



**Minutes of the meeting of Whitland Town Council held on  
2<sup>nd</sup> November 2020 7pm via the medium of Zoom.**

Members of the public were given the opportunity of joining the meeting by Emailing the Clerk and requesting the meeting details (Email: clerk@whitlandtowncouncil.co.uk)

**Present:** Cllr Barry Chapman (Mayor), Jenny Davies-Scourfield (Deputy Mayor), Len Shipton, Mathew McDowall, Ffion Scourfield, Dave Walsh-Gibbon, Raymond Jones and Rhys Davies

Also present – iPad 7 and The Locum Clerk

Prior to the commencement of the meeting, a person identified as 'iPad 7' was invited to join the meeting, but did not confirm if they were able to hear when requested to confirm their attendance by the Locum Clerk. They were then advised that they would be put in the waiting room whilst The Clerk attempted to make contact via the telephone (Cllrs presumed iPad 7 was the County Councillor) to make contact on mobile, and once it was confirmed that iPad 7 was a bondifdi attendant and they could hear and be heard by Cllrs, they would be let back into the meeting.

Cllr Davies-Scourfield proposed that iPad 7 be held in the 'waiting room' until it can be established that their attendance at the meeting was bona fide, and that the meeting be recorded; Cllr McDowall seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement. iPad 7 remained in the waiting room for the whole meeting.

*(Post meeting note – The Locum Clerk sought advice from one Voice Wales regarding the actions of the Council towards the unidentified iPad 7 - It was confirmed that the Council acted in good faith and that the actions taken best represented the situation they were faced with)*

Due to the above the meeting commenced 30 minutes late.

- 1. To accept apologies for absence - None**
- 2. To disclose personal and pecuniary interests - None**
- 3. To review and agree the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

Cllr Walsh-Gibbon wished it to be minuted that he left the meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2020 at 20.50

Cllr Davies-Scourfield proposed that the Minutes of the meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2020, as presented to the Council, be signed as a true record; Cllr Scourfield seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

- 4. To acknowledge correspondence from Councillors**

The Locum Clerk advised the Council that Cllrs Robert Morgan (due to work commitments), Avril Wilson, Gabriela Poore and County Cllr Sue Allen had advised the Whitland Town Council that they no longer wished to hold their positions of Town Councillors. The Locum Clerk further advised that the Returning Officer of Carmarthenshire County Council had been informed and the appropriate Notice served and displayed on the website. This Notice to be replaced with a Notice of Co-optation on the 13<sup>th</sup> November 2020

- 5. Chair's report –**

This month as your Chair there have no official engagements, however I have been invited to lay a Wreath on Reembrace Sunday at a small outdoor service at The Memorial Hall/ Behind the scenes together with Vice-Chair and Locum Clerk we have looked at our current systems in place, the accounts and what needs addressing ongoing to be not only a Competent Council but a Competent Employer.

#### Outgoing Councillors:-

I feel I have to address the situation that we currently find ourselves in, with retirement and resignations of some long term elected Councilors, Two Ex-Mayors and other councillors we now have vacancies for 5 councillors that could potentially be co-opted. Those Councillors between them amounted to many years being members of the Town Council and I personally thank them for their dedication and service to our Town.

#### Moving Forward:-

As previously said in August's Chair's Report and in my email last week, we have to embrace Whitland and bring the community to the fore front of our Council. The Council has been through a very challenging couple of years, having lost Two Clerks and 13 councillors. 2020 has been an exceptional year with Covid and produced many challenges with Technology, Communication and also public involvement with the Council, joining meetings etc. Covid emergency legislation allowed us to meet with minimum notice of meetings and also restricted the way meetings could be advertised, this worked to Council's benefit recently in meetings needing to be called and necessary and essential decisions made.

#### Co-option:-

Whitland has a population of over 2,200 people of which over 1,400 could apply for a position of a Councillor. Whilst a Council's strength remains in maintaining a Core element of Councillors I.E Elected members we should also embrace and welcome the input of co-opted members and allow them as representatives of the Community to bring forward their ideas. The legal notice offering the public the chance to ask for an election has been issued and will expire on 13<sup>th</sup> November. This election can be called to REPLACE the 5 vacancies and not remaining 8 councillors. If no election is called then Council can advertise for residents to apply for consideration to be co-opted. As an agenda item this could be heavily promoted through Facebook(*see below*).

#### Current Projects:-

- Whitland Abbey; My sincere thanks to those who have contributed many hours of work in clearing the grounds and enabling Whitland to use such an asset in future marketing and heritage purposes. A project that nearly didn't start, in 2017 when I first joined Council the task to take over the lease was almost swept under the carpet, it was my firm belief that the Abbey be brought back into Whitland Town Council Remit. We have two remaining Councillors on the Working Party Group Cllrs Shipton and Walsh-Gibbon. For Decembers Meeting I ask Councillors to consider whether The Council would like to continue such Working Party or allow a "Whitland Abbey Working Group" to be separately formed to allow them to continue with the good work that they are doing without the need to return to Council monthly for permissions or updates. WTC could continue to Insure the Area, subject to necessary H&S regulations and could offer financial support on request with a proviso that regular updates be sent via WTC representative on the Group.
- Nazareth Cemetery; This is being actively pursued and we look forward to receiving updates shortly.
- Parklets; Communication received.
- Trevaughan Field; This has received mixed reaction from the community and I ask Councillors to re-visit its potential in encompassing the whole community and their views. This could still be planted as an orchard together with a separate fenced off area for dog walking, recreation ground for younger generation and maybe an outdoor gym/exercise area.

- WI-Fi as noted in Agenda this pilot project has been continued and availed to us for a further two years free of charge. Now is the time to embrace it and utilise the potential that should have been used 2 years ago to advertise/promote local business or heritage and be able to analyse figures and demographic usage.

#### Recruitment of New Clerk:-

As a member of Staffing Committee resigned we have not been able to meet to discuss ongoing needs of Council and the role and hours that would be required to fill the role. This can be seen as a positive and allows Locum Clerk to map a way forward in the hours and duties required to fulfil the role.

#### Staffing Committee need to :-

- Review comments from exit interview with Cllr Wilson and Mrs Mitchell. Create an action plan to bring to Council.
- Review hours required
- Produce Clerks Job Description
- Together with Policy Committee agree a Grievance/Disciplinary Policy.
- Ensure that all Statutory Requirements as an Employer are met.
- Appoint an Assistant Clerk, potentially to manage Cemetery and ensure continuity.

#### Finance/Budget:-

As we approach our precept revision I believe that we should embrace the public and ask for their ideas on what their money should be spent on; This again could be done through Social Media(see below). This would allow our Council to be 100% integrating with the 2000+ residents and allow their opinions not just a council of 8/13 members. If no project/suggestion is deemed viable then we could also review precept and subject to allowing for reserves EG Flooding/Election/Future Projects then we could consider a reduction in precept and publicly announce, thus creating a positive murmur for the town council.

#### Summary:-

As a Council we are now facing a difficult time , this should be embraced as a positive and used to engage our residents, allow them to offer ideas for budget spend and/or join the council. Our ongoing projects remain and committed to the town. Now is the time for change for the better. In 2022 there will be an election of Town Council's let us as one commit to our Town, its future and our commitment to serve, protect and ensure WTC remains a competent council.

#### **6. To receive following information and decide further actions as required:**

##### a) Toilets cleaning regime recommendations

The Locum Clerk advised that an inspection of the toilets had taken place with the Whitland Town Council's employed cleaner, John, explaining his cleaning regime and providing the cleaning log for the Clerk to overlook. The Toilets are exceptionally clean with the correct cleaning products and safety equipment being used. Cleaning is carried out once a day. Cllr Chapman proposed that the cleaning of the public toilets continues as is, at this point in time, and revised in the February meeting; Cllr Davies seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

##### b) To consider the Town Wifi will continue for period of two years free of charge.

Following consideration of the recent correspondence received from Mared E Pemberton Cydlunydd Rhaglen LEADER Co-ordinator advising that the Town WiFi project has received funding for a further two years, with no expense to the Whitland Town Council. Cllr Davies-Scourfield proposed that Whitland Town Council continue to support the Town Wifi project (with no cost to the Whitland Town Council); Cllr Jones seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

- c) Pocket Park – Following inspection the support legs are rotten, but no immediate danger to life.  
Proposal - To contact local carpenters to provide a quotation to repair such.

The Locum Clerk advised that an inspection of the ‘Band Stand’ supports had taken place with photographs being taken. The wooden cladding has become rotten but the metal supports remain in place. It was considered that there was no immediate threat to life.

Cllr McDowall proposed the Locum Clerk seek to obtain three prices to repair the woodwork to the band stand in the Pocket Park; Cllr Davies seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

- d) To consider to continue to use Zoom as a platform for Council Meetings, as all Councillors are now experienced in using such. Consideration was also given to the fact that Cllr Chapman had been purchasing the Licence, on behalf of the Council at a cost of Circa £15 a month.

Following discussion all Cllrs agreed that they had now become proficient in using Zoom to access on line meetings.

Cllr Jones proposed that Whitland Town Council reimburse Cllr Chapman, upon presentation of receipts, for any costs incurred to enable the use of Zoom up to the November meeting and that Whitland Town Council continue to hold meetings remotely via the medium of Zoom until meetings are able to be held face to face; Cllr Davies-Scourfield seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

Cllrs also gave consideration into the possible purchase of a Zoom Licence – The Locum Clerk advised that one of the other Councils she is Clerk to has agreed that their Licence can be used.

## 7. To discuss new items of business.

- a) **Trevaughan Field:** To re – assess Community access to field.

Cllr Shipton advised the Council that, to the best of his knowledge, this area of land was accepted, by the owner, to be used by the Community as a playing area for children, with the Whitland Town Council managing such, but nothing is in writing or on a formal footing at this point in time.

Cllr Walsh-Gibbon produced a plan on where the trees would be positioned to turn this space into a community orchard. It was questioned that there would be no space between the trees to enable play equipment to be placed or used.

Consideration was also given to whether paths should be added to permit residents to walk dogs in this area. Cllrs agreed that as children will be encouraged to play in area, dogs at this point in time, should not be permitted to be walked in this area.

The Locum Clerk advised that the order of certain trees has been put on hold until permission is granted for them to be planted.

Cllr Walsh-Gibbon confirmed that the working party have planted herbs and fruit bushes.

Consideration to form a phased management of this land was given in the possible form of:

Phase 1 – Planting of trees and bushes

Phase 2 – possible addition of children’s play equipment

Phase 3 – possible area for safe dog walking

Cllr Davies proposed that prior to any further planting the Locum Clerk makes an effort to contact the land owner and gain further information; Cllr Scourfield seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

- b) **Projects for next year** To discuss ideas that Cllrs have regarding any possible projects to be carried out in 2021/2022.

Following discussion and consideration that the 2021/2022 budget for Whitland Town Council will be set at the December 2020 meeting, Cllr Scourfield proposed that a post is placed on Facebook inviting members of the public to offer suggestions of any projects that the Whitland Town Council can considered at the finance meeting; Cllr Davies-Scourfield seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

Cllr Scourfield agreed to provide a Welsh translation for the post.

## **8. Committees**

### **a) To appoint a new Member to Staffing Committee.**

Cllr McDowall proposed that Cllr Scourfield be appointed as a member on the Staffing Committee; Cllr Shipton seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

Members of the Staffing Committee – Cllrs Chapman, Davies-Scourfield and Scourfield – The Locum Clerk/Clerk to attend when required to.

Meeting arranged to be held on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2020 at 7pm via Zoom to consider future staffing matters

### **b) To appoint a new Member to Finance Committee.**

Cllr Davies-Scourfield proposed that Cllr McDowall be appointed as a member on the Finance Committee; Cllr Shipton seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

Members of the Finance Committee – Cllrs Chapman, Davies-Scourfield, Scourfield, McDowall and the Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer.

Meeting arranged to be held Monday 16<sup>th</sup> November 2020 at 6pm via Zoom to consider a draft budget to present to Council at the December 2020 meeting

## **9. Banking Matters**

### **a) To ratify authorisation of Locum Clerk on Mandate and Cllr Davies-Scourfield as a Signatory with the removal of Gabriella Poore and Vicky Mitchell from mandate**

The Locum Clerk advised that the Mandate was ready to be confirmed, following which submitted to the bank. The instructions to the bank are to:

- Add as a signatory the Locum Clerk (only to act as per the financial regulations)
- Add as a signatory Cllr Davies-Scourfield
- To remove Cllr G Poore
- To remove V Mitchell
- To stop all direct debits and standing orders

Cllr Chapman proposed the above amendments; Cllr Shipton seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

## **10. Reports and Correspondence**

### **a) To receive County Councillor's report:**

Available via the Facebook link <https://m.facebook.com/CllrSueAllen/>

Cllrs considered that Facebook is not available to everyone. The Locum Clerk to request link to Cllr Allen's website

### **b) To receive planning reports: - None**

c) To receive correspondence:

- Email received requesting further information from the Whitland Town Council regarding the 'parkletts'. Cllr McDowall proposed that Whitland Town Council shelf the Parklett project until the weather is more favourable; Cllr Scourfield seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.
- Email received from one member of the public expressing an interest in being considered for co-option as a Councillor on Whitland Town Council.
- Email forwarded to all Cllrs prior to the meeting explaining the Locum Clerks hours worked from the 24<sup>th</sup> September to the 31<sup>st</sup> November 2020. All Cllrs agreed that they had received the Email and considered its contents.
- Email received regarding the final settlement figure to be paid to the outgoing clerk in the sum of £865.15

**11. Finances**

a) To consider the locum Clerks hours worked 24th September to 1<sup>st</sup> November 2020 (Emailed to all Prior to the meeting)

Cllr Scourfield proposed that the figure of £1,335.78 (as per the time line provided to all Cllrs via Email) be accepted by Whitland Town Council and processed via the HMRC PAYE system; Cllr McDowall seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

(This figure will be added to the accounts to be approved)

b) Financial Report and Bank/cashbook Reconciliation – Full report available upon request

**Cash Flow Up to 12th October 2020**

Balance as of 1st April 2020	£ 25,162.27	B/F
Payments made	£ 26,068.08	
Income Received	£ 53,942.27	
	<b>£ 53,036.46</b>	C/F

Cllr Scourfield proposed that the financial report, as presented, be accepted as a true record of the Whitland Town Council 's finances to date; Cllr Davies-Scourfield seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

Cllr Chapmen thanked the Locum Clerk, on behalf of all Councillors, for providing such a comprehensive and transparent report of the Councils finances.

c) Invoices for consideration

Jamie King – Web Design	£730.00
Jamie King	
Managed website hosting for the period *01/10/20 to 30/09/21	£ 64.00
Domain name hosting of [whitlandtowncouncil.co.uk] for the period*	£ 16.00
Email hosting 2GB for [clerk@whitlandtowncouncil.co.uk] for the period*	£ 20.00
Email hosting 2GB for [chair@whitlandtowncouncil.co.uk] for the period*	£ 20.00
SSL certificate for the period*	£ 60.00
	Total <u>£180.00</u>

Mark West – Repair to hand dryer in toilet	Work not completed
Wages HM -	£325.00 (To be processed via HMRC PAYE System)
Wages LC -	£1,335.78 (To be processed via HMRC PAYE System)
EDF energy – electricity for toilet	£ 33.00 direct debit
Welsh Water – water supply for toilet	£ 20.50 direct debit
XLN business services CCTV line	£ 71.33 direct debit

Llewelyn Davies – payroll services	£ 23.00	direct debit
Rob Thomas – grass cutting -October payment	£480.00	Standing Order

Cllr Scourfield proposed that the above invoices be paid in full; Cllr Davies-Scourfield seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

- d) To consider a date for the Finance Committee to meet and discuss the way in which the accounts and reconciliations will be presented to the Council

As per agenda item 8b as above

Following discussions it was agreed that a special tribute be considered to mark the 50 years plus of service that ‘Ron’ gave to Whitland Town Council. Cllrs to Email their thoughts to the Clerk prior to the December meeting.

**12. Christmas Tree and Lights update**

- The Grounds Man to liaise with the Christmas tree provider to arrange a delivery date
- The light installers are on standby to set up the Christmas lights once the tree is in place.
- The Grounds Man will move the tables to the Trevaughan area, temporarily, to ensure the safety of the public in the area around the tree.

**13. Items for next meeting**

- Report from Staffing Committee
- Report from Finance Committee
- Consideration to the future management of the Whitland Abbey
- Draft budget for discussion and approval
- Any updates regarding the Trevaughan Land
- To consider any comments made by members of the public regarding future Council projects
- To consider any persons for Co-option

**Date of next meeting** – Monday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2020 via the medium of Zoom

Meeting closed 21.26

**Whitland Town Council**  
**Year end 31 March 2021**

Account No:	****	£ 46,222.88
Account No:	****	£ 6,813.58
<b>Balance per Statements @ 12.10.2020</b>		<b>£ 53,036.46</b>

	<b>Credit</b>	<b>Debit</b>
	<b>£</b>	<b>£</b>
Opening Balance 1st April 2020	<u>£ 25,162.27</u>	
<b>Cash Book Totals:</b>		
Bankings	£ 53,942.27	
Payments	<u>79,104.54</u>	£ 26,068.08
		<u>£ 26,068.08</u>
Closing Balance	0.00	<u><b>£ 53,036.46</b></u>

**As per Statements**

Statement Balance	£ 53,036.46
Less outstanding Cheques	£ -
Plus Outstanding Bankings	£ -
	<u><b>£ 53,036.46</b></u>

**Cash Flow Upto 12th  
October 2020**

Balance as of 1st April 2020	<u>£ 25,162.27</u>	B/F
Payments made	£ 26,068.08	
Income Received	£ 53,942.27	
	<u><b>£ 53,036.46</b></u>	C/F

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_