Minutes of a Meeting of the Milford Haven Town Council

held at the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Milford Haven

on Thursday, 13th July, 2017 at 7:00 pm

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PRESENT

The Mayor (Councillor C. A. Sharp)

The Deputy Mayor (Councillor R. D. Gray)

 Councillors: T. Davies W. D. Elliott BA QTS

Miss K. Gray B. T. Jenkins

A. H. Miles Mrs. T. Olin

M. P. Rickard Mrs. Y. G. Southwell

J. Thrower Mrs. L. E. Turner

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

 Youth

 Representatives: Miss A. Coaker Miss B. Roberts

TO RECEIVE MR. LEE HIND, PEMBROKESHIRE ASSOCIATION OF VOLUNTARY SERVIES, CONCERNING TIME BANKING:

The Mayor, Councillor C. A. Sharp, welcomed Mr. L. Hind, Pembrokeshire Association of Voluntary Services, to the meeting.

Mr. Hind said that he was a Time Banking Development Officer and would explain the concept of time banking.

He explained that time banking is a system of exchange that uses time as currency. It creates a structure where people can swap their time and skills with each other for the benefit of all.

Time banking has been in the UK since 1996. Time banking can be traced back to the 19th Century when it was popularised as “time dollars” by Edgar Cahn, an American civil rights lawyer. Martin Simon went to America, saw the work that was being carried out and brought the model back to this Country. He started the first Time Bank in Gloucestershire.

Timebanking UK hosts 285 time banks whose members have exchanged over 2.8 million hours.

Time banking is founded on a series of principles:

\* Everyone has something to give – we are all assets.

\* Redefining work – some work is beyond price.

\* Reciprocity – help works better as a two-way street.

\* Social Networks are important – not social media but contacts within the community.

\* Respect – every human being matters.

\* As all time is worth the same and all skills are valued equally, one hour is worth one time credit, regardless of task.

\* This allows everyone to take part.

\* Time banking does not recognise disability, vulnerability or circumstance as

 barriers to participation – it positively encourages action, in whatever form that

 takes.

 \* Challenge the ‘top-down’ nature of service provision and engages those whom it

 seeks to help.

Mr. Hind said that it is much easier for a person to either ask for help or receive help if they know that at some point in the future they will be able to help others.

When Mr. Hind was carrying out the scoping exercise for this project he visited time banks across the UK and went to Fair Shares time bank in Gloucestershire (which was started by Martin Simon in 1998). He was told a story there about a person who was completely disabled but was able to earn time credits by accepting parcels on behalf of people in his community. People would come home from work, collect their parcels from this person and while they were there would have a chat.

Time banking is an asset based approach. Mr. Hand quoted Mr. Edgar Cahn: “If people are constantly defined by what they need or do not have, it is no surprise that they lose track of what they have to offer”. “People have a basic need to feel themselves useful and constantly receiving and never being asked to give back corrodes people’s lives”.

A lady in England who was asked to join a time bank said “I had a stroke 7 years ago, it has taken me this long to learn how to cook and so on with one arm. What use am I to anyone?” This person is of use to someone who has just had a stroke, who needs to know that there is light at the end of the tunnel, to somebody who knows that you will be able to do things for yourself albeit in a different way from before. This person then becomes a tremendous use but people in such situations are not being used. There are lots of people with skills that are not being utilised.

If there is sufficient interest, Mr. Hind and his team will work with individuals and groups to look at how time banking might be used to support ongoing community actions. This work will be fully supported by PAVS. There will be training as required and full access to a suite of resources via partnership with Time Banking UK.

Mr. Hind said that there is already interest in Pembrokeshire for Time Banking. He is looking for companies where people can spend some of their credits on the services offered. He has already signed up the Meads Leisure Centre and Phoenix Bowl for this purpose.

Mr. Hind said if any Councillors know people who run businesses that might want to support time banking or people that might want to contribute a couple of hours towards the development of a Time Bank to let him know.

Mr. Hind concluded his presentation. The Mayor asked if Members had any questions.

A Member asked whether people who are involved with time banking are volunteers. Mr. Hind explained that time banking is not a reward system for volunteers. It is a way of developing community and a way of encouraging people who would not normally consider themselves volunteers to give their time.

Mr. Hind said that there could be earning opportunities registered by the Town Council when people would then come and assist the Town Council in projects that they wish to run. The Mayor had taken part in a litter pick earlier that day. This could be advertised as an earning opportunity with the Town Council and people encouraged to come forward to earn credits. If Councillors wanted to register as volunteers then they could earn time credits.

Another Member asked how the time banking was monitored so fraudulent activity did not take place.

Mr. Hind explained that the system will be closely monitored by the Software Centre. Everyone who is registered is registered on a piece of software by a time banker and each exchange is registered on a piece of software, so exactly how many people are registered and how many hours are registered is known. A person is registered on the software with a request for assistance and will be matched with someone who has indicated that they can provide the assistance requested. If a person does something they receive one time credit, the person receiving assistance receives one time debit.

A Member said that, in theory, the Town Council could look at forming a Time Bank of volunteers and reward people. It would be an opportunity for the Town Council to play a part in facilitating activity within the community. Mr. Hind said that if the Town Council were interested in working around their own Time Bank he would meet with a small group of Councillors (3 or 4 as a bare minimum) and go through the mechanics of time banking.

Mr. Hind said that when a person joins a time bank they fill in an application form and provide 2 references. All time banking activities are within groups. Time banking will initially run social activities like litter picks and people will be invited to take part in those as spending opportunities. As time goes on, groups of people will come forward and within those activities conversations will take place between the members and the Time Bank will be expected to stimulate the conversations between members in terms of who has what skills and capacities and who has requested help. It is as that point that people seem to match themselves and then facilitate through time banking. There is a certain level of social safeguarding in this but the time bank does not try and DBS everybody because it is one exchange and a person is unlikely to be repeating the same activity. The only person that might qualify for a DBS check is the main time bank broker.

The Mayor thanked Mr. L. Hind for attending the meeting, and he left the meeting at this point.

Councillor A. H. Miles and Mrs. L. E. Turner arrived during the presentation.

There was a short recess during which Councillors M. P. Rickard, Mrs. Y. G. Southwell, and Mrs. C. T. Williams and the Youth Representatives Miss A. Coaker and Miss B. Roberts joined the meeting.

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PRAYERS:

In the absence of his Chaplain, prayers were led by the Mayor, Councillor C. A. Sharp.

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

47. APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A. E. Byrne, R. D. Evans, E. R. Harries and D. R. Sinnett.

48. MAYOR’S REMARKS:

The Mayor welcomed Councillor J. Thrower to his first meeting as a Town Councillor and wished him a long and happy association with the Council.

49. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON THE 26TH JUNE, 2017:

 RESOLVED THAT the Minutes of the Meeting of

 the Milford Haven Town Council held on the

 26th June, 2017, be accepted and that they

 be signed by the Mayor as a true record.

50. INFORMATION FROM THE MAYOR:

 (a) Mayor’s Engagements

 Members were informed of the Mayor’s Engagements since the 27th June, 2017:

 28th June - Visit to the Milford Haven Gymnastics Club

 29th June - Milford Haven Round Table Carnival Meeting

 29th June - P1 Powerboat Welsh Grand Prix of the Sea Meeting

 29th June - Greenacres Charity Bingo

 30th June - Unveiling of Henry VII Statue in Pembroke

 1st July - Milford Haven Carnival

 1st July - Milford Haven Rotary President’s Meal

 2nd July - Greenacres Open Day

 2nd July - Fishguard and Goodwick Mayor Making

 4th July - Milford Haven Junior School Sports Day

 6th July - Funeral of Mr. John Roberts, former Mayor of Milford Haven

 6th July - Autism Friendly Community Conference at the Torch Theatre

 7th July - Funeral of Mr. Jeff Hackett, Milford Haven

 9th July - Sea Sunday Service at St. Katharine and St. Peter’s Church,

 Milford Haven

 11th July - P1 Powerboat Welsh Grand Prix of the Sea Meeting

 12th July - Autism Awareness Meeting at Milford Haven Museum

 12th July - Open Afternoon at St. Francis Catholic Primary School,

 Milford Haven

 12th July - Meads School production at the Torch Theatre

 13th July - Litter Picking initiative at Milford Beach

(b) Register of Interest Forms

The Mayor asked Members to ensure that when declaring personal or prejudicial interests for the first time to complete the Register of Interests form that had been distributed around the table. The Clerk maintains the Register of Interests.

The Mayor had studied the Code of Conduct and devised a form for Members to register all their interests. Another Member thought that this form needed some amendment and the Clerk said that she would seek advice from One Voice Wales.

(c) Disposal of Council Documentation

The Mayor said that it is important that Councillors shred all Council documentation. He had been informed that if Council documents, especially those containing names/addresses/telephone numbers and email addresses, are disposed of in black bags, this is a major breach of the DATA Protection Act 1998 which could lead to the Council being fined if the information is passed to the Information Commissioner’s Officer.

 The Mayor advised that Council documents can be shredded in the office.

(d) Litter Picking

The Mayor thanked those Councillors who had joined him in litter picking on The Rath and Milford Beach that afternoon.

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52. DISCUSSION ON WHETHER ISSUES RELATING TO THE CEMETERY SHOULD BE DISCUSSED DIRECTLY AT FULL COUNCIL:

 The Mayor referred to the Clerk’s report on this matter and asked Members for their comments.

 A Member said that she was not criticising the Cemetery or Council staff. She was speaking as a Councillor of two years and said that the predominant issue she is asked about on behalf of this Council is the Cemetery.

 The Member said that Milford Haven Cemetery is the most important aspect of Council’s responsibility towards the town. The Council has full responsibility for the Cemetery. It is the Council’s biggest outlay. Staff are employed to manage the Cemetery. This Council must take its responsibility for this asset seriously.

 It is a special place for many citizens and used for Remembrance Services throughout the year.

 This Member said this is a topic of an emotional and sensitive nature, and that she has been concerned over a long period of time. Councillors sit on the Cemetery Maintenance and Land Acquisition Group and she felt that Councillors at Full Council are not fully aware of issues. The Cemetery Maintenance and Land Acquisition Group meets during the day which precludes many Members from attending. There was a meeting held on 24th April, for example, when she felt that Members did not receive adequate notice.

She referred to the Clerk’s report which said that a site inspection “has” to be held during working hours when the Cemetery Staff are working in order to answer any queries. She felt it was the right of this Council to be able to inspect the Cemetery when they feel necessary and in order for every Councillor to attend, a site inspection outside normal working hours should be possible.

Full Council regularly has sight of income and expenditure for the Council but does not have information regarding a programme of works at the Cemetery or any information regarding land acquisition, so Councillors cannot raise concerns and do not have the opportunity to raise any concerns from their constituents.

In recent correspondence with the Clerk, the Clerk stated that “any complaints related to the Cemetery are forwarded to her as Proper Officer for the Council. They are dealt with and if I feel the Council needs to know that they are passed on”. The Councillor said that she was deeply concerned that Councillors are not being made aware of a significant number of issues. The Member said that one only needs to look at Facebook to see the deep held feelings – citizens of the town who are frustrated and unsatisfied with the situation.

The Member said that it is her understanding that criticism of any member of staff is not to be carried out at an open meeting. However, she felt that concerns involving the Cemetery relate to its management which is the responsibility of this Council.

The Member said that this Council needs to take this responsibility seriously and with sensitivity.

The Councillor proposed that the following recommendations in the Clerk’s Report be kept:

1. To keep the Cemetery Maintenance and Land Acquisition Group and review membership as two Councillors sitting on this Group have now left the Council.

2. The Chairman of the Public Works and Planning Committee and the Clerk meet with the Cemetery Supervisor at the Cemetery and report back to Full Council.

3. Special Full Council Meetings are held, during the day, starting with a Site Inspection of the Cemetery. *(Item 3 to include a time for all Councillors to attend).*

4. All matters relating to the Cemetery are discussed at Full Council only. *(This is to be amended to read that the Cemetery is to be a regular Agenda item).*

A Member said that before responding to these proposals he would ask whether any Member wished to declare a personal or prejudicial interest as stipulated in the Code of Conduct.

No Councillor declared a personal or prejudicial interest.

The Member then gave background information on the Cemetery. The Member said that he agreed it is difficult to attend meetings during the day when you work, but this does not just apply to the Cemetery. He felt that much of what was proposed is already in place. The Member said that a regular Cemetery Report is presented to Full Council. Members do, however, need to look at the membership of the Cemetery Maintenance and Land Acquisition Group.

The Chairman of the Public Works and Planning Committee and Cemetery Maintenance and Land Acquisition Group pointed out that evening site inspections would not be possible in the Winter months.

The Member who made the proposal said that she was aware that there was a regular Cemetery Report, but it did not give an opportunity to discuss issues and developments.

Another Member said that in her experience the Clerk has always dealt with issues without any problems.

A Member said that the Minutes of the Cemetery Maintenance and Land Acquisition Group go to Full Council when Councillors can ask questions. He asked for clarification as to the recommendation as he was unclear what the recommendation is to vote on.

The Member who made the proposal said that she proposed to keep the options as a whole – the Chair and Clerk meet with Cemetery Supervisor and Report to Full Council. She also proposed that a Special Meeting of Full Council is convened for a site inspection at a time convenient to all Councillors – more consideration is given to the timing of site visits (more Councillors need to be able to attend) and there should be an Agenda item concerning the Cemetery on every Full Council Agenda.

The proposal was seconded. A vote was taken and the proposal was defeated by 9 votes to 2 with 1 abstention.

The Mayor then asked for discussion on membership of the Cemetery Maintenance and Land Acquisition Group.

 RESOLVED THAT:

 (i) Membership of the Cemetery Maintenance and

 Land Acquisition Group be open to any Members

 who wish to join;

 (ii) the following Councillors are to be Members of the

 Cemetery Maintenance and Land Acquisition Group:

 The Mayor (Councillor C. A. Sharp)

The Deputy Mayor (Councillor R. D. Gray)

The Chairman of the Public Works and Planning Committee/

Cemetery Maintenance and Land Acquisition Group

(Councillor M. P. Rickard)

T. Davies

W. D. Elliott BA QTS

B. T. Jenkins

A. H. Miles

Mrs. Y. G. Southwell

53. MILFORD HAVEN SCHOOL CURRICULUM:

Councillor M. P. Rickard declared a personal interest as he is a Governor of Milford Haven School.

Members discussed a letter from Mr. L. Mullins, Press and Public Relations Manager, Pembrokeshire County Council, in which he explained that Combined Year 12 and 13 numbers have dropped by 26.1% from 1,351 in 2014/2015 to 999 in 2017/2018. This means the Pembrokeshire County Council is facing a significant funding reduction of 17.9% from 2016/2017 to 2017/2018.

This reduction has forced the Local Authority and schools to collectively rethink its sixth form curriculum. To maintain sixth forms that are financially viable the Pembrokeshire County Council has made significant inroads in reducing duplication of classes where possible. Following the learners’ options choice process earlier this year, insufficient numbers of learners – just six – opted for A-Level English Literature at Milford Haven School in September.

The option of English Language and English Literature at Pembroke School is available to Milford Haven School learners as part of the South Pembrokeshire Federation.

It should be noted that the Local Authority and secondary schools are building capacity for a new delivery model for the academic year 2018/2019 to ensure a more sustainable A-Level provision in the County.

The Youth Representatives were asked for their opinion on this issue.

One of the Youth Representatives advised that the situation was not ideal for young people, although they did understand the funding reasons and, in addition, there were options open to young people at Pembrokeshire College.

54. HELP US TO CONNECT ADULT MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES WITH LOCAL PEOPLE:

A letter was received by the Director of Transformation, Hywel Dda Health Board, in which she brought to Members’ attention a consultation regarding the challenges and opportunities in meeting the mental health needs of the population.

A Member urged as many Councillors as possible to comment on the consultation. He referred to a recent press report which stated that two Mental Health Doctors could be lost to the area.

55. TRANSFORMING CLINICAL SERVICES – HELP US IMPROVE OUR NHS FROM MID AND WEST WALES:

 Hywel Dda Health Board has launched a new clinically-led engagement and listening exercise to ask local residents and stakeholders exactly what they want from their future NHS service.

 One of the Youth Representatives said that the Pembrokeshire Youth Assembly had a meeting with Hywel Dda the following week to talk about Health Services.

 The Mayor asked whether the Youth Representative would write a report on this meeting and the Youth Representative agreed to do so.

56. REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES:

 (a) James Johns and David Stuart Johns Charity

The Mayor advised that this vacancy had arisen due to the retirement of former Councillor A. W. Eden.

 RESOLVED THAT Councillor Miss K. Gray be

appointed as one of the Council’s Representatives

on the James Johns and David Stuart Johns Charity.

 (b) Milford Haven Port Welfare Committee

Councillor W. D. Elliott BA QTS said that he was starting a full-time job in September and reluctantly had to resign from this Committee. He said that he felt the position would suit someone with an interest in seafaring.

The Mayor said that he was a member of the Unit Management Committee of Milford Haven Sea Cadets and would like to sit on this Committee as an individual Councillor and not as Mayor of the town.

He handed the Chair over to the Deputy Mayor, Councillor R. D. Gray.

Councillor A. H. Miles also expressed an interested in becoming the representative on this Committee. He referred to his work with Save Withybush Action Team.

A vote was taken with Councillor C. A. Sharp receiving 9 votes and Councillor A. H. Miles 2 votes.

 RESOLVED THAT Councillor C. A. Sharp be

 appointed as this Council’s Representative on

 the Milford Haven Port Welfare Committee.

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