

Ordinary Meeting held on the 14th November 2016 at Ynysmeudwy Hall, Old Road, Pontardawe commencing at 6.45pm.

10333. Present: Councillor Mrs R Phillips (presiding), Mrs L Purcell, G Davies, A Nicholson, Ms S Northcott, D B Thomas, H Evans, B Williams, P Williams, M James, Mrs E Puzey, Ms C Ford and Harri Evans-Mason and Thomas Hutchins (Youth Representatives)

Apologies: Councillor D Harris, V Hotten, Mrs J Bowen, H Pickrell, (Mrs L Purcell gave apologies for the first half of the meeting)

10334. Disclosure of Personal and Pecuniary Interests: None.

Resolved to be noted.

10335. Minutes of the Ordinary meeting held on the 10th October 2016:

Resolved that the minutes of the Ordinary meeting held on the 10th October 2016 having been read and confirmed as a true record, be accepted by Council with the following amendments:

Meter should be replaced by metre in the text. Minute number 10307 should have also stated that it was agreed that paper copies of the minutes and agendas should be placed in all three halls prior to the Ordinary meetings.

10336. Matters raised by Members of the Public: None.

Resolved to be noted.

10337. Claire Jenkins of the Coal Industry Social Welfare Organisation addressed Council: Council was advised that the organisation was a Charity that supported retired miners and their wives or widows. They provided the following services:

- Welfare Checks
- Bereavement support
- Payments for widows of miners who died of pneumoconiosis
- Subsidised holidays in their Bournemouth Hotel
- Organised social gatherings in local venues.
- Two free day trips per year.

She explained that they wished to organise social events in the Pontardawe area and was keen to utilise local clubs/welfare halls to host the events as currently the closest groups were in Ystradgunlais and Gwaun Cae Gurwen.

Council were happy to display posters advertising the organisation and provided details of local venues that might be appropriate. They also thanked Claire for attending the meeting.

Resolved to be noted.

10338. Police Matters:

Council was advised that a breakdown of statistics was not available for August 2016 but that in Pontardawe there were 36 crimes and in Trebanos there were 5 crimes.

Sargent James had responded regarding our concerns over a recent spike in anti-social behaviour in the Town Centre. She explained that without CCTV and as Members of the Public were reluctant to come forward as witnesses the investigations were hampered. She did however confirm that crime comparisons were down year on year by 34 crimes. She also explained that there would be additional man power available during events such as Halloween, bonfire night and the Christmas period.

Council was also advised that the Community Alcohol Partnership would be holding another night audit however the date was yet to be agreed.

Council commended Sergeant James and the PCSO's on their work in Pontardawe but was very concerned over the lack of resource available to her. They were also concerned that there was not a Police Car stationed in Pontardawe and the length of time it was taking assistance to arrive from Neath.

Harri suggested that a forum might be set up to discuss anti-social behaviour and possible alternative responses to it.

Resolved that the Clerk will consider alternative forms of addressing anti-social behaviour and will report to Council at a later date.

10339. Cwmddu Glen: Council was advised that the closed path from the Cross was now open and that there were several events taking place for volunteers at the Glen prior to Christmas.

Council did however feel that the Cross itself was looking a little unkempt and asked the Clerk to arrange for it to be power washed. They also wished to know the approximate costs of maintaining the flag stones and garden area at the Cross (no including the fountain which required specialist maintenance)

Resolved that Clerk would consider the costs associated with the maintenance of the area at the Cross.

10340. Christmas 2016: The Clerk confirmed that arrangements were ongoing and that the lights, tree, parade and grotto were to form part of the 2016 celebration. She had however been unable to obtain a prize for the best parading group.

Councillor Mike James confirmed that he would be happy to provide the Prize for the best parading group.

Resolved to be noted.

10341: Planning:

P2016/0818

Applicant name: Miss Janet Evans, 3 Birchgrove House, Heol Nant Bran, Birchgrove, Swansea, SA7 9LQ.

Site Location: The Royal Oak, 66 Commercial Road, Rhyd Y Fro, Pontardawe, Swansea, SA8 4SL.

Proposed Development: Construction of five detached dwellings and associated works.

Resolved No Objection provided there is neighbourhood notification.

P2016/0759

Applicants name: Mr Dean Bowden, 8 Lloyd Street, Trebanos, Pontardawe, Swansea, SA84DR.

Site Location: 8 Lloyd Street, Trebanos, Pontardawe, Swansea, SA84DR.

Proposed Development: Work to 2no Sycamore Trees covered by Woodland Tree Preservation Order T154/W1 comprising of the removal of lower basal growth, to a height of 2m from lowest point to allow inspection, plus prune canopy (overhanging fence line towards the applicants dwelling) to a height of 6m back in line of the fence.

Resolved No Objection.

Applications to change the register of Common Land CL25B Entry 203 Application No NPT 0014, CL25B Entry 221 Application No NPT 0013 and CL24 Entry 27 Application No NPT 0012.

Resolved No Comments.

In the meeting the following were reviewed:

P2016/0964

Applicants name: Mr John Colunson, Fairhome Group, Barton Hall, Hardy Street, Manchester, M30 7NB.

Site Location: The Farm House, Alltycham Drive, Pontardawe, Swansea, SA8 4JR.

Proposed Development: Change of use from 2 holiday units and 1 residential dwelling to 3 residential dwellings (Use of Class C3 (B))

Resolved No objection provided there is neighbourhood notification.

P2016/0928

Applicants name: Mr M Evans, C/O Agent.

Site Location: Yard, Commercial Road, Rhyd Y Fro, Pontardawe, Swansea, SA84SL.

Proposed Development: Three no. detached two storey dwellings plus associated infrastructure.

Resolved No objection provided there is neighbourhood notification.

P2016/0915

Applicants name: Mr Daniel Mccallum, Awel Aman Tawe, 76-78 Heol Gwilym, Cwmllynfell, SA9 2GN.

Site Location: Mynydd Gwrhyd, North of Pontardawe, East of Cwmgors.

Proposed Development: Retention of engineering works to facilitate highway improvements, including improved junction arrangements with A474 plus road/ track widening. In order to facilitate access for construction vehicles in association with the construction of 2 no wind turbines proposed under planning application reference P2014/0402 to allow the retention of an alternative source and type of material used. (Previously approved under P2015/0110 approved on the 10/11/15)

Resolved No objection.

Alleged Public Footpath from Lloyd Street to Common CL24 and to footpath No 3 – Community of Pontardawe.

It was agreed that the footpath had been walked by many Members of the Community including some Councillors for many years.

Resolved that there is no objection to this path being added to the definitive map and indeed this is supported by the Town Council.

10342. Personnel Committee held on the 17th October 2016:

The Committee reviewed staff contracts and pay structures.

The Committee was provided with an update on the current position and details of changes that had been made for previous years. The Clerk confirmed that there had been no recommended changes to the Contracts of Employment that required review.

Regarding pay structures, she confirmed that all staff (apart from the office cleaner who worked only 1 hour per week) were remunerated in line with NALC Salary awards and currently the pay grades were as follows:

Cleaners in Charge SCP 8, Groundsman SCP 15 and Clerk SCP 25.

As all staff grades, had been reviewed in previous years it was agreed that the grades did not require amendment.

Regarding rates of pay, there had been revised figures received from NALC.

The recommended pay values from the 1/4/16 were as follows:

SCP 8 £7.677 PER HOUR

SCP 15 £16772 PER ANNUM

SCP 25 £22434 PER ANNUM

The Committee recommended that these rates be accepted and back dated to 1st April 2016.

NALC had also provided details of the recommended rates of pay from the 1st April 2017 and these were as follows:

SCP 8 £7.924 PER HOUR

SCP 15 £17072 PER ANNUM

SCP 25 £22658 PER ANNUM.

The Committee recommended that the Council accept the NALC Pay increases and that all staff should be remunerated as recommended for the year from the 1st April 2016 and for the year from the 1st April 2017.

Resolved that the Committee's recommendations be ratified.

10343. Finance Committee held on the 24th October 2016:

The Committee reviewed further grant requests:

It was agreed that requests from National Charities would not be reviewed in this meeting as funding for Charities had been provided for 2016.

The following grant requests were reviewed and the grant amounts recommended:

- Ynysmeudwy AFC – Drainage costs - £200.00 AWARDED
- Pontardawe Rugby Club – Fireworks - £100.00 AWARDED
- Llangollen Eisteddfod 2017 – Musical Festival £100.00 AWARDED
- Neath Afon Gymnastics Club – Competition costs £50.00 AWARDED

This Committee to also reviewed the budget for 2017/18:

The Committee discussed the current position in full. They were aware that the call on funds from organisations due to Unitary Authority austerity had not materialised and it was unlikely that these funds would be required prior to the end of the 2016/17 year. It was therefore agreed that the underspend from grant funding would be transferred to Parks to cover part of the unexpected cost of the new septic tank.

The Committee also discounted the cost of the Trebanos Hall heating as this was considered allocated under the 2015/16 budget and therefore was considered a debtor at the beginning of the year.

It was envisaged therefore that at the year end the Actual costs would be only approximately £2100 over the budgeted costs when these factors were considered. (Approximately 1%) See Appendix A.

The Committee were also aware that while inflation was low currently, the weak pound and Brexit was likely to lead to increasing inflation during the next year. The Committee also recognised that there may still be additional costs during 2017/18 due to Asset transfer or Austerity measures from the County Borough.

The Committee therefore recommended that the precept was raised slightly by approximately 2% but that the third-party funding for the WREN grant if it is awarded and the costs of the election for 2017/18 are taken from General Reserves to keep the increase to a minimum. See Appendix B.

The Committee recommended the precept is raised slightly to £167500.

Resolved that the Committees recommendations be ratified.

10344. Clerks Report on Ynysmeudwy Park: Council was advised that they had been awarded a grant of £45000 from WREN to refurbish Ynysmeudwy Park. The work was likely to be in March/April 2017.

Resolved that Council will be kept up to date with developments

10345. County Borough Council/ Town Council Liaison Forum: Councillor G Davies provided details of the topics discussed. These were:

- The Neath Port Talbot Budget. Staff had reduced by 20% since 2010 and there had been a reduction in the finance by £100 million. A further £20 million in savings would need to be made in the next 3 years
- There was a serious fly-tipping problem in some areas. Neath Port Talbot Council requested all instances be referred to their enforcement team to allow action to be taken.

Various information from the meeting would be forwarded to the Clerk which could then be forwarded to Councillors.

Resolved to be noted.

10346. Accounts Schedule 327: Account Schedule 327 totalling £11025.94 together with the Bank Reconciliation were agreed under Standing Orders.

Resolved to be noted.

10347. Email received re: Christmas Tree Festival: The Christmas Tree Festival would take place at St Peters Church for the 2016 Christmas Period and Council was happy for a tree from the Town Council to form part of the festival. As TREAT the rehabilitation charity was the Mayors Official Charity it was suggested that the theme be 'sport'.

Resolved that a Pontardawe Town Council tree will form part of the 2016 festival.

10348. Email received from Neath Port Talbot Council re Ynysderw Road: Council was advised that their suggestion to make the road one way with no entry from the main roundabout would be discussed in the Members Annual Surgery in November.

Resolved to be noted,

10349. Email received from Neath Port Talbot re Signage at The Cross: Council was advised that the sign stating 'No Right Turn' was of a sufficient size and could not be made bigger. It was however mentioned that the missing sign directing traffic to Ammanford had not be replaced despite assurances from the County Borough some time ago that it would be.

Resolved Councillor Mike James will contact the County Borough re the missing 'Ammanford' sign.

10350. Email received from Neath Port Talbot Council re the drainage channel at Lloyd Street, Trebanos:

The Clerk confirmed that the County Borough was to add additional fencing to the culvert shortly to resolve the issue.

Resolved to be noted.

10351. Email received from Rhys George re Elections: Council was advised that the ‘six-month rule’ would take effect from the 4th November 2016. Any vacancies from this date to the election in May 2017 could be filled by co-option but no elections could be held.

A ‘Be a Candidate’ booklet was also in the process of being created which would be available later in the year.

Resolved to be noted.

10352. Welsh Water: Council was advised that the barrier adjacent to the Green at Trebanos would now be locked at night with Welsh Water and the Rugby Club holding keys.

Resolved to be noted.

10353. SLCC Membership: The Clerk requested Council agree to another year’s subscription to the SLCC.

Resolved Council will subscribe to the SLCC for 2017.

10354. Hanging Baskets 2017: Council was provided with details of the Hanging Basket Scheme for 2017.

Resolved that the Council will order Hanging Baskets from the City and County of Swansea for the 2017 Summer season.

10355. Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales: Council as advised of the latest Recommendations.

Resolved to be noted.

10356. Road Safety:

- There was still no Crossing Patrol Officer for Swansea Road. It was therefore agreed that the Clerk would ensure that the advertisement was still available on the Neath Port Talbot web site and Councillor Purcell would attempt to contact the previous Crossing Patrol Warden to determine if they would be interested in the new position.

Resolved that the Clerk will take all necessary action.

10357. Time and Date of next meeting: The next Ordinary meeting is due to be held at ARCH Hall on the 12TH December 2016.

Signed Dated