

**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on the 14<sup>th</sup> January 2013, at Ynysmeudwy Hall, Old Road, Ynysmeudwy, Pontardawe, commencing at 6.45pm**

**9051. Present** Councillor B Williams (presiding), A Nicholson, Ms S Northcott, G Davies, D B Thomas, Mrs J Bowen, P Williams, V Hotten, D Harris, Mrs L Purcell, Mrs E Puzey, H Pickrell, M James.

**Apologies:** Councillor Ms R Lewis and M Thomas.

**9052. Disclosure of Personal and Pecuniary Interest:** Councillor Ms S Northcott, A Nicholson and Mrs J Bowen declared an interest in any discussion on the Pontardawe and District Youth Facility as they are Trustees. Councillor Mrs S Northcott and A Nicholson declared an interest in any discussion on the merger of Neath College and Powys College as they have a personal interest. Councillor Mrs L Purcell declared an interest in planning discussions as she is a member of the Neath Port Talbot Council planning committee. Councillor M James declared an interest in any discussion relating to the Pontardawe Art Centre.

**Resolved** to be noted.

**9053. Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on the 10<sup>th</sup> December 2012:**  
**Resolved** that the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on the 10<sup>th</sup> December 2012, having been read and confirmed as a true record, be accepted by Council.

**9054. Matters raised by members of the public:** The following matters were brought before Council:

- Carl Metcalfe provided details of a right of way adjacent to his property at Waun Gron, Pontardawe. He wished Council to consider extinguishing the path due to its steep gradient and the existence of a more suitable path to Cwm du from the estate.
- Martin Davies from the Canal Society provided details of the work carried out by the Waterways Recovery Group.

**Resolved** to be noted.

**9055. Trebanos Park CCTV:** The Clerk advised Council that the recommendation for improving the CCTV resolution at Trebanos Park from CCTV Cameras Wales, was replacing the two existing cameras facing the shelter and the refreshment kiosk with 'Concept Pro AIR 3026 Cameras' which have a built in infra red light source. They would also service the main CCTV controls box and provide training on the most effective means of utilising the system.

The cost provided for this service was £640 plus VAT.

**Resolved** that CCTV Cameras Wales will be requested to carry out the work to improve the CCTV cameras at Trebanos Park.

**9056. Police Matters:** The Clerk advised Council that the PACT Meetings for 2013 were as follows:

Pontardawe PACT – 7<sup>th</sup> February, 4<sup>th</sup> April, 27<sup>th</sup> June, 15<sup>th</sup> August, 17<sup>th</sup> October and 5<sup>th</sup> December.

Trebanos PACT – 7<sup>th</sup> February, 18<sup>th</sup> April, 20<sup>th</sup> June, 22<sup>nd</sup> August, 17<sup>th</sup> October and 5<sup>th</sup> December.

The PACT priorities remained the same as December for both Trebanos and Pontardawe.

The Clerk also confirmed that she had received an email from Chief Superintendent Julian Williams who took over as Divisional Commander from Chief Superintendent Mark Mathias on the 17<sup>th</sup> December 2012. He also expressed a wish to attend one of Pontardawe Town Council's meetings to introduce himself.

**Resolved** that Chief Superintendent Williams will be invited to attend the March 2013 meeting.

**9057. Pontardawe and District Youth Facility:** Councillors Mrs J Bowen, A Nicholson and Ms S Northcott expressed an interest.

Council was advised that £6500 had been granted to the Youth Club to the 31<sup>st</sup> December 2012. As the budget for support was £10,000 per annum, this allowed a further £3500 to be transferred to the end of the fiscal year.

**Resolved** to be noted.

**9058. Open Meeting:** The Clerk advised Council that Councillor H Evans had arranged for Jason Evans, a local reporter to chair the meeting. She also confirmed that Gwenda Thomas AM and Byron Thomas AM had confirmed that they would be happy to form part of the panel. Peter Hain MP, Bethan Jenkins AM and Peter Black AM would not unfortunately be able to attend.

The Clerk did however state that she hoped that the County Borough Members for the area would be available as panel members; she also confirmed that the posters advertising the event were in the process of being printed.

**Resolved** to be noted.

**9059. Children's out of school activity leaflet:** Council was advised that the posters were in the process of being printed. Councillor Hotten stated that unfortunately he did not attend the meeting of Cilybell Community Council in January but would be attending their February meeting to discuss the partnership in this venture.

**Resolved** to be noted.

**9060. St Peters Church Christmas Tree Festival:** The Clerk confirmed that the first Christmas tree festival at St Peters Church was a great success and although very little had been raised for the Mayors charity, the inclusion of a tree by the Town Council had raised awareness of the Shaw Trust's work.

Council were pleased that the festival was a success and looked forward to participating in future festivals.

**Resolved** that a letter be sent to St Peters Church congratulating them on the success of this first Christmas tree festival and wishing them every success in future Christmas tree festivals.

**9061. Planning:** Councillor Mrs L Purcell expressed an interest.

The Clerk confirmed that she had received details from the planning authority of planning reference P2012/1073 that related to the East Pit at Gwaun Cae Gurwen. She stated that following a conversation with the planning officer she had been advised that should the construction go ahead then the level of vehicles passing through Pontardawe was unlikely to increase but would continue at the current level for approximately another five years. He also confirmed that as the access to the leisure complex was to be through Cwmllynfell, it was unlikely that additional construction traffic would move through Pontardawe.

Planning meeting 7<sup>th</sup> January 2013

**P2012/0783**

Applicant: Mrs Leah Hopkins, Tan yr Allt Farm, Pheasant Road, Trebanos, Pontardawe, Swansea SA8 4DP

Site location: Tan yr Allt Farm, Pheasant Road, Trebanos, Pontardawe, Swansea SA8 4DP.

Proposed Development: Conversion and extension of existing barn into one self contained holiday unit (amended location plan, block plan received 14-12-12 and certificate of ownership received 20-12-12).

**Resolved** No further comment on original objection.

**P2012/0792 (confirmed with Margaret Begley planning officer that this application will not be considered prior to the 9<sup>th</sup> January 2013 so representations can be forwarded after the 14 day period)**

Applicant: Mrs Sarah Grey, 14 Lloyd Street, Trebanos, Pontardawe, Swansea, SA8 4DR.

Site location: 14 Lloyd Street, Trebanos, Pontardawe, Swansea, SA8 4DR.

Proposed Development: Fell sycamore tree covered by Tree Preservation Order T154/W2 (Amended Information).

**Resolved** To object as the damage to the tree roots was caused by a failure of the local planning authority to enforce a root protection area during construction of the property.

**P2012/1100 (confirmed with Margaret Begley planning officer that this application will not be considered prior to the 9<sup>th</sup> January 2013 so representations can be forwarded after the 14 day period)**

Applicant: Mr Simon O'Connor, 11 Spion Kop Road, Ynystawe, Swansea, SA6 5AN.

Site location: Hillcrest, 8 Uplands Road, Pontardawe, Swansea, SA8 4AH.

Proposed Development: Two Storey side and rear extension

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

Council was also advised of the following information being provided to local planning authorities:

A new Welsh national planning policy document which states that economic benefits should be given the same consideration as social and environmental issues when councils are drawing up local plans has been published.

The Welsh government's updated Planning Policy Wales provides the policy framework for the preparation of local planning authorities' development plans. The document states that local planning authorities "should recognise that there will be occasions when the economic benefits [of a scheme] will outweigh social and environmental considerations".

The policy also states that:

Plans and decisions should be also being based on up-to-date and locally specific evidence which demonstrates the suitability of the existing employment land supply in relation to the requirements of business.

As part of the process of establishing a local evidence base, local planning authorities should undertake, and keep under review, an employment land review that is relevant to prevailing market conditions and the requirements of the development plan.

It also stipulates that council planning departments should support the move towards a low carbon economy by, for example, encouraging the development of clusters of industrial and commercial uses that derive environmental benefit from co-location.

Planning departments are also instructed by the document to look favourably on proposals for new on-site low carbon energy generation such as energy from waste facilities.

The policy also states that in instances where development plan policies are "outdated or superseded", local planning authorities should give them decreasing weight in favour of other material considerations, such as national planning policy, in the determination of individual applications.

"This will ensure that decisions are based on policies which have been written with the objective of contributing to the achievement of sustainable development," the document adds.

Environment minister John Griffiths said: "This new policy is about balance. It recognises that jobs and growth are essential to Wales' economy, but also

recognises that we must never lose sight of the other factors that are vital to people's long term quality of life.

"The policy calls on local planning authorities to establish a robust evidence base of the economic characteristics of their particular areas and to use this evidence when making decisions and when developing their local development plans. This should help ensure decision making is based on a realistic assessment of demand."

He added that councils should consult their economic development officers on proposals which have the potential to generate or retain jobs locally so that the "potential benefits of such developments can be fully understood".

RTPI Cymru director Roisin Willmott said that the new Planning Policy Wales would give local planning authorities a "greater steer on looking for economic considerations" when determining planning policies.

She added that, previously, economic considerations were not as clearly articulated in national planning policy as environmental concerns, which are protected by habitat regulations.

**Resolved** to be noted.

**9062. Swansea Valley Stakeholders Meeting:** Councillor Williams confirmed that he had attended the meeting but that there was little to report. He did however confirm that he thought that Pontardawe Town Councils continued participation was warranted.

**Resolved** to be noted.

**9063. SLCC Wales Training Seminar:** The Clerk advised Council that this was to be held on the 17<sup>th</sup> April 2013 and she would be happy to attend on Councils behalf and provide feedback to Council.

**Resolved** that the Clerk will attend the training seminar on behalf of Council.

**9064. Support for the proposed changes to the Art Centre at Pontardawe:**

Councillor M James expressed an interest.

A request had been received from the Art Centre for a letter of support from the Town Council to accompany their request for grant aid to convert the snooker room to a community theatre. Due to the time scales involved a letter was dispatched under standing orders with the agreement of the Mayor.

**Resolved** that the decision be ratified.

**9065. Accounts Schedule 284** totalling £9186.41.

**Resolved** to be agreed under standing orders.

**9066. Consultation on the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Bill:**

Unfortunately the link provided was incorrect and therefore Council had difficulty identifying the information the information to be reviewed. The Clerk confirmed that should any links provided by difficult to access then to please advise her so that the matter could be resolved prior to the meeting.

**Resolved** that the document will be reviewed at a Policy and Resources Committee to be held on Monday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2013.

**9067. Path at Waun Gron to Cwmdu:** Council discussed the matter in full, taking into account the information provided by Mr Metcalfe and was happy for the path adjacent to his property to have a temporary barrier and gate erected but did not wish to extinguish the path as they had been advised that the County Borough was experiencing difficulties registering the main path.

**Resolved** that the Town Council will erect a temporary fence and lockable gate at the site, but that they would not agree to extinguish the path.

**9068. Letter re hanging basket scheme for summer 2013:** Council was advised that the cost of Summer Hanging baskets for the 2013 summer was £52.38 plus VAT per basket and that this was a slight increase from the 2012 prices.

**Resolved** that the Council will enter the scheme for Summer Hanging Baskets for 2013.

**9069. Pedestrian Crossing at Swansea Road, Trebanos adjacent to the Post Office:**

The Clerk advised Council that a letter had been received from a resident requesting that crossing be reviewed to improve its access to disabled residents and mothers with pushchairs. Councillor Lewis had however provided information, which stated that due to specific problems with access to the crossing it would not be possible to improve the access, and that the crossing would need to be moved.

**Resolved** that the letter received be referred to Councillor Lewis as she was in the process of discussion the possible relocation of the crossing with local residents.

**9070. Waterways recovery group:** Council was advised that the Waterways recovery group would be working on the canal in Trebanos for one week from the 31<sup>st</sup> August 2013 to the 7<sup>th</sup> September and required accommodation for their volunteers.

**Resolved** that the Clerk will contact Celtic Leisure to determine if accommodation at the Leisure Centre at Pontardawe would be feasible.

**9071. Independent Remuneration panel for Wales Report:** Councillor Nicholson provided a brief overview and stated that the Town Council would need to adopt a policy for Town Councillor expenses once the introduction finalised.

**Resolved** to be noted.

**9072. Buckingham Palace Garden Party:** A nomination form had been received for the Mayor to attend the Buckingham Palace Garden party in 2013. Councillor Williams confirmed that he would be happy to attend.

**Resolved** that Councillor Williams be nominated.

**9073. Letter received from the Minister for Health and Social Services re the Central and West Region Welsh Ambulance Service:** The letter stated that the Minister expected the service to respond in a safe and efficient way and expressed disappointment that our request for information had not received a reply. It further stated that a letter had been dispatched to the Chief Executive requesting an urgent response.

**Resolved** that the Clerk write the Central and West Region Welsh Ambulance Service with copies of both the original letter and the response from the Minister and request that a considered response is provided within 28 days or action will be taken to publicise the issue.

**9074. Email re former Cinema passageway from the Paradise Car Park:** A request was made for the passageway to remain open on evenings when there were events at the Art Centre. It was stated however that the issue was with 'who' would take responsibility for opening and closing.

**Resolved** that the Art Centre be approached to determine if they would be willing to lock the gate on evenings when events were taking place at the Art Centre.

**9075. Email received re the dangerous state of a property on Swansea Road:** The email stated that Dan y Graig, on Swansea Road was in a ruinous condition and may be a danger to pedestrians on the pavement adjacent to the building.

**Resolved** that the Clerk request the County Borough review the property and take action if necessary.

**9076. Public consultation on the merger of Neath Port Talbot Council and Coleg Powys:** Councillor A Nicholson and Ms S Northcott expressed an interest. Council was advised of the consultation, which had a deadline for response of 28<sup>th</sup> January 2013 although details had only been forwarded to the Town Council on the 7<sup>th</sup> January 2013. Following discussion it seemed that despite the request for feedback the decision to merge had already taken place.

**Resolved** to be noted.

**9077. Road Safety:** Council was advised of the following issues:

- The temporary crash barriers in place following the movement of turbine parts to the Mynydd y Betws Wind Farm had not yet been replaced.

- A request was received for the Town Council to support Ystalyfera Community Council and the people of Godrergraig with an application for a roundabout at the junction of Gnoll Road due the increase in traffic following the opening of Tesco and Asda in Ystalyfera

**Resolved** that the Clerk contact Cambrian Energy once again to determine a time scale for the reinstatement of the crash barriers and also writes a letter of support for the roundabout at Godrergraig.

**9078. Date of the next meeting is the 11<sup>th</sup> February 2013 at ARCH Hall commencing at 6.45pm.**

**Signed .....**

**Dated .....**