Minutes of a Meeting of the Milford Haven Town Council

held at the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Milford Haven

on Monday, 30th November, 2015 at 7:00 pm

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PRESENT

The Mayor (Councillor S. G. Joseph)

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

Councillors: A. E. Byrne J. W. Cole

A. W. Eden R. D. Evans

R. Gray E. R. Harries

A. H. Miles M. J. Norman

M. P. Rickard C. A. Sharp

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

Mrs. C. T. Williams G. Woodham MBA (Open) LL.B (Hons)

PRAYERS:

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

214. APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs. J. Hawkins and Mrs. C. Stevens.

215. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON THE 26TH OCTOBER, 2015:

RESOLVED THAT the Minutes of the Meeting of

the Milford Haven Town Council held on the

26th October, 2015, be accepted and that

they be signed by the Mayor as a true record.

216. INFORMATION FROM THE MAYOR:

(a) Mayor’s Engagements:

Members were informed of the Mayor’s engagements since the 13th November, 2015:

20th November - Visited Milford Haven School and Tesco Stores

Milford Haven with Book of Condolences for victims

of Paris terror attacks.

22nd November - 100 years of Tom Newing and Sons Limited celebration

and remembrance service at St. Katharine and St.

Peter’s Church.

25th November - RVS Darby and Joan Christmas Lunch.

26th November - Welcomed the Rev. J. Cecil to St. Peter’s and

St. Cewydd Church in Steynton.

(b) Letter from Mr. J. T. Morgan re Hubberston Memorial Hall and Community Centre:

The Mayor read out a letter from Mr. J. T. Morgan, a former Trustee of Hubberston Memorial Hall and Community Centre.

Mr. Morgan expressed his grave concern and regret at Pembrokeshire County Council’s decision to close the Memorial Hall and Community Hall at Hubberston.

Mr. Morgan wrote that the Hall was built as a Memorial in memory of the young men who gave their lives in the name of freedom in the 1914-18 War.

The Community worked together over the years to keep the Hall open until the 1960s when the Trustees agreed to give the land and building to the Pembrokeshire County Council to hold in permanent trust. Price and Kelway Solicitors will confirm this.

Mr. Morgan feels that the Pembrokeshire County Council has broken that trust by not supporting this vital community asset in a socially deprived area within a growing population. He asked if there was any way that this Council, together with the Pembrokeshire County Council, assisted by other organisations such as the Port Authority, Gelliswick Bay Society, LNG, Puma Oil and others can come together and give financial support to this vital centre so that it can remain a last Memorial to those who gave their lives.

The Hubberston Councillors present at this evening’s Meeting, Councillors A. E. Byrne and R. Gray were asked whether a Committee has been set up to arrange a fighting fund. They indicated that a Committee had not been set up as yet, but it was early days.

A Member recommended that Councillors should endorse the sentiments expressed by Mr. Morgan, and considered that it is incumbent upon this Council to indicate to Price and Kelway that this assertion has been made and ask them whether they can throw any light on this particular issue.

Another Member expressed his concerns at this letter being considered at Full Council without debate at Committee and with potential cost implications associated with it. He said that there is a community group being established to look at taking this matter forward.

RESOLVED THAT:

(i) a letter be sent to Mr. Morgan indicating that

this Council endorses the sentiments expressed

in his letter;

(ii) Price and Kelway be asked if they have any

information regarding this issue, and to give an

indication of the cost of any in-depth research.

(c) Have your say on Pembrokeshire County Council’s budget pressures 2016 – 2019:

Members gave consideration to the Pembrokeshire County Council’s consultation document.

RESOLVED THAT Members are to complete the

document on an individual basis if they wish to do

so.

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REPORTS ON COMMITTEES

217. PUBLIC WORKS AND PLANNING COMMITTEE:

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Public Works and Planning Committee held on the 9th November, 2015, were moved by the Chairman, Councillor E. R. Harries, with the exception of the reference to cemetery fees in Minute 181 (b) Minutes of the Meeting of the Cemetery Fees Sub-Committee, which for the sake of regularity is to be referred to Minute 191 of the Finance and General Purposes Committee.

(a) Minute 177 – To Receive Mr. R. Maile to discuss his concerns regarding electromagnetic radiation in Milford Haven:

A Member asked whether Mr. Maile’s response had been received and the

Clerk replied that he was still preparing the document.

(b) Minute 187 – Statutory Consultation - Secondary Education Reorganisation in

Haverfordwest:

A Member asked the County Councillors present whether the plans for

secondary education reorganisation in Haverfordwest have been shelved.

A County Councillor advised that at Thursday’s meeting of the Full Council it

was agreed to restart the consultation on secondary education reorganisation in Haverfordwest.

RESOLVED THAT the Education Department

be asked for an update on the process that is

now being followed.

RESOLVED THAT, subject to the above, the

Minutes of the Public Works and Planning

Committee held on the 9th November, 2015, be

approved and adopted.

218. FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE:

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on the 12th November, 2015, were moved by the Chairman, Councillor Mrs. Y. G. Southwell.

(a) Minute 191 – Recommendations from Monday evening’s meeting of the Public Works and Planning Committee:

A Member referred to a recent news item which stated that a number of people

in Wales were finding it increasingly difficult to live and a growing number of people were now turning to county councils to bury their dead.

Members were circulated with an email from a local undertaker in which he expressed disappointment at the proposals to increase the Cemetery fees by a further 20% in the financial year 2016-2017.

Another Member explained that any shortfall in the Cemetery is paid by every ratepayer in the town, so for what seems to be a very few number of people getting buried, the ratepayers of Milford Haven are expected to have an increase in their precept. In addition, as there is a shortage of burial space at the Cemetery, fewer people will choose to be buried there and the burial space will last longer.

A Member said that we are dealing with people, not just figures, and hitting them hard at probably the most traumatic time in their lives.

An amendment was proposed and seconded that this matter should be deferred and discussed when the precept is being settled.

4 voted for the amendment with 10 against.

A vote was then taken on the recommendation that the Cemetery fees for 2016-2017 be increased by 20%, with the exception of the fees for memorials, which are to remain unchanged.

9 voted for this recommendation with 4 against.

Councillors A. E. Byrne, J. W. Cole, A. W. Eden and A. H. Miles wished it recorded that they had voted against this recommendation.

(b) Minute 193 – Rent Review for the Milford Haven Town Council offices at the Town Hall:

A Member said that he had had some time to reflect on the recommendation made by the Finance and General Purposes Committee. He had not had the opportunity to speak to the Chair but considered that Members should defer item (i) of the resolution and seek further negotiations with the Pembrokeshire County Council.

Members were reminded that time was limited as the rent review was on 25th December.

The Chairman, Councillor Mrs. Y. G. Southwell, said that the Finance and General Purposes Committee has put this proposal forward, a decision had to be made by Christmas Day, and there has been no rent increase for 7 years. She concluded by stating that she hoped that Members of the Committee would continue to support this proposal.

An amendment was proposed and seconded that this Council defers making a decision to pay the rent increase, seeks further negotiations with the Pembrokeshire County Council, and makes no decision but keeps its options open.

5 voted for the amendment, with 9 against.

Councillor A. E. Byrne wished it recorded that he abstained from voting.

(c) Minute 194 - Develop Town Centre Wifi:

Councillor D. R. Sinnett advised that as the Mayor and Deputy Mayor were unavailable he had attended a Meeting at County Hall regarding the Town Centre wireless proposals. The Pembrokeshire County Council is supporting the development of free Wifi across a number of towns in the County. Representation was from approximately 10 communities that had been selected to be offered the opportunity to take part in this scheme.

Councillor Sinnett emphasised that this is not an offer that the Council has to accept, although 5 communities are needed to take part in this scheme in order for it to be viable. The crucial issue is the issue of costs. The offer from the Pembrokeshire County Council is that the hardware, the receivers for the wireless transmissions will be free – provided and paid for by them for 3 years.

The only item that has to be funded for the 3 year period is the broadband itself. The Town Council does not have to take the lead to develop this scheme, but a sustainable organisation is required to sign the contract for the 3 year life of this particular project. The scheme can be extended at the end of the 3 years but any licensing and maintenance costs would have to be funded by whoever is the contract holder.

Councillor Sinnett said that if there was sufficient interest a representative from Antur Teifi would be pleased to attend a Meeting to explore this issue in more detail.

RESOLVED THAT Antur Teifi be asked to attend

a Special Full Council Meeting to explore this issue

in more detail.

A Member said that he has seen some of the proposals for Milford Haven through his work engagements. At a recent meeting one of the proposals was a relationship between the Port Authority and the Town Council with a view to making the town and the Marina a Wifi zone. He considered that it would be prudent to invite the Port Authority to attend the same Meeting.

It was FURTHER RESOLVED THAT representatives

from the Port Authority be invited to the Special Meeting.

(d) Minute 201 – Applications for Christmas Donations 2015:

The Mayor explained that the PATCH Coordinator had asked if they could receive a cheque instead of gifts because it would give them more flexibility.

The Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee then read out an email from One Voice Wales which confirmed that this Council had the powers to buy gifts for PATCH.

RESOLVED THAT the recommendation made by

the Finance and General Purposes Committee

is to remain unchanged.

*The donation to PATCH is to be made in accordance*

*with the Milford Haven Town Council’s powers under*

*the Local Government Act 2000 s.2*

RESOLVED THAT, subject to the above, the Minutes

of the Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes

Committee held on the 12th November, 2015, be

approved and adopted.

219. TOWN REGENERATION AND ACTION TEAM (TREAT):

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Regeneration and Action Team held on the 16th November, 2015, were moved by the Mayor, Councillor S. G. Joseph.

(a) Minute 206 – Report from the Mayor and Mr. G. Codd, Area Maintenance Manager, Pembrokeshire County Council, regarding Streetscape:

Members were circulated with a copy of an email from the Strategic Project Officer, Pembrokeshire County Council, in which she advised that the Pembrokeshire County Council will no longer be funding the provision of flowers in the community. The Pembrokeshire County Council offered the following options:-

(i) the Pembrokeshire County Council would give the planters, towers,

baskets etc, used previously and the Town Council could plant and

maintain them;

(ii) alternatively the Pembrokeshire County Council could provide the

flowers as per previous years and recharge the Town Council for the

cost.

The Pembrokeshire County Council has retained a budget to plant and look after any flowers in areas where they have previously maintained and will continue to water during normal daytime hours e.g. Monday – Friday. Where watering is necessary outside of these hours, this would be a matter for the community or alternately the Pembrokeshire County Council can still carry out this function and recharge at full cost recovery rate (labour, vehicles etc) of £26 per hour. Any existing wildflowers will continue to be funded by the Pembrokeshire County Council.

The cost of providing the same floral display as in previous years was £4,431.70 plus VAT.

In order for the Pembrokeshire County Council to receive the best price and to pass it on to this Council, the Strategic Project Officer requested the Council’s decision by 17th December.

RESOLVED THAT:

(i) the Strategic Project Officer is to be informed

that it is impracticable for this Council to

make a decision before 17th December;

(ii) this issue is to be referred to TREAT for

further discussion;

(iii) in the meantime the Clerk obtains as much

information as possible as to alternative suppliers

of floral displays so that TREAT can consider the

implications.

(c) Minute 208 – Problems with Dog Fouling:

Councillor M. P. Rickard apologised for not attending the last TREAT meeting because of illness.

He said that he had some information regarding this issue which he would pass on at the next TREAT Meeting.

RESOLVED THAT, subject to the above,

the Minutes of the Meeting of the Town

Regeneration and Action Team (TREAT)

held on 16th November, 2015,

be approved and adopted.

220. REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES:

(a) Milford Haven Museum:

Speaking as Chair of the Milford Haven Museum, Councillor C. A. Sharp advised that there was still a vacancy for a Trustee at the Milford Haven Museum.

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