Minutes of a Meeting of the Milford Haven Town Council

held at the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Milford Haven

on Monday, 25th January, 2016 at 7:00 pm

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PRESENT

The Mayor (Councillor S. G. Joseph)

The Deputy Mayor (Councillor W. D. Elliott BA)

 Councillors: J. W. Cole A. W. Eden

 R. D. Evans R. Gray

 E. R. Harries Mrs. J. Hawkins

 A. H. Miles M. J. Norman

 M. P. Rickard C. A. Sharp

 D. R. Sinnett Mrs. Y. G. Southwell

 Mrs. C. Stevens Mrs. C. T. Williams

 G. Woodham MBA (Open) LL.B (Hons)

TO RECEIVE REPRESENTATIVES FROM EGNEDOL LIMITED TO DISCUSS PROPOSED

NEW PLANS FOR A NEW RENEWABLE ENERGY FACILITY AT BLACKBRIDGE, MILFORD HAVEN:

The Mayor welcomed Mr. S. Whitehouse, Mr. D. Simons and Mr. P. Johns from Egnedol Limited to the meeting.

The Mayor then welcomed the members of the public to the meeting. He advised that Egnedol Limited would be holding a public meeting in the near future at the Pill Social Centre where there would be questionnaires available as well as an opportunity to ask questions.

A Member asked whether the public would be able to give their opinions on the questionnaire.

Mr. Whitehouse explained that the questionnaire does give people the opportunity to have their say. Egnedol Limited has taken on board the comments made at the recent public consultation meeting held at Hazelbeach Community Mission Hall.

Mr. Whitehouse thanked Members for the invitation to the meeting and giving Egnedol Limited the opportunity to explain their plans.

Mr. Whitehouse explained that the planning application will probably be submitted in February, and during that consultation process the Company is going to put information on the website through which people can ask questions. The Company will respond to any email enquiries sent to them at info@egnedol.com.

Mr. Whitehouse then gave a presentation on Egnedol Limited’s development proposal at Blackbridge and Waterston. The development incorporates the Blackbridge (RNAD) site and the former Gulf Refinery.

The biomass facility will be built on the Blackbridge site in Phases. Phase 1 should create up to 49.9 MW of energy. Existing structures will be refurbished where possible. New structures will also be required and some will need to be extended. The jetty will be refurbished.

 There are two types of biomass – virgin wood from plantations which are being established by the Company in Greece and Morocco, and wood recovered from waste operations.

Biomass will be delivered to the refurbished or reconstructed jetty by ships and will be extracted using a pneumatic device. Fuel handling will be enclosed within sealed conveyors to completely avoid risk of dust or spillage. All the feedstock will be pre-prepared off site and delivered as a ready fuel.

The process to be used is called gasification. The feedstock will be heated, in the absence of oxygen, to allow the molecules to break down into a gas. The process is controlled to ensure that the gas produced is of the correct quality. The gas is cleaned to enable it to be consumed in normal reciprocating engines with generators attached to them.

One of the bi-products of this process is heat. In order to utilise the heat Egnedol Limited is going to establish two Ecoparks.

The first of these Ecoparks will be at Blackbridge. Greenhouses, which have special polytunnels with brick walls either side, will be heated by hot air discarded from the new pyrolysis power plant. The polytunnels will grow horticultural crops. In addition algae production units will be built. These units will produce algae for Omega 3 oil, feedstock for aquaculture, pharmaceuticals, and Research and Development facilities.

The Waterston Ecopark will be built on the former Gulf refinery site with a limited development to the north of Hazelbeach Road. The site will utilise excess heat from the biomass facility to create organic (antibiotic free) prawns and fish. There will be a Halloumi cheese production and packaging plant. The daffodil fields in Waterston will not be developed because of their charitable uses.

 The gas used by the process is cleaned to enable it to be used in the engines. The engines require very clean gas in order to operate. To achieve this, a comprehensive gas clean up system is installed to clean the gas to a quality that is similar to natural gas. The gas clean up system is placed immediately downstream of the gas production unit.

 Waste gases will be emitted from a 60 metres high stack near to the existing jetty.

 In order to conserve water supplies there will be rainwater harvesting tanks and the water will be treated before being processed.

 Egnedol Limited has held meetings with Natural Resources Wales who has confirmed that the site will be regulated via Environmental Permits. There will be separate permits for the biomass to energy facility, the aquaculture units, the algae units, the cheese factory and the greenhouses. Predictions are that the development would produce less than one percent of the allowed nitrous oxide limits.

 Egnedol Limited has submitted a scoping report to the Pembrokeshire County Council in October 2015. A response was received in December 2015, with the planning application anticipated in February 2016. Subject to permissions and the Environmental Permits and due to the modular nature of the build, Egnedol Limited could produce first power from the biomass facility early in 2017.

 Egnedol Limited is employing local large South Wales construction companies to carry out the building works.

 The equipment will be delivered predominantly from South Africa and Germany into Pembroke Dock in shipping containers and lifted from barges directly on to the site.

 Mr. Whitehouse stated that the first phase of the project is designed to create up to 450 jobs. These will include the following:

 \* Scientific Research and Development (working with Swansea University, who have a very sophisticated and advanced knowledge in this field)

 \* All Management Grades

 \* Process Engineering (Power and Chemical)

 \* Operative

 \* Administrative

 \* Logistics

 Recruitment has already started with the employment of four security guards and advertisements placed for other staff. Egnedol Limited is working with the local Job Centre to establish a suitable staff base.

 Mr. Whitehouse explained that the project is very carefully designed to fit the skills that are already well established locally and Egnedol Limited welcomes contact from existing local businesses.

 Mr. Whitehouse advised that the Milford Haven Port Authority is keen to become a key partner in the shipping and fuel logistics. Local fish processing facilities have been visited and are likely to form part of the product processing and logistics chain.

 Egnedol Limited has made contact with Pembrokeshire College and anticipates a close working relationship with the College.

 Mr. Whitehouse concluded his presentation by saying that Egnedol Limited’s project has been designed to be a leading example of sustainable development in the United Kingdom.

 The Company has been very encouraged by the warm welcome they have received from neighbours and existing businesses.

 Mr. Whitehouse said that Egnedol Limited looks forward to bringing this inward

 investment to Pembrokeshire and to being long term and welcome neighbours.

 The Mayor asked if Members had any questions.

 A Member noted that Mr. Whitehouse had not mentioned anything about pollution. Mr Whitehouse replied that the company uses ADMS4 modelling, a computer model which looks at meteorological data and the background air quality to model levels of all relevant emissions. Mr. Whitehouse stressed that he was aware that Milford Haven is a sensitive area for NO2, but Egnedol Limited may be required to use urea injection in this process to minimise emissions.

 Mr. Whitehouse continued by saying that emissions will have to be continuously monitored by Egnedol Limited during the process, with automatic triggers to close the system off if set levels of emissions are breached.

 A Member expressed concern about traffic and noise during the building of the project.

 Mr. Whitehouse advised that the total construction period would be approximately eighteen months. He confirmed that as much equipment as possible would be brought onto the site in containers during the build phase. Staff entering the site from Milford Haven will be under contract to use only one designated route.

 Mr. Whitehouse said that, in respect of noise, the process is quiet, but there is obviously noise from ships. Egnedol Limited has allowed for a structure near the jetty which will allow ships to turn off their systems and not make additional noise.

 In addition, the gasification process is quiet. The engines are noisy but are enclosed in a new building. Each engine is inside its own noise insulated pod. At the site boundary there is no audible increase in noise.

 Another Member stated that the people living around the development site were not happy with the plans. He raised concerns over the 60 metre stack not being high enough for emissions to avoid neighbouring houses.

 Mr. Whitehouse said that of the 200 people who attended the public consultation at Hazelbeach Community Mission Hall, only 10 were against the proposals. He encouraged anyone with questions or concerns to contact Egnedol Limited.

 A Member asked for reassurance as to what materials would be used to create the biomass.

 Mr. Whitehouse confirmed that approximately 50% of the product coming in will be clean virgin woodchips from plantations. The other 50% will be wood that is recovered from waste operations.

 A Member asked questions about the safety of the plant and what impact the development would have in relation to safety generally in the Haven.

 Mr. Whitehouse explained that the woodfuel from the plant would be extracted from ships in enclosed tubes and there would be little or no fire risk.

 In respect to Dragon LNG and SemLogistics, Egnedol Limited has a contractual obligation to consult with them before submitting their application.

 The Mayor thanked the representatives from Egnedol Limited for their presentation and it was RESOLVED THAT that there should be a 5 minutes’ recess before the Meeting of the Full Council.

PRAYERS:

Prayers were led by the Mayor’s Chaplain, Mrs. Naomi Joseph.

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The formal Meeting of the Milford Haven Town Council then commenced.

253. APOLOGIES:

 Apologies for absence were received from Councillor A. E. Byrne.

254. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON THE 30TH NOVEMBER, 2015:

 (a) Minute 216 (b) Letter from Mr. J. Morgan re Hubberston Memorial Hall and

Community Centre:

 RESOLVED THAT in the last line of the fifth

paragraph the word “last” be amended to the

word “lasting”.

 RESOLVED THAT, subject to the above, the

 Minutes of the Meeting of the Milford Haven

 Town Council held on the 30th November, 2015,

 be accepted and that they be signed by the

 Mayor as a true record.

255. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

 HELD ON THE 13TH JANUARY, 2016:

 RESOLVED THAT the Minutes of the Meeting

 of the Milford Haven Town Council held on

 the 13th January, 2015, be accepted and

 that they be signed by the Mayor as a true

 record.

256. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON THE 18TH JANUARY, 2016:

 (a) Minute 251 – Precept Requirements 2016 – 2017:

 RESOLVED THAT:

 (i) the word “Precept” on page 152 be replaced

 with the word “Reserves”;

 (ii) the Resolution on page 153 be amended and

 the word “Precept” be replaced with the word

 “Reserves”.

A Member pointed out that the current Resolution does not make any reference to the figure of £14,000 for the Chapel roof and associated works which was removed from this Council’s Precept requirements. In order to clarify this, it was FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Resolution be amended as follows:

(iii) £12,793, which is the difference between the forecasted

 income and the forecasted expenditure for the Cemetery

 for the financial year 2016-2017, is to be removed from

 the expenditure;

(iv) the costs relating to any repairs to the Chapel roof and

 associated works (which is approximately £14,000) will

 be covered from the Reserves, if necessary, during the

 financial year 2016-2017;

(v) and, wherever possible, alternative sources from grants

 and any other sources will be applied for in order to offset

 any sums being taken from Reserves in relation to the

 agreed works at the Cemetery.

257. INFORMATION FROM THE MAYOR:

 (a) Mayor’s Engagements:

Members were informed of the Mayor’s engagements since the 8th January, 2016:

 23rd January - Opening of Woofers Pet Grooming Salon in Charles

 Street.

 25th January - Official Opening of Sartori Home Furnishing Store

 at Milford Marina.

 (b) Councillor Mrs. C. T. Williams:

 The Mayor wished Councillor Mrs. C. T. Williams a very happy birthday.

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REPORTS ON COMMITTEES

258. ESTABLISHMENT COMMITTEE:

 The Minutes of the Meeting of the Establishment Committee held on the 30th November, 2015, were moved by the Mayor, Councillor S. G. Joseph.

 RESOLVED THAT the Minutes of the Meeting of the

 Establishment Committee held on the 30th November,

 2015, be approved and adopted.

259. TOWN REGENERATION AND ACTION TEAM:

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Regeneration and Action Team held on the 21st December, 2015, were moved by the Mayor, Councillor S. G. Joseph.

 RESOLVED THAT the Minutes of the Meeting of the

 Town Regeneration and Action Team held on the

 21st December, 2015, be approved and adopted.

260. PUBLIC WORKS AND PLANNING COMMITTEE:

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Public Works and Planning Committee held on the 4th January, 2016, were moved by the Chairman, Councillor E. R. Harries.

 RESOLVED THAT the Minutes of the Meeting of

the Public Works and Planning Committee held

on the 4th January, 2016, be approved and adopted.

261. FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE:

 The Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on the 7th January, 2016, were moved by the Chairman, Councillor Mrs. Y. G. Southwell.

 (a) Minute 254 (ii) Applications for Financial Assistance (e) Milford Haven Amateur Operatic Society:

 RESOLVED THAT:

 (i) a donation of £350 be made to the Milford Haven

 Amateur Operatic Society.

 *This donation is to be made in accordance with the Milford Haven Town Council’s powers under the Local Government Act 1972, s.145*

(ii) any balances remaining in the General Donations

 Budget are to be carried over to the financial year

 2016-2017.

 RESOLVED THAT, subject to the above, the Minutes

 of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held

 on the 7th January, 2016, be approved and adopted.

262. SUPPORT FOR TOWN COUNCILS:

 A letter and consultation report – ‘Draft Charter with Community and Town Councils’ – was received from Dr. S. P. Jones, Director of Development, Pembrokeshire County Council, in which he advised that the County Council is currently considering how it can provide support to Town Councils as part of the commitments set out in the draft Charter.

 The Pembrokeshire County Council is looking at piloting named Senior Managers to act as a single point of contact or ‘Relationship Manager’. As such, a Senior Manager would be available to attend Milford Haven Town Council meetings and contribute to the Agenda as appropriate.

 A Member proposed that this could be agreed in principle but enquiries should be made as to how the future of such a scheme of co-operation and interchange of ideas would be affected by the impending local Government reorganisation.

 An amendment was proposed and seconded that this Council welcomes the document, and would like to work with the Pembrokeshire County Council on it being developed.

 The first Member withdrew his proposal.

 A vote was taken and it was RESOLVED THAT Dr. S. P. Jones, Director of Development, Pembrokeshire County Council, be informed that this Council welcomes the ‘Draft Charter with Community and Town Councils’ and would like to work with the Pembrokeshire County Council on it being developed.

263. CORRESPONDENCE AND PETITION FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR PETER STOCK – ‘PLEASE SAY NO TO DYFED’:

 A letter and petition was received from County Councillor Peter Stock in which he advised that the Welsh Government is currently conducting a consultation on Draft Local Government (Wales) Bill and Explanatory Memorandum.

 One of the proposals in this consultation is to recreate the former Dyfed Local Authority area. County Councillor Stock believes that this would lead to less local democratic accountability and greater centralisation.

 Councillor Stock said that Dyfed was hugely unpopular until it was abolished in 1996 after a long campaign in which Town and Community Councils played a huge role.

 Councillor Stock asked Members to respond to the consultation and sign a petition ‘Please say No to Dyfed’.

 RESOLVED THAT Members are to sign the petition on an

 individual basis if they wish to do so.

264. MEMBERSHIP OF STANDING ORDERS SUB-COMMITTEE:

 The Mayor advised that the Standing Orders Sub-Committee last met in 2014, when the Committee was composed of the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Chairmen of the two Standing Committees, and Councillors A. H. Miles, M. H. George QGM, S. G. Joseph and G. Warlow.

 RESOLVED THAT in addition to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor

 and Chairmen of the two Standing Committees,

 (a) three Members from each of the Standing Committees

 are to sit on the Standing Orders Sub-Committee;

 (b) the Members appointed from the Finance and General

 Purposes Committee are as follows:

 Councillor R. Gray

 Councillor A. H. Miles

 Councillor G. Woodham MBA (Open) LL.B (Hons)

 (c) the Members appointed from the Public Works and

 Planning Committee are as follows:

 Councillor J. W. Cole

 Councillor Mrs. J. Hawkins

 Councillor M. P. Rickard

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