

Ordinary General Meeting held on the 12th October 2020 by virtual platform zoom due to Covid 19 restrictions commencing at 6.45pm

Present:

Councillor A Nicholson (presiding), Reverend S Northcott, J Jones, Ms C Ford, R Thomas, V Hotten, G Davies, Mrs L Purcell, A Richards, Mrs R Phillips, D Williams, and H Davies

Apologies:

None

11539: Disclosure of Personal and Pecuniary Interests:

None

Resolved to be noted.

11540: Signing of the Minutes of the Ordinary General Meeting held on the 14th September 2020:

Resolved that the minutes of the Ordinary General Meeting held on the 14th September 2020 having been read and confirmed as a true record be accepted by Council. With the following amendment:

Councillor H Davies was present at the meeting

11541: Matters raised by Members of the Public:

None

Resolved to be noted.

11542: Defibrillator Mapping Project:

Council was advised that there was still some signage to be arranged by the Heartbeat Trust to complete the initial project. No information was currently available on when the partnership committee would meet in future.

Following a request for information, David Thomas (NHS) had stated that in his opinion exterior cabinets should be heated to protect both the lithium batteries and the gel pads during extremely cold weather.

Council discussed the matter and as both the building owners had already agreed to attaching the boxes to their electricity supply, it was agreed that the boxes should be heated, with the Town Council covering the additional expense.

Resolved that the Clerk will arrange for an Electrician to connect the two recently installed defibrillators to the buildings electrical supply.

11543: Eco and Wellbeing Committee including Cwmdu:

The Friends of Ynysmeudwy Park had been awarded over 200 trees to extend the hedge at Ynysmeudwy Park earlier in the year. The Trees would be delivered in November.

The Friends group together with Neil Hinds (Coed Cymru) wished to organise a socially distanced volunteer event on the 28th November 2020 to extend the hedge by planting trees on the higher tiers of the park. The intention was that eventually the hedge would replace the fence between the Community Hall and the Park.

We could also plant some fruit trees on the highest tier which was allocated as meadow to increase the green signature of the Park. The fruit trees were approximately £20 each and could be sourced by Coed Cymru.

Neil had produced an extensive risk assessment for the event which was in accordance with the Covid 19 restrictions.

Council was also provided with an 'Ash dieback plan' prior to the meeting

Resolved that the volunteer event will be agreed. The Town Council will also purchase the fruit trees (the preference was for cherry, damson and plum)

The Council also agreed the Ash Dieback plan.

11544: Police Matters:

PACT Meetings were still not taking place due to Covid Restrictions

Pontardawe statistics – August total crime 41 which was down from Julys figure of 45

Trebanos statistics – August total crime 7 which equalled July

PCSO Zac Bird was also involved with Operation Amethyst which was currently identifying vulnerable people in the area. An email from PCSO Bird with details of the operation would be forwarded to all Councillors

Resolved to be noted.

11545: Christmas:

The main Christmas tree would be chosen by Vale and transported to their site in Clydach free of charge. The Town Council would need to transport the tree to the Art Centre as in previous years.

All relevant documentation had been forwarded to Neath Port Talbot Council to allow the Christmas Lights to be placed by 'Lite' and Centregreat.

Neath Port Talbot Council had confirmed that no permission would be granted for any Christmas Events to limit large gatherings. The 2020 Winterfest would therefore not take place.

Reverend Councillor Sue Northcott had agreed to film and edit the Virtual Light 'Switch on'

Trebanos would be conducting their popular Christmas Window competition and it was suggested that this type of event could also be rolled out to the other areas of Pontardawe such as Pontardawe Town, Ynysmeudwy and Rhy y Fro.

Photographs of the frontages could be forwarded to the Town Council then each of the Primary Schools in the area could be asked to judge the best frontage from each area. The Event could be promoted by Social Media

Resolved that the Clerk will discuss the proposed project with Rhyd- y Fro School, YGG Pontardawe and Llangiwig School.

11546: Possible relaxation of Lockdown Restrictions:

Council was advised that currently all Pontardawe Community Halls were closed to all groups. The regulations did however now allow some groups to meet indoors with restrictions. The groups were 'Open Access Playwork Sessions' for children, Exercise groups with social distancing and groups that assisted the community such as blood donation sessions and food banks.

An urgent request had also been received from Age Concern who desperately required a venue with car parking to assist with their chiropody programme in the Pontardawe area

Council discussed matters in detail and felt that the Community Halls should be opened in a limited way only as there was currently a marked increase in infection rate in Neath Port Talbot.

It was therefore agreed that Trebanos Hall and Ynysmeudwy Hall could be opened for unaccompanied children's groups only (i.e. brownies, creche etc). ARCH Hall would be opened for Age Concern only. This would ensure that more vulnerable older people would be in a separate venue to the children.

All adults and children over 11 years would be required to wear masks while within the centre.

No adult exercise groups would be considered initially. Other Leisure groups were currently not permitted to meet due to the Welsh Government restrictions.

The Clerk confirmed that the original processes and risk assessments would be updated and QR Codes created for all the venues. The groups would also need to provide their own risk assessment prior to commencing

Resolved ARCH Hall will be opened for Age Concern chiropody. Ynysmeudwy Hall and Trebanos Hall will be opened for unaccompanied children's groups only.

11547: Section 106 funds:

Funds were available for Parc Chwarae Teg which would cover the cost of the current Pendulum swing repairs and would provide additional funds to repaint the ball courts and

additional small maintenance issues. (Section 106 funds were available specifically for this park)

Ynysmeudwy Park and Trebanos Park were currently in good condition.

There were additional Section 106 Funds which were available for the spatial area and a request had been received from Neath Port Talbot Council for the Town Council's support for these funds to be allocated to Ynysderw Park as this Park was in need of refurbishment.

Resolved to support Neath Port Talbot's request for the Section 106 funds to be allocated to Ynysderw Park

11548: Emergency Process:

The Clerk had revised and improved the process to be used should an emergency situation arise while the Clerk was on holiday. In the first instance Councillors should contact the Chair and if unavailable, the Deputy Chair

Resolved to be noted.

11549: Planning:

P2020/0727:

Applicants name – Mr Alan Thomas, Nant Araian, 40a Derwen Road, Pontardawe SA8 3AY

Site Location: Land adjacent to Dan y Bryn Residential Home, Brecon Road, Pontardawe, SA8 4PD

Proposed Development – New Community Church building (Class D2), car parking and associated works.

The Town Council supported this development.

Resolved No objection provided there is neighbourhood notification. (Council did wish to ensure however that the Environmental statement ensured no work to be carried out while birds were nesting, that there would be restrictions on construction times as this was a residential area and also that the height of the building would not cause an issue for neighbours)

11550: Development Committee held on the 5th October 2020:

The Committee discussed the 'Sustainable farming and our land: simplifying agricultural support' consultation

Committee Members were provided with all relevant documents prior to the meeting.

The Consultation was in depth and the Committee did not feel that they had sufficient experience in the subject matter to comment however they were concerned that the lack of

details currently available on the post Brexit landscape could lead to the consultation being potentially premature.

The Committee discussed the proposal to create an Art Trail through Pontardawe.

The Committee reviewed the proposal and discussed the matter in detail and felt that the idea was very promising. It could create a feature in Pontardawe to promote both the natural beauty of the area together with historical events and people.

The original idea was to paint murals on sides of buildings however there was currently no details of what buildings were to be considered and what part the Town Council had to play. If the Town Council were to partner the project the subject matter would need to be approved and all relevant permissions obtained prior to any action taken.

It was suggested that perhaps murals on the electrical boxes could be considered initially, as this had been carried out in some Swansea areas to great effect and would require permission from only one organisation.

The Committee recommended that the Clerk liaise with the partners to suggest murals on the electrical boxes.

Resolved to ratify the Committees recommendations.

11551: Development Committee held on the 5th October 2020 – Web site:

The Committee to discuss the new Pontardawe Town Council web-site content and design. The following observations were made:

- The whole web site must be accessible in accordance with the law.
- The main web pages should be easy to read and contain pictures and photographs associated with the Pontardawe Town Council area and history
- The main menu should be straightforward to navigate with additional information linked to each section with effective categorisation (For example 'Our Community, Our Council and Councillors etc)
- There should be sections for each ward (Pontardawe, Trebanos and Rhyd-y-Fro) including a map showing the ward boundaries and the boundaries to local Community Councils
- Social media pages (Facebook and Twitter) should be embedded
- The Web site should include methods to volunteer and to get involved with local groups and events
- Online applications for grants
- Online booking for Community Halls
- 'Go Valley' including the calendar of events should be included
- Frequently asked questions
- There was no preferred colour scheme provided the scheme was accessible
- Clydach Community Council Web site was considered particularly good and should be used as a template.

The following had also already been agreed or was a legal requirement:

- The new web site was to be bilingual (Councillor Daniel Williams volunteered to assist with translations)
- The Town Council domain was to be altered to .gov
- Councillors would be provided with work emails (County Borough Members would not be required to obtain additional work emails as their current County Borough emails would be compliant)
- A Members only area of the web site would be requested.

The Clerk stated that on the advice of our current web administrator, we employ Vision ICT as our ongoing support as this would prevent issues with coding differences. Committee Members understood the need but were disappointed that One Voice Wales had not sourced Wales based companies to recommend for ICT Services in Wales.

Resolved to ratify the Committees recommendations.

11552: Civic Service and Councillor matters:

The Civic Service had been postponed due to Covid 19 restrictions and would be reviewed early in 2021.

Councillor Williams Thomas had resigned as Councillor for the Trebanos Ward as he had permanently relocated to Cardiff and felt it was now unfair to represent Trebanos as he was no longer a resident.

Benjamin McCarthy had also resigned as the Youth Representative as he was now attending University outside of the area.

Both thanked Council for the experience and support they had enjoyed as Members of the Town Council.

Councillors wished both well on their future endeavours.

Resolved that the Clerk will advise the County Borough of the Councillor Vacancy and will advise the community of a Youth Representative vacancy

11553: Town Council/County Borough Council liaison committee:

Unfortunately, Councillor Ford was unable to attend

Resolved to be noted.

11554: Finance Committee required:

The Clerk requested a Finance Committee arranged to discuss remaining grant funds together with the Precept for 2021/22

Resolved that a Finance Committee will be arranged

11555: Account Schedule 373:

Resolved that Account Schedule 373 totalling £23992.06 together with bank reconciliation should be accepted by Council in line with Standing Orders.

11556: Email received from 'My Green Valley':

My Green Valley had arranged a project with YGG Trebannws to create a poster to encourage people to place litter in appropriate bins. They hoped the posters could be placed at Trebanos Park and Rugby Ground.

They also requested a grant from the Town Council to create the posters of £205 plus VAT

Resolved that the Grant will be awarded, and permission given to place the signs at Trebanos Park.

11557: re Temporary Disabled bay at Herbert Street:

Unfortunately, the County Borough wardens were currently unable to enforce the Temporary Disabled bay however action was now being taken to create the permanent order that would allow enforcement. The orders may however take some time

Resolved to be noted.

11558: Mind and West Wales Fire and Rescue Authority Draft Corporate Plan 2021-2026:

Councillors were provided with details of the plan prior to the meeting

Resolved to be noted.

11559: Independent remuneration panel for Wales draft plan 2020/21:

Councillors were provided with details of the plan prior to the meeting

Resolved to be noted.

11560: Email re Grants Awarded 2020:

Many Organisations who had received grants for events in 2020 were unable to hold the event due to Covid 19 restrictions.

Resolved that the grants awarded can be retained for the event taking place in 2021.

11561: Email re Dog fouling:

An email had been received from a local resident who felt that the 'No Dog fouling' notices placed on lamp posts by the County Borough were too small to be effective. They thought larger notices, perhaps designed by local youngsters could be created

Resolved that the Clerk will determine if larger signs can be placed on lamp posts and if so, could local children design a sign.

11562: Urgent Road Safety Matters:

Council was advised that there was a significant issue with the speed of vehicles crossing the canal path on the unadopted road from Brecon Road to the Pontardawe Recreation field.

A request was made for signs to be placed close to the bridge to suggest vehicles slow down when approaching the canal path

Resolved that the Clerk and County Borough Member will review permissions.

11563: Next Meeting:

The next meeting of Council will take place on the 9th November 2020 by virtual platform commencing at 6.45pm.

Signed

Dated

