

TENBY TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE TENBY TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD
19th JANUARY 2021

PRESENT: Cllr Mrs S Skyrme-Blackhall Mayor
Cllr Mrs T Evans
Cllr Mr D Morgan
Cllr Mrs T Rossiter
Cllr Mr L Blackhall
Cllr Mr T Brown
Cllr Mrs C Brown
Cllr Mr T Hallett
Cllr Mr H Whitehurst
Cllr Mr M Evans
Cllr Mrs S Lane

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

The meeting was held remotely due to coronavirus restrictions

The Mayor wished councillors good evening.

201. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES

None received.

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

Cllr Mrs Rossiter declared a personal interest in item 8a.

203. TO AGREE ITEMS OF CORRESPONDENCE AND COMMITTEE MINUTES OTHER THAN THOSE MARKED NOT FOR PUBLICATION BEING GIVEN TO MEMBERS OF THE PRESS PRESENT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 and seconded by Cllr Mr Brown.

RESOLVED

That items of Correspondence and Committee Minutes other than those items marked Not for Publication be given to members of the Press present.

204. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Resolved that the Minutes of the Tenby Town Council meeting held 5th January 2021 be confirmed and signed as accurate.

205. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES FOR INFORMATION ONLY

Page 121 Item 190 - Market: The Clerk told councillors that he was having difficulty contacting traders as there was only one operating when he called in. The market has also been closed on a number of occasions he had tried to visit. Another trader has been emailed to see if they could assist in setting up a meeting but he has yet to respond.

Cllr Mrs Rossiter told councillors that although she had not attended recent meetings, she had read all the minutes and thanked the Clerk and assistant to the Clerk for ensuring she received them.

She felt TTC would be taking on a massive obligation if they transferred the market to us. It could become a bottomless pit that we would end up throwing money at. She said we should think very carefully.

Cllr Evans told councillors that this was not what we were proposing. He felt what was being asked was that we communicate with PCC to see what their intentions are and that we are here to work with them. The market is a valuable asset to Tenby.

Historically TTC were involved in the running of the market and it is integral to the future of Tenby. We should keep all avenues open and look at things with an open mind, Cllr. Evans added stressing that any project would need to be fully costed first to see how it could be beneficial to Tenby.

Cllr Mrs Lane said she was happy with Cllr Evans' response at this stage.

Page 122 Item 190 – Five Arches: The Clerk told councillors that the online consultation for enhancing the Five Arches has been arranged for 26th January at 7.30 pm and information had been distributed in the press and on several social media sites.

There has been some interest in the meeting with a couple of requests to come in on the link already received. There had also been a number of comments and ideas put forward on social media and in email form to TTC.

Cllr Evans said that he too had received lots of feedback. Mostly it was positive, welcoming the fact that TTC were being proactive and looking at cleaning and tidying the Arches. He felt people also understood that there were money pressures and not everything could be done at once.

Cllr Mrs Lane said it may be helpful if the Clerk could remind members of the resolutions and proposals from 2018 in relation to the Five Arches and town walls.

The Clerk said that TTC had actually been talking about lighting the Five Arches since 2006 but the project had stalled. When the trees were removed it was agreed to extend the desire to light the Arches to the whole walls along with streetscaping.

Following more recent discussions in depth, members had reached the conclusion to possibly adopt a phased approach and we would start with the Five Arches. Comments coming forward seem to be in favour of subtle lighting and this can be discussed next week to see how we can progress.

The Clerk added that a couple of things that have been suggested e.g., dealing with weed growth on the Arches, were PCCs responsibility.

As such, Suzie Adams, who is in charge of the historic monumental maintenance budget at PCC, had been contacted to see if this could be carried out as a fairly easy first step.

She had replied that PCC now has 2 in house staff who are responsible for dealing with growth on historic monuments etc who could clear what is there as a start.

However, it is quite expensive at £600 per day, and she felt she could only find enough budget for one day given that here are 108 historic monuments in Pembrokeshire and most funding is already committed this year.

She questioned how much could be achieved in one day and wondered if TTC would be happy to fund a second day to complete any works necessary. Members felt that this was something to speak about next week.

Cllr Evans told councillors that a £60,000 budget was introduced by PCC this year for maintenance of all 108 sites within Pembrokeshire. While £600 may seem a lot for one day's work it was his understanding that this is for 2 people and all necessary equipment and legalities for closing off the pavement to undertake the work. It was not simply a person spraying the weeds, he said, adding that when you have to work across all the relevant departments to ensure public safety, costs soon add up.

Personally, he felt it was not bad value and if we were to source this job externally, we could be into thousands of pounds. His view was that if TTC agreed to match fund we could see how far they get down the town walls.

Cllr Brown agreed saying at least we would have been seen to have made a start. If we don't start making progress, then TTC's inaction will be remarked upon, he continued. It would be good to show that we are going to do something.

He felt members should go along with Cllr Evans and offer to match fund the weed work.

Cllr Blackhall felt TTC needed to make sure we are getting value for money. The situation regarding the walls and particularly the Five Arches had been going on for a long time. He absolutely supported the idea of match funding and getting work done to progress, but we had to be wary of what costs will come back on town council. He felt a decision could be made following next week's meeting.

Cllr Mrs Brown told councillors that the walls were discussed at the last regeneration meeting held on 10th May 2019 when it was said that while the lighting and enhancement works were supported any scheme should be held in abeyance whilst a Town Walls Trust was investigated further and formed.

As members know, the Trust idea did not progress and she felt TTC needed to start to be proactive, proposing that TTC go ahead and start that progress with de-weeding.

Cllr. Evans said that Cllr Mrs Lane is right about what was discussed in 2018 as is the Clerk, going as far back as 2006. These points have been made to PCNPA, CADW, and PCC but it is always on their 'to do' list. They don't realise that this is such a passionate issue to us.

The town walls are one of our greatest features, he continued. Ultimately it comes down to money, but let's see what the people want, cost it and decide what our priorities are going forward for 2021.

Cllr Hallett said that the walls are in the ownership of PCC and need looking after. They are every bit as iconic as Tenby harbour, of which pictures can be found all over the world. The town walls are our asset and need looking after.

Page 123 Item 190 – Newell Hill Parking: Cllr Evans told councillors that a meeting had taken place at PCC today and that policy is changing. This will be beneficial to Newell Hill as the estate will now fit in with new criteria. It is important that we keep on it. Cllr Mrs Evans thanked Cllr Evans for the update adding that she really appreciates his input.

Page 127 Item 195 - Floral Displays: Cllr Mrs Lane told councillors that she had been unable to access the last two meetings due to technical problems but now the issue had been resolved.

She was concerned that members questioned the cost of watering floral displays as she and the Clerk had worked together many times on this. TTC have known that this has been coming for several years.

We must decide what we want, she continued adding that we have asked for a complete cost breakdown for several years. We have looked at taking this on ourselves a number of times but there are many costs to consider including staffing and equipment. It has been discussed many times and the only solution to our problems is for PCC to continue to do this work.

Tenby had lost two floral gardens already, she continued. Tenby is renowned for its floral displays. There was so much positivity that we did keep up our floral displays last year despite Covid-19 and we must keep going, she said adding that she was saddened to see negative discussions. There was no need to highlight negativity at this time and we need to be careful not to lose and upset people in PCC when they have worked so hard to keep the displays going.

Cllr Blackhall said that his point had been related to whether TTC were getting value for money. Continued support of floral displays is a categorical yes, but he was just slightly alarmed that we were getting charged such a high price. He was happy to be reassured that there was no alternative and was certainly not criticising those doing the work.

He was just alarmed at level of the fee and the potential danger that we take on more and more costs on a slice-by-slice basis as PCC look to make savings.

Cllr Evans said he did not see it as a slant on those who did the work just as a discussion point on how TTC move forward.

Where would Tenby be without Cllr Mrs Lane and Cllr Mrs Rossiter and their work over the years, he asked?

Things are going to get worse as more cuts are coming, he said We need to be proactive, TTC need to say formally to PCC that we have this amount, what can we get for this?

PCC employ staff seven days a week with all the added costs. It may seem expensive, but it all makes sense and would cost TTC far more if we tried to do it ourselves. If members do not want to do it anymore then members need to say but consider the implications first.

Cllr Blackhall agrees with Cllr Evans but pointed out that his query related to the finance papers and expenditure. If we see something we want to ask a question about then we can. It was a simple question over whether it was value for money and he should not be criticised for asking the question.

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

a. NP/20/0551/TPO – Re-pollarding exercise on Elm tree – St Teilos Primary School, Greenhill Road, Tenby

Cllr Hallett said that this was one of only 2 Elm trees left in Tenby following Dutch elm disease and needs trimming back. It is blocking light and interfering with telephone wires across St John's Hill, he pointed out. Cllr Hallett proposed that the work be done. He was seconded by Cllr Mrs Brown.

RECOMMEND

No objections. Members are aware that branches from this tree are already interfering with over-road BT cables on St John's Hill and feel this work needs to be undertaken as a matter of urgency.

b. NP/20/0611/FUL – Extension and alterations including addition of third storey under gabled roof and addition of two storey rear extension – The Chapel, St Mary's Hill, Tenby

Cllr Hallett believes it will improve the structure and will be a good improvement. Proposed by Cllr Hallett and seconded by Cllr Mrs Rossiter.

RECOMMEND

Approval. Considered against all the relevant policies of the LDP members feel this will improve the aspect and amenity of the property with no adverse effect on neighbours.

207. TO DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING ITEMS OF PLANNING CORRESPONDENCE AND TO AGREE ACTION IN RESPONSE TO PROPOSALS:

a. Mark Crafty – 17 High Street

The Mayor commented that she could not see any new information in this letter.

Cllr Brown felt all had agreed previously that tables and chairs would not be suitable directly outside the premises but the proposed location of the seating, according to this letter, would indicate that it is only during summer months when café culture/pedestrianisation is in force.

He pointed out that it encompasses the disabled bays which were suspended during pedestrianisation. Perhaps this needs clarification and, if so, he could not see a problem with it.

Cllr Mrs Lane commented that, if this is the case, then it would fall within the café culture permit scheme and would be up to PCC. It was indicated in the original planning application that a license was to be sought to put tables out and she had some concern about this as there was not a lot of room directly outside his property. However, if this was for an area within the suspended parking bay during pedestrianisation the PCC would make this decision.

The Clerk commented that the letter had mentioned Covid-19 mitigation measures but it would not be possible for the suggested area to be used outside of pedestrianisation as it was a live parking bay. He suspected that the application will be going to Mr Marc Owen as part of his café culture remit during pedestrianisation.

Cllr Morgan queried if the use of this area would affect funerals and weddings, but the Clerk referred members to the point in the letter where it was stated that the gentleman would liaise with St Mary's Church and tables and chairs would not be put out on those occasions.

Cllr Blackhall agreed with Cllr Mrs Lane but he also felt that the information supplied was no different to what was discussed last time. He too felt this was a matter for PCC which should be discussed with them at the appropriate time.

Cllr Evans said while he had an interest, he could supply information. Ultimately any decision would be down to Mr Marc Owen but our opinion is very important to PCC. Any change of use of the pavement or parking bay would fall under PCC and they would have to give permission.

Cllr Mrs Brown asked if we had refused permission for tables and chairs but was told that we had passed the change of use application but had expressed a view that any future application for a license to site tables and chairs outside should be resisted due to the location of the premises in relation to surrounding businesses.

Members agreed to wait to see if an application comes forward through café culture and reserve further comments until that time.

208. TO CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING ITEMS OF CORRESPONDENCE AND AGREE ACTION IN RESPONSE TO PROPOSALS:

a. Cllr Mrs Michelle Bateman's Response – Response to a request for a meeting about the Brynhir development

The Clerk had made contact with Cllr Simpson and this response had been received from Cllr Mrs Bateman.

The Clerk had since spoken on the phone with Cllr. Mrs. Bateman and a meeting had been suggested for 9th February at 6.30pm.

Cllr. Mrs. Bateman had suggested that, at this stage, it would just be with herself to re-establish contact with the town council and give a brief outline of the current position. Going forward more meetings could be arranged and relevant officers could be brought on board as we go forward.

If members were agreeable, he would set up the Zoom meeting the following day.

Cllr. Blackhall welcomed the response. TTC have always sought to work closely with PCC on Brynhir. We have seen how this approach has worked with the development at Knowling Mead and how a local needs housing policy works.

Cllr Evans welcomes the Clerk's efforts and Cllr Bateman's response. He too would welcome the meeting but felt that the new housing officer Gaynor Toft and Chris Pratt who was leading with the development at Brynhir, should also be present. As this is a large development PCC are pulling a design team together from outside and it would be useful to have their input.

He also felt it would be useful to have feedback from Ateb as to how many applications came in for Hafalnod at Knowling Mead. This would really enhance our argument to move local housing need at Brynhir forward.

He proposed that the Clerk return to Cllr Bateman asking for the meeting but asking that it also include Gaynor Toft and Chris Pratt. Cllr. Blackhall seconded and all were in favour.

RESOLVED

That the Clerk inform Cllr. Mrs. Bateman that the suggested date and time were acceptable and ask if relevant PCC officers, Gaynor Toft and Chris Pratt could also be in attendance.

b. Clare Williams, PCC – Narberth Road speed concerns

In response to concerns, PCC have agreed to do another survey as it has been more than 4 years since the last survey was undertaken. The attached map indicates where monitoring wires will be. Cllr Mrs Rossiter asked if we could write to Dr O’Doherty to update him as to what PCC plans to do.

The Clerk had previously written to Dr O’Doherty but was happy to write again to update him on situation. Cllr Evans agreed with Cllr Mrs Rossiter also adding that it would be courteous to liaise with Cllr Michael Williams on North Ward issues when he was not at TTC meetings.

c. David Astins, PCC – Community Delivery Project – review of play area provision

The Clerk explained that, due to a change in policy, PCC would like us to now pay for annual and quarterly inspections or arrange our own and secondly, that we undertake our own public liability insurance for the play park.

He had replied to Mr Astins referring him to the 2012 lease on the play park stated that public insurance liability would be provided by PCC.

Mr Astins had returned to us today saying that, while it was unusual for such a clause, it was there in black and white and as such PCC will continue to cover the public liability insurance. An amended Service Level Agreement would be sent for signature reflecting this.

However, they still want us to pay for inspections at a cost of £230 for 2021.

Cllr Blackhall firstly thanked the Clerk for his diligence in pointing out the clause to PCC. He had spoken to the Clerk last week saying that this was another example of where we should be careful over costs creeping up year on year.

Cllr Mrs Brown proposed accepting the SLA terms. The provision of PCC doing the quarterly and annual inspections at a cost of £230 for the year is not too much for this service. It could cost TTC far more if we had to make private arrangements.

Cllr Hallett seconded.

Cllr Evans said we must all pay credit to the Clerk and that we had been clever in getting PCC to agree to this clause in the original negotiations.

Cllr Blackhall is quite right, when no one else will do it then we’ve got to do it or close the play park he said.

However, he continued it was important that we do not say yes immediately to paying these inspection costs. If PCC were insuring it was part of their obligation to carry out inspections.

In time, if we need to, then so be it but we should not commit today, he commented. We should not do so until we absolutely have to. Let's leave this on table and wait for them, we are not under obligation, if we are fulfilling our obligation with weekly inspections, we do not need to take on the costs of quarterly and annual ones.

Cllr Mrs Brown withdrew her proposal.

The Clerk said it is TTC's obligation to make sure the equipment is in good repair with weekly inspections and under the terms of the SLA, TTC will have to continue to make this commitment so that PCC will continue to insure.

He was concerned that, if TTC did not agree to fund the costs for quarterly and annual inspections it could negate the SLA and mean that the park was uninsured.

Cllr Evans suggested the Clerk contact Mr. Astins again and come back to members at the next meeting.

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

Cllr. Evans gave members some background as to why the town's council tax base had been reduced this year even though there were more properties built. Due to Covid-19 Welsh Government had calculated that PCC will not be able to achieve its usual high collection rate. It was very technical but next year it would be very likely that the council tax base would go up again.

Cllr Blackhall asked if we have access to reliable data from PCC regarding the total number of eligible properties for council tax, those eligible for upgrade, the number of second homes and any data on the number of properties who have turned from being registered for council tax to being registered for small businesses.

Cllr Evans said there has actually been a positive impact as the criteria for small business rating has now become so strict that many have returned to the council tax register.

Cllr Hallett moved that accounts be accepted, and Cllr Brown seconded.

RESOLVED

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

210. TO CONSIDER WAYS TO SUPPORT AND PROTECT BUSINESSES AND THE COMMUNITY AS COVID-19 RESTRICTIONS ARE LIFTED – CLLR MRS S SKYRME-BLACKHALL

The Mayor said we don't know where we will be in the time to come as lockdown measures ease but it seems sensible to discuss the best ways we can protect and support our community when changes start to happen.

She had spoken to Mr Marc Owen who was willing to discuss what work we did last year and she would like to propose a meeting with PCC to discuss the safety of our community and the effective operation of our town as we come out of lockdown.

This meeting should discuss issues and allow us to plan ahead. We would be making no assumptions just making sure we have ideas in place if needed.

The Mayor proposed a meeting with councillors and PCC to discuss the way forward.

The Clerk had recently chatted with Mr Marc Owen too and basically, we don't know how we are going to be forward. Welsh Government will be reviewing restriction on 29th January and while figures are going the right way, they may not be ready to release from Tier 4 just yet.

It is believed that there will be no change before half term but going forward, the restrictions may be eased in a phased way and, with travel to Europe being an unknown quantity it is highly likely there will be more staycations, meaning that Tenby could see an influx, possibly from Easter.

It was busy last year when restrictions were lighter so we need to engage and get ahead of curve in how we support the town. Is it a case of increasing sanitation stations, should we be looking at bringing back closed parking spaces, do PCC need to refresh signage? With regards to hospitality, do we look at allowing premises to utilise space outside?

TTC had a good partnership with PCC last year, and ideas were constantly being tweaked the Clerk continued. It would be prudent to re-engage in that partnership with meetings, a forum for ideas as to what needs to be put in place when getting back to some form of normality.

The Mayor said that Marc Owen was fantastic last year. She, Mr Owen and the Clerk went out every day and he was looking at what worked for us as all towns are different and no one has experienced anything like this before.

Cllr Evans was full of admiration for the Mayor and Clerk for all the hours put in last year. So how do we go forward, he asked? Tenby is making headlines he said, it has just been voted the second greatest place for post Covid relocation.

He felt PCC will have to look after visitors, but there are other responsibilities too. Cllr Evans felt that local housing is also key. There had been a large number of applications for Hafalnod with all properties going to local people. This week there are three

properties advertised in Tenby through Choice Homes due to those moving into the new development and their properties in turn becoming available.

Cllr Evans suggested that we need to focus on Tenby people and Tenby people's problems. He suggested a meeting with Citizen's Advice to see what can be put in place, to help those who have seen their livelihoods decimated and the growing divide in society, the gulf between those who have and those who have not.

He said we should welcome visitors, but let us look at where our priorities lie. The Mayor had touched on our community and keeping us all safe and with this he fully agreed.

Cllr Mrs Evans agreed with all said and seconded the Mayor's proposal. It is really vital that we prepare as, when Tenby re-opens, we will see a huge influx of visitors and everyone needs to be kept safe. If plans are discussed and put in place we'll be ahead of the game.

RESOLVED

That the Clerk contact PCC to establish a meeting to discuss ways in which businesses and the community can be supported as lockdown restrictions are eased.

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

a. Dual authorisation for on-line banking

The Clerk told councillors that there are now many suppliers and contractors who are requesting payment through BACS rather than cheques.

When setting up online banking originally TTC did have a second authorisation signatory but that councillor has long since resigned and is no longer a signatory. The Clerk is looking for permission to investigate adding a second signatory to the online banking so that TTC can pay contractors via BACS rather than cheque.

The authorised councillor will be advised that there are payments in the system and they will log in to the account and authorise payments. A full record would be kept of payment made in this way.

The Clerk suggested that this be the Mayor as that person would remain a signatory for the year after their office allowing time for mandates to be amended.

Cllr Brown said he could not see a problem with this and suggested the matter should be looked into. The Mayor seconded.

RESOLVED

That the Clerk investigate Dual Authorisation for On-Line banking to facilitate TTC's timely payment for goods and services in line with Financial Regulations.

212. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Resolved that the next meeting will take place on Tuesday, 2nd February 2021 at 7.30pm. Due to Covid-19 restrictions still being in place this meeting would again be held remotely.

The Clerk told councillors that he will be putting the usual Mayor Elect procedure on that Agenda. He also reminded councillors of next week's engagement meeting regarding the Five Arches.

Cllr Mrs Lane asked how balloting will take place in relation to Mayor Elect online and Cllr Blackhall suggested that discussions take place at the next meeting once nominations are established. We need to ensure that all councillors, however they access meetings, are able to participate, he said. Cllr Mrs Rossiter suggested that a postal vote would be the best way forward and the Mayor agreed. Further information will be announced at the following meeting.

213. TO PROPOSE ANY ITEM FOR THE NEXT AGENDA

Brynhir – Cllr M Evans

Ateb, Hafalnod - Can we establish how many applications were received and the demographics of them so we can understand demand locally – Cllr M Evans

Citizen's Advice – Let us look to see how we work with them going forward post Covid to establish what demand there is and how to provide assistance to residents of Tenby in overcoming inequalities – Cllr M Evans

Cllr Mrs Rossiter said that this was not necessarily an item for the next agenda but expressed concern about the condition of the carriageway in Gas Lane. The Mayor added that the Maudlins also has pot holes reappearing after already being filled, white lines at the top of the Maudlins have also faded. The Mayor has spoken to Cllr Williams on these and passed on a message to Mr Marc Owen.

If people mention things to the Clerk when they occur, he can record issues and fast track to PCC to get it done, commented Cllr. Blackhall.

Cllr. Rossiter pointed out that it was not just the occasional pot hole in Gas Lane but the whole carriageway.

The Clerk said he would bring Gas Lane to the attention of Mr. Darren Thomas.

214. 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”

Cllr Hallett moved and Cllr Mrs Evans seconded.

215. TO CONFIRM THE PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE TENBY TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD 5th JANUARY 2021

Resolved that the Private and Confidential Minutes of the Tenby Town Council meeting held 5th January 2021 be confirmed and signed as accurate.

216. MATTERS ARISING FOR INFORMATION ONLY

None.

Mayor _____

Town Clerk _____

Date _____