

**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Pontardawe Town Council held on Monday 10th June
2013,
at Trebanos Hall, Swansea Road, Trebanos commencing at 6.45pm**

9199. Present Councillors Sue Northcott (presiding), P Williams, G Davies, D Harris, D B Thomas, Mrs E Puzey, Mrs J Bowen, Mrs L Purcell, A Nicholson, H Evans, Ms R Lewis, H Pickrell.

Apologies: Councillor V Hotten and B Williams.

9200. Disclosure of Personal and Pecuniary interests:

Councillors Linet Purcell and Rebeca Lewis declared an interest in planning and Councillors Jean Bowen, Andrew Nicholson, Sue Northcott and Gary Davies declared an interest in the Pontardawe and District Youth Facility.

Resolved this be noted.

9201. Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 13th May 2013:

Resolved that the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 13th May 2013, having been read and confirmed as a true record, be accepted by Council.

9202. Matters raised by members of the public: A request was made for clarification on the continuance of Members Surgeries, an update on the request for information on dog bins in Pontardawe, and the date of Bethan Jenkins AM's attendance at a Council Meeting. Further requests were made for the double yellow lines in Trebanos to be extended, and for enquiries to be made as to the future of the Rugby Club at Trebanos and of the feasibility of the purchase of the Rugby club car park for public use.

9203. Police Matters: The Clerk provided the following information:

Trebanos:

On the 24th March 2013 a speed camera was placed between Graig Road and Glynmeirch Road. They recorded speeds between 17mph and 39mph. The speed camera placed on the border of Trebanos and Clydach recorded speeds between 18mph and 35mph. Three warning letters were sent to motorists as a result.

On the 27th March 2013 an exercise was carried out by the police to target dog fouling and littering. Two fixed penalty notices and one warning letter were issued as a result.

For April there were also two instances of Violent crime in the area.

The next PACT meeting was scheduled for the 20th June 2013 at 6.30pm at Trebanos Hall.

Pontardawe:

An exercise was carried out alongside the Junior Road Safety team at Llanguick School with speed cameras and high visibility patrols. One person's details were taken as a result.

Local officers also increased their high visibility patrols of Church Street and Quarr road; however no vehicles were witnessed contravening the one way system.

For April there were thirty two offences reported in the Pontardawe area. Four for Burglary, Eight for Anti Social Behaviour, two for vehicle crime, seven for violent crime, three for criminal damage, six for other types of theft, one for drug offences and one for other crime.

The next PACT meeting was scheduled for the 27th June 2013 at 6.30pm at 'The Cross' Community Centre.

Sergeant Andy Abraham and Inspector Huw Griffiths also attended the meeting and provided answers to various questions.

Inspector Griffiths gave a brief explanation of his background and his views on community safety, local policing and public communication.

He explained that PCSO's were no longer attending 'PACT' (**this has been altered by amendment in the June 2013 minutes to 'Town and Community Council'**) meetings as they had insufficient information to answer specific strategic questions however he explained that he was available to attend meetings if specifically asked and was more than happy to answer email queries directly.

He explained that the priorities were currently violent crime and victim satisfaction.

He also reiterated that information from local people and Town and Community Councils was vital for them to target crime and urged Members encourage residents to report all potential crimes.

Inspector Griffiths confirmed that drug crime was continually being investigated, and that prevention was also a high priority with the 'All Wales School program' continuing to be funded by the Welsh Assembly Government. The recent spate of 'sheep rustling' was being addressed by specific liaison with local farmers.

Sergeant Abraham conceded that the 101 number for non violent crime had initially not been successful but confirmed that a great deal of additional resource and training had been undertaken and that the system was now far more efficient.

Council then thanked both Inspector Griffiths and Sergeant Abrahams for attending the meeting.

Resolved that the Clerk will request crime details from Inspector Griffiths and will then forward to Members. The Clerk will also arrange a visit to Neath Police station for Members.

9204. Pontardawe & District Youth Facility: The Clerk confirmed that no response had been received from the County Borough on the question of the lease or a valuation of 'The Stables' and that for the financial year to the 31st May the contribution to the Youth facility was £500.

Resolved that Council will be kept informed of developments.

9205. Park signage and Skip availability: Council was advised that the County Borough had not yet received confirmation whether the 'Community Skip Scheme' was to continue this year and therefore was not able to confirm if a skip could be made available for residents of Gellideg. The Clerk also confirmed that funds were available for additional signage at Parc Chwarae Teg.

Resolved to provide copies of the County Borough's letter on the 'Community skip scheme' to Councillors Linet Purcell and Rebeca Lewis as County Borough Members. It was further agreed that the Clerk purchase the appropriate signage for Parc Chwarae Teg.

9206. Summer Playschemes: The Clerk confirmed that the summer playschemes would run from the 5th August 2013 to the 30th August 2013.

It was further confirmed that both Trebanos Hall and Park ,Cefn Llan Hall and Parc Chwarae Teg were available for the playschemes, which would run as follows:

Parc Chwarae Teg – Monday, Wednesday and Friday 10.30am to 12.30pm. Tuesday and Thursday 1.45pm to 3.45pm

Trebanos Park – Monday, Wednesday and Friday 1.45pm to 3.45pm. Tuesday and Thursday 10.30am to 12.30pm.

Resolved to be noted.

9207. Parking in Pontardawe: A letter had been received from the County Borough stating that the layout of the car parks had been to maximise car parking spaces and that although disabled parking had taken some of the original bays, four additional bays would be available following the current regeneration of the bottom car park. There could be no alteration to 'one hour free parking with no return for 24 hours' due to the Councils financial pressures, but that additional signage was being erected to clarify the position.

The letter also confirmed that the cost of the installation of the parking meters was approx. £2500 each with the cost of lining the Paradise car park at approximately £500.

Council was very concerned that traders were losing business and that following the introduction of the car parking charges the Town Centre was not being fully utilised, with the car parks almost empty.

Resolved that the following information will be requested from the County Borough

- A comparison between the number of cars utilising the car parks following the introduction of charges and the number of cars utilising the car parks prior to the introduction of charges.
- If County Boroughs projected revenue was likely to be achieved.
- When the additional signage explaining the one hours free parking was to be erected.
- Whether the original intention to fund the parking enforcement officer from parking fines was still feasible.

9208. Planning: Meeting held on the 28th May 2013:

P2013/0421 Mrs E C Davies, 2 Glynmeirch Road, Trebanos
Proposed two storey rear extension at above.

Resolved no objection provided there has been neighbourhood notification.

P2013/0370 Mr Sebastian Dickinson, Caradog Landscaping

Proposed demolition of existing shed and rear single storey extension, proposed change of use of dwelling/shop into two 2 bed self contained residential units, two storey rear extension and front porch at 52 High Street, Pontardawe.

Resolved no objection provided there has been neighbourhood notification.

Planning reviewed in meeting:

P2013/0490 Lloyds Banking Group, PO Box 112, Canons House, Canon Way, Bristol BS1 5LL.
Proposed Two internal freestanding illuminated signs at 66 Herbert Street, Pontardawe.

Resolved No Objection.

Council was also advised that an appeal had been determined for planning application P2012/1047, the proposed detached building for storage and sale of agricultural products at Commercial Road, Rhyd y Fro.

Resolved that Councils original objection that the access to the site and road layout was unsafe was still applicable.

9209. Personnel Committee held on the 28th May 2013:

The Committee discussed holiday entitlement after sick leave: The Clerk produced an ACAS document stating that in July 2012 the Court of Appeal ruled that an employee on long-term sick leave is entitled to carry holiday leave forward to the next year, even if no specific request had been made to do so. The implications of the Court's decision could be costly for employers.

On termination of employment an employee who has been on long-term sick leave must be automatically paid for any holiday that had been accrued over that period, whether or not a request had been made to carry it over.

The committee recommended adopting the above ruling.

The Committee discussed the introduction of a 'rolling year' for the calculation of sickness pay:

The committee recommended that this rolling 12 months be adopted by Council.

The Committee to discuss the need to review a new contract of employment as the Committee felt it was many years since the original contracts of employment of Council employees had been looked at.

The committee recommended that the Clerk make a report on the contracts of employment to try to identify any shortcomings, this could then be discuss and recommended on by the Personnel Committee who would report back to Council. The committee felt that there was a need to set up more up to date contracts for new Council employees.

Resolved to ratify the Committee's recommendations.

9210. Finance Meeting held on the 28th May 2013: The committee recommended awarding the following outstanding grant applications:

Chamber of Trade and Commerce: request for £3,500.00 to cover the road train and fireworks for the Summer Fest.

The Committee felt that in these difficult financial times a grant of not more than £3,000.00 should be given i.e. no increase on the previous year.

Summer Music Prom: The Clerk reported that Mr Williams had been in touch stating that they had £1,500.00 in the bank and he would be sending a copy of the bank statement to Council.

The Committee recommended giving the £500.00 previously allocated to the Music Prom once the statement was to hand.

A discussion was also held on the Mayors annual remuneration. It was agreed that in these financially difficult times there should be no increase in the rate and it should remain at £950 pa.

Resolved that the committee's recommendations be ratified and that the Mayors remuneration should remain at £950pa.

9211. Accounts Schedule 289:

Resolved to accept the schedule totaling £12949.30.

9212. One Voice Wales annual AGM: Council was asked if they wished to propose a motion for the AGM and also if a representative of the Council would like to attend. Council was advised that there was no cost for the AGM but if the whole day's conference was attended then there would be a cost of £65 if booked prior to the 26th July.

Resolved that the Clerk would contact One Voice Wales to determine why a cost had been introduced to this event. Council also gave Councillor Nicholson authorisation to request information on this matter in the next One Voice Wales local committee. A decision is therefore deferred until the July meeting when any motions will also be discussed.

9213. Letters of Thanks: The Clerk confirmed that letters of thanks had been received from the following organisations:

- Cardiff, vales and valleys RNIB.
- Powys Citizens advice bureau.

Resolved to be noted.

9214. Consultation on the future management of private water supply pipes: Council reviewed the consultation prior to the meeting and believed that the recommendations were worthwhile.

Resolved to be noted.

9215. Emailed document amalgamation: The Clerk confirmed that in order to amalgamate scanned documents by email additional software would need to be purchased at a cost of approximately £280.

Resolved that new software will be purchased.

9216. Abandoned property off Brecon Road: A request had been made to determine if action could be taken to improve the condition of an abandoned property off Brecon Road, Pontardawe. Councillor Purcell explained that the County Borough had already inspected the site and there was no action that could be taken, however if children were seen climbing on the roof and there was a 'risk to life and limb' then the police could be called.

Resolved to be noted.

9217. Open Meeting: Council confirmed that they wished an 'Open Meeting' to be held during 2014 and that the organisation of the meeting should be overseen by a 'Development Committee'

Resolved that a Development Committee would be scheduled in the autumn to organise the 'Open Meeting'.

9218. Grant Aid for a Pontardawe Food Bank: Councillor Davies explained that action was being taken to set up a 'Food Bank' at Pontardawe and that the cost was in the region of £1500. He asked if Council would be willing to support some of the set up cost and if Council Members would like to get involved as volunteers.

Resolved that the matter would be discussed in the July meeting when further details of available grant funding would be provided together with additional details on the proposed 'Food Bank'.

9219. Public Event re devolution: The Clerk provided details of the local public meeting on devolution. She confirmed that the meeting would be held on the 27th June 2013 from 6.30pm to 8.00pm at the Grand Theatre, Swansea.

Resolved that the Clerk will email a copy of the flyer to Council Members.

9220. Consultation of guidance re part 7 Local Government (Wales) measure 2011: Council Members were provided with details of the consultation prior to the meeting but decided to defer discussion until the July meeting as responses were not required until the 23rd August 2013.

Resolved to be noted.

9221. Urgent Road Safety Concerns Raised by Members:

- Double Yellow Lines at Trebanos. Councillor Lewis to provide the Clerk with specific issues.
- 20mph sign on the road coming through Trebanos but the sign state 30mph. Councillor Lewis to take forward.
- Sale of the Rugby Club and linked car park – Councillor Lewis to obtain further information.
- Lidl's Pontardawe, incorrect address causing issues with traffic in the area – No response received so to be contacted once again by Clerk.
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Resolved to be noted.

9222. Date and Time of Next Meeting:

The date of the next Ordinary Meeting of Council will be Monday 8th July 2013 at Ynysmeudwy Community Hall commencing at 6.45pm.

Signed **Dated**