Minutes of a Meeting of the Milford Haven Town Council

held at the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Milford Haven

on Monday, 30th October, 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 R. D. Evans

Miss. K. Gray E. R. Harries

B. T. Jenkins Mrs. T. Olin

D. R. Sinnett Mrs. L. E. Turner

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

Youth

Representative: Miss B. Roberts

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PRAYERS:

Prayers were led by the Mayor, Councillor C. A. Sharp, in the absence of his Mayor’s Chaplain, Father Harri Williams.

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

145. APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A. E. Byrne, W. D. Elliott BA QTS, A. H. Miles, M. P. Rickard, Mrs. Y. G. Southwell, Mrs. C. T. Williams and one of the Youth Representatives, Miss A. Coaker. Apologies for absence were not received from Councillor J. Thrower.

146. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON THE 25TH SEPTEMBER, 2017:

RESOLVED THAT the Minutes of the Meeting of

the Milford Haven Town Council held on the

25th September, 2017, be accepted and that they

be signed by the Mayor as a true record.

147. INFORMATION FROM THE MAYOR:

(a) Mayor’s Engagements:

Members were informed of the Mayor’s Engagements since the 26th September, 2017:

27th September - PALS Coffee Morning

28th September - Opening the Milford Haven School Art Exhibition

28th September - St. Katharine’s Junior Production of *Mary Poppins*

29th September - Torch Theatre Macmillan Coffee Day

29th September - Milford Haven School Macmillan Coffee Day

29th September - St Francis Macmillan Coffee Day

29th September - Milford Haven Junior School Macmillan Coffee Day

30th September - Seafarers Summer Charity Ball

1st October - Pet Service at St. Katharine and St. Peter’s Church

4th October - PALS Coffee Morning

5th October - Divisions Milford Haven Sea Cadets and Royal Marines Cadets

13th October - PATCH Toy Launch

13th October - Torch Theatre Gala Evening *One Flew Over The Cuckoo’s Nest*

17th October - *Your Town Your Say* at Hubberston and Hakin Community Centre

20th October - Neyland Ladies Choir 40th Anniversary Dinner

24th October - Town Team Meeting

25th October - Fashion Evening at Images at Vanessa

26th October - South Hook Liaison Meeting

27th October - Mercury Talent Night Final

(b) Milford Haven Youth Club

The Mayor advised that one of the Youth Representatives, Miss B. Roberts, had informed him that the members of the Milford Haven Youth Club are currently running an activity during Youth Club evenings to support the charity Samaritan Purse for ‘Operation Christmas Child’. The Youth Club is sent boxes to fill up with items such as toys, hygiene items and school supplies. The young people who attend Milford Youth Club will have the opportunity not only to take part in creating these boxes but will also learn about charity and diversity. The Youth Representative, Miss B. Roberts, asked whether Members would be able to assist in any way.

The Mayor asked whether Members were needed either to donate items or to assist with the filling of the boxes. Miss B. Roberts replied that any assistance would be gratefully received. The Mayor asked if any donations could be dropped off at the Youth Club.

(c) Services in Connection with Remembrance

The Mayor listed the times and dates of the services in connection with Remembrance.

(d) Milford Haven Yarn Bombers

The Mayor said that he had just returned from visiting the Milford Haven Yarn Bombers.

He had received a warm welcome from the industrious Yarn Bombers who are working very hard and deserve much encouragement. The Milford Haven Yarn Bombers were also very appreciative of the donation made by this Council.

The Mayor showed Members a Remembrance themed display which the Yarn Bombers had requested should be featured in the Remembrance Services on both the 5th and 12th November.

REPORTS ON COMMITTEES

148. PUBLIC EVENTS SUB-COMMITTEE:

In the absence of the Chairman, Councillor W. D. Elliott BA QTS, the Minutes of the Meeting of the Public Events Sub-Committee held on 21st September, 2017, were moved by the Mayor, Councillor C. A. Sharp, who had been present at the meeting.

(a) Minute 118 (i) Minute 61(b) – Budget

The Mayor advised that he, the Clerk and the Council’s Electrician, Mr. B. Jones, had recently met with representatives from the Welsh Government and the South Wales Trunk Road Agent.

There is stringent new legislation in place for work on the highways and although Mr. Jones is a qualified electrician he needs to attain the following qualifications: National Highways Sector Scheme 8 (NHSS 8) and the Highways Electrical Registration Scheme (HERS).

The Officers from the Welsh Government and the South Wales Trunk Road Agent said that they would work with this Council and Mr. Jones to ensure that the column lights were in place on Hamilton Terrace this year. Mr. Jones has undertaken additional training at his own expense in order to comply with the new legislation.

RESOLVED THAT, subject to the above, the

Minutes of the Public Events 21st September,

2017, be approved and adopted.

149. CEMETERY MAINTENANCE AND LAND ACQUISITION GROUP:

In the absence of the Chairman, Councillor M. P. Rickard, the Minutes of the Meeting of the Cemetery Maintenance and Land Acquisition Group held on 25th September, 2017, were moved by the Mayor, Councillor C. A. Sharp, who had been present at the meeting.

Councillor T. Davies declared a personal and prejudicial interest in this item. He explained that he had received dispensation from the Standards Committee to talk but not vote on any matter relating to the Cemetery.

(i) Minute 127 (c) – Minute 77 (a) – Town Council Insurance Policy

Members were advised that that the independent valuation did not include cover for the boundary walls.

The Clerk had contacted the insurance company and if Members wish to use the BCH figures there would be an additional premium of £769.20 (which is pro- rated from the £948.48 as previously advised). If Members wish to accept figures from the independent valuation, the Council would then be charged a pro-rata portion of £393.17 (which will be in the region of £290 but to be confirmed by Aviva).

RESOLVED THAT the Clerk contacts the

Council’s insurers to advise that the

Milford Haven Town Council wishes to utilise the

figures from the independent valuation for

insurance purposes.

(ii) Minute 128 – Chairman’s Remarks

A Member stated that the most appropriate person to contact for any matter relating to the Cemetery or other aspects of the Council is the Clerk. He expressed misgivings that Members are dealing directly with the Cemetery Supervisor and recommended that Members always follow the proper procedure.

A Member said that she was one of the Councillors who has contacted the Cemetery Supervisor directly and it had always been with the prior knowledge of the Clerk.

Another Member emphasised the importance of speaking to the Clerk first as she is aware of the priorities at the Cemetery and the Cemetery Staff’s Line Manager. It is important that Councillors do not visit the Cemetery to tell the staff what to do.

(iii) Minute 129(i) – Stillborn Section

A Member said that he was aware that this was a very emotive subject but wished to express his opposition to the proposal to rename the Stillborn Section “The Angel Garden” as he did not think it an appropriate name for a section in a Municipal Cemetery.

The Mayor advised that the Clerk has received other comments indicating that some people may be offended by the name “The Angel Garden”, particularly from those people who are non-Christian or belong to a religious sector that does not believe in angels. A suggestion brought forward was “The Forget Me Not Memorial Garden”.

Another Member said that the words “Forget Me Not” do not convey that it is a baby’s resting place. The words “Stillborn Section” are very clinical sounding. The Member appreciated that some people would feel uncomfortable with the name “Angel Garden” so had researched the term. An Internet search stated that an angel is a term for a baby that has died before birth. There are no religious connotations to the term. The Member suggested that the Council needs to ask the public what they would like the Stillborn Section to be called.

RESOLVED THAT:

(i) the public is to be asked to submit alternative

names for the Stillborn Section;

(ii) these names will then be considered by Members

and an appropriate name agreed.

(iii) Minute 131(vi) – Memory Tree

RESOLVED THAT Minute 119(vi) be amended

to read: “the Clerk, assisted by Councillor T.

Davies, be authorised to liaise with the family

and monitor the usage of the tree”.

RESOLVED THAT, subject to the above, the

Minutes of the Cemetery Maintenance and Land

Acquisition Group held on 25st September,

2017, be approved and adopted.

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150. CEMETERY REPORT FOR SEPTEMBER 2017:

RESOLVED THAT the Cemetery Report, as

presented by the Clerk for the month of

September, 2017, be received.

151. PLANS:

RESOLVED THAT the recommendations of the

Chairman 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.

(a) Planning Application No. 17/0595/PA – Subdivision of flat (in retrospect) at Flat 5, St. Frances Apartments, Upper Hill Street, Hakin Milford Haven

Councillor E. R. Harries declared a personal interest as he lives adjacent to this property.

(b) Planning Application No. 17/0613/PA – Erection of a Class A3 (food and drink) Drive-thru Coffee Shop, access, landscaping, parking and ancillary works at land adjacent to Quay Street, Victoria Road, Milford Haven

Councillor G. Woodham MBA (Open) LL.B (Hons) declared a personal interest as he is employed by the Torch Theatre Company which neighbours the site for development.

RESOLVED THAT the Milford Haven Town Council

submits the following observations to the Pembrokeshire

County Council:

(i) concerns were expressed over pedestrian safety

and traffic management;

(ii) safety concerns were expressed regarding the

proximity of the proposed application to a cliff

face, and the bank leading up to the Torch Theatre

should be secure;

(iii) an assurance with regard to environmental issues

as the site was previously a petrol station;

(iv) Japanese knotweed should be removed from the area.

152. DRAFT CALENDAR OF AMENDED DATES FOR FULL COUNCIL MEETINGS FROM JANUARY TO APRIL 2018:

Members discussed the draft calendar of amended dates for Full Council meetings from January to April 2018.

A Member said that he had spoken to the Clerk regarding this matter. He had scrutinised the proposed dates and had calculated that this would result in a reduction in the number of days for the Clerk to be able to prepare papers between Council meetings. He then gave examples of the proposed meeting dates from January to April 2018 which illustrated that the Clerk would have on average 10.5 days in which to prepare papers before the Agenda packs were circulated.

The Member did not believe that would be sufficient time for the Clerk to prepare the papers. If the dates were slightly adjusted, and with every meeting not taking place on a Monday, the Clerk could be provided with over 13 days between meetings. The Member explained that this new information was not available at the September meeting when this item was discussed.

On a personal level, the Member did not think that having every meeting on a Monday was appropriate. The Full Council calendar is set for the municipal year every May and less than 6 months into the municipal year changes are proposed to the dates. Some Councillors may not always be available on a Monday and some Councillors may not always be available on a Thursday but having the meetings on two different days of the month accommodates everybody rather than those who expressed the view of having a particular day.

A discussion followed and it was RESOLVED THAT that the dates of the Full Council meetings from January to April 2018 are as follows:

* Thursday, 11th January (Precept meeting)
* Monday, 29th January
* Thursday, 15th February (only one meeting in February)
* Thursday, 8th March
* Monday, 26th March
* Thursday, 12th April
* Monday, 30th April

Ten Members voted in favour of this proposal with one abstention.

153. CHRISTMAS DONATIONS 2017:

Members gave consideration to the Report regarding the Notice for the Christmas Donations which was published in 2016.

Members were asked whether they wish to approve the same Notice for this year.

RESOLVED THAT the same Notice

be utilised for the Christmas Donations

process in 2017 with the closing date

of 5:00 pm on Friday, 17th November,

2017, for applications being received at

the Town Council Office.

154. PROPOSED SPEED LIMIT TRAFFIC REGULATION ORDER:

Members discussed a letter from Mr. B. S. Blake, Senior Traffic Engineer, Pembrokeshire County Council in which he advised that the Pembrokeshire County Council has recently carried out a review of its current speed limit Traffic Regulations Orders (TROs). The purpose of the review is to create a new single TRO which will update and bring together all existing schedules contained in these Orders under one simplified TRO.

RESOLVED THAT the Milford Haven Town

Council supports the recommendations made

by the Pembrokeshire County Council.

155. MILFORD HAVEN TOWN REGENERATION TEAM:

The Mayor stated that he was concerned because he had received a copy of a letter from a person on the Milford Haven Town Regeneration Team (an outside body) which stated “I am writing this letter on behalf of the Town Regeneration Team for Milford Haven, on which I serve in the capacity as Chair and representing Milford Haven Town Council”. The Mayor said that he did not have any concerns over the content of the letter. He was concerned, however, that the writer was giving the impression that the letter represented this Council’s views.

A Member asked who the letter was written to and the Mayor replied to a number of people. The Mayor advised that the writer of the letter had asked for the Council’s support.

Another Member asked whether someone should officially represent the Town Council on the Town Team.

Another Member suggested that the Mayor should be the Council’s official representative and that attendance moves with the Mayor every municipal year, as in the South Hook Liaison Group.

Another Member said that this letter is completely out of order as there is no way that anybody can contend that is the opinion of this Council when it has not been debated.

It was agreed that representation from this Council on to the Town Team should be referred to the Town Team and, if they wished to have representation from this Council, they should make a request.

The Mayor said that he would contact the Chair of the Milford Haven Town Regeneration Team and ask for this to be added to the Agenda of the next meeting.

RESOLVED THE Mayor is to contact the Chair

of the Milford Haven Town Regeneration Team

to ask whether Representation from the Milford

Haven Town Council can be added on to their Agenda.

156. GELLISWICK TOILETS:

Member discussed an email from Mr. M. Harries, Environmental Services, Pembrokeshire County Council, in which he advised that the Pembrokeshire County Council has boarded up Gelliswick Toilets because of vandalism. Mr. Harries also attached a report detailing the repairs required.

Mr. Harries said that over recent months the toilets have been subject to on-going vandalism with numerous toilet cisterns and doors having to be replaced. Instances of vandalism have occurred in previous years at the site. Since March it has become significantly worse.

Mr. Harries concluded by stating that no other toilet is victim of this amount of vandalism within Pembrokeshire.

A Member said that this is a sad example of people not respecting the community.

Another Member suggested that County Councillor Mrs. V. Stoddart, who had been copied into the email, be invited to a meeting to seek her view on what can be done. The Member highlighted sections in the report which itemises repairs such as “toilet pan loose in gents – fixed pan to floor”. He considered that seems very generic in terms of an explanation. It may well be that the toilet was stripped off as an act of vandalism, but he believed that there is a lot of repair work that seems to be listed just as much if not more than what is highlighted as arisen from vandalism.

A Member said that it was important that a very small number of people should not spoil this facility for the majority.

RESOLVED THAT County Councillor Mrs. V. Stoddart

and the relevant Officers from the Pembrokeshire

County Council be invited to a meeting with the Mayor,

Deputy Mayor, and Ward Members to discuss this situation

and explore options.

Councillor E. R. Harries left the meeting at this point.

157. INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION FOR WALES – ANNUAL REPORT 2018/2019:

Members discussed the Independent Remuneration for Wales’ draft Annual Report.

The Mayor confirmed that this is a consultation and Members have until 29th November to comment.

A Member drew Councillors’ attention to the following Determinations:

Determination 44: “*Community and town councils must make a payment to each of their members of £150 per year for costs incurred in respect of telephone usage, information technology, consumables etc”.*

Determination 45: “*Community and town councils in Group A must make an annual payment of £500 each to a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 5 members in recognition of specific responsibilities. This is in addition to the £150 payment for costs and expenses”.*

Determination 51: *“Community and town councils are authorised to provide a Civic Head payment to the mayor/chair of the council up to a maximum of £1,500 to undertake the functions of that office. This is in addition to the £150 payment for costs and expenses if that is made”.*

The Member referred to Determination 44 and said that it is his understanding that when the precept is being discussed in January, if this is the policy set by the Independent Review Panel every Councillor must receive a payment of £150. Furthermore, Determination 45 would also have an impact on the precept.

Members then discussed Determination 51. The Mayor said that, as other past Mayors were aware, the role of Mayor involved considerable expenditure.

A Member said that over the last few years there has been an increasing interference from the Independent Review Panel into what takes place at town and community council level and they are reducing the flexibility that councils have to make their own arrangements as to how they design their own systems for remuneration dependent on their own local circumstances.

RESOLVED THAT any Members with comments/

strong views on Section 13 – *Payments to Members*

*of Community and Town Councils* – forward those

comments by 5:00 pm on Tuesday, 7th November,

so that this issue can be discussed at the next Full

Council meeting on Monday, 13th November, and a

response formulated by this Council.

158. BOUNDARY COMMISSION FOR WALES: REVISED PROPOSALS REPORT 2018 REVIEW:

Members considered an email from the Boundary Commission for Wales relating to the Revised Proposals for changes to Parliamentary constituencies in Wales.

The Commission’s Revised Proposals Report is available on the Commission’s website: [www.bcw2018.org.uk](http://www.bcw2018.org.uk) or at 54 public locations across Wales.

RESOLVED THAT the information be received.

159. GUIDANCE FOR PRINCIPAL COUNCILS ON THE REVIEW OF COMMUNITIES:

Documentation was received from the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales relating to the Guidance for Principal Councils on the Review of Communities.

RESOLVED THAT the information be received.

160. GET INVOLVED! REVIEW OF COMMUNITY AND TOWN COUNCIL SECTOR:

An Independent Review Panel has been set up by the Welsh Government to consider the future role of Community and Town Councils.

The review will:

* explore the potential role of local government

below Local Authority councils, drawing on best

practice;

* define the most appropriate model(s)/structure(s)

to deliver this role;

* consider how these models and structures should

be applied across Wales. This will include

consideration of any situations in which they would

not be necessary or appropriate.

The review is expected to take around a year.

The Panel is keen to hear all views: from Community and Town Councils themselves, from the communities they serve, from the people they work with, from areas that have councils and areas that don’t. The Panel is looking to obtain thoughts on the following:

1. What should Community and Town Councils

be responsible for?

1. How should they operate?
2. What’s standing in their way to deliver for

the local community?

1. How do councils ensure they best represent

their local community?

A discussion followed in which a Member said that he felt that this was an incredibly important document which went to the heart of what this Council should be doing on a daily basis.

RESOLVED THAT:

(i) this document is promoted across this

Council’s social media;

(ii) a Special Meeting will be held to discuss

the responses.

Miss B. Roberts, Youth Representative, offered to circulate the document to the Milford Haven Youth Council to obtain the opinions of the young people of the town.

(iii) Miss B. Roberts is to work with the Clerk

to engage with the Youth Council.

161. STATEMENT OF INCOME:

RESOLVED THAT the statement of income for the

second quarter of the financial year 2017-2018 be

received.

162. SUMMARY OF EXPENDITURE:

RESOLVED THAT the summary of expenditure for the

second quarter of the financial year 2017-2018 be

received.

163. SCHEDULE OF ACCOUNTS:

RESOLVED THAT the Schedule of Accounts,

as presented by the Clerk for the month of

September, 2017, in the sum of £26,351.03,

be accepted and approved for payment.

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