

# MINUTES

Minutes of the General Meeting of Whitland Town Council held remotely, via the medium of Zoom, on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> February 2021, at 7.00pm.

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](mailto:clerk@whitlandtowncouncil.co.uk))



Meeting started at 19.05

Present: Cllr Barry Chapman (Mayor), Jenny Davies-Scourfield (Deputy Mayor), Len Shipton, Mathew McDowall, Ffion Scourfield, Raymond Jones, Rhys Davies, Julie Jones, Enfys Eynon and Jonathan Blandford

Also present – The Clerk

**1. To accept apologies for absence** – Cllrs Frank Connor-Hughes and John Dobson

**2. To disclose personal and pecuniary interests**

Cllr J Blandford declared a personal interest in agenda item 19 – Living in the vicinity of the proposed speed sign

Cllr B Chapman declared Personal and Prejudicial interests in Agenda item 20 – He is the organiser of the Whitland Foodbank

**3. To receive any updates regarding the Co-option Process**

The Clerk advised the Council that the closing date for the Electors Rights, in accordance with Section 116 of the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011, is the 5<sup>th</sup> February 2021. Council agreed that if no Election is requested then the Clerk should continue the Co-option process as advised by the Electoral Services Officer.

**4. To review and accept the minutes of the meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

Cllr Davies-Scourfield proposed that the Minutes of the meeting held on the 4<sup>th</sup> January 2021, as presented, be signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting; Cllr Shipton seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

**5. To review and accept the Minutes of the Extraordinary meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021**

Cllr Scourfield proposed that the Minutes of the Extraordinary Meeting held on the 18<sup>th</sup> January 2021, as presented, be signed as a true and accurate record of the meeting; Cllr Davies-Scourfield seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

**6. Chair's report** – Cllr Chapman confirmed that all items will be covered in the Agenda

**7. To receive any updates regarding the following:**

a) Trevaughan Field – update regarding the planting of all trees delivered to date

Cllr Shipton advised the Council that:

- All trees that have been received to date, have been planted within the land managed by the Whitland Town Council, at Trevaughan.
- The professional gardener (Kelly) advised the positions of the trees to allow ball games to continue without damaging the newly planted trees.
- Kelly advised the Council that the choice of trees will encourage wasps to congregate – This is an issue that will be further considered in the summer with the possibility of wasp traps being installed.
- The existing position of the herb garden was noted – adjacent to the goal post. Council agreed that this should be moved to a more appropriate location with the consideration of a raised bed being built to afford access by all.

Cllr Shipton proposed that a Grounds Maintenance Working Party be formed to oversee the day-to-day management of land in the ownership or Leased by the Whitland Town Council. This would include Bryngwenllian Park, the toilets, the car park area adjacent to the Old Dairy Site, The Pocket Park, The Abbey, the land at Trevaughan and **any other land I have not listed!!**; Cllr Chapman seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

Councillors interested in being a part of the Grounds Maintenance Working Party are: Cllrs Shipton, J Jones, Eynon, R Jones and Chapman

b) The changes to the Banking Mandate – On going

c) St Mary Street – Hording along the ‘Old Dairy Site’

The Clerk advised that an Email had now been received from the Planning Enforcement Team at Carmarthenshire County Council advising that *‘The matter will now be investigated, in line with our Adopted Protocol, to ascertain whether a breach of planning control has occurred’*. The Clerk will update the Council as and when further information is received.

d) Fly tipping at Bryngwenllian

This matter has been reported to the Carmarthenshire County Council who have advised that the relevant department will ensure the rubbish is cleared.

e) Planning Enforcement Issue - Llys Y Crofft, Whitland SA34 0HG

Following three Emails sent to the Planning Enforcement Officer by members of the public, which the Whitland Town Council were copied into, the Clerk advised the Council that correspondence has been received from the Carmarthenshire County Council Officer confirming that the home owner has been instructed accordingly.

**8. To receive County Councillor’s report – None received**

**9. To receive reports for Working Groups and Council Representatives including**

Whitland Abbey Working Group – To include consideration of the Correspondence received from Ms Avril Wilson on behalf of members of the Abbey Working Group

All Councillors confirmed that they had received a copy of Ms Wilson’s Email.

It was agreed that once the advice has been received from One Voice Wales, the Grounds Maintenance Working Party would consider such and draft a response for consideration by full Council at the February 2021 meeting.

It was brought to the Council’s attention that small stones and lumps of mortar are falling from the low stone wall to the front of the Abbey Site. It was considered that there is no immediate harm to life or property, at this point in time.

Photographs to be taken and professional advice sought.

**10. To consider Planning Applications Received**

All planning application information has been Emailed to all Cllrs prior to the meeting

PL/00989      Proposed construction of a dedicated parking facility for coaches, taking pupils to and from the adjacent school. With a capacity for 16 marked bays and adequate turning area, the park will be accessed from an existing single track access road from the B4328 West Street.

Following consideration of all the information provided by the Planning Authority and discussion of such by all Councillors, Cllr Davies proposed that Whitland Town Council support this planning application but to draw to the Planning Officers attention the sure possibility that the proposed access lane is privately owned; Cllr Shipton seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

**11. To receive any planning application Notices – None Received**

**12. To receive correspondence**

- Email received from XLN advising that the account is now closed and no monies owing
- Email forwarded to all Councillors advising of training sessions, held remotely, by One Voice Wales. Any Councillor wishing to attend a course to let the Clerk know.
- Email received advising that a meeting will be held on the 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2021 regarding the Towns Free WiFi access
- Email forwarded to all Councillors, from Carmarthenshire County Council, advising that social distancing banners are available upon request to Carmarthenshire County Council
- Telephone call received advising of the possibility that land could be offered to Whitland Town Council for Community Use. Following discussion of such Cllr Scourfield proposed that the Clerk follow up this offer; Cllr Davies-Scourfield seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

**13. To consider and approve the Financial Report and Bank/Cashbook Reconciliation**

All Councillors confirmed that they had received all financial information prior to the meeting

The Clerk advised the Council that an error had been made in the January 2021 report and that the amount of payments made is over accounted for by the sum of £311.72 This error occurred as the Clerk processed the Gros value of the Wages and not the Net value in the cash flow. Cllr Chapman proposed that the amended figures be accepted and that the error was understandable; Cllr Shipton seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement. (ie Payments made £2,246.78-£311.72=£1,935.06)

Amended figures -

<b>Cash Flow</b>			
<b>16.11.2020 - 07.12.2020</b>			
Balance	£	<b>48,938.81</b>	B/F
Payments Made	£	1,935.06	
Income Received	£	0.06	
	<b>£</b>	<b>47,003.81</b>	C/F

Following consideration of the Financial Report Cllr Scourfield proposed that Whitland Town Council accept the report as a true and accurate record of the Council’s finances; Cllr Davies-Scourfield seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

<b>Cash Flow</b>			
<b>16.11.2020 - 15.01.2021</b>			
Balance	£	<b>47,003.81</b>	B/F
Payments Made	£	2,695.60	
Income Received	£	20,833.39	
	<b>£</b>	<b>65,141.60</b>	C/F

**14. Invoices for consideration: -**

1240	HMRC (PAYE and NI)	£843.67
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1241	Cutting Hedge (Bryngwenllian Park – Tree removal)	£1,550.00
1242	January Wages (To be processed through the PAYE System)	£240.00
1243	GR Consultancy Services (Independent attendee at Interviews)	£70.00
1244	Davies Builders Merchants (Stakes for trees)	£18.90
1245	City Illuminations (Christmas Lights)	£6,150.00
1246	January Wages & outstanding holiday (To be processed through the PAYE System)	TBC
1247	Atheston Firewood (Christmas Tree)	£144.00

Following consideration of the above invoices for payment, Cllr Chapman proposed that the accounts as listed be paid; Cllr Davies-Scourfield seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

All Councillors confirmed that they had received a copy of the Locum Clerk's hours worked during part of December 2020 and all of January 2021.

Cllr Scourfield proposed that Whitland Town Council accept the Locum Clerk's hours, as presented, and pay for hours worked and any outstanding holiday entitlement in lieu of time off up to the end of January 2021. In total £1,816.34 to be paid through the PAYE system; Cllr Eynon seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

## Agenda Items

### 15. To consider the Remuneration decisions, as set out by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales

Whitland Town Council is within the B group with a Precept for 2020/2021 of £62,230.00

Community and Town Council Group	Income or Expenditure in 2020-2021 of:
A	£200,000 and above
B	£30,000 - £199,999
C	Below £30,000

Determination 40 – This is a mandatory payment of £150 paid to each Councillor at the beginning of the financial year or when Office is taken and apportioned as such

Determination 41 – N/A Group A only

Determination 42 – Cllr Davies-Scourfield proposed that Whitland Town Council do not offer remuneration in recognition of specific responsibilities; Cllr Shipton seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

Determination 43 – Cllr Chapman proposed that Whitland Town Council make available remuneration to Councillors for travel costs which have been pre-approved by the Council; Cllr J Jones seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

Determination 44 – Cllr Chapman proposed that Whitland Town Council make available remuneration (as set out by the Welsh Remuneration Panel) for any pre-approved overnight expenses; Cllr Shipton seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

Determination 45 - Cllr Scourfield proposed that Whitland Town Council do not offer remuneration to members who have incurred a loss of income due to attending approved duties; Cllr McDowell seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

Determination 46 - Cllr Chapman proposed that Whitland Town Council do not offer remuneration to the Chair (Mayor); Cllr McDowell seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

Determination 47 - Cllr Davies-Scourfield proposed that Whitland Town Council do not offer remuneration to the Vice Chair (Deputy Mayor); Cllr J Jones seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

Determination 48 - N/A

Councillors were reminded that the Mayor Allowance as budgeted is for reimbursement of any costs incurred while undertaking Mayoral duties and Civic events, (upon production of receipts or on the approval of full Council).

#### **16. To review the Whitland Town Council's Financial Risk Assessment**

All Councillors confirmed that they had received a copy of the proposed Financial Risk Assessment of Whitland Town Council prior to the meeting

Cllr Davies-Scourfield proposed that Whitland Town Council accept and adopt the Financial Risk Assessment as presented and such should be reassessed annually; Cllr Shipton seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

#### **17. To consider the Whitland Town Council Standing Orders – and to acknowledge such**

All Councillors confirmed that they had received a copy of the proposed National Association Local C Model Standing Orders prior to the meeting

Cllr Chapman proposed that Whitland Town Council accept and adopt the Model Standing Orders with one amendment – that meetings are no more than two and a half hours long; Cllr Blandford seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

#### **18. To finalise the way in which the Whitland Town Council will Acknowledge 'Ron's' time served as a Councillor**

Following discussion and consideration of a few ideas presented by Councillors. Cllr Shipton proposed that the Clerk make certain enquiries as to whether a plaque could be placed within the Station area and if so what type of plaque would be acceptable; Cllr Chapman seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

#### **19. To consider the proposed speed signs to be located at the Velfrey Road area (Correspondence from Carmarthenshire County Council Emailed to all Cllrs prior to the meeting)**

The following points were brought up in discussion –

- The proposed location of the sign is not within the area that the purported speeding occurs
- A site visit had taken place in January 2020 but unfortunately no notes of such could be located
- Within the Email it was stated that accidents had occurred within this location – to the best of the local knowledge held by Councillors no accidents had occurred in this location recently
- Carmarthenshire County Council are requesting that Whitland Town Council contribute to the purchase and installation costs of the sign (£ 2,094.04 + VAT)

Cllr Davies-Scourfield proposed that the Clerk request clarification from the Traffic Engineer at Carmarthenshire County Council regarding the possibility of the sign being located in a differing position and that the sum of £2094.04 is still required to be paid by the Whitland Town Council; Cllr Scourfield seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

*Post meeting note:*

*The Carmarthenshire County Council Officer confirmed that:*

- *There was a meeting in January 2020 with the Past Clerk when a walk through took place and possible locations for the sign were discussed.*
- *Unfortunately, the only viable position, as considered by the Officer, is outside no 3 on the opposite side of the road to the houses.*
- *This has now become a Carmarthenshire County Council project as Carmarthenshire County Council are now funding the whole amount at no cost to Whitland Town Council.*

21.07 - Cllr Chapman suspended Standing Orders to enable the meeting to continue to fruition

Cllr Davies left the meeting - due to prior work commitments

**20. To consider a donation request made by Whitland Townhall Food Bank**

Cllr Chapman left the virtual meeting room due to his declaration of a prejudicial interest in this agenda item

Cllr Davies-Scourfield Chaired this agenda item

The Clerk read out the letter received from the Whitland Townhall Food Bank

Consideration was given to the existing Grants Policy and Financial Regulations of Whitland Town Council.

It was brought to the Council's attention that this service is offered to anyone who attends the Town Hall and not on a referral basis, also that the Foodbank and the Town Hall are run as one entity at this point in time.

Cllr McDowell proposed that Whitland Town Council are not able to offer financial support to this project at this point in time; Cllr Shipton seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

Cllr Chapman re-joined the virtual meeting

**21. To consider Whitland Town Council obtaining a storage unit for the storage of Council owned property and the location of such a unit.**

Cllr Shipton proposed that Whitland Town Council consider purchasing a container to safely store any items belonging to Whitland Town Council which are currently stored in various locations. If approved the container to be placed in an already agreed location; Cllr J Jones seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

Cllr Shipton advised the Council that he would make enquiries as to the cost of containers and report back to the Council at the March 2021 meeting

**22. To review the Whitland Town Council's Emergency Flood Plan**

It was considered that the existing Flood Plan is stored in the Mayors Parlour and inaccessible at present. Further consideration was given to the fact that it was more than likely out of date and should be revised anyhow.

The Clerk to gather further information from the Carmarthenshire County Council, Resources Wales and the local residents who live where flooding occurs and report back to the Grounds Maintenance Working Party to enable a draft Plan be prepared for presentation to full Council.

**23. To accept the New Clerks Contract - (Emailed to all Cllrs prior to the meeting)**

Cllr Chapman proposed that the entries, as depicted in red, be accepted and signed as such; Cllr Shipton seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

**24. To arrange a date for the Staffing Working Group's next meeting – 24.02.2021 7pm Via Zoom**

**25. Considerations for discussion at the next meeting – None at present**

**26. To confirm date of next meeting – 01.03.2021 7pm Via Zoom**

Meeting closed 21.42