



Minutes of the meeting of Whitland Town Council held on 1st April 2019.

Present: Cllr Barry Chapman (Chair), Ron Jenkins MBE, Richard Davies, Mathew McDowall, Len Shipton, Jonathan Blandford, Raymond Jones, Gabriela Poore, Ffion Scourfield and County Cllr Sue Allen.

Also in attendance were Rhian Phillips and Aled Nicholas to give a presentation on pop-up shops and place plans in Carmarthenshire.

Cllr Chapman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Rhian Phillips first provided the background to Place Plans (also known as Economic Growth Plans) and stated that in Carmarthenshire the focus was on 4 specific market towns, including Whitland. Funding from the Rural Development Programme and Carmarthenshire would enable the project to be carried out at no cost to Whitland. It would be carried out by independent consultants who would present a report at the end that would provide evidence to aid Whitland Town Council in applying for funding for future developments. After questions that ascertained it was a largely paper exercise, but could influence the special housing guidance for the LDP as well as that CCC would provide assistance in funding bids if they could, it was agreed by all to take this opportunity.

Aled Nicholas then spoke about the pop-up shops report from work carried out two years ago. He would send the summary report to the Clerk for circulation. He summarised the interest expressed and expressed concerns, noting the latter were not backed up by evidence. A number of Carmarthen businesses had expressed interest in taking on a pop up shop in Whitland. It was noted that since the exercise there were far fewer empty shops in Whitland. However, the Council considered that a clothes shop had potential. It was agreed that the short-term nature would require considerable advertising by the retailer and both Councils. It was agreed by all to take up this opportunity.

Aled Nicholas also spoke briefly about the LEADER project of Wifi Towns, and requested that the Council nominate a digital champion for Whitland.

To accept apologies for absence. None were received

To disclose personal and pecuniary interests in the items listed below. None were declared.

Signed by Chair

Date

To sign minutes of the previous meeting on 4th March 2019. These had been previously circulated. They were accepted as a true record and duly signed – proposed by Cllr Blandford, seconded by Cllr Shipton and agreed by all.

Clerk’s report. This had been previously circulated. The Clerk spoke about the information obtained from CCC about streetlights, and was requested to go back to CCC for further clarification. The Clerk also stated that the asset register, which had been previously circulated, had been updated. This was accepted by Council. All other matters were accepted or discussed further in the rest of the meeting.

To report on matters arising from previous minutes and decide further action as required.

- Wifi update. Cllr Poore reported that all the Wifi locations were now live. After discussion it was agreed that Cllr Allen should be the digital champion – the Clerk would inform accordingly.
- Whitland Town of Culture. Cllr Poore and the Clerk had met with an Observer reporter regarding the brochure. The latest versions of the contents had been circulated to all Cllrs. It was agreed that Cllr Poore and the Clerk should finalise the contents and complete the project. Cllr Poore was also compiling the list of Town of Culture events for inclusion.
- Nasareth Cemetery. The Clerk had circulated the final list of questions to the Deacon, and replies had been received. After discussion it was agreed that the Clerk should inform the Deacon that the Council was minded to take on the cemetery with the conditions already discussed - proposed by Cllr Jones, seconded by Cllr Poore and agreed by all.
- Play Grant working party. Cllr Poore gave a summary report on what had been achieved. The Clerk reported that the project had spent just over the grant sum provided, but the monies were available. All VAT would be reclaimed in due course.
- Complaints Policy. The draft version had been previously circulated for consideration. There were no objections, and so the policy was adopted – proposed by Cllr Chapman, seconded by Cllr Davies, and agreed by all.
- Training. There had been no public interest yet expressed in defibrillator training. Various Councillors agreed they were interested and so the Clerk would organise at least one session and circulate details. The Code of Conduct training had been successful and well received.
- Junior Council involvement. Cllr Chapman stated that this had not progressed with the school for various reasons, but it would be revisited. He then stated that he had been approached by the ATC regarding a Mayoral Cadet. This was discussed, and it was agreed the Council was interested, but would wish to know how the ATC would propose to ensure child protection issues were managed. Should this go ahead, the Council agreed to fund a DBS check for the Mayor each year if required.
- Litter pick. This would take place on Sunday 14th April between 10.00am and 12.00 noon. The Rugby Club would be encouraging its members to participate. Discussion then was held regarding the recent decision of CCC to limit use of the recycling centres to CCC residents, and restricting the vehicles

Signed by Chair

Date

that could access the services. A significant number of complaints had been received by Councillors, and it was agreed the Clerk should contact CCC expressing those concerns.

New items of business.

- Pop up shop study. The Council agreed after the earlier presentation that they were in favour of both this and the Place Plan study.
- Mayor making ceremony. Cllr Chapman summarised the current situation – it was to be on Sunday 2nd June in St Mary’s Church. The Clerk and Cllr Chapman were compiling a list of invitees and an order of service had been drafted.
- Parking St Mary’s Street. Some information regarding parking schemes within CCC had been received, but not the specific information requested, barring that there were no plans for Whitland to be included. The Clerk would contact again to clarify.
- Clerk probation. Cllr Chapman summarised the review meeting held by the Staffing Cttee. It was agreed that the revised Contract of employment be signed, and that the Council should fund the attendance of the Clerk at the training conference mentioned in May.
- Trevaughan area. The Clerk summarised the situation thus far. After discussion it was agreed to continue to maintain it, and to apply for adverse possession, with the intention to use the area as a community resource – perhaps as allotments, a community garden and/or a community orchard. Proposed by Cllr Shipton, seconded by Cllr Poore and agreed by all.

County Cllr’s report. This had been previously circulated. Cllr Allen highlighted the items regarding the Cardi Bach pathway, and also the Welsh in Education Strategic Plan. She also spoke about the Hywel Dda Health Board funding for home support and remote diagnostics for health and social care. She reminded Cllrs that the OVW regional meeting was the following evening in the Roadhouse Restaurant.

Standing Orders were suspended at this point, since it was 9.00pm, so that the financial report and invoices could be considered.

To receive the financial report including invoices for consideration.

A spreadsheet was circulated in the meeting of the current expenditure against the allocated budget headings, as well as the latest bank balances. The Clerk stated that she was still awaiting a response regarding one invoice that had been presented because it lacked original invoices and confirmation of the work. It was agreed that the Clerk should follow up on this as necessary.

The following invoices were agreed for payment – proposed Cllr Allen, seconded Cllr Blandford.

Clerk’s salary and expenses for March.
John Lewis salary and expenses for March.
Rob Thomas – clearing vegetation to wall of Abbey ruins - £480.00
CCC – Code of conduct training - £200.00

Signed by Chair

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CCC – Whitland Abbey sign - £390.00
W3Webdesigns – Play Grant website work - £110.00
Eagle Signs – Play Grant mini-maps for town - £1128.00
Eagle Signs – Play Grant main town map - £2388.00
Eagle Signs – Play Grant walk leaflets and rip pads - £476.00
Mayoral donation – Whitland Cricket Club juniors - £50.00
B+CE Holdings Ltd – pension payments for staff – direct debit
EDF energy – electricity for toilet - £20.00 direct debit
XLN business services CCTV line - £39.48 direct debit
Llewelyn Davies – payroll services - £23.00 direct debit
Rob Thomas - grass cutting for previous month - £480.00 direct debit

The above were accepted and agreed by all.

To receive planning reports.

There were no planning reports to consider..

To receive correspondence for information:

- Request for donation Cerdd Dant festival Llanelli

The Clerk also stated that she had received a letter too late for consideration in this meeting that would be included on the agenda in May.

To confirm the date of the next meeting. This was agreed for Tuesday 7th May at 7.00pm in the Mayor’s Parlour. It would be preceded by the AGM.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 9.15pm.

Signed by Chair

Date
