

Whitland Town Council Minutes



Minutes of the General meeting of Whitland Town Council held via Zoom on Monday the 13th December 2021 at 7pm.

This meeting was open to the public via a live Zoom link, available on request to the Clerk.

Present: Cllrs J Davies-Scourfield (Chair), L Shipton (Vice Chair), F Scourfield, B Chapman, M Mc Dowell, R Jones and J Blandford.

Also present – The Clerk

Meeting commenced – 19.06

2021/12 148 To accept Apologies for Absence - Cllrs R Davies, J Jones, E Eynon, and J Dobson

The Clerk advised the Council that, due to work and family commitments, Cllr Natasha West has resigned as Councillor on Whitland Town Council

The Clerk also advised that due to Frank Connor-Hughes not attending meetings over the past 6 months and in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 s85(1) and (2) Frank Connor-Hughes is no longer able to continue as a Councillor on Whitland Town Council.

2021/12 149 To Receive any Personal and Prejudicial Declaration of Interests

Cllr Chapman declared a personal and prejudicial interest in any matters appertaining to the Post Office as Cllr Chapman works within the Post Office.

Cllr Chapman declared a personal interest in any matters appertaining to the Town Hall as Cllr Chapman is a Trustee of the Town Hall.

2021/12 150 To Receive the Minutes of the Meeting Held on the 8th November 2021

Cllr Blandford proposed that the Minutes of the General meeting held on the 8th November 2021 be signed as a true record of the meeting; Cllr McDowell seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

2021/12 151 Matters Arising from the Minutes – Information Only - None

2021/12 152 To Receive the Minutes of the Meeting Held on the 22nd November 2021

Cllr McDowell proposed that the Minutes of the General meeting held on the 22nd November 2021 be signed as a true record of the meeting; Cllr Shipton seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

2021/12 153 Matters Arising from the Minutes – Information Only - None

2021/12 154 To Receive the Minutes of the Meeting Held on the 30th November 2021

Cllr Chapman proposed that the Minutes of the General meeting held on the 30th November 2021 be signed as a true record of the meeting; Cllr Blandford seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

2021/12 155 Matters Arising from the Minutes – Information Only - None

2021/12 156 Mayor's Christmas Message and Report

Cllr Davies-Scourfield reported that she had attended:-

- the Round Table Charity Santa Run held in Narberth. This was a very well attended event with money being raised for a number of charities. The Round Table would very much like to hold this event in Whitland next year.
- the Christmas Bingo held in the Whitland Rugby Club – this event raised over £1,000

Cllr Davies-Scourfield wished all present a Merry Christmas and a Safe New Year.

2021/12 157 To consider any account(s) for payment

Cllr McDowell proposed that the invoices, as presented to the Council, be paid in full; Cllr Scourfield seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

2021/12 158 To consider the Financial Report and Bank Reconciliation

All Councillors confirmed that they had received the financial report.

Cllr Scourfield proposed that the finance report be signed as a true representation of the Whitland Town Council's finances to date; Cllr Shipton seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

Cash Flow		
30.11.2021 - 01.12.2021		
Balance	£ 58,805.00	B/F
Payments Made	£ 2,577.92	
Income Received	£ 0.11	
	£ 56,227.19	C/F

2021/12 159 To consider any Planning Applications received after the publication of the agenda.

None received

2021/12 160 To receive any Planning Decision Notices from the Carmarthenshire County Council

None received

2021/12 161 Consideration of Correspondence Received

- Confirmation Email from the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) advising that the Whitland Town Council registration has been renewed.
- Various Consultations forwarded to all Councillors for their consideration.
- Email forwarded to all Councillors from One Voice Wales offering various training courses, being held remotely during January February and March.
- Further Email sent to the contractor who installed the hand dryers in the public toilets, requesting that the matter of the rust spots on the hand dryers be attended to ASAP – No response to date.

2021/12 162 To receive County Councillor's Report

None received

2021/12 163 To Receive Any Reports from Committees/Working Parties

Cllr Shipton – On behalf of the Grounds Working Party

Cllr Shipton reported that –

- It is purported that the pathway at Trevaughan could be owned by Welsh Water – This is the pathway which the Carmarthenshire County Council are trying to ascertain ownership and therefore who is responsible for the upkeep of such.
- Part of the troublesome fence along St Mary's Street was blown down on the 26th November 2021, just after the children from School had passed the site, with further panels being blown down early hours of the 27th November 2021. Cllr Shipton was pleased to report that no persons or property had been harmed.

Cllr Davies-Scourfield, as Chair, requested that this matter be discussed in further detail.

The Clerk advised that Whitland Town Council, through correspondence lasting over nine months, have brought its major health and safety concerns, regarding the structure of this fence, to the attention of Carmarthenshire County Council. Correspondence sent by the Whitland Town Council included an independent Safety Assessment, carried out by a qualified professional, advising that the fence was unsafe. Carmarthenshire County Council advised that, in the opinion of one of its Officers experienced but not qualified, at that point in time there were no health and safety issues with the fence and that the landowner

is responsible for maintaining such to a safe standard. (Email response from Carmarthenshire County Council received August 2021).

Following discussion Cllr Davies-Scourfield proposed that the Clerk publish a Statement, on the Website, in the Tenby Observer and in various public places, setting out the Whitland Town Council's involvement leading up to and during the incidents on the 26th and 27th November 2021; Cllr McDowall seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

Cllr Chapman proposed that the Clerk write, once again, to the Chief Executive of Carmarthenshire County Council requesting its confirmation that any health and safety matters will be addressed and that the Carmarthenshire County Council give its assurance that there will not be any further incidents; Cllr Blandford seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

Meeting held on the 11th December 2021 – It was brought to the attention of several Councillors that County Cllr Sue Allen had called a meeting regarding the fencing. Cllrs Davies-Scourfield, Shipton and the Clerk attended the meeting on behalf of the community of Whitland Town, but were not permitted to enter, being advised that the meeting was for residents of St Mary's Street only.

Following discussions regarding the recent events surrounding the fence along St Mary's Street and the refusal by the County Councillor for Whitland Town Council to be represented at the meeting held on 11th December 2021, Cllr Shipton proposed that Whitland Town Council hold a public meeting in the Town Hall, inviting the land owners, County Councillor Sue Allen and representatives from Carmarthenshire County Council health and Safety department, to advise and reassure the community that there will not be any further health and safety issues and that a more suitable and acceptable fence will be reinstalled; Cllr Scourfield seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement. A live link to be afforded to anyone who would prefer to attend remotely.

(Post meeting note – Due to the increase in Covid 19 cases it was concluded that this meeting should be postponed)

2021/12 164 To Receive Reports from Council Representatives

Cllr Scourfield on behalf of Ysgol Llys Hywel

Cllr Scourfield advised the Council that she had been voted in as Vice Chair for the Governing Body.

All present congratulated Cllr Scourfield and wished her all the best in her new role representing the Community of Whitland within the School.

2021/12 165 To receive any updates regarding the Ten Towns Growth Project – and to consider appointing the Clerk Delegated Powers to enable her to complete paperwork appertaining to this initiative.

The Ten Town Growth Project is governed by the Carmarthenshire County Council with a sub group representing Whitland Town. There are two projects, at present, relating to the Growth plan namely:

1. LEADER Funding – This affords the ability to 'bid' for up to £10,000 to improve the digital communication within Whitland and surrounding area. It has been concluded that a website will be designed offering businesses the opportunity of advertising and providing an electronic 'address book' for local businesses. Also there is a provision for screens to be situate within businesses in Whitland with software advertising businesses and providing local information of events that are being held.
2. Capital Funding – This affords the ability to bid for a share of £1,000,000 (Circa £100,000 per Town) to improve the business ability within Whitland. It has been concluded that car parking and electric bike/car charging facilities are a priority for Whitland.

A number of meetings have been held over the past few months. It was resolved in the Emergency Meeting of Whitland Town Council held in November 2021 that Whitland Town Council would take lead in the above three projects and ensure that all the relevant paperwork is completed and procedures are followed. Cllr Davies-Scourfield proposed that the Clerk, as Proper Officer to Whitland Town Council, be afforded the

Power to complete any relevant paperwork and ensure that the proposed projects are managed and if so required alternative solutions investigated; Cllr Scourfield seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

The Ten Towns Growth Plan is available upon request.

Car parking – Currently the Whitland Town Council are in discussion with the owner of the ‘old Dairy Site’ to extend the existing car park. Following recent correspondence and the setting out of the proposed Lease arrangements The Clerk is making alternative enquiries into other possible projects. One such possibility involving the Town Hall.

Cllr Chapman left the virtual meeting room

The Clerk advised that an alternative opportunity for Whitland Town would be the possibility of updating the Town Hall to enable a shared office space ie for local businesses to uses the premises for their clerical requirements.

It was concluded car parking would take priority but that the Whitland Town Council to diarise an agenda item to discuss the Town Hall. (April 2022)

2021/12 166 To consider how the Whitland Town Council can support the Post Office Service in Whitland Town

It has been brought to the attention of the Whitland Town Council that the management of the building which houses the Post Office is to change in the New Year with the possibility of the Post Office Service being lost.

It is purported that the new managers of the building will continue with the Post Office Service, but this is not confirmed.

At present there is no action that the Whitland Town Council is able under undertake.

Cllr Chapman returned to the virtual meeting room

2021/12 167 To receive correspondence from the Nazareth Chapel Members relating to the proposed hand over of the cemetery to the Town Council for the management thereof

Councillors confirmed that they had received a copy of the Email from the Members of the Nazareth Chapel along with the Clerks response.

Within the Email received Members of the Nazareth Chapel confirmed that, due to s149 of the Equality Act 2021 not permitting members of the Nazareth Chapel ‘special burial rights’ in a Burial Ground managed by a Town Council, they do not wish to proceed with the proposed hand over.

Councillors wished it to be noted that it was a shame that this conclusion had been met after such a long period of time.

2021/12 168 To consider and approve the draft 2022/2023 budget and Precept request.

All Councillors confirmed that they had received a copy of the draft budget, prior to the meeting, and had time to consider such.

Each heading was considered and the amount confirmed. (Budget to be published on the Whitland Town Council Website)

New items discussed –

- The safety flooring at Bryngwenllian Park – This has been flagged up within the past few reports and following an inspection recently by a park installer, an estimate figure to replace such of £8,000 was offered.
- The Grass Cutting Tender will require to be renewed prior to this seasons cuts.

Cllr Chapman proposed a budget for 2022/2023 of £93,330.00 with a Precept request of £61,210.00 (sixty one thousand, two hundred and ten pounds only); Cllr Jones seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

2020/2021 Precept - £62,230.00

Budget - £62,230.00

2021/2022 Precept - £56,022.40

Budget - £79,392.40

2022/2023 Precept - £61,210.00

Budget - £93,330.00

2021/12 169 To consider a date for the Play Park Working Party to meet – to consider the quotations received and move forward with an application to Carmarthenshire County Council for Section 106 funding towards phase one of the play equipment.

Once the Clerk has received all the requisite paperwork a meeting will be arranged to consider such and make the relevant applications for the Section 106 contributions towards phase one of the play park.

2021/12 170 Considerations for discussion at the next meeting

It was brought to the Council's attention that persons have been knocking on doors collecting for charities without wearing face masks and ignoring any 'no cold caller' notices on doors.

Meeting closed at 21.15