Minutes of a Meeting of the Public Works and Planning Committee

held at the Town Hall, Milford Haven

on Monday, 6th July, 2015 at 6:00 pm

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PRESENT

The Mayor (Councillor S. G. Joseph)

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

Councillors: E. R. Harries (Chairman) J. W. Cole

A. W. Eden Mrs. J. Hawkins

M. P. Rickard C. A. Sharp

50. CHAIRMAN’S REMARKS:

The Chairman, Councillor E. R. Harries, congratulated the Deputy Mayor, Councillor W. D. Elliott BA, upon his graduation.

51. APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence were not received from Councillor Mrs. C. Stevens.

52. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PUBLIC WORKS AND PLANNING COMMITTEE HELD ON 8TH JUNE, 2015:

RESOLVED THAT the Minutes of the Meeting of

the Public Works and Planning Committee held

on 8th June, 2015, be approved as a correct

record and that they be signed by the Chairman.

53. INFORMATION FROM THE MAYOR:

(a) Mayor’s Engagements:

Members were advised of the following engagements undertaken by the Mayor since the 30th June, 2015:-

4th July - Milford Haven Carnival

5th July (am) - Haverfordwest Civic Service (attended by the Deputy

Mayor)

5th July (pm) - Mayor of Milford Haven’s Civic Service

6th July - Bingo with the Haven Club at the Manchester Club

6th July - Festivities Week Bingo at the Pill Community Centre

(b) Exercise on Cemetery Premises:

The Mayor read out an email from Mr. C. Lawrence, Watch Manager, Pembrokeshire County Command, Mid and West Wales Fire Service.

In his email, Mr. Lawrence made a formal request to use Cemetery House for a small exercise one evening for Milford Haven On Call firefighters. He anticipated that the exercise would not take place until, at the earliest, 29th September.

Mr. Lawrence said that the exercise would take no more than one hour and would provide realistic and valuable training in unfamiliar surroundings providing operational firefighters with realistic training i.e. placing dummies within the building, filling it full of synthetic smoke and allowing firefighters to then carry out rescues in a controlled environment.

All risk assessments, manual handling and safety issues would be the responsibility of the Fire Service and Mr. Lawrence, as supervising officer, would liaise with the Cemetery Supervisor, and issue the Clerk with all the relevant documentation and certificate of public liability from the fire service.

Members discussed Mr. Lawrence’s request and it was RESOLVED THAT Mr. Lawrence be granted permission to utilise Cemetery House for a small exercise one evening, probably in September.

54. CEMETERY:

(a) Report:

RESOLVED THAT the Cemetery Report, as

presented by the Clerk for the month of

June, 2015 be accepted.

(b) Minutes of the Meeting of the Cemetery Maintenance and Land Acquisition Group held at the Town Hall on Monday, 22nd June, 2015:

(A) Minute No. 40 (a) Cemetery House Roof and Associated Works:

RESOLVED THAT the Public Works and Planning

Committee recommends to the Finance and General

Purposes Committee that the lowest tender received

from RED Building Services, Milford Haven, be

accepted in the sum of £13,602.89 plus VAT.

(B) Minute 41 (c) Undermining Graves:

The Chairman referred to recent discussions regarding the undermining of graves by rabbits.

The Clerk had been requested to obtain as much information as possible on how best to remedy the problem.

The Clerk said that she had contacted the Council’s Insurers and the Superintendent from Parc Gwyn for advice on this issue.

The Council’s insurers had recommended that it would be prudent to employ a professional pest controller, who would have his own insurance in place to cover his activities whilst working at the Cemetery.

The Clerk had asked the Superintendent of Parc Gwyn for information as to how they dealt with unwanted pests. The Superintendent recommended a Company which the Clerk contacted.

The representative from this Company advised that shooting rabbits is not effective - it reduces numbers but does not solve the problem. Cage trapping is another option which would not be suitable in the Cemetery as the cages need to be in place for a number of days. The representative considered that the best option was to erect a rabbit proof fence.

If Members wished this Company to dispose of a number of rabbits, operatives would visit the Cemetery at night at a cost of £40.00 plus VAT.

RESOLVED THAT:

(i) the Clerk is to continue discussion with the

representative from the pest control company

to clarify what the charge of £40.00 plus VAT

covers;

(ii) the Council is to explore the possibility of

extending the fencing at the Cemetery to

below ground level.

(C) Minute No. 41 (h) (ii) Acquisition of Land:

A Member emphasised the importance of acquiring land for future burials.

He pointed out that apart from the land near to the Cemetery which was owned by the Pembrokeshire County Council, there was nowhere else in Milford Haven suitable for a Cemetery. The Member said that if this Council does not address the question of acquiring additional land it will not be long before the Council is facing a very serious situation. This concern needs to be expressed to a representative from the Pembrokeshire County Council so that possibly that Authority could assist

this Council in some way.

RESOLVED THAT:

(i) the word “purchasing” is to be replaced by the

word “using” and the Minute now reads:

“the Council will explore the possibility of using a

portion of land at Steynton Church”.

(ii) an officer from the Pembrokeshire County Council is to

be invited to address this Committee to discuss the

problem that this Council has associated with the

acquisition of land to extend Milford Haven Cemetery.

(D) Minute 42 – To Consider the Implications of Voluntary Work at the Cemetery:

The Chairman said that in preparation for this meeting the Clerk has been carrying out some research as far as insurance was concerned regarding the implications of voluntary workers at the Cemetery.

The Council’s insurers stated that, in principal, the volunteers will be covered under the Employers Liability section of the Town Council insurance policy (as volunteers are included under the definition of employee) but the volunteers will have to be risk assessed and provided with relevant personal protective equipment. They will have to be treated as a normal employee and provided with appropriate training (if required).

The Mayor said that the volunteers would come under the remit of Milford Youth Matters who would make sure that all the volunteers are trained and supervised at all times and provided with the relevant personal protective equipment.

The Mayor explained that the volunteers would look after neglected graves where there are no longer any families to fulfil this role. Furthermore, these graves would deteriorate further if the volunteers did not assist with their maintenance.

Members agreed that it was essential to have in writing an undertaking from Milford Youth Matters to ensure that the Council is fully covered for insurance purposes.

RESOLVED THAT:

(i) the Public Works and Planning Committee

agrees, in principle, to the volunteers from

Milford Youth Matters assisting with the untended

graves at the Cemetery;

(ii) Milford Youth Matters is to provide a written

undertaking that the volunteers will be risk

assessed and provided with any relevant

personal protective equipment and provided

with appropriate training (if needed) which

will be forwarded to the Council’s Insurers for

their approval;

(ii) Mr. P. Johnson, the Cemetery Supervisor, is

to be included in any training.

The insurance company also asked the following:

1. Who owns the graves?

2. Are the groups going to be cleaning and maintaining headstones?

3. Does the Council have the right to clean/maintain the graves/headstones?

The insurance company was also concerned with the older graves that have not been maintained because of the risk of falling headstones.

56. PLANS:

RESOLVED THAT the recommendations of

the Chairman of the Public Works and Planning

Committee (which have been made in consultation

with Members of the Public Works and Planning

Committee) in respect of the planning applications detailed on Page 1 of the attached report

(see Appendix B) be approved.

57. PLANNING APPLICATION CONSULTATIONS AND DECISIONS NOTICES:

Members gave consideration to a letter from Mr. David Fitzsimon, the new Head of Planning, in which he outlined changes to the way in which the Pembrokeshire County Council will be notifying all Town and Community Councils of planning applications falling within their administrative boundaries and the subsequent formal determinations.

In order to reduce photocopy and postage costs and to promote more sustainable working practices, from 1st September 2015 all Town and Community Councils will be notified of future planning applications and subsequent Decision Notices electronically only.

RESOLVED THAT the letter be received.

58. PEMBROKESHIRE LSB 2015 CONSULTATION REPORT:

Members discussed an email from the Local Service Board Support Officer, Pembrokeshire County Council, in which she advised that the consultation report for the ‘Public Service in Pembrokeshire’ event which took place on 24th March at Letterston Memorial Hall is now available.

Pembrokeshire Local Service Board (LSB) hosts an annual event to engage community and voluntary sector organisations, local businesses and members of the public in the development and delivery of the Single Integrated Plan (SIP) for Pembrokeshire 2013 – 2018.

The report highlighted the following priorities for 2015-2016 – Children and Families; the Economy; the Environment; Health; Social Care and Wellbeing; Safeguarding Children and Adults and Community Safety.

RESOLVED THAT the Consultation Report be

received.

59. PUBLIC HEALTH (WALES) BILL – PROVISION OF TOILETS AVAILABLE FOR USE BY THE PUBLIC:

A letter was received from the Senior Responsible Officer, Public Health (Wales) Bill, in which he advised that the Public Health (Wales) Bill has been introduced to the National Assembly for Wales by the Minister for Health and Social Services. The Bill

seeks to bring together a series of practical actions in specific areas, in order to have a positive impact on health and well-being.

Amongst other proposals, the Bill will place a duty on each local authority in Wales to prepare and publish a local toilets strategy on the provision of toilets available for use by the public in its area. This strategy must include an assessment of the community’s need for toilets, including changing facilities for babies and changing places facilities for disabled persons, as well as details of how the local authority proposes to meet that need.

A Member said that under this Agenda heading he wished to draw Members’ attention to the fact that one day last week he approached the toilets on the Rath to discover the disabled doorway was locked and the door on the other side was also locked. He informed the Clerk who had contacted the Pembrokeshire County Council and had been informed that the contractor thought that perhaps the people from the Chinese Restaurant had closed the toilet door.

The Member was advised that it was nationwide policy for disabled toilets to be accessed with a key which could be purchased locally from Pembrokeshire County Council offices.

RESOLVED THAT:

(i) the letter from the Senior Responsible Officer,

Public Health (Wales) Bill be received;

(ii) the Clerk is to contact Mr. M. Harries, Maintenance,

Pembrokeshire County Council, to ask that the

contractor ensures that both the western door

and the eastern door from the

old swimming pool area are opened according

to the agreement made between the Milford

Haven Town Council and the Pembrokeshire

County Council.

60. PLANNING IN THE NATIONAL PARK – PEMBROKESHIRE COAST NATIONAL PARK AUTHORITY:

A letter was received from the Director of Park Direction and Planning, Pembrokeshire

Coast National Park Authority in which she advised of the changes to the Authority’s planning procedures.

RESOLVED THAT the letter be received.

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