Minutes of an Extraordinary Meeting of the

Town Regeneration Environmental Action Team (TREAT)

held at the Town Hall, Milford Haven

on Thursday, 7th April, 2016 at 6:00 pm

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PRESENT

The Mayor (Councillor S. G. Joseph)

Councillors: E. R. Harries

(Chairman – Public Works and Planning Committee)

R. Gray C. A. Sharp

Also in attendance were:

Mr. B. T. Jenkins, Chairman, Milford Haven Business Circle

Mr. G. Codd, Area Maintenance Manager, Pembrokeshire County Council

Ms. S. Henehan, Community Safety, Poverty and Regeneration Manager, Pembrokeshire County Council

Ms. F. Kay Galliford, Secretary, Milford Haven Town Council

321. APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence were received from the Deputy Mayor, Councillor W. D. Elliott BA QTS and Councillors R. D. Evans, M. P. Rickard, Mrs. C. T. Williams and

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

322. MILFORD HAVEN TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION:

The Mayor welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Members had been provided with an email from Mr. B. T. Jenkins, Chairman, Milford Haven Business Circle, itemising some of the issues of concern to the Milford Haven Business Circle and it was RESOLVED THAT these should be discussed in the order that they were listed.

Mr. Jenkins explained that these issues have been constantly referred to in Business Circle meetings. The Business Circle is aware that most of them have been discussed on several occasions.

(a) Milford Haven Market:

Mr. Jenkins referred to the recent meeting with the Mayor, in his role as County Councillor for the Central Ward, and Mr. M. Owen, Street Care Manager, Pembrokeshire County Council.

Mr. Jenkins explained that in order to have a street market in Charles Street on Founders’ Day the Business Circle would have to have an annual licence in place which would cost £755.53. This would be funded from the Business Circle’s market bank account.

Mr. Jenkins advised that when the application for a licence is submitted the Business Circle has to list the dates of other markets they wish to hold throughout the year.

The Mayor, Councillor S. G. Joseph, said that he had understood from the meeting with Mr. M. Owen that there was flexibility and it was possible to add dates afterwards.

Mr. Jenkins replied that Mr. Owen would ideally like the dates upfront. The Milford Haven Business Circle is considering holding a monthly market utilising the laybys in Charles Street (which was the original plan for the market) as opposed to holding the market in the Market Square.

Mr. Jenkins stated that one of the reasons the market had stopped was that it was impracticable to hold the market on a Saturday. The Business Circle has discussed which would be the best day to hold the market and it seemed that holding the market on a Monday or Tuesday would be a better option. There is a market in Newport held on a Monday which is a very popular market. The beginning of the week is also better for market traders because they are involved with Withybush and Carew markets over the weekend.

Ms. S. Henehan, Community Safety, Poverty and Regeneration Manager, Pembrokeshire County Council, said that she would be pleased to speak to Mr. Owen to get clarification from him whether or not the dates are needed up front. This information can be submitted in email form so that a written procedure is in place.

Ms. Henehan advised that Mr. Owen will need to know when the market is being held e.g. every Monday, once a month on a Monday or twice a month on a Monday.

Ms. Henehan said that one of the concerns about having a Monday market is that towns are quiet on Mondays and if you try to get people in just for a market it has to be a very good market. Traders know what footfall is like in the town and maybe thinking about using another day of the week, such as a Wednesday or Thursday, which is busier, might be a better option than Monday, which might be a challenge.

Ms. Henehan said that Newport, which is a very different town to Milford Haven, has a fresh, natural produce market which is held in the middle of the street.

Mr. Jenkins said that the market will begin on Founders’ Day. The people attending Founders’ Day will receive a leaflet giving information on the market.

Mr. Jenkins explained the original plan to hold the market in laybys in Charles Street was changed because it was thought to be more secure in Market Square, but they did not know at that time about the problems associated with the wind.

Mr. Jenkins stated it will be easier to anchor the equipment in the laybys and the wind is not as strong on Charles Street as on the Market Square.

The Mayor said that he had run businesses on Charles Street and had concerns as to the wind aspect as he thought Charles Street was a wind tunnel.

Mr. Jenkins was asked how the Business Circle was going to keep the parking bays clear. He replied with signage, exactly as they did for the market held at the Market Square.

Ms. Henehan suggested that the Milford Haven Business Circle speaks to the traders about using the laybys and to see which day is busier for them.

RESOLVED THAT:

(i) the Milford Haven Business Circle is to provide

TREAT with all the details relating to the Market,

including the siting and the procedures;

(ii) Ms. Henehan is to be thanked for her kind offer

to liaise with the appropriate officers of the

Pembrokeshire County Council to furnish this

Committee with relevant information.

(b) New and Upgraded Street Furniture for the Town Centre:

Mr. Jenkins said that some of the street furniture in the town is old and some has been vandalised. Businesses are asking for additional benches and bins, although some bins have been replaced.

Mr. G. Codd, Area Maintenance Manager, Pembrokeshire County Council, advised that when he and some Members of this Committee had an inspection of Charles Street, he had agreed that the Pembrokeshire County Council would change all the bins. The bins at the bottom end of Charles Street have been replaced and the Pembrokeshire County Council has more bins to replace at the top end.

Ms. Henehan said that she would replace street furniture like for like as long as the Maintenance Department will continue to maintain them. The Pembrokeshire County Council will not put benches in new areas without some sort of maintenance agreement between the Town Council and the Pembrokeshire County Council.

Mr. Codd stated that he has made a lot of enquiries but cannot match up to the furniture that is already in existence.

The Mayor asked whether it would be possible to replace all the benches.

Ms. Henehan replied that if this Council wants the existing benches in the town centre footprint replaced she would have to look at her budget and see if she could replace some benches or all of them.

The Mayor referred to the site visit with Mr. Codd where they identified areas where they would like benches to be installed.

Ms. Henehan said that before additional benches are installed a maintenance agreement between the Milford Haven Town Council and the Pembrokeshire County Council would have to be in place.

RESOLVED THAT the situation will be

reassessed once the information is

received.

(c) The Upkeep of the Bus Shelter at Market Square:

Mr. Codd indicated that it was the County Council’s plan to remove the bus

shelter at the Market Square.

A Member advised that this would be discussed at the next meeting of this Council’s Public Works and Planning Committee.

(d) Empty Shops:

Mr. Jenkins gave an example of a shop where the landlord refused to do any maintenance and which was derelict at the back of the property. He said that, in general, people do not take on the tenancy of shop premises because of the disrepair.

Ms. Henehan said that people who are located next to a derelict building need to let Public Protection know that this is an issue.

Ms. Henehan said that the Pembrokeshire County Council has been offering Pop-up Shop opportunities for over twelve months. One of these has been incredibly successful and is now operating a fully functional business that has expanded into the next property.

A Pop-up Shop is very much dependent upon it being a local owner and very much about a network between local traders and local business owners.

A Pop-up Shop is located in high foot-traffic areas when a property owner lets his premises in the short term - typically from 1 to 3 months – to someone who wants to test the concept of running a shop.

Ms. Henehan was asked for an assurance that the Pembrokeshire County Council is aware of the ownership of every single shop premises in Charles Street.

Ms. Henehan replied that from a business rates prospective the Pembrokeshire County Council could probably pull off all of those rateable addresses.

Mr. Jenkins confirmed that as long as there is something in a shop, the owner gets free business rates.

A Member said that this Council is desperately wanting to regenerate Charles Street. There are properties in Charles Street which are under the ownership of people who apparently could not care less about the state of their properties.

The Member wished to prevail upon these people to return their properties to a presentable appearance.

Ms. Henehan said that the Pembrokeshire County Council has delivered a paint scheme which is now in its 4th year. Every single owner has been mailed at least twice in relation to whether they want to participate in the paint scheme. The challenge that the Pembrokeshire County Council has is that there are many absentee landlords who are not prepared to maintain their buildings.

Ms. Henehan advised that because of the legal implications she would not be able to forward the Council the names and addresses of the owners of the empty properties in Charles Street.

A suggestion was made that the Pembrokeshire County Council be asked to forward the letters, on behalf of the Milford Haven Town Council, to the landlords of the empty properties in Charles Street.

RESOLVED THAT:

(i) Ms. Henehan will forward a press release

regarding Pop-up Shops to the Clerk to be

published on the Council’s website;

(ii) Mr. K. MacDermott, Head of Revenues and

Assurance, Pembrokeshire County Council,

is to be asked whether it would be possible

to forward a letter to the landlords of

the empty properties in Charles Street on this

Council’s behalf;

(iii) the letter will express this Council’s deep concern

about the condition of the empty properties in

Charles Street and prevail upon the owners to

put their properties into a better state of repair;

(iv) Mr. M. White, Head of Regeneration, Pembrokeshire

County Council, is to be copied into any correspondence.

Mr. Jenkins said that he is prepared to walk around Charles Street with a Town Councillor in order to compile a list of empty properties.

(e) Planters and Hanging Baskets:

Mr. Jenkins stated that the last Chairman of the Business Circle had

received a letter offering hanging baskets to individual businesses at a cost of about £25 per hanging basket.

Mr. Codd asked whether there were any businesses that would like hanging baskets.

Mr. Jenkins replied that the business owners were waiting to hear what was entailed.

Ms. Henehan said that the baskets have to be weighted in a particular manner. This is carried out by the Pembrokeshire County Council. The shop owner is responsible for the insurance and maintenance of the basket. Due to the cost of staff time, the Pembrokeshire County Council would need some assurance that the shop owner would have a hanging basket from the Pembrokeshire County Council for the next 3 years.

Mr. Codd advised that Quay Street traders pay £30 per basket. The brackets for the hanging baskets need to be fixed to a good square wall. The baskets are self-watering so they are fairly heavy.

The Mayor said that during the inspection of Charles Street they had identified areas to locate planters. He asked Mr. Codd to provide costings for these planters.

(f) Former Motorworld Building:

Ms. Henehan confirmed that there is a paper going to Cabinet on 25th April

regarding this building. The paper will be in the public domain when the Agendas for the Cabinet meeting are published, but at this time it is confidential.

RESOLVED THAT the information be received.

(g) Town Centre Signage:

Mr. Jenkins said that when coming into Milford Haven there is a sign directing people to the town centre via Robert Street. This would cause confusion to visitors.

Ms. Henehan said that she believed that this was a Trunk Road Agency sign.

The Clerk advised that she had received an email during the week from someone who wished to have better signage in the town.

RESOLVED THAT:

(i) a letter, accompanied by photographs, is to

be written to the Trunk Road Agency, drawing

to their attention the misleading sign on

Robert Street and asking for the sign to be

relocated;

(ii) arrangements are to be made with officers from

the Pembrokeshire County Council and other

interested bodies for an inspection of signage

in the town.

(h) Street Maintenance:

Mr. Jenkins asked for a regular agreement to have street maintenance carried out.

Mr. Codd said that he would pass the information on to the relevant Officer.

Mr. Jenkins concluded by circulating Members with a copy of an email from a local business owner which was discussed at a previous TREAT meeting.

RESOLVED THAT the email be received.

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