

TENBY TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE TENBY TOWN COUNCIL
MEETING HELD 14TH JULY 2020

PRESENT: Cllr Mrs S Skyrme-Blackhall Mayor
Cllr Mrs T Rossiter
Cllr T Brown
Cllr L Blackhall
Cllr T Hallett
Cllr Mrs T Evans
Cllr H Whitehurst
Cllr Mrs S Lane

IN ATTENDANCE: Mr A Davies Clerk
Mrs S Thompson Assistant to the Clerk

25. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES

Apologies received from Cllr Morgan and Cllr Ronowitz.

26. TO DISCLOSE ANY PERSONAL INTERESTS IN ITEMS OF BUSINESS LISTED BELOW

None declared at this time.

27. TO AGREE ITEMS OF CORRESPONDENCE AND COMMITTEE MINUTES OTHER THAN THOSE MARKED NOT FOR PUBLICATION BEING GIVEN TO MEMBERS OF THE PRESS PRESENT

Proposed by Cllr Hallett seconded by Cllr Mrs Lane.

28. TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE TENBY TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD 30TH JUNE 2020

Cllr Blackhall proposed that they be signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting and Cllr Hallett seconded.

29. ANY MATTERS ARISING FOR INFORMATION ONLY

Minute 13b Page 7: Cllr Mrs Lane referred to the resolution. She commented that three councillors were involved in a meeting to discuss a compromise which she feels was wrong as it should have been the Mayor and Clerk only. There are 13 councillors she said and no individual councillors should be singled out in particular.

The Mayor replied saying that it was Cllr Mrs Evans who had initiated the scheme and that only guidance was sought, no decision was made. They had liaised initially with the Clerk and then handed it over to the Clerk to liaise with PCC. Cllr Mrs Lane was concerned that this was not what was proposed. Cllr Ronowitz was also involved. All

councillors are elected and councillors cannot be singled out for meetings especially when what was proposed specified the Mayor and Clerk.

Cllr Mrs Evans said she had not been involved in any meeting with PCC. Cllr Blackhall recommended that the comments be noted.

The Clerk explained that there had been a misunderstanding over the initial resolution and a compromise suggestion over the hand sanitisers had been considered and sent to members for consideration before PCC had been contacted.

When this error had been realised the Clerk had contacted PCC to establish what other things in relation to coronavirus mitigation measures TTC could assist PCC with. The only thing PCC felt TTC may be able to assist with was contributing to the costs of the town warden scheme.

This reply sparked more questions, including potential costings to the town council, but by the time information had been received on the town warden scheme (still without potential costings to the town council) there was insufficient time for members to be consulted further before the scheduled council meeting.

The Mayor and Clerk felt therefore that any further considerations regarding the hand sanitisers could be left until tonight. Cllr Blackhall asked why would TTC pay for wardens that PCC were going to pay for anyway.

He proposed that the resolution of the last meeting be followed and the compromise in terms of a reduced number of hand sanitiser stations be actioned. He felt 5 would be supported. Secondly, in terms of the compromise regarding additional signage, that TTC look at erecting two banners, one at end of White Lion Corner where temporary charity banners usually go and another possibly in the vicinity of the Parade.

He suggested the banner say something along the lines of 'Welcome to Tenby our town motto is 'the sea washes away the ills of men' however in the current circumstances please observe social distancing'. He suggested the Clerk look at the wording and email around to members to be agreed.

Cllr Mrs Lane commented the 'compromise' that had been suggested on email had not been the resolution. It was to await results of discussions with PCC first.

Cllr Blackhall said he was therefore happy to propose to the meeting that the council reduce the number of sanitiser stations to 5 and to also look at purchasing 2 information banners for White Lion Corner and The Parade. The wording of the banners to be devised by the Clerk and consulted on with the members. Cllr. Whitehurst seconded the proposal.

Cllr Mrs Lane said she still did not feel sanitisers were right for Tenby and Cllr Mrs Rossiter agreed. Cllr T Brown said he could support the banners but not the hand sanitisers.

RESOLVED

That the town council purchase five hand sanitiser stations to be sited at strategic locations around the town.

Further that the council purchase two vinyl banners to remind people about social distancing. The wording to be devised by the Clerk and consulted on with members.

The question was then asked if PCC would also provide sanitisers in the town, and the Clerk confirmed that they have said they are not.

Minute 13 b(i) Page 9: The Clerk noted that Pedestrianisation was already included on the Agenda but could either be discussed now as a Matter Arising or at the appropriate agenda point.

Cllr Mrs Lane proposed that, as there were members of the public with us specifically for this item, that TTC take all three letters together and move the item forward on the agenda. Cllr Hallett seconded this proposal.

The Clerk said that he had received 3 more items of correspondence on the matter by email that afternoon. Members agreed that they be considered with the correspondence already received.

Cllr Mrs Lane felt that TTC jumped the gun a little bit and got over excited in suggesting extending pedestrianisation before considering all the details. The current scheme has been in place for a long time and it suits 99% of the people.

Cllr Mrs Lane would like to withdraw the proposal to extend the hours of pedestrianisation as it is not fair on residents whom we should be supporting. She added that it may be too late.

Cllr Brown agreed saying 8pm is too long for people living in town to wait for unrestricted access.

Cllr Blackhall felt there had been no new information from TTC's meeting two weeks ago to change the previous resolution but Cllr. Mrs. Lane commented that the letter from Mr. Thomas outlined pros and cons that was new information which needed to be considered.

Cllr Blackhall said we should have a conversation with PCC as that is what we decided to do. This idea is legitimate and should be explored but to withdraw it is wrong.

The Clerk then read the three letters from residents within Tenby that had been received by email that afternoon - Mr and Mrs Evans and Mr John in St Mary's Street and Mr and Mrs Williams from the Harbour area – all opposed an extension to pedestrianisation.

Cllr Rossiter said she has lived with pedestrianisation and feels it was adequate to 5.30 pm. Any longer and it is not workable and not fair on residents inside the town walls,

it is also very awkward for businesses. TTC should not consider asking PCC to continue to pursue an extension to 8pm.

Cllr Blackhall noted that a number of letters were concerned that extending pedestrianisation would lead to more drinking on the streets.

He said Café Culture does not mean drinking on the street, drinking is ancillary to food.

He then asked for clarification on declarations of interest on this item. The Clerk said that a councillor has an interest if it benefited them, or their family or friends, more than the general public. It was down to the individual councillor to determine if they had an interest and whether it was just personal or prejudicial.

Cllr Mrs Rossiter said she has no interest, personal or prejudicial. Cllr Mrs Lane also added that currently she has no interests in this item.

Cllr Hallett said that the town does not just rely on hospitality, there are other businesses that need to be considered, hospitality is a big part but not all.

Cllr Blackhall knows it is a difficult subject and fully understands concerns of town residents. He has lived all over Tenby including within the town walls during pedestrianisation. One thing for him in thinking about this issue, we are a tourist town, we have a visitor economy. We need to enable public houses, restaurants and services to operate in a safe, socially distanced manner. The thinking behind the extension of hours was a traffic free environment to allow that space.

He could favour a compromise of an extension to 7pm. It would allow cafes and restaurants to operate outside space, generate additional revenue and safeguard jobs up to the point when they could open in doors. He said the suggestion was to look if an extension was possible in the short term.

He understands there has been drinking in streets with people buying 'off' sales going down to harbour and on to beaches and even consuming alcohol on tables outside properties on Crackwell and Bridge Street.

One advantage of allowing premises to use available space longer is that public houses can manage the situation. These are experienced businesses used to café culture. If we do not allow them additional time to utilise and manage outdoor space, we will end up with people walking around town with pint glasses and takeaway food which would be a worse situation.

He felt 7pm is not a huge extension. Food deliveries can still happen as can other deliveries, access can still happen. These are sensitive issues but we need to find a balance to support those living and working in town.

Cllr Brown said it is difficult, but in two weeks' time public houses, cafes and restaurants will be allowed to let customers back in.

Cllr Mrs Skyrme-Blackhall said she went down to the harbour at 6pm in her car on Saturday to check St Julian's church and there was a lot of drinking. It was a beautiful

evening and there was a party atmosphere but things were not too bad with locals and visitors enjoying themselves. At 11pm she was out walking the dog and there was a distinct change. There were a number of drunk people walking through Tudor Square and the harbour was 'party central'. The mess was extreme.

Cllr Mr Brown said extending pedestrianisation further would not make it any better for the town. It would just delay the point when 'takeaway' culture started.

The Clerk told councillors that he had received a number of questions about 'takeaway' alcohol in relation to drinking on the street. If premises have an 'on/off-licence' under the terms of the licensing act, they can serve take away alcohol in sealed or open containers unless there are specific conditions imposed on their licence. Premises have been able to do this even before they were allowed to use their open space.

The Clerk and the Mayor had met with Insp. Hamish Nichol of Tenby Police Station on Monday. The inspector said that he had not been made aware of problems down the harbour at the time they were occurring and had only learnt of them that morning.

There had been no reports to police on Saturday of any anti-social behaviour. If there had been, they would have been dealt with.

Operation Lion starts this Friday with additional police officers on our streets Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays, and British Transport Police on trains.

The Inspector said the Police are proud to have worked with the town over the years to move Tenby away from its reputation as a stag and hen party venue. They are very much against reverting back to this situation and are constantly monitoring the situation.

In addition to weekends, if any hot spots or problems are identified during the week, they will look to put additional resources into town. The Superintendent has already requested an additional 6 officers to deploy when necessary.

Also, there is an Act going through parliament which cuts the time premises can be called in for review if they are not seen to be acting within the objectives of the Licensing Act. The premises can be called in for review within 48 hours of any breaches and the licence can be suspended for two weeks.

The police will also be utilising Section 35 dispersal orders to tackle anti-social behaviour.

While Tenby is a honeypot for tourists, it can also be a hot spot and the police will be doing everything to ensure that Tenby does not experience what happened last weekend again. If anyone was concerned about anti-social behaviour, they should call the police.

Cllr Blackhall thanked the Clerk for his update. He said we want the best for the town and the best for residents and it is good that police are looking at extensive measures to deal with potential problems.

However, he still believes that extending pedestrianisation to allow cafes, restaurants and public houses to operate with sufficient social distancing space could also help

manage the situation. Public houses are legally able to provide off sales, how does not extending pedestrianisation stop people walking around with drinks and going down the harbour?

RESOLVED

Given the legal complexities around the issue outlined by Mr. Darren Thomas; the representations made to the town council from walled town residents regarding further restrictions to their access and the changing landscape over the easing of lockdown restrictions, that Pembrokeshire County Council be asked not to pursue the extension of the pedestrianisation times any further.

30. TO DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING PLANNING APPLICATIONS AND TO AGREE ACTION IN RESPONSE TO PROPOSALS:

- a. NP/20/0310/FUL – Erection of side annex extension and removal of 2 dummy chimneys – Ty Isaf, 22 Haytor Gardens, Tenby

The Mayor asked if everyone had taken a look at the plans online. Cllr Mrs Lane proposed accepting the proposal and Cllr Mr Brown seconded. An explanatory letter had been received from the applicant which the Clerk read to councillors, he also added that there had been no concerns raised by neighbours.

RECOMMEND

Approval. Considered against all the relevant policies in the LDP, members feel that this application will have no adverse effect on neighbouring properties.

31. TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING ITEMS OF PLANNING CORRESPONDENCE AND AGREE ACTION IN RESPONSE TO PROPOSALS:

- a. PCNPA – Conservation Area Tree Works Application NP/20/0339/TCA – reduce height of trees to 15m – land adjacent to the Cemetery, Slippery Back, Tenby

The Mayor handed over to our tree consultant, Cllr Hallett who, on grounds of health and safety, proposed accepting the proposal to reduce the canopy size, Cllr Mrs Evans seconded.

RECOMMEND

Members have no objection to these works being undertaken on the grounds of health and safety and see no merit in the introduction of a Tree Preservation Order.

32. TO RECEIVE THE FOLLOWING ITEMS OF CORRESPONDENCE AND AGREE ACTION IN RESPONSE TO PROPOSALS

- a. Mr Ken Skates, Minister for Economy, Transport and North Wales – Business Support

The Mayor asked if councillors had any comments to make.

Cllr Blackhall said that we are grateful for the reply and wondered whether we should be in touch with businesses that are concerned to see if this reply is helpful to them or not. If not, he suggested that the Clerk and Mayor liaise and reply to Mr Skates with feedback as necessary. Cllr Blackhall suggested making contact with those who expressed concern to see if this reply provides them with clarification and draft a response to Mr Skates accordingly based on their feedback.

Cllr Lane suggested that this letter be published on the Tenby Traders What's App group. It may ensure they've read it and it does urge businesses to look at emerging support from government. Cllr Blackhall supported this.

RESOLVED

That the Town Council publish the reply from Mr Skates on the Tenby Traders What's App group to see if the support measures had been of assistance. Any further response to Mr Skates as a result of feedback to be delegated to the Town Clerk in consultation with the Mayor.

Items b, c & d had been dealt with earlier in the meeting.

33. TO RECEIVE THE ACCOUNTS FOR JUNE (INCLUDING SCHEDULED PAYMENTS, UNPRESENTED CHEQUES, RECEIPTS, ACCOUNT BALANCES, BUDGET MONITORING TO DATE AND BANK RECONCILIATIONS) AND CONSIDER ANY ISSUES ARISING

Cllr Blackhall asked the Clerk, in terms of COVID if there may be some reduction in income, could he come back next time and advise if there are any COVID related losses? The Clerk told councillors that income from the cemetery was on par with last year. Any losses sustained by TTC is due to the lack of rental income on Augustus Place Community Centre. Cllr Brown proposed accepting the accounts for June and Cllr Mrs Lane seconded the proposal.

RESOLVED

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

34. TO REVIEW THE POSSIBILITIES OF TENBY TOWN COUNCIL HOLDING MEETINGS IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER – CLLR MRS ROSSITER

Cllr Mrs Rossiter said she knows that Madam Mayor is conducting the meetings as well as she is able online. However, last week the Senedd met with 20 MSs in the Chamber and 40 on Zoom. She cannot see any reason why TTC cannot meet in the De Valence hall. It is the largest hall in the county with plenty of room to be able to have 2 metres distancing between our 13 members and the Clerk and assistant to the Clerk.

This will make it so much easier to take the minutes.

She knew two councillors are shielding (she being one of them) but she manages to get around without problems. It was only last meeting she was able to get into the meeting, for previous meetings she was denied access. She feels she has been denied being able to take part in any discussion and feels it is not legal.

Some members were breaking up online and leaving for a time to resolve technical issues. Cllr Mrs Rossiter thinks this way of conducting a meeting is a farce. Please let us get back to some normality and meet in the hall she said.

Cllr Hallett reminded councillors of the air conditioning, air will be recycled and COVID is airborne. Cllr Mrs Rossiter said doors could be left open.

Cllr Mrs Lane suggested wearing masks, adding that air conditioning does not need to be on, she seconded Cllr Mrs Rossiter's proposition.

Cllr Whitehurst said he appreciates that remote meetings are not ideal. However, guidance says meetings should not be held and the potential risk was higher now with incoming tourists. He felt it unfair to ask members to attend meetings in the hall. Continuing to hold meetings remotely was far better than risking the health of members. We also have a duty to allow members of the public to observe meetings, we could not do that in De Valence.

Cllr Mrs Rossiter said she is shielding but she has to go out and go about her business. She felt it was not a problem as long as we were careful.

Cllr Blackhall asked the Clerk for clarification of legal position, in particular from various bodies including One Voice Wales and Welsh Government, on whether councils can meet face to face and what implications where some were excluded.

Cllr Mrs Lane said Cllr Mrs Rossiter had experienced troubles in joining on line meetings and yet those meetings had still gone ahead even though she was 'excluded'.

The Mayor said that there had been a few complications with remote meetings but, as time went on and councillors got more used to the system, these had been rectified.

Cllr Mrs Evans understands there were issues, she being one who had experienced problems initially. However, she had now been in this meeting by telephone for an hour and a half and had experienced no issues. She had changed the way in which she had joined the meeting and could hear everyone perfectly well, it was just trial and error.

She felt it is working well and could see no reason to change at this point in time.

Cllr. Brown said he sees both sides but he would like to get back into a proper meeting setting. There seems to be a lot more talking over each other and arguing at remote meetings. There is seldom arguing in chamber. Face masks are used in supermarkets and could be used at meetings.

However, he would like to hear the view from the Clerk.

The Clerk told councillors that currently people are only allowed to meet in family social bubbles in Wales. Meetings of no more than 6 people not in your 'bubble' outdoors were okay but indoors you could only meet within your 'social bubble'.

There is some argument that volunteer groups can be allowed to meet indoors and, in essence, councillors are volunteers. Some councils in England have had hybrid meetings but guidance is different in England. As Cllr Whitehurst has said, our meetings must be open to the public and government guidance is still the same in relation to who could meet indoors.

The Clerk would suggest a compromise in that we hold another remote meeting on 28th July. After this the council will be in its August recess.

We would be able to see where we stand in relation to changing guidance relating to meetings come our September restart. An indoor meeting may be possible by then.

Cllr Hallett would go along with this.

Cllr Mrs Rossiter questioned why you can go out shopping in a busy supermarket but cannot sit around a table. If the Senedd could do it, why can't we? There is still plenty of room in De Valence. She proposed TTC resume meetings indoors and Cllr. Mrs. Lane seconded.

Cllr Brown felt the Clerk had put forward a sensible compromise and moved it as a counter proposal. Cllr. Hallett seconded.

Cllr. Brown's proposal was put to the vote first and gained a majority.

RESOLVED

That the next scheduled meeting of the town council be held remotely. The possibility of holding meetings in the Chamber again following the summer recess will be reassessed based on Welsh Government guidelines and legislation in place at the relevant time.

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

The Clerk told councillors that he had two items, one of which he would like to deal with in private.

The Clerk told councillors that he now has a provisional starting date for work on the Jubilee Skate Park extension. Work is to start on 17th August, with a preconstruction meeting at the end of July.

There have been issues with the park being closed sadly which had resulted in a lot of calls on the handyman and Clerk's time. Not only had chains and padlocks been broken and removed on a number of occasions, the fence had actually been unbolted and taken off to enable folk to get in over the weekend.

The Welsh Government have said that play parks can be reopened on 20th July. The Clerk and our handyman have worked on a programme of works to ready the park for reopening on Monday 20th.

Sadly, it appeared that stones had been used to smash holes into the deck of the roundabout, creating jagged finger traps, and it was now not revolving correctly. As a result, it will have to be taken out of commission and removed before the park reopens. The Clerk was unsure if it could be repaired.

Cllr Hallett had seen about 16 youths at the skate park just the other day.

36. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting to be held on 28th July 2020 at 7.30pm.

37. TO PROPOSE ANY ITEM FOR THE NEXT AGENDA

No items were proposed and the Clerk suggested councillors contact the office should they have any items.

Cllr Hallett asked if there had been any response from the Belgians. The Clerk told councillors that the book had been received but nothing further at this time.

38. 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"

39. TO CONFIRM THE PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE TENBY TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD 30TH JUNE 2020

Cllr Hallett declared this to be a true and accurate record of the meeting. Cllr Mrs Evans seconded.

40. MATTERS ARISING FOR INFORMATION ONLY

There were none.

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

The Clerk had received an email from Sinead Henehan relating to grant aid Welsh
The Mayor thanked councillors for attending. Councillors thanked the Clerk for all his
hard work.

Mayor _____

Town Clerk _____

Date _____