

**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Pontardawe Town Council held on Monday, 12<sup>th</sup> March 2012, at Ynysmeudwy Community Hall commencing at 6.45 p.m. (Bilingual)**

**8787. Present:** Councillor B Williams (presiding), Mrs J Bowen, D B Thomas, M James, H Pickrell, M Thomas, Mrs L Purcell, D Harris, Mrs E Puzey, Ms S Northcott, A Nicholson, H Evans.

**Apologies:** A E Williams, V Thomas, Mrs C Lambourne.

**8788. Disclosure of Personal and Pecuniary Interest:** None.

**Resolved** to be noted.

**8789. Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on the 13<sup>th</sup> February 2012:**

**Resolved** that the minutes of the meeting held on the 13<sup>th</sup> February 2012, having been read and confirmed as a true record, be accepted by Council.

**8790. Mynydd y Betws Wind Farm traffic discussion with the Police:** The meeting was attended by Sergeant Andy Abrahams, Inspector Dean Thomas, Leigh Lewis (Abnormal Loads Officer) and Paul Daniels (Traffic Management Officer), to discuss the process for transporting turbines through Pontardawe and Rhyd y Fro. There was no representation from the haulier as at the time of the meeting he had not yet been officially contracted.

The Mayor initially thanked the Police Officers for attending the meeting, and began by posing a number of specific questions.

The delegation from the Police however stated that at this point in the process there was no answer to some of the specific questions, they then went on to explain the process:

- All construction utilising large vehicles must first apply to the Local Authority.
- The Local Authority review the route to determine if the actual roads are suitable, i.e. weight due to bridges etc.
- If the route is deemed suitable the haulier will produce a detailed 'Traffic Management Plan'
- The 'Traffic Management Plan' would be reviewed by the Police, who will determine if escorts are required, special orders, or road closures are needed.
- A 'dummy run' is carried out with a vehicle of comparable length and width to determine areas on the route that may cause difficulties.
- The local authority is advised of changes that will be required to the road structure i.e. roundabouts, street furniture etc.
- The Police will review the results of the 'dummy run' to determine issues with traffic management and the safety of members of the public.
- Safety is the primary concern, and should there be an insurmountable problem with the 'Traffic Management Plan' that cannot be resolved, then the plan will be rejected and no transport can take place. The Police did however confirm

that in this area, there had been no instance when an issue could not be resolved.

The Police then went on to advise Council of some of the specifics with regard to the Mynydd y Betws Wind Farm construction traffic.

- Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council had confirmed that the route was suitable for heavy vehicles and that all the appropriate checks on the structure of the road had been completed.
- At present a haulier had not been officially contracted so a 'Traffic Management Plan' had not yet been officially produced.
- The Police had however had some informal discussions with a haulier and had a great deal of experience with other construction sites to call on.
- The Police were already aware of some areas which were likely to cause an issue, and were aware that there were pinch points on the route where other vehicles were not able to pass. They explained that there would be a number of passing points built into the plan, together with constant communication with other emergency services, and motorcycle outriders ahead of the convoy, which would prevent any delay in the arrival of other emergency services, should they be required in the area. In the event of a breakdown, the Police confirmed that the turbine trailers could be raised to allow another vehicle to pass.
- Any street furniture, signs or roundabouts that needed to be removed would be replaced by temporary structures during construction and would then be replaced when construction had been completed.
- The haulier always had an alternative transporter available, should the original suffer a breakdown.
- At present the plan was not to move the turbines at night but to move them from Swansea docks from 9.00 am. Also, it was estimated that there would be three movements each day. The transit would be approximately one hour.
- The Police hoped to carry out a 'dummy run' by the end of May, but there would be no actual transports until at least September 2012.
- As far as possible the 'dummy run' will mimic the actual conditions, where this is not possible computer simulations will be utilised.
- The Base tower is 43.27 meters long and the blades are 50.927 meters long.
- Until the completion of the 'Traffic Management Plan' and the 'dummy run' the route and times are only 'proposed', however there is no alternative route.
- Local residents in Rhyd y Fro would be informed of proposed road closures and of requirement to move vehicles from the curb side in advance by leaflet drop.
- The Neighbourhood Policing teams would work closely with residents to resolve any problems then encounter.

The Police did however reiterate that until a 'Traffic Management Plan' had been produced and the 'dummy run' had been carried out, then answers to specific questions about the route and concerns over passing could not be answered. They did however confirm that in future the 'Traffic Management Plans' would be considered as part of the planning process, to ensure that they can be reviewed at an earlier point in the process.

The Police team were thanked by Council for attending the meeting, and providing an insight into the traffic management process.

**Resolved** that Council be kept informed of when the 'Traffic Management Plan' is available and when the 'dummy run' has taken place, and that the haulier and Police be invited back to a meeting to discuss specific issues and concerns at that time.

**8791. Matters raised by members of the public:** There were a number of issues raised by members of the public with regard to the Mynydd y Betws Wind Farm construction traffic route. These were as follows:

- The 'Traffic Management Plan' should have formed part of the planning application.
- The 'dummy run' should not only have trailers with comparable length and width but should also include a comparable weight.
- Although it was stated that the trailers could be heightened to allow traffic to move beneath it, there was concern that the height would be insufficient to allow a fire engine to move below it. Also, there was concern that overhead power lines may restrict this action if a breakdown occurred in an area with overhead cables.
- Many residents would welcome an open forum meeting with the Police and haulier to allow them to review the 'traffic management plan'.
- There was concern over the timing of the transit during peak periods.
- The observers at the 'Old Star' had data on the number of emergency vehicles using the A474 on a daily basis.

**Resolved** to be noted.

**8792. Site visit to Mynydd y Betws Wind Farm:** A number of members attended a site meeting at the Mynydd y Betws Wind Farm site in order to view the archaeological site. Councillor Nicholson provided photographs and stated that the meeting had been interesting. The Clerk also confirmed that at present the report from CADW was not available but that a copy would be provided when one was available.

**Resolved** to be noted.

**8793. Police Matters:** The Clerk stated that February 2012 was a strong performing month when compared to February 2011, as apart from thefts from motor vehicles of which there were only three, all categories of crime were down. In summary, there was a reduction of 92 crimes overall.

One of the current major initiatives was metal theft, and that the Police would require local residents to be vigilant and to report any suspicions.

The PACT meetings in the Swansea and Neath Port Talbot were to be suspended until after the election on the 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2012, in order to maintain their independence; however the Neighbourhood policing teams would continue their work in the communities throughout the period.

Council was also advised that the contrary to information received, the youths suspected of causing damage close to the park in Trebanos had been sixteen and Seventeen years old and not young teenagers, and therefore referral to Social Services was not warranted.

**Resolved** to be noted.

**8794. Herbert Street Improvements:** Council was advised that a letter had been received from the County Borough Council confirming that the review of the new road signage and Parking on Herbert Street would now take place prior to November. A date would be provided in due course.

**Resolved** to be monitored.

**8795. Anti- Social Behaviour in Church Street:** Council was advised that a licence review by the County Borough Council for the 'Football Club' was due to take place on the 27<sup>th</sup> March 2012.

**Resolved** to be monitored.

**8796. Charter Progress:** A letter was received from the Head of Corporate Strategy at Neath Port Talbot Council, stating that the workshop group at One Voice Wales was due to meet in March, and that following this meeting, a date would be arranged for a meeting with the County Borough Council.

**Resolved** to be monitored.

**8797. Small fire fighting vehicles:** A letter had been received from Mid and West Wales fire and rescue confirming that they were due to introduce an additional sixteen small fire fighting vehicles, in the next few months.

**Resolved** to be noted.

**8798. Planning meeting held on the 20<sup>th</sup> February 2012 together with additional applications received prior to the Ordinary meeting:**

Councillor L Purcell was absent for the entire discussion.

#### **P2010/1040**

Applicant: Mrs A D Howells, Pontardawe Town Council, P O Box 556, Swansea, SA8 4WL

Site location: Pontardawe Leisure Centre, Ffordd Parc Ynysderw, Pontardawe, Swansea.

Proposed Development: Skate Park.

**Resolved** No objection.

#### **P2012/0056**

Applicant: Mrs Maureen Littlewood, 9 Bryn Derwen, Pontardawe, Swansea SA8 4LF.

Site location: Bryn Derwen, Pontardawe, Swansea SA8 4LF.

Proposed Development: Works including removal of dead wood lower branches to pruning points to tree covered by tree preservation order T299.

**Resolved** No objection provided work does not impact negatively on the health of the tree.

**P2012/0045**

Applicant: Mr Peter Bridgens, 10 Blaencwm Road, Llansamlet, Swansea, SA7 9TA.

Site location: Gosen Eglwys Apostolaidd, Holly Street, Pontardawe, Abertawe.

Proposed Development: Demolition of single storey rear extension and construction of single storey rear extension.

**Resolved** No objection provided there is neighbourhood notification.

**P2011/1141**

Applicant: Mr Pennant Homes, 11 Wind Street, Swansea, SA1 1DP.

Site Location: Former Coleg Cwmtawe, Alltycham Drive, Pontardawe, Abertawe, SA84JX.

Proposed Development: Variation of condition 23 of P2010/0880 granted on the 14/9/11 to allow the construction of road, Plots 1-4 and Plots 22 – 25 and the erection of temporary security fence and access gate prior to highway improvements required along Alltycham Drive.

**Resolved** No Objection however Council has concerns over obstruction of usual vehicular movements due to site traffic.

**P2012/0082**

Applicant: Mr & Mrs Morris, 4 Waun Sterw, Rhydyfro, Pontardawe, Swansea, SA8 4NF.

Site location: 4 Waun Sterw, Rhydyfro, Pontardawe, Swansea, SA8 4NF.

Proposed Development: Conversion and alteration of garage including raising existing ridge height to provide two bedroom granny annex.

**Resolved** No objection provided there is neighbourhood notification.

**P2012/0018**

Applicant: Mr Stephen Thomas, 12 Lloyd Street, Trebanos, Pontardawe, Swansea, SA8 4DR.

Site location: 12 Lloyd Street, Trebanos, Pontardawe, Swansea, SA8.

Proposed Development: Proposed pruning of two trees covered by tree preservation order T154/W1.

**Resolved** No objection provided work does not impact negatively on the health of the tree.

**P2011/1000**

Applicant: Mr K Yeo, 150 Jersey Road, Bonymaen, Swansea, SA1 7DQ.

Site location: Gellifowy Fawr Farm, Gellifowy Road, Ynysmeudwy, Pontardawe, Swansea, SA8 4TU.

Proposed Development: Conversion of agricultural barns into two units of residential accommodation together with demolition of existing livestock sheds.

**Resolved** No objection provided there is neighbourhood notification.

**P2011/1122**

Applicant: Mr John Evans, 6 New Road, Ynysmeudwy, Pontardawe Swansea SA8 4PJ.

Site location: 6 New Road, Ynysmeudwy, Pontardawe Swansea SA8 4PJ.

Proposed Development: Single storey side and rear extension.

**Resolved** No objection provided there is neighbourhood notification.

**P2012/0119**

Applicant: Mr Peter Lake, Woodbine Cottage, Gellifowy Road, Ynysmeudwy, Pontardawe, Swansea, SA84QE.

Site location: Woodbine Cottage, Gellifowy Road, Ynysmeudwy, Pontardawe, Swansea, SA84QE.

Proposed Development: Part two storey part single storey extension.

**Resolved** No objection provided there is neighbourhood notification.

**P2012/0072**

Applicant: Matthew Hayes, Waste Recycling Group, Suite D, Darwin House, 414 The Quadrant, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 6FW.

Site location: Pwllfawatkin Landfill, Rhydyfro, Pontardawe.

Proposed Development: Scheme under conditions 36 & 60 of Planning permission P2002/1016 for the restoration and aftercare of the old (current) landfill and Phase 1 & 2 of the extension area.

**Resolved** No objection.

**Applications reviewed in this meeting:**

**P2012/0074**

Applicant: Mr Khadim Hussain, Trebanos Service Station, 140-146 Swansea Road, Trebanos, Pontardawe, Swansea, SA84BN.

Site Location: Trebanos Service Station, 140-146 Swansea Road, Trebanos, Pontardawe, Swansea, SA84BN.

Proposed Development: Retention of one fuel pump, two gas bottle cages and two above ground fuel tanks.

**Resolved** Objection due to concerns over the risk of fire with above ground fuel tanks and the effect this would have on local residents.

**P2012/0202**

Applicant: Ms Elspeth Lowe, 4 Grove Road, Pontardawe, Swansea, SA8 4HH.

Site location: 4 Grove Road, Pontardawe, Swansea, SA8 4HH.

Proposed development: Single story rear extension.

**Resolved** No objection provided there is neighbourhood notification.

**P2012/0138**

Applicant: Avonbank, Feeder Road, Bristol, BS20TB.

Site Location: 33/11Kv Electrical substation and switch room off A474 – Swansea Road to Graig Road, Pontardawe, SA8 4AF.

Proposed Development: Extension to 33/11kV Switch room Building and demolition of Outdoor Switchgear Building.

**Resolved** No objection.

**8799. Finance meeting held on the 20<sup>th</sup> February 2012:**

Distribution of Grants for the Financial Year 2012/13:

Councillor B Williams expressed an interest in both the 'Riverside' projects and the Pontardawe Chamber of Trade, and took no part in the discussion on grant funding for these organisations.

Cefn Llan Residents Association **£100.00 (LGA (Misc provisions) Act 1976)**

Glantawe Lions 'Tree of Light' **£100.00 (LGA 1972 S137)**

Trebanos RFC **£250.00 (LGA (Misc provisions) Act 1976)**

Swansea Valley Canal Society **£180.00 (LGA (Misc provisions) Act 1976)**

St Peters Flower Festival **£100.00 (LGA 1972 S145)**

Pontardawe Arts Club **£150.00 (LGA 1972 S145)**

Urdd **£100.00 (LGA 1972 S145)**

National Eisteddfod **£100.00 (LGA 1972 S145)**

Bobath **£50.00 (LGA 1972 S137)**

Shelter Cymru **£50.00 (LGA 1972 S137)**

Victim Support **£50.00 (LGA 1972 S137)**

Alzheimer Society **£50.00 (LGA 1972 S137)**

Macmillan Cancer Support **£50.00 (LGA 1972 S137)**

St John's Ambulance **£50.00 (LGA 1972 S137)**

British Heart Foundation **£50.00 (LGA 1972 S137)**

Kidney Wales Foundation **£50.00 (LGA 1972 S137)**

Council agreed to provisionally award this grant provided that following the Clerks investigations there were no issues with regard to this organisations funding methods.

Pontardawe Bowls Club **£100.00 (LGA (Misc provisions) Act 1976)**

Council also agreed to fund the purchase of a trophy or cup for one of the ongoing fixtures.

Council was unable to award a grant to the Neath Art Club as it was felt that this organisation did not provide activities in the Town Council area and that in accordance with the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 the benefit would not be commensurate with the expenditure to be incurred.

Pontardawe Chamber of Trade and Commerce requested £3000 in order to support the Carnival, winter, spring, summer and autumn festivals. Council however requested that additional details be made available on how this figure was to be spent prior to making a decision on the level of funding. They would also like sight of previous accounts and bank statements if these were available.

The Riverside Centre in Pontardawe requested a donation to support two festivals to be carried out this year however once again the Town Council felt that additional details on the amount of funds required together with copies of accounts and bank statement were required prior to making a decision on the level of funding.

Pontardawe Art Centre requested assistance in supporting the 'Nofit State Circus' – Barricade project, which is due to take place in Pontardawe in 2012. Council however has requested additional details on this project and its other funders prior to making a decision on funding.

The grants given are in the interest of, and will bring direct benefit to, this area or any part of it, or all, or some of its inhabitants.

Review the current Financial Standing orders and financial risk assessment:

The Committee was provided with the current Financial Standing Orders and reviewed them. The Clerk confirmed that she had no recommended changes. The Committee was then presented with the proposed amendments to the financial risk assessment, and these were as follows:

- The request that the Hall management committees should take advice on insurance and those copies of the management committee meeting minutes should be forwarded to the Clerk, and should be requested by the 30<sup>th</sup> April each year.
- The 'Loss of Money' risk identified and measures to be taken should be altered to take into account the current wording and values on the Insurance schedule (schedule as of June 2011)
- Clerks Salary should be presented to Council annually, this should take place at the same time that a list of other employees is presented to Council – this should form part of a Personnel meeting prior to the end of the tax year when salaries would also be agreed.
- 'Training of Clerk' should be altered to take into account that the CILCA examination is currently held.
- 'Consultations' The Clerk confirmed that the County Borough will now provide us with 21 days consultation rather than 14 days.
- 'Register of Members Interests' The Clerk confirmed that there was no obligation to hold a 'Register of Members Interests' and had been advised by the County Association not to hold one, as there were significant issues with holding a register if the information held was not current.
- Councillor Nicholson also requested that an additional section be added to the Financial Risk Assessment to cover the 'Freedom of Information Act'.

The Clerk also advised the Committee of actions now taken to address High Risk Financial Issues.

- A list was now held of local businesses that could assist in tasks should the grounds man be unable to perform his function due to long term illness.

- Paper records reviewed – Copies of historical minutes only held at the Town Council Office. The actual records are now stored in the County Archive.
- All records now held in both paper and electronic format, with the electronic copies uploaded onto a flash drive weekly and held in a separate location to the paper records.
- Occupational risk assessments compiled in 2011 and are reviewed annually.

**Resolved** that Council agree the recommendations on Grant funding for 2012/13 and also the changes recommended in the review of the Financial Standing Orders and Risk Assessment.

**8800. Policy and Resources Committee held on the 21<sup>st</sup> February 2012 reviewing possible cost savings:**

The committee looked at the level of current costs and determined that the three areas where cost savings could be reviewed were Administration, Parks and Halls. A full discussion was entered into with a number of issues brought to the table. At this point however it was agreed that there was significant amount of investigation required which would need to be reviewed at a later date before any decisions could be made. The Committee provided a number of possible cost saving measures which once again would require additional investigation before any action or decisions could be made.

- Trade accounts in conjunction with the other local Town/Community Councils to take advantage of the buying power under shared services. Areas to be reviewed are office, park and Hall supplies.
- It was suggested that although the Summer Hanging baskets were very popular and should continue, the winter baskets could instead be replaced by miniature Christmas Trees. It was suggested that the Town Council provide the Christmas Trees with the individual retailers supplying lighting if they wished.
- A supply of second class stamps should be purchased prior to the expected price rise in 2012.
- Email copies of minutes and notices for meetings rather than send or deliver paper copies.
- Copies of English minutes to be attached to the Council web site – Welsh translation on application.
- Look at possibility of sub let of office room review legal, contractual, insurance and practical considerations
- Encourage Members to undertake Councillor training with ‘One voice Wales’ and divert funds to training budget to compensate following the election in May. The training should be on a rolling program.
- Professional investigation to be undertaken on the heating system in Trebanos Hall.

- Review of groups to be undertaken in all halls to determine the demographics of users.
- Identify the hourly variable utility costs for all three halls.

#### **Resolved**

- That a supply of second hand stamps is purchased.
- That the Clerk arranges for an English copy of all future meeting minutes to be available on the internet with a notice that a Welsh copy can be supplied on request.
- That a professional investigation of the heating system is carried out at Trebanos Hall.
- That the Clerk collects data for the other initiatives and arranges a further Policy and Resources Committee for April to discuss these issues.

#### **8801. Development meeting held on the 18<sup>th</sup> January 2012:**

CoRE funding projects (The CoRE or Community Regeneration Environment grants provides funding for projects through Groundworks and the Rural Development plan for Wales.

A number of potential projects were discussed taking into account Environmental issues and the increase of health and wellbeing of residents within the wards. As the criteria for grants and value of the grants to be issued are not publicized, but that numerous projects could be put forward, it was agreed to look at a number of projects.

These were:

- The Pontardawe Skateboard Park – This project has been in progress for a number of years, but is lacking funding. There is however already agreement to lease the land from Neath Port Talbot Council. Planning permission has also been sought.
- Allotments
- A Community Orchard on the land owned by Pontardawe Town Council at Maes Iago
- Updating of equipment at Trebanos Park to create a natural play area.
- A 'bog garden' on the land adjacent to King George V Park in Pontardawe.

It was also suggested that the Canal Society be made aware of the CoRE grants, so that they could obtain funding to further improve and publicise the Canal in this area.

**Resolved** that the Clerk will approach 'Groundworks' to determine if any of the above projects fall within their criteria and then apply for grant funding. Furthermore, she is to contact Neath Port Talbot Council to determine if any land in the area owned by the County Borough could be leased by the Town Council for allotments and will provide details of the scheme to the Canal Society.

**8802. Annual Salary Review:** It was agreed that a Personnel Committee would be arranged for 6.00pm on the 26<sup>th</sup> March 2012.

**Resolved** to be noted.

**8803. Cefn Llan Park:** Council was advised that the lease for Cefn Llan Park had been prepared and had been signed by Councillor Bob Williams and Councillor Mrs C Lambourne under the standing order emergency powers, as time was an important factor.

**Resolved** that this decision be ratified.

**8804. Accounts Schedule 275:** totalling £7341.35. The Clerk confirmed that of the two cancelled cheques, one had been cancelled on the request of the contractor as the original cheque had been received but subsequently mislaid by him. The second cheque had been cancelled as a precaution as it had been posted but not received by the contractor.

**Resolved** to be agreed under financial regulations.

**8805. Princes Trust:** The Clerk confirmed that a letter of thanks for the donation had been received from the 'Princes Trust'.

**Resolved** to be noted.

**8806. National Grid:** A letter had been received stating that Ynysymond Road would be closed from the 27<sup>th</sup> February 2012 for inspection of the pipe line. The road would be closed for approximately 20 weeks.

**Resolved** to be noted.

**8807. Countryside Council for Wales:** Review of open access to land in Wales due to commence on the 16<sup>th</sup> July 2012. A provisional map was to be produced on the 7<sup>th</sup> August 2013 and on the conclusion of the appeals process the final map was due to be issued in September 2014.

**Resolved** to be noted.

**8808. Discussion document on the closure of Clydach Memorial Hospital:** Council discussed the reasons for possible closure and understood that the building could no longer be utilised as a clinical facility, but would like to see the building saved if possible but if not then every effort should be made to preserve the frontage and war memorial.

**Resolved** to be noted.

**8809. Hanging Basket Scheme:** An email had been received from one of the businesses not situated on High Street, Herbert Street or James Street and therefore outside area of the original hanging basket scheme, which was for the improvement of the Town image and provided hanging baskets at regular intervals. In 2011 a number of other businesses which fell outside of the original scheme were contacted with an offer to take advantage of the Town Council's bulk buying power to obtain fully maintained hanging baskets at a reduced rate. As an added benefit, the Town Council would fund one hanging basket per establishment. The email stated that it was unfair that both of his hanging baskets would not be funded by the Town Council.

**Resolved** to be noted.

**8810. Paradise Car Park:** An email was received from a local resident stating that the curb stones at the car park were damaged and dangerous.

**Resolved** that the Clerk would contact the County Borough Council.

**8811. Proposed visit to Ystalyfera Community Council:** An invitation was received from Ystalyfera Community Council for some of our Councillors to attend their next meeting to informally discuss projects on the Pontardawe Town Council/ Ystalyfera Community Council border.

**Resolved** that Councillors Bob Williams and Andrew Nicholson would attend.

**8812. Community Plan Partnership Seminar:** Councillor Williams attended on behalf of Council but stated that the meeting had little merit.

**Resolved** to be noted.

**8813. Urgent Road Safety Matters:** None

**Resolved** to be noted.

**8814. Date of next meeting** – To confirm that the next meeting of Council will be held on the 16<sup>th</sup> April 2012 at ARCH Hall.

Signed ..... Dated .....