

MINUTES OF THE TENBY TOWN COUNCIL
MEETING HELD 2ND JANUARY 2024

Present: Cllr Dai Morgan Mayor
Cllr Charles Dale
Cllr Sam Skyrme-Blackhall
Cllr James Phillips
Cllr Laura Crockford
Cllr Laurence Blackhall
Cllr Duncan Whitehurst

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

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The Mayor welcomed councillors and wished all a Happy New Year.

147. TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES

Apologies received from Cllrs Evans, Lewis and Sloan.

148. TO DISCLOSE ANY PERSONAL ITEMS OF BUSINESS LISTED BELOW

None.

149. PUBLIC PARTICIATION: 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

No members of the public present.

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

Proposed by Cllr Dale, seconded by Cllr Skyrme-Blackhall.

151. TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD 5TH DECEMBER 2023

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the Tenby Town Council meeting held 5th December 2023 be confirmed and signed as accurate.

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

Page 93 Item 137 – Avenue Centre: The Clerk had written to PCC and the reply confirmed that what Cllr Dale had been told was indeed correct. PCC would be happy to speak to the resident who had contacted Cllr Dale.

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

a. **Mrs Rossiter – Progress update**

The Clerk updated members regarding the Clicketts footpath.

The Community Engagement Officer was liaising with PCC and last year they identified funding without need for grant aid. The current position was hard to ascertain. The Mayor has noted that work is being done on other footpaths.

Cllr Skyrme-Blackhall would this follow up.

Regarding the former Gatehouse Garage, work had deemed to have been started and it was at the discretion of the applicant as to how long they would take to complete the project.

While planning permission has been granted for the former Post Office, the site was still unsold and no potential developer identified.

Cllr Phillips asked if the owners of the Post Office building could be forced to tidy it up.

Cllr. Blackhall felt that, as the planning permission included demolition of the existing building, only the bare minimum would be done. Overgrowth had been cut down.

The Clerk will reply to Mrs Rossiter.

b. **Will Davies, PCC – E-Bike Trial**

Cllr Dale wishes PCC luck with this venture believing it to be a fantastic idea.

However, he hoped that it works out better than Cardiff who had all their bikes stolen or vandalised and the scheme had now ended. He hopes the bikes will be respected.

Cllr Phillips queried the suggested locations and the number of rechargeable hub stations.

He felt it was unclear if the bikes had to be returned to the proposed locations and had concerns that bikes may just be abandoned in different locations.

He felt the proposal was very unclear and fellow members agreed that more information as to how the system will work was needed.

Will the 'third party provider' they are seeking have to collect bikes from all over town, wondered Cllr. Dale. Will the scheme only have one central charging point? More information is needed.

We're being asked which locations would be best, but consideration must be given to the range of the bike, he continued. Suggested locations could be the railway station, the Multi-storey, Tudor Square, The Green/Salerns and the top of The Maudlins but we don't know if the bikes are recharged at each of these locations or have to be brought back to a central charging point by someone with a van.

In principle it is a great idea but we need more information. He was seconded by Cllr Blackhall.

RESOLVED

That PCC be asked to provide more information on how the scheme would operate.

154. TO CONFIRM THE BUDGET FOR 2024/25 AND SET THE PRECEPT FIGURE

The Clerk told members that the precept agreed at the last meeting indicated an estimated Band D equivalent of £78.76 but the Band D rate had been based on 23/24 council tax base of 3036 chargeable dwellings.

PCC's recent decision to charge second homes 200% council tax has resulted in an increase in the council tax base to 3529 chargeable dwellings. This meant that, if the precept remained at £239,160.88 it would result in a Band D equivalent of £67.76, which is a cut of £6.39 on last year.

This would mean that we are funding the toilets and library, but actually saving the council tax payers money. However, we are proposing to use a substantial amount of our reserves to do this. We could keep the Band D equivalent at this year's rate or we can keep the idea of an increase to £78.76 which would reduce the reliance on reserves.

Cllr. Blackhall commented that we are constantly fighting a fluctuating council tax base.

The figure is up because the 200% second homes charge has made a difference, he said. I would be interested to know what the figure would have been without that change I suspect it would have gone down.

Cllr. Blackhall said that our budget included EPF works. While we have submitted an EOI to EPF, it has been 'knocked back' before going to full submission. A response had been sent to PCC asking why but no reply has been received.

EPF is being reduced, said Cllr. Blackhall. Slices are being taken for PCC's own budgets and there is only around £700,000 left to accommodate all the various bids. This means there will only be a few large projects and a whole series of small bids.

Our previous EPF bid centred around the community engagement strategy, proved it could work, so there is no basis for rejection.

However, if we were to fix on a Band D equivalent increase as originally intended, we could then create own fund for what the EPF was intended for, Cllr. Blackhall suggested. We could have Tenby's own fund to assist in alleviating the effect of second homes in our town.

If we kept the Band D equivalent at what we thought it could be, i.e. £78.76 it should give us approximately £40,000 that. TTC can use to support organisations so the people of Tenby, including the second home owners, see and feel the benefit. This would be second homes money coming directly back to Tenby rather than going into a pot we have to bid for.

Cllr. Phillips commented that the Audit Office did not like councils carrying too great a surplus of reserves but eventually reserves run out. Keeping the Band D equivalent at last year's rate would generate an additional £22,000.

Cllr. Blackhall said we already had a line within our budget to accommodate funding for Special Projects, this could be increased and TTC could have discussions on how all money goes out.

The Clerk pointed out that £30,000 of reserves funding we had allocated within the budget was for match funding EPF schemes.

While PCC had declined our large strategic bids, funding was available for smaller ones of up to £15,000. One of the ideas we had included within the large strategic bid could be achieved within a £15,000 bid.

Cllr Dale felt, at some point, PCC are going to come up with something else that they are no longer able to fund that they would like the town council to take over.

We would be able to use the projected £40,000 additional precept income to fund EPF projects while retaining the money in reserves to cater for this possibility.

This would give us the opportunity to reconsider in a year's time as part of next year's budget deliberations.

Cllr Whitehurst agreed with majority. He cannot understand why our bid failed and would like to understand what the criteria is now.

Cllr. Blackhall proposed that the Special Projects in the Community budget be increased by £38,840.65 to create a larger fund for Enhancing Tenby Initiatives.

Cllr Crockford seconded, commenting that it sends a message that second homes money is being spent in Tenby.

RESOLVED

That the proposal to increase the Special Projects in the Community budget head by £38,840.65 be agreed and the precept requirement be set at £278,001.53.

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

Cllr Skyrme-Blackhall along with the Clerk had taken two Christmas trees, generously donated by Anna Bolton to Tenby Market. The Market traders were very happy.

Cllr Blackhall told members that there had been a number of pop-up stalls in lead up to Christmas and hopefully this will carry on.

The Mayor had attended the senior citizens Christmas meal which had 160 attendees. Cllr Criddle, as a Round Tabler, had been heavily involved and congratulations to all. It was great to see people enjoying themselves.

He had spent an evening with Girl Guides for their presentation night where he gave out 50 badges. They have a brilliant set up and it was hoped that, in the near future, we will be able to get a Scout group back in Tenby.

The Mayor had also travelled with Santa round town. His thanks went to Sion Brace and to Mike and Dave at the De Valence.

Just before Christmas he had also attended the Old Chapel with the Clerk and Lions, Rob Mayhew and Roly Fury. The charity market organised by the Lions as part of the Christmas festivities had raised £725 which they donated to the Mayor's chosen charity, which was the Old Chapel.

The Boxing Day Swim has seen record numbers and hopefully record sums raised for charity. It was quite a bitter-sweet event as it was also the last official engagement of Rev John Morgan as Sergeant at Arms.

Cllr Blackhall thanked the Mayor for giving up his swim medal to a child who didn't have one as they had run out.

Cllr Skyrme-Blackhall informed members that Dyfed Powys Police would be holding a drop-in surgery in Tenby this Thursday. This is open to all to air grievances, make suggestions or just chat and will be from 11am until 12noon at Church House, St Mary's. The surgeries will be held on the first Thursday of every month.

We have a couple of new PCSO's and all are working exceptionally hard, she commented.

Cllr Whitehurst gave an update on the recent SEPCN meeting which had asked for an update on Witybush Hospital.

Back in April 2023 RAAC was discovered in the roof. Withybush was the only hospital in Wales affected. The whole of the top floor was affected with 108 beds closed.

Three wards have already reopened and Wards 9, 7 and 12 are ready to reopen. All wards are scheduled to be re-opened by the end of March.

Some eye appointments had been moved to Aman Valley, these have now returned to Manchester Square in Milford Haven.

A 16-bed frailty ward had been introduced as part of winter planning, to be used for those awaiting discharge. Tenby Hospital beds were all full at the moment.

In December there were 3140 on the waiting list, waiting over 36 weeks for operations. These figures had been down to 100 prior to Covid. Hywel Dda admit they have a huge mountain to climb. The ambition is that by 31st March no one will be waiting for more than 2 years. Before Covid the HDUHB were doing really well on waiting times.

There is a new Physiotherapy project which is based in practices. It was raised that there is a physiotherapy suite at the New Tenby Cottage hospital which is not being used and John Evans will look into physiotherapy services.

The new Hub is down to two proposed sites, both along the dual carriageway between St Clears and Whitland.

The Staying Well Together roadshow will be coming to Tenby in the new year. There will be 50 stands including a vaccination drop-in centre.

Tenby surgery gave an update. They now have a new salaried doctor two days a week and clinical lead for four days and it appears that now GPs are interested in working in Tenby Surgery. There is a new booking system and new telephone systems, also promoting E-consult for those who have the technology. This will allow more appointments to be made over phone for those that do not have or are unable to go online.

There were problems with Saundersfoot Surgery car park which is privately run and are issuing tickets to patients. This is being looked into.

All 3 surgeries are under a lot of pressure, difficulties with recruitment, staff sickness and people not turning up for appointments. The number of missed appointments at the last minute are a lot more than you would expect, particularly when there are not many appointments to give out in first place.

The next meeting is to be confirmed and SEPCHN will promote the roadshow once dates are known.

Cllr Blackhall told councils that physiotherapy self-referral is now possible. In addition, meetings will be specifically discussing creation of an integrated well-being facility, similar to that provided in Cardigan. He would like to extend thanks to senior members of the health board and members from surgeries for attending. This a really open forum and there is always constructive dialogue.

156. TO CONSIDER FUNDING TOWARDS A BUSINESS BREAKFAST CLUB MEETING FOR GREENHILL SCHOOL BUSINESS STUDIES STUDENTS – CLLR. MRS. SKYRME-BLACKHALL

Cllr Skyrme-Blackhall had been approached by Ms Price, Business Studies A-level teacher from Greenhill School.

It was a long-established practice that Businesses have breakfast ‘business club’ meetings. Greenhill is now establishing a Breakfast Business Club for the A level students to meet with the Chamber of Commerce and Ms Price wondered if TTC were in a position to provide financial support for future events.

This will provide a link with businesses to, through engagement and interaction, explore future work opportunities within the town. She proposed TTC offer a starter grant of £250 which will hopefully be matched by the Chamber of Commerce.

The first meeting will be on 22nd January with varied businesses in the area in attendance. She was pleased the project was progressing but funding is needed.

It was suggested the A Level students could prepare a business case for the meetings as part of their studies.

Cllr. Skyrme-Blackhall suggested initial funding to be followed by a presentation on how they would use future funding. They may wish to do other things within town and conversations were already being had between staff at the school, the Mayor and Cllr. Sloan, she said.

Cllr Whitehurst felt a contribution from the council would be value for money s it would continue long term relationships being developed with the school which would be beneficial for the town.

Cllr Skyrme-Blackhall encouraged members to come along to the Cove on 22nd January for the first meeting.

RESOLVED

That, undersection 40 of the Well-being of Future Generations Act (Wales) 2015, a donation of £250 be made towards the costs of the breakfast club.

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

The Clerk told members that the planning committee were only just quorate, thanking Cllr Blackhall for stepping in at the last minute as an agreed substitute. It was suggested that with Cllr Hallett’s current ill health we appoint an additional councillor to the committee. Cllr Evans was proposed and the Clerk will contact Cllr Evans to invite her to join.

158. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Resolved that the next planning meeting will take place on Tuesday, 6th February 2024 at 7pm followed by a full council meeting on Tuesday, 6th February 2024 at 7.30pm.

159. TO PROPOSE ANY ITEM FOR THE NEXT AGENDA

Mayor Elect for 2024/25.

160. 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