



## MINUTES - June 2024

Minutes of the General Meeting of Whitland Town Council held via in Whitland Town Hall and via Zoom, on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> June April 2024

All 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.

The Public Participation session commenced at 7.00pm and will not normally exceed 15 minutes in length. Members of the public are welcome to ask questions or make representations relating to items listed on the agenda only.

Present in person: Cllrs L Shipton (Mayor), J Davies-Scourfield, E Morgans, S McDowall, A Cornick, and A Smith

Also present in person –Twenty members of the public The Clerk

Present via the live link – Cllrs M McDowall (Vice Chair), J Blandford, D Rutter and one member of the public

Prior to the commencement of the Public Participation Session, it was proposed and seconded that Cllr Davies-Scourfield Chair the meeting. Vote taken – all Cllrs in full agreement.

The meeting commenced 19.30

### Agenda

**2024/06 28 To Accept Any Apologies For Absence.** R Davies and R Jones

**2024/06 29 To Acknowledge Any Declarations Of Interest, As Per The Code**

- Cllr Shipton declared a personal interest in agenda item 2024/06 39 – Cllr Shipton has very strong views regarding this matter and considered himself to have a predetermined view.

**2024/06 30 To Receive The Minutes Of The Meeting Held On The 20<sup>th</sup> May 2024**

It was proposed and seconded that the Minutes of the meeting held on the 20<sup>th</sup> May 2024 be accepted as a true record of the meeting. Vote taken – all Cllrs eligible to vote in full agreement.

**2024/06 31 Matters Arising From The Minutes – None**

**2024/06 32 To Minute Any Comments Made By Members Of The Public Attending The Meeting**

Every member of the public who wished to make representation was given the opportunity to speak. Everyone present wished to speak regarding agenda item 2024/06 39. Points raised by persons present included:

- It is essential that every Town/Community should have an area where dogs and their family can socialise with other dogs and families off or on the lead.
- There is nowhere in Whitland where dogs and families can socialise.
- Providing an area of land will not cost the Town Council a great amount of money

- There is a high percentage of families in Whitland who own dogs.
- There are several businesses within the town of Whitland that welcome dogs and their families
- Children should not be encouraged to mix with dogs unknown to them
- It is a person's choice whether to own a dog or not
- When several dogs gather there could be an increase in barking
- Dogs are not permitted in children's play areas (Carmarthenshire County Council - Public Spaces Protection Order 2016)
- The possible complications to health (dog or human) due to dog faeces or dogs not being properly vaccinated.
- There is a newly opened business close to Whitland where people can pay a fee and let their dogs off for a run in a safe and controlled environment.
- The land that could be considered for a dog area is maintained as a children's play area by Whitland Town Council

The above are views of persons who attended the meeting and not the views of Whitland Town Council.

19.30 - All members of the public left the meeting.

Standing Orders commenced at 19.40 following a ten-minute comfort break.

**2024/06 33 Account(s) For Payment And Bank Reconciliation** – This agenda item has been carried forward to the July 2024 meeting

**2024/06 34 Planning Application(s) Received**

- a) PL/07741 - Sparrows Nest, Whitland, SA34 0LG  
Installation of two Mitsubishi Ecodan 8.5kW air source heat pumps

Following consideration of all the information provided by the planning authority – Whitland Town Council does not raise any concerns regarding this application.

**2024/06 35 To Consider Any Planning Application Notices Received From The Carmarthenshire County Council** – None

**2024/06 36 To consider any correspondence received**

- Email forwarded to all Cllrs outlining Training being offered by One Voice Wales
- Email to all Cllrs outlining the training being offered by Carmarthenshire County Council on the 28<sup>th</sup> June 2024 at 2pm – to cover the Code of Conduct.
- Email received from the Ombudsman for Wales – Response sent
- Email received from Western Power Distribution concerning the Electrical Substation located in Cross Street (adjacent to the public toilets, managed by Whitland Town Council) – the request is to grant access to Western Power Distribution across the land in the management of Whitland Town Council to enable the substation to be upgraded and maintained. This request has been passed to the Council's Solicitor.
- Emails sent to Cllr Sue Allen (9<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> May 2024) inviting her to attend this meeting. No response received at time of publishing the agenda.
- Emails sent to Mr G Blain (9<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2024) requesting the contact details of the Parc Dr Owen Trustees
- Emails sent to Mr Robert Kersey (Facebook messages 9<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> May, Email 23<sup>rd</sup> May 2024)- requesting contact details of Committee members of the Parc Dr Owen
  - None of the requested information has been received to date

- Email received regarding the purported footpath in Maes Abaty and such being impassable – The Clerk to Email Carmarthen as to whether this is a Public Right of Way or Right of Way for the building owners.
- Email received from Narberth Town Council inviting Cllr Shipton and Mrs G Shipton to a Major Making Service and Civic lunch
- Correspondence received relating to the possibility of a pop-up business within Whitland, utilising one of the empty properties. This has been passed on to the Chamber for Trade

#### **2024/06 28 Receive Any Minutes From Committees:**

- Grounds Management Committee– No meetings held, nothing to report
- Personnel Committee

Cllr Shipton and The Clerk conducted the cleaner's review.

Cllr Shipton advised the Council that over the past few months the public toilets have required deep cleansing after becoming blocked and being left in a poor state several times.

It was proposed and seconded that the cleaner's rate of pay be increased to the NALC pay point 18 (backdated from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024). Vote taken – all Cllrs in full agreement.

- Finance and Policies– No meetings held – nothing to report

#### **2024/06 37 To Receive Reports From Council Representatives Of Outside Bodies:**

- One Voice Wales – Cllr Blandford – nothing to report
- Parc Dr Owen Committee – Cllrs Rutter and Shipton

Cllr Rutter reported that she had attended a committee meeting – items discussed included:

- The chair is going to be stepping back after this year's Whitland Week and the vice Chair will take a more active role.
- Arrangements for Whitland Week are coming together in a positive manner
  - Whitland Town Hall Committee – Cllr S McDowall – nothing to report
  - Air Cadets – The Clerk

The Clerk attended the June 2024 meeting – items discussed included:

- A request was made to the Town Council to consider re-electing a Mayor's Cadet – this will be added to the July 2024 agenda for further consideration.
- An open evening is currently being arranged – members of the public will be able to attend and celebrate the achievements of the Cadets.
  - Schools – No meetings held – nothing to report

#### **Report from the Development Officer**

Melanie reported that:

During my initial visit, in April 2024, to the School Council it was requested by the pupils that –

- A. The bus shelter at Bryngwenllian be re-designed and painted
  - Designs were requested from the pupils in readiness for the next meeting in June.
  - To seek permission from Carmarthenshire County Council regarding the painting of such
- B. A youth club be started in Whitland
  - To post a notice on facebook to request any interested adults to attend a meeting to discuss such further
- C. The public toilets be open for longer.

- To ask the Council if they would consider this request

I along with Cllr Cornick attended the School Council on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> June 2024. I was overwhelmed with the number of designs that had been handed in.

A. The Bus shelter

- Permission has been granted by Carmarthenshire County Council to re-paint the shelter
- Permission has been granted by Carmarthenshire County Council for Whitland Town Council to carry out any repair works required to the shelter – Unfortunately they do not have any funds available for the required works to the roof at this time.
- The shelter has been pressure washed, free of charge by H2O Cleaning Solutions
- A final design has been chosen and the Art Teacher is drafting it out
- Several letters to local suppliers will be sent requesting any kind of donations of any supplies
- A provisional date for painting has been set for 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2024 (and 3<sup>rd</sup> if required) – The school will carry out all the necessary paperwork, risk assessments, and permission slips for the pupils – the Clerk to carry out a risk assessment regarding the carrying out of the painting.
- Repairs to the roof are required to be completed before the 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2024 – see agenda item 2024/06 45

B. A Youth Club - This is something which has been requested by both residents of Whitland and the pupils.

- A meeting has been held with several members attending
- A second meeting has been called for the 13th June 2024 for anyone interested in helping to attend
- A grant application has been completed and will be discussed at the meeting on the 13<sup>th</sup> of June 2024, prior to it being submitted.

C. Longer opening times of the public toilets –

- Unfortunately, three days after this request the toilets were blocked and Prowaste was called to remove several items which had purposely been placed in the toilet and flushed, blocking the drains and causing an overflow.

The Clerk has received a number of photographs depicting a large number of youths sitting in the lady's toilet, and turning the CCTV around– All persons concerned are wearing the uniform of the school.

Items being considered –

- Summer drop-in session for children up to 11 years old – Thursday mornings through August 2024
- Open air cinema – September
- Christmas lights in the St Davids Avenue area – on-going
- Two day Christmas event – If you are interested in taking part or assisting please Email [developmentofficer@whitlandtowncouncil.co.uk](mailto:developmentofficer@whitlandtowncouncil.co.uk) This will include stalls, street traders, a concert and hopefully a visit from Father Christmas.

**2024/06 38 To consider the Whitland Town Council providing an area of land designated for use by dogs** – Whitland Town Council has been approached with the request to provide an area of land, within Whitland, where dogs and their owners are able to socialise.

The Clerk advised the Whitland Town Council that five letters had been received raising concerns relating to the Council providing such a space.

Following the Clerk conducting a brief risk assessment and seeking advice from local contractors, the possible one-off cost to the Whitland Town Council to provide a safe area of

land next to a busy main road and adjoining land that houses livestock, the possible one-cost could be £68,944 (that is £64.62 per household). This would provide:

- A 6ft powder-coated fence to all four sides of the subject land
- two double-gated entrances/exits
- Salary to cover administration and daily inspection costs
- Planning application costs
- Removal of hogweed
- Any other sundries

Cllrs noted that during the public participation session, it was brought to everyone's attention that there is a new business, locally, that is offering a safe space that can be hired, allowing dogs to exercise freely in a safe environment.

It was proposed and seconded that Whitland Town Council do not support the provision of providing an area in Whitland where dogs and their families can socialise -consideration was given to all the comments made by the public.

Vote taken – All Cllrs eligible to vote in full agreement of such.

Cllr Shipton did not vote due to his consideration to predetermination.

**2024/06 39 To consider the recommendations made by the Architect relating to the proposed purchase of the Studio – Whitland** – This is the Ten Towns project relating to grant funding.

The Clerk advised that, following a request from Carmarthenshire County Council, the costings for the proposed works for the Studio had to be put out to tender again – the Council's architect took over and managed the process. These works were carried out at short notice with the tenders having to be received within a very short timeframe.

The Architect has provided a report to the Carmarthenshire County Council.

It was proposed and seconded that Whitland Town Council accept any recommendations made by Geraint Phillips BSc (Hons), MArch, PgDip Arch, ARB, RIBA as duly appointed architect to Whitland Town Council. Vote taken – all Cllrs in full agreement.

**2024/06 40 To consider payment of the Architect's account** – This is for works undertaken in supporting the Whitland Town Council and carrying out the procurement process relating to the proposed purchase of the Studio, Whitland.

It was proposed and seconded that Whitland Town Council pay the invoice received from Geraint Phillips for works undertaken to date - £945 and such should be presented to Carmarthenshire County Council if the grant application is successful. Voet taken – all Cllrs in full agreement.

**2024/06 41 To consider the grant application made by the Community Research Engagement Officer** – this request is to pay towards the hire of Whitland Town Hall to hold drop-in sessions – all information has been forwarded to all Cllrs.

Following information received it was proposed and seconded that, at this point in time, Whitland Town Council will not contribute any monies towards this request. Vote taken – all Cllrs in full agreement.

**2024/06 42 To consider the adoption of the amended Code of Conduct Guidance** - as set out by the Ombudsman for Wales.

It was proposed and seconded that Whitland Town Council adopt the new Code of Conduct guideline. Vote taken – all Cllrs in full agreement.

- 2024/06 43 To consider the 20mph Speed Limits** - Following the announcement by the Welsh Government on Tuesday 23rd April 2024 outlining their plans for 20mph speed limits, Carmarthenshire County Council is accepting suggestions on which roads residents believe should be exempted from the 20mph national speed limit in Wales. Have your say and forward your suggestions ([Link to survey](#)) for why a road should be exempted from the 20mph national speed limit in Wales or why you consider the limit should remain at 20pmh.

The Clerk provided handouts to all Cllrs regarding the on-going information gathering process being carried out by Carmarthenshire County Council. Cllr Shipton requested that all Cllrs consider completing the survey.

- 2024/06 44 To consider repairs to the roof of the Bryngwenllian bus shelter** – As a community engagement project the Development Officer has been working with the pupils and staff at Dyffryn Taff School to design a new backdrop to the shelter – Before any painting works commence the roof requires repairs. Any costs would be covered by the Bryngwenllian Maintenance Budget.

The Clerk confirmed that she had received confirmation from Carmarthenshire County Council that the Officers are agreeable for Whitland Town Council to carry out any repairs to the bus shelter at Bryngwenllian.

It was proposed and seconded that the Clerk seek prices for the painting (three coats in white) and the replacement of the whole roof on the Bryngwenllian bus shelter with all works being carried out before the 2<sup>nd</sup> of July 2024. Also delegated powers be given to the Grounds Maintenance Committee to award the contract of works, up to the agreed amount. Vote taken – all Cllrs in full agreement.

- 2024/06 45 To consider the installation of CCTV within the Clerk's Office** – To ensure the safety of the Clerk, the Whitland Town Council to consider the installation of a recordable CCTV system

It was brought to the Council's attention that within the past few weeks, the Clerk has had to request one visitor to the office to lower the tone of their voice and a second to leave the office altogether.

It was proposed and seconded that the Clerk draft a lone working policy and too research CCTV equipment that will provide a visual doorbell and a recordable camera within the Council's office, and purchase such up to the value of £75. Vote taken – all Cllrs in full agreement.

- 2024/06 46 To consider the Internal Auditors Report** - All information has been forwarded to all Cllrs, via Email, before this meeting. The Council is to acknowledge any recommendations and sign such for onward submission to the Auditor General for Wales.

All Cllrs confirmed that they had received a copy of the Internal Auditors report and duly completed annual return.

It was proposed and seconded that Whitland Town Council accept the figures and report as presented and such should be signed by Cllr Shipton as a true record. Vote taken – all Cllrs in full agreement.

- 2024/06 47 To consider correspondence received relating to the proposed lease on land at Parc Dr Owen** - correspondence received from the Whitland Town Council's Solicitor relating to the requested amendment to the proposed lease.

The Whitland Town Council is awaiting confirmation from the Parc Dr Owen Solicitor and Trustees regarding the area of land that the Town Council will be responsible for paying a

portion of the upkeep. The Council is agreeable to maintain the land on which the Licence will relate, already having such insured, paying for the Council's groundsman to cut it, and have covered it with recordable CCTV.

**2024/06 48 Considerations for discussion at the next meeting**

- Persons have been seen riding through Whitland, on motorbikes, without helmets on.

Meeting closed 21.20