

MINUTES OF THE TENBY TOWN COUNCIL
MEETING HELD 3RD SEPTEMBER 2024

Present: Councillor Dai Morgan Mayor
Councillor Charles Dale
Councillor Sam Skyrme-Blackhall
Councillor Laurence Blackhall
Councillor James Phillips
Councillor Emma Lewis
Councillor Michelle Evans
Councillor Tom Sloan

In attendance: Mr Andrew Davies Clerk to the Council/Financial Officer
Sharon Thompson Deputy Town Clerk

Nicky Young PCC

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79. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES

Apologies were received from Cllrs Whitehurst, Crockford and Hallett.

80. TO DISCLOSE ANY PERSONAL ITEMS OF BUSINESS LISTED BELOW

None declared.

81. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION: AN OPPORTUNITY FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO ASK QUESTIONS AND MAKE REPRESENTATIONS ABOUT ANY ITEM OF BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED DURING TONIGHTS MEETING AND WHICH IS OPEN FOR PUBLIC DISCUSSION. CONFIDENTIAL ITEMS OF BUSINESS ARE EXCLUDED

- a. Messrs Neil McCarthy and Nicky Young, PCC Area Maintenance have been invited by South Ward County Councillor Mrs Sam Skyrme-Blackhall to address the council on waste management issues in the town**

Cllr Skyrme-Blackhall thanked Mr Young for attending the meeting in his own time. Unfortunately, Mr McCarthy couldn't make the meeting due to workload.

As an Environmental Services Officer, Mr Young was here to give an overview of how the system works.

There are issues within our town, said Cllr. Skyrme-Blackhall, but Mr Young has worked well with me and the Clerk and always does his best to get problems sorted while working on limited resources.

Mr Young explained that his remit covered from Amroth to Angle where he had 9 workers, servicing 418 bins in villages and local communities. Six of these staff were based in Tenby covering as far as Amroth and St Florence. There were 118 bins in Tenby to service. Town centre bins are emptied 4 times a day, while those on the outskirts are visited 2 or 3 times a day depending on workload. Shift patterns allow service provision from 5am to 9pm during the peak times.

Tenby is unique and he hopes people can see that his team are working hard for Tenby as the front face of PCC and TTC. However, he was always open to any suggestions on how to look to improve.

He explained that during the daytime street litter collected is taken to Pembroke Dock. After 4pm it goes to Crane Cross and the special packer in the central yard.

Councillors asked if PCC were able to recycle street litter. Mr. Young said that sadly, while the bins were segregated, rubbish was just put in either slot by the public which meant that a lot of potential recycling was contaminated with food waste.

PCC were also getting to grips with fly tipping by fining. A number of local people have been fined and operatives are going through the bags to find evidence. Although not in their remit, private lanes will be cleaned if a mess.

Cllr. Phillips felt disposable vapes were becoming a new issue and asked if PCC had considered separate bins for their disposal.

Mr. Young said that it was something that was being considered. They had also trialled disposable BBQ bins and beach wheelie bin systems in other parts of Pembrokeshire which have worked well and they would now be looking to implement these in Tenby.

He explained that they had been trying things outside of Tenby to ensure they work first.

Fly tipping of domestic waste from holiday lets into street bins was still a major problem and PCC were now checking trade waste licenses. They were aware that some rental properties actually instructed visitors to use the street bins and PCC had physical evidence of this which was being dealt with.

It was not just visitors, however. PCC were aware that some locals also used the street bins to dispose of domestic rubbish. Trace address and information was being gathered.

Members felt that information stickers should be put on bins to say that it is a criminal offence to fly tip in the bin. Mr. Young said that some bins had these and revised ones were being looked at by PCC's signage team.

Cllr Dale was concerned about the state of the bins and the fact that there were not enough which causes fly tipping.

He also noted a new habit of people sticking vape stickers on the top of the bins which contributes to the awful appearance of the bins.

Mr Young said that dealing with the appearance of the bins would be winter work. A firm had been commissioned to 'up-cycle' existing bins which would make savings on providing new. This would mean that, for a time, there may be fewer bins as they had to be taken away to work on.

Cllr. Dale said that he had raised the issue some time ago that in Southall they have 5 feet tall bins in use and made a request to enquire if PCC could introduce ones in Tudor Square and on the North or South Beach.

We had been informed that PCC did not have these bins but when he went to Haverfordwest retail park there they were.

Mr. Young explained that the retail park waste is dealt with by a private contractor and currently PCC has no means to empty these larger bins.

Cllr Blackhall said that the point is that if holiday properties are rented out at £1500 per week, then £50 to have rubbish removed is the very least that property owners could do.

People are making good money, he said. They do not pay council tax because they register as a business and then get full business rate relief so pay nothing towards services. They expect the people of Pembrokeshire to pay for their greed and sense of entitlement he said.

We've heard that street bin waste has to go to landfill. For every ton that goes to landfill Pembrokeshire has to pay. We who pay council tax are the ones that are paying, ultimately it comes back to us.

Labelling on bins needs to be strong, street waste only, no household waste, he said. What is the alternative, a PCC officer standing by bins on change over day?

Cllr Dale felt that PCC should be trialling waste schemes in Tenby. If it doesn't work, then so be it, he said. There is frustration on both sides and I understand the enormity of the task but people can be very forgiving if PCC are seen to be trying to address problems.

Cllr. Dale added that he loves the new Quad recycling bags for smaller properties and flats and the seagull proof bags were fantastic but he but felt that an advertising campaign was needed.

Cllr. Blackhall suggested that our Community Engagement officer might be about to source grant funding for an environmental campaign.

When you look at everything that Mr Young and his team do, and the support he provides to our gardens, Time for Tenby and litter picking volunteers, it is all there, he added. Many places look absolutely fantastic.

The Clerk reminded members that TTC office is a Keep Wales Tidy litter picking hub where people can borrow equipment.

Although not ‘waste’ related, Cllr. Dale said that he was aware that Mr. Young also dealt with grounds maintenance. He had received complaints about roots of trees outside St Teilo’s School which were breaking through the pavement making it hard to get wheelchairs and walkers through.

Mr. Young said that it was difficult to tackle roots without killing the tree. It was really a Highways Department issue to investigate and will be passed on.

Cllr. Skyrme-Blackhall again thanked Mr Young for attending and all his support in finding solutions to sometimes difficult problems with his limited manpower.

We are all very grateful for your assistance, she said.

Mr Young said he could always try and find a solution if possible and members were welcome to please contact him with any queries at all.

82. TO AGREE ITEMS OF CORRESPONDENCE AND COMMITTEE MINUTES, EXCEPT THOSE MARKED PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL, BE GIVEN TO THE MEMBERS OF THE PRESS PRESENT

Proposed Cllr Dale, seconded by Cllr Sloan.

83. TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD 2ND JULY 2024

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Tenby Town Council meeting held 2nd July 2024 be confirmed and signed as accurate.

84. TO CONSIDER ANY MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES FOR INFORMATION ONLY

Page 34 Item 68 – Dwr Cymru: Cllr Whitehurst had emailed the Clerk, having written to Deputy First Minister in relation to the rising main issue. The Clerk read the response to members:

As you are aware, Ofwat is the independent economic regulator and every 5 years it undertakes a statutory price review which sets the levels of funding for investment by

the water companies for new and existing infrastructure and the levels of water bills which primarily fund this. Dŵr Cymru can submit further evidence before Ofwat makes a final determination later this year. It would not be appropriate for me to intervene with the water company or Ofwat as to how individual investment proposals are prioritised or funded.

The draft determination separates proposed expenditure by the water companies into base and enhancement expenditure. Base expenditure is for routine, year on year expenditure to deliver a base level of good service to customers and the environment and maintain the long-term capability of assets so that it delivers resilient services on a day-to-day basis. It includes expenditure for capital maintenance.

Dŵr Cymru requested enhancement funding for rehabilitating several rising mains but rising main renewal falls under base expenditure. It is the water company's duty to maintain its assets so that they are in a condition to operate as they were intended to meet and continues to be able meet its statutory obligations. The draft determination provided Dŵr Cymru with a base allowance of £3.4 billion for the 2025-30 period and it is up to Dŵr Cymru as to how it prioritises the Tenby scheme over other schemes. Ofwat has not rejected funding for DCWW to undertake this work and has provisionally determined that the company has already been funded to make this repair and can begin work now.

I have made clear that substantial new investment is needed by the water companies to improve water quality and to reduce harm caused by storm overflows, and have provided a steer that at least 60 percent of storm overflows should cause 'no or very low' harm to the environment by 2030. The draft determination has also set Dŵr Cymru a target of zero serious pollution incidents by 2030. This requires a very substantial new investment which will be funded through increases in water bills, and the draft determination has provided for record levels of funding for water companies to deliver this.

I am sorry not to be able to intervene on the specific investment you refer to, and hope this letter provides you some reassurance that our ambitions for infrastructure renewal have been communicated very clearly to both Ofwat and the water sector in Wales.

Kelly Jordan from Dwr Cymru has also been in touch with Cllr. Whitehurst to tell him that they have been installing improved pumps on the rising main in advance of Iron Man. These are 'graduated flow pumps' that come on gradually rather than the old off/on pumps. This will reduce the risk of another burst to the rising main.

Cllr. Blackhall commented that OFWAT is answerable to Welsh Government. Dwr Cymru is answerable as a not-for-profit service in Wales. He felt the minister's reply was not good enough.

He needs to speak to the Chief Executives of both organisations to sort this out, he said. This is not just routine maintenance; it is fundamental to tourism in our town.

Tourism is the biggest section of our economy; another failure would be a disaster to that economy. We are talking about people's jobs and lives, he continued. Saying that he is not able to intervene is simply not good enough.

Cllr. Blackhall proposed we write to the First Minister saying we expect OFWAT and Dwr Cymru to come clean, work out whose responsibility it is, and get on with it.

Cllr Skyrme-Blackhall seconded.

RESOLVED

That we write to the First Minister asking for assistance in resolving the issue.

Page 36 Item 68 – Dog Ban Boundaries: Update on Cllr Crockford's dog ban boundaries concerns on South Beach. Cllr Crockford, Cllr Skyrme-Blackhall and the Clerk had met with Gary Nicholls and Myrddin Dennis of PCC on South Beach to look at signage. The signage is correct and it was felt that perhaps enforcers were initially overzealous. PCC had spoken to them.

Next year PCC have agreed to look at altering the maps. By rotating them through 90 degrees the map will provide the same perspective as looking at the beach and may provide a better understanding of where the areas are.

85. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETINGS HELD 11TH AND 25TH JULY AND 8TH AUGUST 2024

Cllr Blackhall proposed that the Minutes be received for information and Cllr Skyrme-Blackhall seconded.

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee meetings held 11th and 25th July and 8th August 2024 be received.

86. TO RECEIVE THE ACCOUNTS FOR JULY AND AUGUST (INCLUDING SCHEDULED PAYMENTS, UNPRESENTED CHEQUES, RECEIPTS, ACCOUNT BALANCES, BUDGET MONITORING TO DATE AND BANK RECONCILIATIONS) AND CONSIDER ANY ISSUES ARISING (ON THE TABLE)

Cllr Phillips asked why we pay for broadband in Church House. It is part of the town connectivity project funded through EPF.

Cllr. Blackhall felt we needed to assess where we are in terms of signing off on EPF. He would have a chat separately with the Clerk and report back. The Clerk said that he had a breakdown of figures as to what was remaining to claim under each project head.

Cllr. Phillips asked if we tend the War Graves hence the £204 received from the War Graves Commission. We receive the funding which we pass onto the Sea Cadets who look after the graves as a project. The Mayor asked if we could contact a local monumental mason for advice as to what could be used to clean algae off the headstones.

The Mayor proposed accepting the accounts and Cllr Phillips seconded. The Clerk was thanked by the Mayor.

RESOLVED

That the accounts for July and August (including scheduled payments, unpresented cheques, receipts, account balances, budget monitoring to date and bank reconciliations) be approved.

87. TO CONSIDER A SUGGESTION TO CHANGE THE DAY OF MONTHLY MEETINGS TO THE SECOND TUESDAY OF THE MONTH – CLLR BLACKHALL

Cllr Blackhall commented that, when we meet on the first Tuesday of the month there is an incredible rush for the Clerk to get the accounts finalised and out on time. He would be guided by the Clerk but it may be easier from a staff point of view to look to move to second Tuesday.

The Clerk said it often depended on when the first Tuesday of the month fell. If the first of the month was a Wednesday, he had time to get end of month bank statements, reconcile and include the paperwork with the agenda.

Otherwise, he was in a position where the agenda had gone out before he received end of month bank statement and he had to email the accounts for consideration to members ready for the meeting. This was not ideal as he liked to give members plenty of time to study all the paperwork before the meeting.

He said that legislation says you have to meet in May and then you determine further meetings during the year but the minimum must be three.

We have already published our calendar of meetings for this year and members may have already planned to avoid clashes of dates. He suggested members may consider starting new arrangements from May next year.

The Mayor felt that if we were going to start meeting on a different date we may as well start now and an amendment could be made on our website.

Cllr Blackhall proposed that meetings be held on the second Tuesday of the month from October and the Mayor seconded.

RESOLVED

That TTC meet on the second Tuesday of the month from October.

88. TO RECEIVE ANY UPDATES FROM COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Cllr Dale felt the electric bicycles are doing rather well as he had seen them being used. However, no-one appears to be picking them up and replacing them. If this was not happening perhaps someone more local could manage the project.

Cllr. Skyrme-Blackhall noted that the drop-off point by the town walls had also not been removed. She would speak to the relevant officers at PCC on the matters raised.

PCC were aware there were on-going issues with A frames, which were in hand said Cllr Skyrme-Blackhall. Cllr. Dale noted certain cafes were keeping table and chairs out after pedestrianisation and people were being forced out into a live carriageway. The Clerk said that some cafes have licenses allowing tables and chairs outside café culture hours. PCC officers will be out checking that the rules are adhered to.

Cllr Blackhall said Time for Tenby had undertaken a couple of litter picks over the summer. They were very successful and well attended.

Cllr. Phillips said that there was a light out by the war memorial. The Clerk said that these types of issues could be reported to the office. The streetlight number would also be helpful in reporting problems to PCC

Cllr. Sloan felt that Tenby Arts Events had held a successful series of events over the summer and he had witnessed an unbelievable, change in attitude to what we are doing via these events.

We were told this is something that has been missing for 20 years, a platform for local artists to be seen. There is huge amount of interest in taking this into next year because it is their only showcase. There are conversations about blending into the Christmas Market. From feedback through contacts, we would probably get 3 times what we had last Christmas which is a good problem to have.

Cllr. Blackhall felt congratulations were due to the Mayor and Cllr Sloan. TCC were hugely supportive of this concept, he pointed out. In terms of the work with schools on Castle Hill, with this work displayed in the market and at the front of DV with equal billing with other artists, it sends a strong message to young people.

This was not just about financial return it is a statement of what a community can be about.

Cllr Sloan said he and the Mayor were very conscious about not letting others turn the project into a 'commercial' machine. A lot of work was to keep contact with schools, to keep them engaged and deliver a community element.

This was a showcase opportunity for local artists in their hometown, he stressed. Feedback has also shown that it has improved mental health.

The feedback from the schools has been very positive, students have been inspired and are already asking what happens next.

Veterans from the VA Gallery involved also found it enjoying and therapeutic.

Some local artists have never shown any of their paintings before. Even though they had been painting for years producing lovely artwork, other locals, even members of their families had no idea.

What happens when the ‘café’ space was not available, as a question, added Cllr. Sloan. We benefited from being able to utilise the space far more than we expected.

There are possibilities to be elsewhere but that would be down to how everyone feels about it.

Cllr Blackhall felt the display provided a space that was nice to come in to and gave an idea of what the space could become eventually as part of the plans; a place to sit and have a conversation.

Cllr. Skyrme-Blackhall was sure that all knew that Dr John Harrison had sadly passed away. The news had hit her particularly hard as she had known him since she was 7 years old.

It was very sudden and he will be missed greatly. He had done so much promoting music in Tenby. October 6th had been a day when the church was going to celebrate his 50 years as Organist and Director of Music. This would now be a Memorial Thanksgiving Service to celebrate his life as Dr Harrison’s funeral was to be private.

Among his engagements, the Mayor had been privileged to represent the town at the RNLI 200th anniversary service in St David’s Cathedral. He had also been lucky to spend time with the local crews and volunteers at their Open day where he had judged the sandcastle competition.

‘I take my hat off to the crews who continually sail into danger when the natural instinct is to run the other way, and to all the people who volunteer to fundraise on their behalf, he said.’ I wish them all the very best for the rest of the year and the future.

He had also attended Tenby Firefighters’ Carnival Day. This is another group who we underestimate what they do, he said. We’re lucky to have them.

He had also held his Civic Service in August.

Much of his time had also been spent assisting with Tenby Arts Events.

It was started up to give school pupils a chance to express themselves through art, he explained.

It was also an opportunity for young creative minds to mix with more experienced creative people, learning some valuable lessons in turn taking on some excellent advice that could be the difference between arts as a hobby and arts as a profession.

The concept soon grew to something much bigger as we realised that a platform in the town needed to be for all ages and capabilities.

There unfortunately has been no stage to promote some of these fantastic artists as they seem not to reach the criteria of certain establishments in the town. The outdoor and indoor arts markets were not just for selling but also for showcasing, including students from St Teilo’s Catholic School, Tenby Church in Wales and Ysgol Greenhill.

We have worked with PCC by gaining a markets license for South Parade and also constantly thinking about access for all. Not once has anyone not been able to pass or not use the pavement including wheelchair users, mobility scooters or pushchairs.

Even with the large plant pots on South Parade we measured stall dimensions and spaced them to make sure there are no blockages or restrictions.

What we were trying to do and achieve is how it has/is positively impacting the wider community. This would include the 240 children from 3 different schools having a chance to paint at an event up Castle hill and exhibit their work in a pop-up community art gallery at the temporary arts space in the front of the De Valence.

At this point now there is an age group from 5 to 73 years displaying within the art space. 95% of work on display has never been seen before as the artists never had the confidence to show it.

It's an opportunity to give people the confidence to do something even if others don't like it! One person even said the whole idea has changed her mental health and probably saved her life.

This project has taken so much time and commitment, much more than Cllr Sloan and myself ever thought, but the positive, emotional, life changing and unbelievable growth in everyone involved is so rewarding.

This hasn't been a commercial venture, but we have, from the markets, gained some cash towards Market licence fee and monies for the Mayor's charity.

On behalf of both of us, I'd like to take this opportunity to thank Harbour Master Chris Sailsbury and Marc Owen of PCC.

We do have to say a huge thank to De Valence, especially Dave and Mike, for all their help throughout the project.

A massive thank you also to this Council, for your huge support. Cllr Blackhall seemed more excited than most people involved which is fantastic.

Without the community we live in, this project would not have been this successful and thank you to all who have supported us and congratulations to all who have contributed, you should be proud.

This isn't the end we are continuing the work and planning for next year already, he said.

89. TO CONSIDER ANY FINANCIAL OFFICER/CLERK'S ITEMS AND TO AGREE ACTION IN RESPONSE TO PROPOSALS:

None at this time.

90. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Next meeting Tuesday, 8th October 2024 at 7.30pm.

This would also be the date of the planning committee.

91. TO PROPOSE ANY ITEM FOR THE NEXT AGENDA

None at this time.

92. TO RESOLVE TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC FROM THE MEETING DURING CONSIDERATION OF THE FOLLOWING ITEM(S) OF BUSINESS UNDER THE “PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT OF 1960”