Minutes of a Meeting of the Town Regeneration

Environmental Action Team (TREAT)

held at the Town Hall, Milford Haven

on Tuesday, 6th March, 2018 at 4:00 pm

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PRESENT

The Mayor (Councillor C. A. Sharp)

Councillors: D. R. Sinnett (Chairman) T. J. Davies

Mrs. L. E. Turner Mrs. C. T. Williams

R. Williams

County Councillor C. Tomos, Cabinet Member for Environment and Welsh Language

Mr. M. Elliott, Head of Public Protection, Pembrokeshire County Council

Mr. N. McCarthy, Operations Manager, Pembrokeshire County Council

270. APOLOGIES:

Apologies for absence were received from the Deputy Mayor, Councillor R. D. Gray, and Councillors A. E. Byrne, W. D. Elliott BA QTS, R. D. Evans, Miss K. Gray, E. R. Harries, Mrs. T. Olin, M. P. Rickard, Mrs. Y. G. Southwell and G. Woodham MBA (Open) LL.B (Hons).

Apologies for absence were also given from Mr. R. Brown, Head of Environment and Civic Contingencies, Pembrokeshire County Council, and Mr. M. Harries, Head of Waste, Pembrokeshire County Council.

271. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS:

The Mayor, Councillor C. A. Sharp, welcomed everybody to the meeting and asked them to introduce themselves.

272. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR:

RESOLVED THAT Councillor D. R. Sinnett be

appointed as Chair of this Committee.

273. PURPOSE OF THE GROUP AND MEMBERSHIP:

The Chairman, Councillor D. R. Sinnett, thanked the Committee for his appointment.

He said that that there have previously been a number of groups within the Town Council and the town that have taken a very broad view on what constitutes an environmental issue.

The impetus for restarting this group was when Town Councillors received an increasing number of complaints regarding the cleanliness of the town, the problems associated with dog fouling, grass not being cut and vandalism to play areas.

The Chairman said that this Group will be working in partnership with the Town Regeneration Team to look in more detail at the environmental quality. Part of that, from his perspective, was to invite County Councillor Cris Tomos, Cabinet Member for Environment and Welsh Language, and a number of County Council officers to the meeting to understand what can or cannot be done so we can either manage it within the town or develop a community response to some of the challenges.

The Chairman advised that the Deputy Mayor, Councillor R. D. Gray, is very involved in an initiative to make Milford Haven plastic free.

One of the other major issues is a Dog Watch Scheme. There are also day to day issues regarding grass cutting and flytipping.

The Chairman stated that an Action Plan had been devised when MEAT – Milford Environmental Action Team - was in existence some years ago. He suggested that TREAT might develop another Action Plan that has some long-term projects to improve the quality of the streets and surroundings of the town.

Councillor Mrs. C. T. Williams, the Chair of the Milford Haven Town Regeneration Team, said that the Chairman’s comments fit in with the threads of the Town Team. The Town Team was reinvigorated in August 2017 to run with 4 separate strands – environmental issues being one of them – so it was hoped that this Group would feedback to the Town Team.

A Member said that he was constantly asked as to the future of the Motorworld Building, and it was RESOLVED THAT the Clerk seeks clarification as to the future of this building.

County Councillor C. Tomos said that he has been involved with other environmental groups in Pembrokeshire. He advised that there are a number of plastic free initiatives emerging in towns and villages in Pembrokeshire.

County Councillor Tomos stated that PLANED was organising an event on 24th April to bring together like-minded groups across the County to look at environmental issues.

He then referred to the waste review and the kerbside sort which should be a big saving to the Pembrokeshire County Council as it will not have to send everything out to be sorted. That saving will be put into community projects.

Another opportunity, which is going through Cabinet, will be the second home tax. This has been ringfenced as half for affordable housing and half for the community. The current recommendation is that each Town Council’s allocation will be based on how many second homes are in the Wards.

County Councillor Tomos referred to “Ecochampions”. The Town Council would gather the names and contact details of people who are passionate about recycling and environmental issues who would be trained in volunteer schemes such as PAVS Time Banking. These people would encourage citizenship in others.

The membership of TREAT was then discussed.

It was RECOMMENDED THAT the following be invited

to the meetings:

(i) all Town and County Councillors

(ii) operational officers from the Pembrokeshire County Council

as and when necessary

(iii) Mr. A. Don, Chief Executive, Port of Milford Haven

(iv) a representative from Keep Wales Tidy

(v) County Councillor C. Tomos is to receive an open invitation

It was FURTHER RECOMMENDED THAT Sub-Groups can

be formed if considered necessary.

274. PLAN OF ACTION TO INVOLVE PROPOSALS FOR IMPROVING THE ENVIRONMENT OF

THE TOWN:

(a) Dog Fouling

Mr. M. Elliott, Head of Public Protection, Pembrokeshire County Council,

explained the problems associated with dog fouling.

Mr. Elliott said that since he started work with the Pembrokeshire County Council some 9½ years ago the problem of dog fouling has never gone away.

He explained that the Pembrokeshire County Council had 2.8 full time equivalent dog wardens, who were hard stretched to deal with the statutory functions such as stray dogs, dangerous dogs and micro chipping and the high numbers of dog fouling issues across the County, as well as dealing with byelaws for Blue Flag beaches.

One dog warden has left and is not being replaced due to the medium-term financial plan cost reductions. Further reductions may follow.

Mr. Elliott referred to the number of dogs in Wales – 450,000 in 2013 and 550,000 in 2015, and the income stream if there was an annual dog registration scheme in Wales with all monies collected pledged to dog control and welfare. In Northern Ireland a dog licence is a legal requirement.

Mr. Elliott said that there are three types of dog owners – responsible ones who always clear up their dog’s mess, irresponsible ones who always leave their dog’s mess, and those who only sporadically clear up their dog’s mess.

Mr. Elliott said that it has been found that responsible dog owners become part of the solution. When the responsible dog owners wear hi vis jackets or vests the dog owners who only sporadically clear up their dog’s mess will see someone in a hi vis jacket and pick up the mess straight away. As many responsible dog owners as possible are to be encouraged to join the scheme and cover the walks in the town.

Mr. Elliott advised that one Town Council had received sponsorship from a pet food company to purchase hi vis jackets.

Mr. Elliott said that the difference between litter and dog fouling is that although dog fouling is not an offence, it is an offence not to pick it up.

Mr. Elliott was asked whether his department had “dog waste” stickers. He said that he believed that there were some remaining which he would pass on.

A Member said that not everyone realised that dog waste could be put in every bin.

It was suggested that TREAT instigates a competition for schoolchildren to design a “dog mess” sticker to be placed on litter bins.

It was RECOMMENDED THAT:

(i) responsible dog owners be invited to attend

a meeting to discuss the setting up of a Dog Watch

Scheme in Milford Haven;

(ii) schoolchildren are to be invited to enter a

competition to design a “dog mess” sticker to

be placed on litter bins;

(iii) the winner of the competition will have the sticker

printed.

County Councillor Tomos referred to the Pembrokeshire County Council website which shows every street light in the area and how customers can report flytipping and other issues.

It was RECOMMENDED THAT the Milford Haven

Town Council is to promote what the Pembrokeshire

County Council does on social media.

(b) Plastic Free

Councillor Mrs. C. T. Williams, the Chair of Milford Haven Town Regeneration Team, said that she was passionate about this and is keen to work in partnership with TREAT and local businesses about the use of plastics.

It was RECOMMENDED THAT discussion on this issue

be deferred until the Deputy Mayor, Councillor R. D.

Gray, is present as this is one of her projects for

her Mayoral year.

(c) General Cleanliness in the Town

(i) Sweeping Brooms

A Member said that Town Team had provided funding for 10 sets of sweeping brooms for Charles Street traders to clear up the areas in front of their premises.

(ii) Litter Picks

Mr. N. McCarthy, Operations Manager, Pembrokeshire County Council, said that, where appropriate, he would co-ordinate litter picks with the Housing Section.

It was agreed that it was important for the community to be aware what is planned and it was RECOMMENDED THAT all projects are to be promoted via social media.

(ii) Beach cleaning

It WAS RECOMMENDED THAT beach cleaning initiatives

are to be arranged at Gelliswick and Milford

Beaches during the summer holidays.

County Councillor C. Tomo­s left the meeting at this point as he had another engagement.

275. NEXT STEPS:

It was RECOMMENDED THAT if Members are made aware

that there is interest in a litter pick in the town, could they

advise the Clerk so that this can put on the Agenda for the

next meeting.

276. DATE OF NEXT MEETING:

It was RECOMMENDED THAT:

(i) meetings be arranged every two months, alternating

afternoons and evenings;

(ii) the next meeting will be held at 2:00 pm on Wednesday,

9th May, 2018.

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