



Email: clerk@whitlandtowncouncil.co.uk

Minutes of the General Meeting of Whitland Town Council held remotely, via the medium of Zoom, on Monday 9th January 2023, at 7.00pm.

Correspondence and planning documents have been Emailed to Councillors prior to the meeting.

Please note that Audio or Video recording of Full Council meetings is not permitted.

All Whitland Town Council meetings are regulated by its Standing Orders.

Prior to the commencement of the meeting Mrs R Phillips from Carmarthenshire County Council spoke with Councillors regarding the LEADER funding and the Council's decision regarding the proposed car park project.

Present: Cllrs J Davies-Scourfield (Mayor), L Shipton (Deputy Mayor), J Blandford, M McDowall, R Jones and S McDowall.

Also present – The Clerk

Meeting commenced – 19.26

2023/01 140 Apologies for Absence – Cllr R Davies

2023/01 141 To receive any Declaration of Interests as per the Code of Conduct - None

2023/01 142 To receive the Mayors Report

Cllr Davies-Scourfield wished all Cllrs a Happy new year and thanked Cllr Shipton for starting the Charity Santa Run in her absence, which was a great success and enjoyed by all who took part.

2023/01 143 To Receive the Minutes of the Meeting Held on the 12th December 2022

Cllr Blandford proposed that the Minutes of the General meeting held on the 12th December 2022 be signed as a true record of the meeting; Cllr S McDowall seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

2023/01 144 Matters Arising from the Minutes – Information Only

The Clerk advised that no further response nor acknowledgment of the Council's Email had been received from the Whitland and Henllanfallteg Appeal Committee.

2023/01 145 To acknowledge and approve account(s) for payment

Cllr Davies-Scourfield proposed that the invoices, as presented, be accepted and paid in full; Cllr Shipton seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

12.12.2022	1553	Arts Factory - Final Payment	£ 3,451.00
12.12.2022	1554	Eagle Sign - Play Park Safety	£ 42.00
12.12.2022	1555	Welsh Water	£ 219.64
	1556	CANCELLED	£ -
01.01.2023	1557	Wages	£ 993.20
12.12.2022	1558	Reech Sport - Bryngwenllian Surface Replacment	£23,299.20
12.12.2022	1559	EDF Energy - electrics Public Toilets	£ 200.00
12.12.2022	1560	Tree Consultancy West Wales (Re-issue of 1556)	£ 577.20
04.01.2023	1561	Wages	£ 264.00
09.01.2023	1562	HMRC PAYE	£ 1,528.72
09.01.2023	1563	Eagle Signs - Play At Own Risk Signs x3	£ 64.80
09.01.2023	1564	Carmarthenshire County Council - Street Light Replacment Bulbs (Year 2 of 8)	£ 938.26
09.01.2023	1565	David Harries and Co Toilet Paper	£ 70.42
			£31,648.44

2023/01 146 To consider and approve the bank/cash book reconciliation

Cash Flow			
30.11.2022-31.12.2022			
Balance	£	47,705.71	B/F
Payments Made	£	31,183.86	
Income Received	£	20,407.26	
	£	36,929.11	C/F

Cllr Blanford proposed that the bank reconciliation be signed as a true record of the Whitland Town Council's financial position; Cllr S McDowall seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

2023/01 147 To consider the 2023/2024 Budget

All Councillors confirmed they had received a copy of the proposed 2023/2024 budget.

Following consideration of all the information provided, Cllr Blandford proposed that Whitland Town Council approve the draft budget, as presented, as request a Precept from Carmarthenshire County Council of sixty two thousand, four hundred and ninety pounds (an increase of 2.1% of 2022/2023); Cllr Jones seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

2023/2024 Budget**Whitland Town Council - Budget / Spending 2023/2024**

	C/F	Precept	Total Budget
Gros Wages and Pension Payments		£ 21,650.00	£ 21,650.00
Administration	£ 2,000.00	£ 3,350.00	£ 5,350.00
Insurance/Professional subscriptions	£ 1,500.00	£ 4,740.00	£ 6,240.00
Public Services		£ 9,050.00	£ 9,050.00
Donations	£ 600.00	£ 150.00	£ 750.00
Grounds Maintenance	£ 4,500.00	£ 15,000.00	£ 19,500.00
Christmas		£ 6,300.00	£ 6,300.00
King Charles III Coronation		£ 1,500.00	£ 1,500.00
Possible Spends	£ 21,250.00	£ 750.00	£ 22,000.00
None Budgeted from Reserves			
	£ 29,850.00	£ 62,490.00	£ 92,340.00
£ 62,490.00	2023_2024		
£ 61,210.00	2022_2023		
<u>£ 1,280.00</u>	Increase		

2023/01 148 Planning Application(s) Received – None**2023/01 149 To consider any planning application Notices received from the Carmarthenshire County Council - None****2023/01 150 Consideration of Correspondence Received**

- Information received regarding People Speak up – a Carmarthenshire and District Dementia Friendly steering group. For more information contact Email – info@peoplespeakup.co.uk
- Email forwarded to all Cllrs advising of the trainings being offered by One Voice Wales
- Information received regarding Actif Sports and Leisure – A community hub project held at the Memorial Hall, Whitland offering sports opportunities for children. For more information, contact Email – ckwan@carmarthenshire.gov.uk
- Flood warning received from Natural Resources Wales – Cllr Shipton confirmed that sandbags are stored within the Council's container should they be required.
- Requested information received from Audit Wales – 2019/2020 audit – still being assessed, 2020/2021 audit completed awaiting review and 2021/2022 audit completed awaiting review. The

Clerk has been advised. Via a telephone call with the auditor, no penalties will be imposed for the none posting of Audit Completion Notices as all information has been received by the external auditor and it is no fault of the Council's that the audits have not been completed.

- Telephone conversation with Mr Murphey, from Carmarthenshire County Council, relating to the information received regarding Section 106 historical spends. The Council were advised that Mr Hancock is no longer a member of the Section 106 team at Carmarthenshire County Council and Mr Murphey will make enquires with the new Section 106 Officer if the Council wished to continue with this process. It was agreed that the enquires should continue, as there are several outstanding matters the Whitland Town Council would like further information on.
- Telephone call received from Dyfed Powys Police in relation to the incident prior to Christmas when the public toilets were vandalised. The PCSO who has been assigned the incident has been on leave over the Christmas period and has now returned to work. The Clerk advised that the Council wish to pursue the matter and, as agreed at the December meeting, and the Council request that a youth restorative disposal be considered. The Council are concerned regarding the increase of minor acts of vandalism that are occurring in and around Whitland. The Police will be informed of any incidents as and when they occur.
- Donation request received from Y Cardi Bach local paper – The Clerk to request further information and on receipt of such the request will be considered at the February 2023 meeting.

2023/01 151 To Receive Any Reports from Working Parties

Grounds Management Working Party – Cllr L Shipton

- One of the flower planters is now located outside the butches – The proprietor as offered to maintain it.
 - Arrangements will be made to remove the Christmas tree once the lights have been removed by the contractors.
- a) **The Parc Dr Owen Play Park Task and Finish Group** – update regarding the
- The damaged newly laid artificial grass has been replaced by Sunshine.
 - Replacement of the basket swing and repairs to the ground around certain play equipment is still awaited. The Clerk has request a date as to when these outstanding works will be carried out.
 - Various concerns were raised, by the Council, relating to the inconsistent information received from different Trustees of Parc Dr Owen. It was agreed that a meeting be requested with all Trustees and Councillors to enable various questions be answered by all Trustees.

2023/01 152 To Receive Reports from Council Representatives of Outside Bodies

Including an update regarding the

- Ten Towns - Digital Project – It was confirmed that the website is due to go live at any time. The Clerk has a pre-arranged telephone call with one of the Carmarthenshire County Council Officers to go through the paperwork to enable the Council to re-claim the costs they have incurred funding this project. There is one invoice outstanding relating to the digital housing of the website.
- Ten Towns - CAPITAL funding (£100,000) and a possible additional car park within Whitland. To consider information received from Carmarthenshire County Council – Prior to the commencement of this meeting Rhian, from Carmarthenshire County Council, requested if the Council would re-consider financially part supporting, in conjunction with the already approved grant, the proposed car park in St Mary's Street. Councillors advised that a proposed car park has been depicted on the pre-planning application and raised the question why is £100,000 of grant money along with an unknown amount of Whitland Town Council's money being considered by Carmarthenshire County Council to fund a car park that the developers are considering anyway. The response was that this is a pre-application and the plans could be changed.

The Council requested if the promised information relating to the possible site behind the co-op on North Road had been received from the Regeneration Department at Carmarthenshire County Council, it was confirmed that the information is still outstanding despite Rhian requesting such. It was discussed that this was originally a car park but was turned into a bus park, without consultation, and now with the new purpose built bus park being opened Councillors consider that this site would be a better location for a car park with the costs being much less than the proposed St Mary Street site. The Council have requested a meeting of the Ten Towns steering group numerous times since October 2022, all to no avail. The Whitland Town Council consider that the group should be supporting the Council and Carmarthenshire County Council Officers regarding possible other sites and projects rather than just supporting the St Mary Street site.

2023/01 153 To consider the report received regarding the tree management program for the trees at Pocket Park and Bryngwenllian Park.

All Councillors confirmed that they had received a copy of the report that covered all Whitland Town Council owned trees along with a suggested management process for the trees aligning the Pocket Park and highway.

Four trees have been identified with Ash Die Back – these are located on the boundary with the highway. The Clerk to ascertain where the liability for these trees lies. The report has given 12 months for these trees to receive the required attention.

The suggested management process for the very tall trees, located at Pocket Park on the boundary with the highway, was acknowledged and it was agreed that the Clerk should contact Carmarthenshire County Council and advise them of the suggested management process and request their comments regarding such, their agreement for works to be carried out and ascertain if they would be able to offer financial support.

2023/01 154 To consider the Whitland Town Council having a Facebook page – To further engage with the large part of the community which uses Facebook to communicate.

It was advised that the Whitland Town Council already have a Facebook page and that Cllr S McDowall will make enquiries to enable the Council to access such. This page will be used for information sharing only and no comments to be allowed.

2023/01 155 To consider the possible return to face-to-face meetings offering multi-locational facilities via Zoom (in accordance with s47 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021) – Since March 2020 the Whitland Town Council have met via Zoom to conduct its business.

Following consideration of the way in which Council meetings are currently being held, Cllr Blandford proposed that Whitland Town Council continue to conduct its monthly meetings via Zoom, and should a face to face meeting be required then to offer a live link, via Zoom, in accordance with s47 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021; Cllr S McDowall seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

2023/01 156 To consider the future safe storage of items which, to date, have been stored within the Town Hall, Whitland – the Trustees of the Town Hall have made the Mayor Parlour accessible for members of the public to hire with the removal, to a safe space, of all the Council's historic documentation and furniture.

Following a lengthy discussion regarding the History of the Mayor Parlour and the Whitland Town Council's relationship over the years with the Town Hall, Cllr Blandford proposed that Whitland Town Council remove all its property and historic documentation, at a mutually convenient time, from the Town Hall and store such either at the archives at County Hall or in the Council owned container; Cllr M McDowall seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

2023/01 157 To consider the correspondence receive relating to the removal/closure of post boxes within Whitland and how the Town Council can assist in this matter.

Several Emails have been received, by the Whitland Town Council, raising concerns regarding the number of post boxes that are being closed, within Whitland, and are just being left taped up and looking unkempt.

The Clerk to request information relating as to why these are being closed with the large number of new properties planned to be built in the area and why the closed boxes are just being left in situ.

2023/01 158 To set a date for the Clerk's annual review

A new Personnel Working Group was formed – Cllrs Davies-Scourfield, Blandford and Shipton.

Cllr Davies-Scourfield will co-ordinate the arrangements for the Clerks review

2023/01 159 Considerations for discussion at the next meeting

- The Christmas Lights design for 2023
- To promote what the Council does and fill available seats by co-option.

Meeting closed 20.56