

RHAYADER TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 15TH APRIL 2015 AT 5.45PM AT THE OLD SCHOOL CWMDAUDDWR

THOSE PRESENT

Chairman Councillor L. Price
Councillors P. Dark C. Evans J. Humphreys M. Lloyd C. Walton
C.R. Davies D.O. Evans D. Jones J. Narborough G. Williams
J. Jones
County Cllr. K. Curry

PCC: County Councillor Avril York & Ms. Sue Bolter, Head of Regeneration, Property & Commissioning.

APOLOGIES: Cllr. W. Davies & Cllr. J. Stuart, County Cllr. Gary Banks.

The meeting had been convened as a result of RTC's request for a meeting with Cllrs. York & Banks to discuss PCC's intentions for the Wyeside Caravan & Camping Site.

Councillors met at 5.45pm to determine their agenda for discussions with their visitors.

Cllr. York & Ms. Bolter joined the meeting at 6.30pm.

Councillors expressed disappointment that RTC had not been consulted before PCC's decision to lease or sell the Wyeside Site were announced. Cllr. York apologised for the omission but said that she thought that RTC had been consulted, particularly so because of the involvement of Cllrs. Curry & D. Evans with both Councils.

Both Cllr. Curry & Cllr. D. Evans believed that the decision to lease or sell the site had not been taken at full Council level and asked for the date of the meeting concerned. They were informed by Cllr. York & Ms Bolter that it was in February 2014.

The visitors stated that PCC was not the right organisation to manage the Site as it was outside their core business & they had no legal obligation to provide the service. When RTC suggested that its popularity yearly generated a surplus, PCC replied that it was too risky a venture as the return did not justify the outlay.

Cllr. York insisted that she was aware of the importance of the site to Rhayader. However Councillors were appalled that PCC were only allowing 6 months for the agent (presently Colliers) to find someone to agree to take on the lease before the same agent commences to try to sell it outright. They believed this decision was either biased towards selling the site or it showed supreme naivety on the part of PCC's to believe that the short interval allowed for marketing the lease and the likely higher return from a sale would not have any influence on the agent's marketing strategy. Councillors suggested that in the event of a sale being sought, PCC should engage a different agent to sell the site.

Councillors noted that improvements are needed to bring the Site up to a reasonable standard for marketing, but were informed that PCC will only do work for which there was a legal obligation.

Cllr York stated that, in the event of a sale, there would be a covenant stipulating that the site will always remain a caravan & camping site.

Councillors were aware that when the camping field was given to Radnorshire Council, the donor intended it to be in public ownership.

Cllr. Dark ask what price was being asked for the lease. Ms Bolter said that had not yet been set and neither had the terms of the lease except that it would be offered on a 50 year basis. The value must be set at a level agreed by the Local Authority valuation official unless it was offered as a Community Asset Transfer.

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Cllr. C. Evans stated that a vehicles access Waun Capel Parc through the Site and that ability needs to be retained. Councillors were advised by Ms. Bolter that this will be ensured in any future transactions. It was stated that a Common Land watering place existed through the site. Ms. Bolter stated that all rights will be honoured.

Cllr. C. Evans suggested that if the Site was transferred to RTC it would be a revenue generator which would greatly benefit local ratepayers by helping to offset the costs incurred in providing other devolved services. Ms. Bolter indicated that PCC had not judged the Site to be appropriate for a Community Asset Transfer. If RTC wished this to be considered they should write to PCC to explain how they would run it. Cllr. Lloyd said that whatever change in management of the Site was considered it would realistically take at least a year to sort out.

Cllr. D. Evans informed that he & Cllr. Curry were in discussion about the Site with Cllr. Rosemary Harris when she was the Portfolio Holder but when she left office all discussion ceased. Cllr. Curry said there had been no discussion this year. Cllr. York agreed to check it out.

Councillors agreed with Cllr. Walton when he said that everything points to PCC wanting it to be sold.

RTC want the Site to remain in public hands. Cllr. D. Evans said that if it was leased, the Site would still remain an asset belonging to PCC, once it was sold it has gone forever. Cllr. C. Evans said that by leasing it, PCC would also have a guaranteed income annually for the period of the lease. To sell this asset amounted to negligence.

Cllr. York said that they would go back with a clear message that RTC's preferred option would emphatically be to lease or offer it as a Community asset Transfer definitely not to sell it.

After the visitors had left it was resolved to write to Cllr York & Ms. Bolter to:

- Confirm that they had agreed to ensure that however the Site is managed to the future a road access will always remain through the site to the Parc.
- Request a copy of the minutes of the meeting at which it was agreed to sell the site.
- Request that, in the event that the site is offered for sale, a different agent be appointed to manage the sale than the one engaged to market the lease.
- Request to be provided with details of the terms for an asset transfer of the site to RTC.

Cllr. Humphreys said that the matter had been totally mishandled by PCC.

It was agreed to prepare a press release stating that RTC were outraged at PPC's apparent intentions for the Site.

The meeting closed at 7.40p.m.

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