Minutes of a Meeting of the

Pembrokeshire County Council Liaison Group

held at the Town Hall, Milford Haven

on Thursday, 23rd November, 2017 at 11:00 am

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PRESENT

The Mayor (Councillor C. A. Sharp)

The Deputy Mayor (Councillor R. D. Gray)

Councillor Miss K. Gray

Mr. M. Cavanagh, Head of Cultural Services, Pembrokeshire County Council

Ms. J. Ashley-Jones, Link Officer, Pembrokeshire County Council

Mr. J. Walters, Manager, Milford Haven Leisure Centre

County Councillor S. G. Joseph, Central Ward

Mr. B. Phillips, Instigator of the Petition to Save The Rath Paddling Pool in Milford Haven

181. MAYOR’S REMARKS:

The Mayor, Councillor C. A. Sharp, welcomed everybody to the meeting.

182. APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors T. J. Davies, R. D. Evans, B. T. Jenkins and the Youth Representatives, Miss A. Coaker and Miss B. Roberts.

183. TO DISCUSS THE PADDLING POOL ON THE RATH AND THE RATH IN GENERAL:

Mr. M. Cavanagh said that such conversations are sadly not new because austerity has been with us for some time and it looks like it will continue for at least another 4 years. The Pembrokeshire County Council has to save another £50 million.

Mr. Cavanagh said that the Pembrokeshire County Council has been talking with other town, community and city councils in Pembrokeshire to discuss whether they can assist in maintaining services, particularly library services. To date, Haverfordwest, Fishguard and Goodwick and St. Davids have all agreed to support local services.

Mr. Cavanagh said that the proposal is that the paddling pool will be closed. If there is a way that the Pembrokeshire County Council can work with this Council and the local community to avoid closure they want to find that way.

Members were circulated with copies of Staffing Costs for the Paddling Pool for 2016/2017 and the Expected Costs for 2017/2018.

The budget shown for 2017/2018 showed a total expenditure of £4,289.80. Mr. J. Walters, Manager, Milford Haven Leisure Centre, explained that the actual figure is less than anticipated as the expenditure for Lifeguards and Duty Officers was not as much as forecast.

Mr. Walters explained that the expected cost for maintaining and staffing the pool can change quite significantly each year dependent on the weather.

Mr. Walters said that the Paddling Pool had been open for 27 days this year and closed some days due to staffing problems. If staff are offered permanent work, they are reluctant to commit to working at the Paddling Pool because if it rains they lose their money. There were 3 occasions when the staff said that they were guaranteed work somewhere else and the Paddling Pool could not be opened.

Mr. Walters referred to the budget line for Lifeguards and Duty Officers. He explained that if the Paddling Pool is open there is a Lifeguard present. The Duty Officer deals with any issues relating to the Paddling Pool. They do not, therefore, need to be on site at the same time. All Pembrokeshire County Council’s staff who man the Paddling Pool are NPLQ qualified, although this is not a legal requirement.

The officers were asked whether members of the public could be trained to man the Paddling Pool.

Mr. Walters replied that a lifeguard is not a legal requirement for a pool that is under 1.2 metres in depth. The Pembrokeshire County Council has always taken the line that safety is paramount. The Pool could be managed and volunteers could be trained. This, however, has not been tested in Court.

The key staff are the Duty Officer, two staff and a receptionist. If there was a problem, there would not always be a member of staff available. If Mr. Walters was available, he would attend to any problem. He said that he could be seen down the Paddling Pool in May or June pressure washing or weeding because there are no costs involved.

Mr. Cavanagh explained the following options for maintaining the Paddling Pool:

1. The easiest option is the one that is the most expensive. The Pembrokeshire County Council will continue to manage and insure the Paddling Pool, and all the risks stays with that Authority. The Town Council would pay for the service.

2. Volunteers: who can be Pembrokeshire County Council volunteers. These

people would be required to follow the various procedures for being volunteers, such as a medical and DBS check. These would be managed by the Pembrokeshire County Council. The Pembrokeshire County Council volunteers would get certain benefits such as their mileage paid.

3. There can be a separate constituted volunteer body. A group would be set up and that is a difficult process to go through. If that happened the risk would be with that group as they are not being managed by the Pembrokeshire County Council.

County Councillor S. G. Joseph joined the meeting.

Mr. Walters said that 71 male adults, 256 female adults, 264 male children and 281 female children had visited the Paddling Pool this year.

Councillor Joseph said that at a recent meeting of the Trustees of the Nantucket Charitable Incorporated Organisation it had been agreed to assist in maintaining the Paddling Pool as they could see how important it is to the Town.

Councillor Joseph said that the Nantucket Charitable Incorporated Organisation would also fundraise to improve the facilities around the Paddling Pool.

A discussion followed as to the terms of the partnership.

It was RECOMMENDED THAT:

(i) the Pembrokeshire County Council will maintain

ownership of the Paddling Pool, insurance liabilities

and supply qualified staff;

(ii) the Milford Haven Town Council and Nantucket

Charitable Incorporated Organisation will, in

principle, form a partnership agreement for five years

to maintain the Paddling Pool, with the Town Council

making a financial contribution of £3,000 per annum

and the Nantucket Charitable Incorporated Organisation

£2,000 per annum.

Mr. Cavanagh said that at least one of the officers at this meeting would be present at the December meeting of the Full Council when these Minutes will be discussed.

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