Minutes of a Meeting of the Milford Haven Town Council

held at the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Milford Haven

on Monday, 27th July, 2015 at 7:15 pm

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PRESENT

The Mayor (Councillor S. G. Joseph)

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

R. D. Evans R. Gray

E. R. Harries A. H. Miles

M. P. Rickard C. A. Sharp

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

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

MAYOR’S REMARKS:

The Mayor apologised for the late start of the meeting.

PRAYERS:

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

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79. APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence were received from the Deputy Mayor, Councillor W. D. Elliott BA, and Councillors A. E. Byrne, M. J. Norman and Mrs. C. Stevens. Apologies for absence were not received from Councillor Mrs. J. Hawkins.

80. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON THE 29TH JUNE, 2015:

RESOLVED THAT the Minutes of the Meeting of

the Milford Haven Town Council held on the

29th June, 2015, be accepted and that they

be signed by the Mayor as a true record.

81. INFORMATION FROM THE MAYOR:

1. Councillor A. H. Miles:

The Mayor apologised again for the late start of this evening’s meeting. He explained that he had been speaking to Councillor A. H. Miles before the meeting regarding an issue that Councillor Miles wished to clarify.

Councillor Miles expressed regret for a contentious incident that had occurred during the last Finance and General Purposes Committee Meeting, which was reported by the local press. Councillor Miles, who was unaware of the media presence at that meeting, affirmed that he did not include the names of other Councillors in his comments, and that he has never spoken to the press.

The Mayor asked if all present were happy with Councillor Miles’s apology, and a Member urged to move progress.

A Member said that he intended to raise this issue under the Finance and General Purposes Committee Minutes.

(b) Mayor’s Engagements:

Members were informed of the Mayor’s Engagements since 10th July, 2015:

11th July, 2015 - Milford Haven Town Band Concert (attended by the

Deputy Mayor).

17th July, 2015 - Opened “Living Well” at Hubberston Resource Centre.

17th July, 2015 - Visited Hakin School Springboard Project at Pembroke

Dock.

(c) Elly’s Fundraising and Awareness Campaign for Ward 10 – Cancer Ward, Withybush Hospital, Haverfordwest:

The Mayor advised that correspondence had been received that day from Mr. L. Neville, a former Cancer patient, regarding a fundraising and awareness campaign for Ward 10, Withybush Hospital which is fronted by his 5 year old daughter Elly, with her collage of the Pembrokeshire Flag.

Mr. Neville asked for a letter of support from this Council to show that Town Councils in Pembrokeshire endorse Elly’s Ward 10 Campaign for improved Cancer Services in Pembrokeshire.

RESOLVED THAT a letter of support for

Elly’s Ward 10 Campaign for improved

Cancer Services in Pembrokeshire be

forwarded to Mr. L. Neville.

(d) TREAT:

The Mayor said that a meeting of the Town Regeneration Environment Action Team was held on Wednesday, 22nd July.

He advised that at the meeting it had been agreed to ask for the following recommendations to be approved:-

(i) To furnish all Town Councillors with copies of the Town Action Plan.

(ii) To issue an open invitation to all Councillors to attend the next TREAT meeting on 2nd September to discuss the Action Plan and agree on the medium and long term goals.

(iii) A letter is to be written to all shopkeepers in the town centre to canvas their opinion on the way forward for the town centre. The Mayor said that he would hand deliver the letters with Councillor R. D. Evans, who had offered to assist with the delivery.

(iv) The Mayor and Clerk are to investigate funding available from the Pembrokeshire County Council for streetscape in the Town Centre.

(v) It was also agreed to ask that plenary powers to action non financial

matters be vested in the Mayor and Chairmen of the two Standing Committees.

A Member asked the Mayor to explain “streetscape”. The Mayor replied that streetscape includes street furniture such as bins and planters.

A Member said that although he commended the idea of regeneration for the town, he considered that a properly constituted Committee should be formed to develop the terms of reference for TREAT. He felt that the Committee should comprise the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Chairmen of the two main Committees and 3 representatives from each of the main Standing Committees.

Another Member stated that the feeling of the TREAT meeting was that although Members have to act correctly, they have to act quickly. He had no problem in establishing a group to determine the terms of reference to make sure that the whole issue of reporting is dealt with. He supported the group if it is task and finish with a very tight timescale to get things right.

RESOLVED THAT:

(a) the recommendations made by TREAT and

raised by the Mayor be approved;

(b) a task and finish Terms of Reference Group be

formed with a very limited timescale to work in

parallel with TREAT;

(c) the Mayor, Deputy Mayor and Chairmen of the

two Standing Committees sit on this Group with

Councillors R. D. Evans, A. H. Miles and

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

from the Finance and General Purposes Committee

and Councillors A. W. Eden, M. P. Rickard

and C. A. Sharp from the Public Works and Planning Committee.

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REPORTS ON COMMITTEES

82. PUBLIC WORKS AND PLANNING COMMITTEE:

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Public Works and Planning Committee held on the 6th July, 2015, 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 6th July, 2015, be approved and adopted.

83. FINANCE AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE:

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on the 9th July, 2015, were moved by the Chairman, Councillor Mrs. Y. G. Southwell.

(i) Minute 63 – Appointment of Vice-Chairman:

A Member said that he had read the Finance and General Purposes Committee Minutes of the 11th June and noted that it was unanimously agreed not to appoint a Chairman or Vice-Chairman on that occasion. He presumed from this that no one had any strong feelings on that particular issue which was deferred until the July meeting of that Committee.

At the meeting of the Finance and General Purposes Committee held on the 9th July, the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman were appointed. The Minutes indicated that a Councillor who was present at the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting of the 11th June commented he did not want to be part of a “rigged election”. This Member said that Councillors might think that the implications of that statement applied to only the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes Committee, but it was his contention that it applied to the whole Council because at June’s Full Council the Minutes were presented and it was endorsed to accept the reason why the Chairman and Vice-Chairman were not appointed.

He felt, therefore, that every Member of the Council is under some sort of cloud and he thought it appropriate for the Councillor who made the statement that he did not want to be part of a “rigged election” when there is clearly absolutely no evidence whatsoever of that happening. The Member urged that the Councillor concerned should withdraw that statement and apologise not only to the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of that Committee but to the whole Council.

Councillor Miles said that he had already apologised and had no intention of bringing this Council into disrepute.

A vote was taken, 9 Members accepted his apology, with 2 against and 1 abstention.

The Mayor said that this matter was now concluded.

(ii) Minute 71 (d) Milford Haven Sea Cadets and Royal Marine Cadets:

Cllr E. R. Harries declared a personal interest in this issue as Chairman of the Milford Haven Sea Cadets Management Committee.

(iii) Minute 71 (ii) (f) – Applications for Finance Assistance – Herbrandston Cricket Club:

Members noted that discussion on this application had been deferred from the Finance and General Purposes Committee in order that the Clerk could seek information as to how many people from the town of Milford Haven utilise this Club.

Mr. R. Owens, Chairman, Herbrandston Cricket Club, has confirmed that 25 of the 32 members of this club are from Milford Haven.

The Clerk advised that this Council has supported the Herbrandston Cricket Club financially for at least 19 years. Since 1996 the amounts have varied from £20 to £70. For the last four years this Council has made a donation of £75 to the Herbrandston Club each financial year.

RESOLVED THAT based on the fact that three quarters

of the members of the Club are from Milford Haven,

it was agreed to support the Herbrandston Cricket

Club in the sum of £75.

RESOLVED THAT, subject to the above, the Minutes

of the Meeting of the Finance and General Purposes

Committee held on the 9th July, 2015, be approved

and adopted.

84. REPORT OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE PUBLIC WORKS AND PLANNING COMMITTEE HELD ON THE 27TH JULY, 2015:

Councillor Mrs. Y. G. Southwell declared a personal interest in this issue as she is the Chair of the Governing Body of the Hakin Community School.

County Councillors S. G. Joseph, D. R. Sinnett and G. Woodham MBA (Open) LL.B (Hons) wished it recorded that they did not take any part in the discussion or voting on this matter, as this may at some point come before Full Council at Pembrokeshire County Council and they do not wish to be seen to predetermine the issue.

Councillor E. R. Harries, the Chairman of the Public Works and Planning Committee, explained that he had called the Special Meeting of the Public Works and Planning Committee earlier that evening to discuss Planning Application No. 15/0321/PA – Erection of a Primary School and Associated Works on land off Gelliswick Road, Hakin, Milford Haven. As the deadline for the Council’s response to this planning application was the 5th August, he did not think it appropriate to allow it to proceed without giving the Public Works and Planning Committee and every other Member of the Council the opportunity to make observations on it.

The Chairman confirmed that the Public Works and Planning Committee had recommended that this planning application be refused on the following grounds:- the play facilities are too limited; car parking facilities are too limited and in an inappropriate and insecure location; and the access to such parking is through a narrow lane leading off Picton Road which is already highly congested throughout the day.

The Public Works and Planning Committee also agreed to seek clarification on the ownership of the land which it is believed to have been endowed to the Milford Haven Urban District Council for leisure facilities only.

The Chairman of the Public Works and Planning Committee said that he believes that the application will be considered by the Pembrokeshire County Council’s Planning and Rights of Way Committee in September. He advised that a Member of this Council can seek an opportunity to be present when this application is discussed.

Councillor Mrs. Y. G. Southwell, speaking as the Chairman of Hakin Community School, said that following the two days of the plans being available at both Hakin Community and Hubberston V. C. Schools, the governing body and head teachers of both Schools had met with architects to discuss concerns, particularly regarding the problems with parking and access. The results will be reported to another governing body meeting before the end of August. This planning application will be discussed by the County’s Planning and Rights of Way Sub-Committee on 8th September. Councillor Mrs. Southwell said that she had seen examples of the children’s work illustrating how much they are looking forward to their new school.

A Member stated that if the Pembrokeshire County Council is going to re-submit plans or changes to the plans then these need to come back to this Council for further consideration. The Public Works and Planning Committee made a decision based on the plans submitted by Pembrokeshire County Council to this Council and nothing else, because Members were privy to no other conversations or information. If the Pembrokeshire County Council are rethinking their scheme they will come back with a revised plan which Members will then deliberate and decide upon.

The Mayor suggested that he and the Chair of the Public Works and Planning Committee could attend the Pembrokeshire County Council’s Planning and Rights of Way Sub-Committee in September.

A Member explained that his understanding was that they could both attend the meeting, but only one Member of this Authority could ask to speak at the meeting.

The Chairman of the Public Works and Planning Committee said that it was Council’s decision as to who would speak at that meeting. He then reiterated the Public Works and Planning Committee’s reasons for refusing this planning application.

A vote was taken and 6 voted for the Public Works and Planning Committee’s recommendation, with 3 against with 3 abstentions.

Discussion then took place on who should represent this Council at the Planning and Rights of Way Sub-Committee of the Pembrokeshire County Council.

RESOLVED THAT:

(i) the Milford Haven Town Council recommends

that this planning application be refused on the

following grounds:-

(A) the play facilities are too limited;

(B) car parking facilities are too limited and in

an inappropriate and insecure location;

(C) the access to such parking is through a

narrow lane leading off Picton Road which

is already highly congested throughout the day.

(ii) clarification be sought from the Pembrokeshire

County Council as to the ownership of the land,

which is believed to have been endowed to the

Milford Haven Urban District Council for leisure

facilities only;

(iii) the Chairman of the Public Works and Planning

Committee, Councillor E. R. Harries, is to

represent this Council when this planning application

isdiscussed at the September Meeting of the

Planning and Rights of Way Sub-Committee of the

Pembrokeshire County Council.

The Chairman concluded by saying that he has reported the recommendation made by the Public Works and Planning Committee. He is most anxious for a school to be progressed but there are many difficulties that appear not to have been addressed properly.

85. GATEWAY SIGNAGE:

Members discussed an email from Ms. S. Henehan, Community Safety, Poverty and Regeneration Manager, Pembrokeshire County Council, in which she enclosed a copy of the proposed new Gateway signage for Milford Haven.

RESOLVED THAT the Gateway signage for

Milford Haven be approved.

86. AGEING WELL IN PEMBROKESHIRE:

Members gave consideration to the draft Older Person’s Strategy Consultation and questionnaire which set out Pembrokeshire County Council’s Strategy for Older People in Pembrokeshire to show how that Authority will work with residents in Pembrokeshire, partner agencies and organisations to take forward Welsh Government's Phase 3 of The Strategy for Older People in Wales: Living longer, Ageing Well set up as a 10 year plan spanning from 2013 – 2023.

RESOLVED THAT:

(i) Members can complete the questionnaire

on an individual basis if they wish to do so;

(ii) Councillor D. R. Sinnett is to prepare a draft

response to this document for submission

to the Clerk for circulation to all Members

prior to its submission to the

Pembrokeshire County Council.

87. APPLICATIONS FOR CO-OPTION ON TO THE NORTH WARD OF THE MILFORD HAVEN TOWN COUNCIL:

The Mayor advised that four applications had been received to fill, by co-option, the vacancy on the North Ward of the Milford Haven Town Council.

In the past the public were excluded whilst Members were deciding on applications for co-option.

A Member said that he did not think it necessary for press and public to be excluded. In this Council’s Standing Orders it says that meetings shall be open to the public unless their presence is prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted or for other special reasons. The public exclusion for part or all of the meeting shall be by resolution which shall give reasons for the public’s exclusion.

As Members are discussing the co-option of someone on to a vacancy as a Town Councillor, he considered that there is no reason why the names of those people who are going to put themselves forward cannot be made public. As the vote will be taken by secret ballot it can be taken with the members of the public and the press present. If there was the intention to debate anything that is contained in the letters of application then the Member said that he would reconsider that position but in his experience Members read the letters, vote and one successful candidate is elected and the letters are passed back to the Clerk so they are exempt from publication.

The Member advised that Standing Orders state that the successful candidate needs to have 50% of the vote and if one candidate has not got 50%, then the candidate with the lowest number of votes is removed and Members have to vote again. The Member suggested that the amount of votes that individuals receive is not disclosed.

RESOLVED THAT:

(i) the press and public are not to be excluded

from the meeting;

(ii) the letters of application be distributed and

the meeting be adjourned for a period of 10

minutes for Councillors to read the letters;

The Clerk distributed the application letters to Members.

(iii) a secret ballot be conducted to fill the vacancy;

(iv) the Chairman of the Finance and General Purposes

Committee, Councillor Mrs. Y. G. Southwell, and

the Chairman of the Public Works and Planning

Committee, Councillor E. R. Harries, act as

scrutineers;

(v) the amount of votes that individuals receive is

not disclosed.

The secret ballot then took place, resulting in Mrs. C. T. Williams receiving more than 50% of the votes.

It WAS FURTHER RESOLVED THAT:

Mrs. C. T. Williams of 4 Pill Lane, Milford Haven,

be elected to fill the current vacancy in the North

Ward of the Milford Haven Town Council.

The Mayor welcomed Councillor R. D. Evans, who is the youngest ever Councillor on this Authority, to his first Full Council meeting and congratulated him on his victory in the recent election to the Central Ward.

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