

TENBY TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE TENBY TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD
5TH OCTOBER 2021

PRESENT: Cllr Mrs Skyrme-Blackhall Mayor
Cllr Mrs T Evans
Cllr J Cornwell
Cllr P Rapi
Cllr T Hallett
Cllr L Blackhall
Cllr M Evans

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

The Mayor welcomed councillors once again.

153. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES

Apologies received from Cllr Ronowitz and Cllr Morgan.

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

None.

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 TO AGREE ITEMS OF CORRESPONDENCE AND COMMITTEE MINUTES OTHER THAN THOSE MARKED NOT FOR PUBLICATION BEING GIVEN TO MEMBERS OF THE PRESS PRESENT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

RESOLVED

That items of Correspondence and Committee Minutes other than those items marked Not for Publication be given to members of the Press present.

156. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Resolved that the Minutes of the Tenby Town Council meeting held 21st September 2021 be confirmed and signed as accurate.

157. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES FOR INFORMATION ONLY

- a. Page 74 Item 140b – Arcadis – Tenby Pedestrianisation Study:** The Clerk reminded councillors that Mr Phillips of Arcadis had postponed the scheduled meeting due to the county officers being unable to attend. The Clerk is now awaiting to hear from him with regard to when a meeting can be rescheduled.

- b. **Page 74 Item 141 – Christmas Festivities:** The Clerk had met with Cllr Ronowitz and Shelley Webb with regard to the Christmas trees outside St Mary’s Church. The Mayor had confirmed to the Clerk that Canon Grace was more than happy to support. A quote had been received in the sum of £2870 to include 19 trees (4x 7ft and 15x 4ft). Shelley has asked that TTC make a 50% deposit on this so that goods can be purchased in readiness to make them up.

Cllr Blackhall said it was perfectly reasonable that 50% be paid in advance and proposed that payment be made. Cllr Hallett seconded.

RESOLVED

That under Section 144 of the LGA 1972 a 50% deposit be paid to facilitate the provision of illuminated Christmas trees around St Mary’s Church as part of the town’s Christmas Lighting scheme. The balance to be paid on completion.

The Mayor told councillors that Canon Andrew Grace is in favour and wishes to help in any way he can. The Clerk is meeting with Mr Percival, the council’s Christmas lighting contractor, tomorrow to work out how to get power to the trees.

Once Mr Percival has assessed the project, more will be known as to potential additional costings.

The Clerk then went on to tell councillors that Cllr Ronowitz and Cllr Mrs Lane have been working hard to get around the businesses in town and that there has been a lot of support, it has really sparked a chord with the business community.

With regard to the planned Christmas festivities, Mr Briers has been working hard in getting acts for the afternoon, having confirmed Kelly Williams School of Dance dancers and two musical artists. We are waiting to hear from the Salvation Army band.

A catch-up meeting next week was suggested for a progress report.

Cllr Blackhall asked as the Clerk was meeting with Mr Percival, would it be worth speaking in relation to the main tree at St Mary’s. Would it be worth having a conversation with Shelley to reflect her smaller tree design in the big tree? This question has already been raised commented the Clerk and is being looked into.

- c. **Page 76 Item 143 - Former Post Office:** A meeting had just taken place and at this stage there was not much more to say, commented Cllr. Evans. We will need to follow up, by thanking Gaynor Toft and Andrew Davies Wrigley, of PCC and Will Lloyd Davies of Ateb for their input and say that TTC are here to work on ideas with them.

Cllr Evans told councillors he will email the Clerk what we want to say to emphasise to PCNPA in relation to Policy 48 that any subsequent purchasers of

the site should be aware of the 50% affordable housing requirement. The Clerk told councillors that he has already emailed Mrs Gandy at PCNPA in this vein and this has been passed on to Mr Richards who the Clerk believes is the officer involved.

He said it was interesting what Will Lloyd Davies said, that the viability of the scheme could be improved if there was some element slightly above Welsh Government capped rental rates. A lot of Tenby residents are already paying well above the capped rental rate.

Cllr Blackhall felt there was a need to keep all options open as a mix on the site including commercial and some of more 'middle ground' rent would still deliver more social/affordable housing.

It was important to have input into any conversations had. Although we don't have the ability to make any financial input it would be good for us to be represented. If Cllr Evans could do this on this council's behalf it would be very good. Cllr Evans is quite happy to take this forward, adding that the Clerk had joined him during similar discussions on Brynhir.

The Mayor thanked Cllr Evans for agreeing to help move this forward. Cllr Blackhall then asked if there was anything else that would be helpful for us to resolve now in order to aid moving forward.

Cllr Evans said that it is important that we highlight that TTC are happy to work with Ateb and PCC on any joint venture. Whilst our target is 100% affordable housing we are happy to work with both bodies to make a scheme achievable. Cllr Blackhall seconded that TTC write to PCC and Ateb.

RESOLVED

That PCC and Ateb be asked to look into the possibilities of acquiring the site of the former Sorting Office for local affordable housing provision and that TTC were prepared to engage with, and support, them all we could to achieve this.

- d. **Page 79 Item 144a – Rail Services:** Cllr Mrs Evans reminded councillors that at the last meeting she had prepared an email to Simon Hart regarding the proposed works which had been scheduled to take place last November but had not. Immediately after the meeting she had sent the email to Simon Hart's office and had received a reply the following morning. Cllr Mrs Evans read the reply and said that she would continue to follow up. We need to keep an eye on this and not let it slide, said the Mayor.
- e. **Page 80 Item 147a – Mayor's Parlour:** The Clerk said he had had a good response regarding quotes for a deep clean. Three quotes had been received, of which 1 had not visited the site. He was just waiting for a fourth quote which was due. Due to the disparity in the quotes the Clerk would rather wait for the fourth quote as he was concerned that the scale of the job is not realised by some of the firms.

All quotes are, however, within the financial regulations that would allow himself and the Mayor authority to decide. Once discussed this can then be reported back to council as to those appointed.

Cllr Hallett proposed that this approach be followed.

The Clerk said he had not seen the builder Cllr. Evans was going to arrange yet and Cllr Evans said he would message the Clerk with the gentleman's contact number.

f. Page 80 Item 147b – Guides and Brownies

Any suggestions for raising the profile of Brownies and Guides would be gratefully received said the Mayor.

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

- a. NP/21/0562/FUL – Rear single storey extension and with 3 roof lanterns – Clair Logis, Heywood Lane, Tenby

Cllr Hallett moved approval on the grounds of improved amenity for those living there. Cllr Rapi said this is a large house already with plenty of land around so there would be no impact on neighbours. He could not see any objection and seconded Cllr. Hallett.

RECOMMEND

Approval. Considered against all the relevant policies within the LDP, members feel there is sufficient space to accommodate the proposed extension with no adverse effect on neighbouring properties.

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

- a. Mr Neil Kinsey (via email) – ‘Friendship City’ proposal

The Clerk said members may recall a number of years ago, due to a Tenby connection with members of the Welsh choir in Frankton, there had been a suggestion for a possible twinning arrangement between us and the city.

At that time members did not want to go for a full twinning arrangement, but understands they are now looking more at a ‘friendship’ arrangement at this stage. There would be a cost involved to provide the suggested signage. What are members view on this?

Cllr Mrs Evans thinks it's a lovely idea but, not being on the council at the time, she was unsure as to what Frankton was like. What is this town like, is it similar to ours, she asked?

Cllr Blackhall confirmed it is coastal town, originally a fishing village but now much bigger.

Cllr Rapi believes TTC has been looking for someone to twin or 'befriend' with for years, and he felt it was a little embarrassing that no progress had been made.

He cannot see anything wrong with this and said he is all for it. Cllr Mrs Evans proposed accepting the proposal and the Mayor seconded. All present were in favour.

b. Mr Luke Conlon (via email) – Men's Support Initiative

Cllr Cornwell told councillors that he is happy to support this initiative as it will be good for the town. It is good to support them as they supported us with regard to the painting of the bandstand and there will be other projects in the town they could assist with. Cllr Hallett seconded.

Cllr Mrs Evans was also in full support.

Cllr Evans, in regard to their EPF bid, asked the Clerk if he would be able to assist Mr. Conlon in preparing it. The Clerk said he believed that Mr Conlon had already prepared the bid and was only asking for a letter of support from the town council in relation to the consultation element of their bid.

Cllr Blackhall confirmed that Mr. Conlon is very experienced in bid writing and had already completed the required paperwork.

Cllr Evans thinks it is an excellent idea. The Mayor reminded councillors that there was already a proposal that TTC send a letter of support.

RESOLVED

That TTC send a letter in support of the Men2Men Enhancing Pembrokeshire Fund bid to improve local Men Shed provision.

c. Welsh Government – Consultation on Local Taxes for Second Homes and Self-catering accommodation

Cllr Rapi believes that this is a consultation for noting. The consultation is online and members should get on with it. PCC cabinet has agreed to a 100% surcharge on Second Homes from April next year subject to full council ratification. This is something for all to respond to individually as to whatever our opinions may be.

Cllr Blackhall feels we should be seen to be commenting as a town council. Obviously, there may be some differences of opinion amongst councillors but there is a housing need in this town partly caused by second homes. The second homes tax is not about a means to dissuade people having second homes just how to help mitigate their effect on local community cohesion.

Cllr Evans thinks it is important and that TTC respond to this consultation and have a working party to prepare a response on behalf of town.

He does have an interest, as he owns holiday let businesses, but he is becoming increasingly concerned at the collapse in private rental availability in the town due to unregulated lettings and Airbnb. These are is not the Anti-Christ, he stressed. We are in tourist area and units that are open and occupied bring much money to the area. However, at the moment there is no planning system to control any change of use.

Traditional blocks of flats that were previously let as year-round homes are either being bought up or sold off as holiday lets. Opportunities for locals to live in their own town are getting less and less.

Do we know what properties are being let within town walls, should they require change of use, and should they be licensed? If what was once considered to be a primary residence wants to change to holiday let then there should be a change to commercial letting application. There needs to be a change of use process or nothing will be left.

He was happy to contribute to any response, bearing in mind there were aspects he would have to declare an interest in, as he feels it is vital that TTC makes an official response.

He knows that Plaid Cymru have strong views.

Although non-political as a town councillor, Cllr Rapi said, as a Plaid Cymru representative at PCC level, this is very true but he was intrigued as to how letting properties would be licensed.

The Welsh Government has been looking at the impact, particularly in coastal areas, over second home and holiday let properties said the Clerk. Many former residential units are ‘flipping’ to non-domestic rated self-catering accommodation which quite legally enjoy certain tax breaks. Welsh Government is looking at how they can tie it all up so that those businesses are contributing to local services. Should they have to have a change of use or have a special rating category?

Cllr Evans told councillors that Edinburgh City Council were first at controlling holiday let properties. If letting properties are part of an agency within Wales they have quality ratings. Standards vary but at the moment, with anyone being able to advertise their property as a holiday let on the internet, there are no minimum standards. This consultation is not just about change of use but about driving standards up, understanding the tax base, and how this impacts on the needs within the community, e.g. hospitals.

This has all sorts of ramifications for Pembrokeshire and TTC needs to set up a working party.

Cllr. Evans’ proposal was seconded by the Mayor. It was agreed that Cllr Evans, Cllr Rapi, Cllr Blackhall and Clerk will make up the working party.

RESOLVED

That Cllrs. Blackhall, Evans and Rapi, together with the Clerk, form a working party to respond to the consultation on behalf of the council.

d. Mr and Mrs Evans – Congratulations

How nice to read something positive said the Mayor. Cllr Hallett believes this is a ‘memory lane’ letter.

Cllr Blackhall suggested writing back to invite the couple to have tea in the Mayor’s Parlour when next they visit.

The Clerk said that, when most contact with the town council seems to be complaining about lowering of standards, it was nice that someone had taken time to write with a different perspective. It was nice to hear that some people felt that the town was doing exceptionally well in extraordinary times.

Cllr Cornwell told councillors that whilst he was painting the gate at the Rotary Gardens, he had received a lot of complimentary messages including how lovely, clean and well-organised the town was and how beautiful the gardens were.

While not wishing to be negative, Cllr Rapi said, at the last county budget meeting, he had voiced that he felt environmental services had let things slip in our town. There were red barriers filling in broken railing spaces on the North Walk, the Paragon and the Esplanade; there were weeds growing and bins sneakily being taken away. He was disappointed with the county council.

The Clerk told councillors that part of the recent EPF bid was to fund railing replacement as PCC is not in a position to fund alone. The Clerk was out today with an engineer looking at railings to get costings.

Cllr Evans understands Cllr Rapi’s observations but only 1% of Tenby is looking neglected. Ninety-nine percent of Tenby is thriving. Adding to Cllr Cornwell’s comments he felt that a whole new clientele has found Tenby and there was just an avalanche of people wanting to come here.

We’ve just come through a huge pandemic and if you look at our high street it is pretty unique, he commented. You only have to travel 12 miles away to see far more neglect, he opined. Other towns in the county would be delighted if their standards were the same as Tenby.

Cllr Rapi believes that the town enhancement has been done by the people themselves. It is they who have worked to make Tenby a special place and he is disappointed in PCC.

Cllr Cornwell said he had been approached by the Friends of Tenby Museum to help clear weeds, which was done, and was now undertaking to do railings

around the Museum. He agrees with some of Cllr Rapi's comments. The zig zag down to South Beach is full of overgrowing weeds which is not good.

The Clerk felt that the area maintenance teams were doing their best with the staff they had. Mr Young and his team cannot be everywhere and problems are being exacerbated as they are frequently taken off ground maintenance work to deal with litter problems.

Cllr Hallett commented that a copy of the letter should be sent to PCC as he considered them to be doing a great job under trying circumstances.

160. TO CONSIDER ANY UPDATES ON TENBY TOWN WALLS AND AGREE ACTION IN RESPONSE TO PROPOSALS

The Clerk told councillors that there was nothing to add at this time as the arborists are still dealing with ash die back throughout county.

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

a. Update on Mayor's Parlour/Council Chamber

Already dealt with earlier in meeting.

b. Tenby Observer feature – request for TTC support advertisement

The Clerk told councillors that, although it had not been made common knowledge yet, Mr Neil Dickinson was retiring from the Tenby Observer. He had worked on the paper for almost 50 years and had been Editor since 1989 and the Tenby Observer are wondering if TTC would support an advertisement wishing him all the best in his retirement.

Cllr Hallett moved in support. The Mayor feels it is important that we support the local 'paper as they have always supported us over the years.

The Clerk informed councillors that the advert will cost £41.20 plus VAT.

Cllr Blackhall supported the placing of the advert and asked that a Mayoral Scroll be prepared in recognition of Mr Dickinson's achievements.

Cllr Hallett agreed TTC should support the Tenby Observer as it has been an important part in the town for over 150 years.

We need to keep supporting our local newspaper and we wish Neil all the best in his retirement, added the Mayor.

RESOLVED

That the town council place an advertisement in the Tenby Observer to wish Mr. Dickenson well on his retirement.

- c. Possible commemoration of the stationing of the Belgian Army in Tenby 1940 -1944.

The Clerk had spoken with retired Lieutenant Colonel Christopher Le Hardy who was also a former county councillor in the Yeovil area.

Members may recall that TTC had been contacted by a retired Belgian Army Officer in 2019 looking to try and have a commemoration of the re-mustering of the Free Belgian Forces following the Dunkirk evacuation in 1940.

The Free Belgian Forces re-mustered in Tenby as the Brigade Piron and their HQ was the Atlantic Hotel. His idea was to have an 80th anniversary event in the town in 2020, but this had not been progressed due to Covid-19.

Lt. Col, Le Hardy, a former British Army defence attaché to Brussels and the brother-in-law of a retired Belgian Army officer was now trying to resurrect idea and have the 80th anniversary two years late in 2022.

This was in the early stages but he wished to know that TTC would still be in favour of the idea.

There was a wish list, including an Anglo-Belgian event in the town, which could include an exchange of plaques involving the Belgian Ambassador, a performance by the Belgian Royal Guides Regiment band and even the possibilities of a Belgian naval vessel visiting the town and a fly past by the Belgian Air force.

Cllr Hallett and Cllr Rapi thought this was a great idea and asked the Clerk to continue to liaise with Lt. Col Le Hardy.

162. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Resolved that the next meeting will take place on Tuesday 19th October 2021 at 7.30 pm.

163. TO PROPOSE ANY ITEM FOR THE NEXT AGENDA

None.

164. 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”

165. TO CONFIRM THE PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES OF THE TENBY TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD 21ST SEPTEMBER 2021

Resolved that the Private and Confidential Minutes of the Tenby Town Council meeting held 21st September 2021 be confirmed and signed as accurate.

