

RHAYADER TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 13TH DECEMBER 2016 AT 7.00PM AT THE OLD SCHOOL CWMDAUDDWR

THOSE PRESENT

Chairman Councillor C. Evans
Councillors C.R. Davies J. Humphreys D. Jones M. Lloyd C. Walton
J. Jones
Observer County Cllr.
K. Curry

1. **APOLOGIES:** Cllrs. J. Narborough, G. Williams, L. Price, D.O. Evans, J. Stuart, W. Davis & P. Dark.

1a. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENT

Cllr. C. Evans said that the St John Ambulance Ball at the Leisure Centre had been superbly staged and very enjoyable. It had again deservedly proved to be very successful in raising funds for St John Ambulance. Despite the weather the Very Rhayader Christmas event organised by RDCS seemed to have gone well and attracted a good number of people.

She had been invited to the Luncheon Club Christmas dinner on 14th December.

1b. MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION UNDER URGENT BUSINESS

- Benchmarking survey.
- Rhayader Cub Scouts.

2. MINUTES TO BE AGREED

Minutes to be agreed were those for the meeting on 22nd November. They were agreed to be a true record.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Burial fees: No response had been received from Brian Price or Cllr. Powell about the level of fees. It was resolved to initially contact Mr. Price and if appropriate to approach Cllr. Powell direct.

Action: Clerk to contact Brian Price initially and Cllr Powell if appropriate.

Matters Arising: 7.5 PCC: BT Programme of intended public telephone removals: Details had been received from PCC of their draft decision on BT's proposals. Councillors were pleased to note that in respect of the threatened public telephones in the Elan Valley and Village, RTC's reasoned opposition to closure on public safety grounds in an area having poor mobile phone signal, had been endorsed by PCC. If this decision is ratified it will ensure that three viable communication points remain in the area.

6.2 Town Clock: Nathan Davies of PCC informed the Clerk that he had asked Ty Mawr Lime Ltd to carry out a report on the Town Clock War Memorial. The cost would be met from his project funding. If viable, Councillors wished to carry out the work required in the current financial year. For this reason it was resolved to write to Nathan to seek clarification on whether financial assistance would be made available to RTC to carry out remedial work and if so when and to what value. **Action: Clerk to write as above.**

Cllr. Walton had been reliably informed that PCC had very nearly cancelled their contract for maintenance of the Clock mechanism. Happily this was reconsidered and (for the present) the maintenance programme will continue.

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3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES (CONT).

Renewal of insurance: Cllr. Walton and the Clerk had identified three items on the Schedule which they suggested RTC consider for removal.

- The present condition of the mower rendered it unfit for RTC's requirement since the grass collection mechanism did not function and spares were no longer available.
- The Banner Frames had not been used for some years.
- The oak plant troughs were old and replacement due to rot was not covered by the policy

The Clerk reported that the insurers would reduce the policy premium by £130.60 to £1,738.43 if the above changes were incorporated. After discussion it was resolved to remove the mower and the plant troughs from the schedule, but retain the banner frames. It was further resolved that the Clerk should obtain a renewal premium from the insurers which reflected the above decision and go ahead with renewal. Cllr. Walton agreed to look into the options for disposal of the mower.

Actions: The Clerk to obtain a new premium from Zurich and renew the policy. Cllr. Walton to look into the options for disposal of the mower.

6.7 Leisure Centre / Events: A response had been received from Freedom Leisure (item 7.1 on the agenda) which maintained that the booking criteria had not been changed. It remained as that which had been agreed with PCC and the Consultative Committee in 2014. However Councillors had been informed that the onus for providing adequate insurance had passed from PCC to those wishing to hire the main hall. It was resolved to request a meeting with Mr. Owen at the Leisure Centre in February for an update.

Action: Clerk to request a meeting in February.

4: REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORTS

In her absence, Cllr. Williams had sent a report referring to a recent meeting between the Parc Trust and PCC about the refurbishment work to be carried out on the Pavilion. The schedule of works had been approved and will be offered for tender in January. The work must be completed in the current financial year. Despite assurances offered, Councillors remained concerned about the possibility that the desired end date would not be met and the repercussions this might have on funding.

The Chair reported that concerns had been expressed to her about the issue of waterlogged ground in the Parc.

It was resolved to write to PCC informing them that RTC had been advised about the Pavilion tender situation, expressing concern of the short period remaining for completion and also asking how the ground drainage issues will be addressed.

Action: Clerk to write to PCC highlighting RTC's concerns about the Pavilion refurbishment programme and the land drainage.

In her absence, Cllr. Narborough had sent 3 reports:

The first was Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service Corporate Plan 2017/22. She gave a resumé of the document and reported that she had completed the accompanying questionnaire on behalf of RTC.

Secondly she reported on a recent meeting of Rhayader Focus on Health when the role of the cardiac nurse specialist was explained. Attendees were also informed that discussions are in progress about setting up a steering group to make Rhayader a "dementia friendly Town".

Thirdly she had attended a Powys Health and Care Futures event at Llanelwedd the aim of which was to develop a health and care strategy in Powys. She looked forward to reading the ensuing report when it is issued in May 2017.

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5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest

6 AGENDA ITEMS

6.1 Quarterly Budget Appraisal

The Clerk had prepared and distributed a document to all members prior to the meeting which showed the current spend to the end of November against the Precept and the anticipated spend to the end of March 2017, to enable them to monitor current usage against their budget and if necessary, adjust effort to ensure that it stayed on target.

Councillors agreed that to date, in most areas spend was on target, but more concentrated effort was required on Town improvements to ensure that these are achieved within the current financial year.

It was agreed to accept the document and to take action to ensure that appropriate effort is placed on Town improvements during the remaining periods of the year.

6.2 Town Improvements.

Cllr. Walton said that the public were able to pin notices to the notice boards by the Smithfield entrance and at the Old School. This has resulted overtime with the surface being covered in staples. He suggested that they should be resurfaced. This was agreed in principal, formal approval will be given when costs are agreed. Cllr. Walton stated that the Perspex in all three faces of the triangular notice board by the Leisure Centre had degraded so badly that it was not possible to view the contents. It was agreed to replace the windows.

It was also reported that the seal on the window of the Cwmdauddwr notice board was faulty and notices were ruined within days during wet weather. It was agreed that the seal should be replaced or repaired as appropriate and that all of the boards to be checked to ensure that they are watertight. **Action: Cllr. Walton and the Clerk to size up the work and materials required to reinstate all faulty notice boards.**

It had been reported that three fingers had been broken off the fingerpost near the rear entrance to the Smithfield. Unfortunately the broken items have disappeared. The broken fingers indicated: Play Area, Tennis & Bowls, Waun Capel Park. Another arm broken from a fingerpost in the Parc indicated the Riverside Walk. It is not known how any of these breakages had occurred. Cllr. Walton will investigate the possibility of the arms being welded back on to the collars. Whether the arms are replaced or repaired the work should be carried out as a claim on the Council's insurance policy. **Action: Cllr. Walton and the Clerk to determine how the fingers should be replaced. The Clerk to initiate an insurance claim when appropriate.**

It was also noted that many of the posts would benefit from repainting.

Although it was agreed that ideally a "walk round" should take place to inspect the Council's street furniture, it was acknowledged that this would have to take place in daylight, which was impractical on a weekday for most Councillors. It was agreed that Cllr. C. Davies and the Clerk would undertake an assessment and report back to the January Precept meeting.

Action: Cllr. C. Davies & the Clerk to assess requirements in time for the Precept meeting.

Councillors noted that the fence bordering the Dark Lane car park and St Harmon Road is in a very bad condition with rotten posts and loose rusty sheep wire. The fence is set on the top of a bank above the footpath. It does not appear substantial enough to protect anyone from falling down the bank if they accidentally tripped and came in contact with the fence. It was therefore considered to present a hazard to safety. Cllr. Walton to inspect the fence to assess appropriate remedial action. It was resolved to ask PCC to replace the present fence with a more substantial version as a matter of urgency.

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6. AGENDA ITEMS (CONT)

Action: Cllr. Walton to assess appropriate remedial action. Clerk to contact Alastair Knox to ask that the fence be urgently replaced .

6.3 Rhayader Library.

The Town Council is still waiting for comment from PCC on the CAT for the Library building. PCC remain adamant that Town Councils should ignore the advice given to them from the Welsh Government in favour of that which PCC had received from their own London barrister. This had therefore resulted in an impasse.

Cllr. C. Evans asked Cllr. Curry if he would be able to intervene in an effort to resolve the situation. He agreed to look into the matter and she undertook to provide him with copies of the relevant documents.

Action: Cllr. Curry to attempt to intercede on behalf of RTC (and thereby all councils similarly affected).

6.4 Dolgerddon Community Asset Transfer (CAT) – update.

Despite attempts by the Clerk to obtain an update on the current position with this application the promised response had not materialised. Councillors were very aware that whatever the outcome of their application, it would have an effect on the required Precept for the year 2017/2018 the requirement for which must be submitted in January. It was resolved to push for an update on the status and likely outcome of the application prior to the Precept meeting in January 2017.

Action: Clerk to seek an early response.

6.5 Community Plan.

Cllr. C. Evans reminded Councillors that the Collaborative Committee was seeking suggestions from participating groups for Short, Medium and Long Term projects. Councillors were asked to bring their own suggestions for each category to the January Precept meeting when they would be used to formulate the Town Council’s aims.

Action: Each Councillor to bring their suggestion(s) for each category to the January Precept meeting.

7. CORRESPONDENCE

With the exception of those commented on above and below, all items of correspondence listed on the agenda and received since it was prepared were noted.

7.6 PCC: Right of Way Improvement Plan. Councillors were pleased to note that the Town Council would be on the list of consultees.

Action: Clerk to inform Mark Stafford–Tolley that RTC welcomes the opportunity to comment.

7.10 WG (to County Cllr Curry): Coach parking signs. Councillors acknowledged the benefit in trade derived from coaches stopping at Rhayader and were pleased to note the possibility of more signage being provided by the Welsh Government. Cllr. Curry informed that he was meeting with them the next day for discussions. He also informed that R2K were considering putting an advertisement in the Coach Drivers Handbook. Action: Clerk to obtain contact details of the magazine.

Welsh Women’s Aid: Request to meet ref. “Ambassadors” for domestic violence. The benefits accruing from such a scheme were acknowledged, but Councillors believed that this sort of operation would more suitably sit under the umbrella of RDSCS than that of the Town Council.

Action: Clerk to forward the request to RDSCS along with RTC’s suggestion.

OVW/National Assembly for Wales: Consultation on changing its name. In view of the likely costs involved, Councillors did not feel that there was any need for a change in name of the National Assembly for Wales. Should a different name eventually be chosen, then they considered that the logo should stay the

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7. CORRESPONDENCE (CONT)

same as that currently used, again to save costs. Councillors were minded to note that the cost of any change in name or logo will have huge financial implications in the long term as new headed paper, signs, literature, documentation etc. will need to be changed for no real benefit to the people of Wales at this time of austerity.

Action: Clerk to inform the National Assembly for Wales of the Town Council's comments.

OVW/WG: letter ref consultation on Welsh Transport Appraisal Guidance. It was resolved to pass this to Cllr. Narborough to take appropriate action. **Action: Cllr. Narborough to respond to the consultation.**

8. PLANNING

No planning applications had been received.

9. FINANCE

There were no outstanding invoices.

10. URGENT BUSINESS

Benchmarking Survey: The second round of the Survey is due to be completed by the end of January. R2K had delivered the paperwork to the Town Council for members to carry out the survey. It was resolved to pass the folder to Cllr. Williams and Cllr. Narborough to organise the surveys into individual lots for distribution to Councillors at the Precept meeting. **Action: Clerk to pass the material to Cllr. Williams and Cllr. Narborough to prepare for the distribution at the Precept meeting.**

Rhayader Cub Scouts: Cllrs. C. Walton, J. Jones and K. Curry jointly reported on the present status of the Rhayader Scouts Group. It would appear that the Group had been disbanded on instructions from the Scouts organisation, but this was only expected to be for a month. Nevertheless the closure of the group had caused concerns and uncertainty about its long term future. It was resolved to write to the District Commissioner to seek clarification about the long term future of Scouting in Rhayader.

Action: Clerk to write to the District Commissioner as above.

11. PRESS RELEASE

- Coach parking

12. BUSINESS FOR NEXT MEETING

1. Bench Marking
2. Community Plan
3. Town improvements
4. Precept requirements

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held at 7.00pm on 17th January 2017 at 7pm (Precept meeting.)

The next monthly meeting will be held at 7.00 p.m. on Tuesday 24th January 2016.

The meeting closed at 9.05p.m.

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Date