

# RHAYADER TOWN COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 22<sup>ND</sup> NOVEMBER 2016 AT 7.00PM AT THE OLD SCHOOL CWMDAUDDWR

### THOSE PRESENT

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

In the absence of Cllr. C. Evans, Cllr. C. Walton took the Chair.

Prior to the meeting Ms. Nia Hughes and Mr. Brian Price of PCC conveyed apologies from Cllr John Powell who was unfortunately unable to attend. Discussion was primarily about the standard of maintenance at Rhayader Cemetery but widened out to encompass provision of grass cutting and allied services in Rhayader and Cwmdauddwr. Cllr. Lloyd was also present for the duration of these discussion.

Mr. Price acknowledged and apologised for the shortfall in expected service experienced at the Cemetery which were caused by “teething” troubles experienced by the new contractor, Greenfingers. Those problems had now been addressed and he felt assured that procedures were now in place that would ensure that the service would improve to provide a high standard of respect and workmanship appropriate to the Cemetery. He said that Greenfingers had received the same standard of training as PCC’s own staff. Ms. Hughes acknowledged that there was a marked difficulty in this area in recruiting suitable staff for grave digging. The optimum procedures for the work were discussed at length. Councillors Lloyd and Dark declared their willingness to share their relevant expert knowledge with the contractor if requested. Mr. Price had instigated a new procedure with Greenfingers that would ensure that RTC is informed immediately a grave has been dug to ensure that Councillors have an opportunity to inspect and comment on the standard of the workmanship.

It was acknowledged that the general standard of care had now improved to an acceptable level and that the operatives appear to be good at their jobs.

The rise in burial fees was discussed, particularly those for the internment of ashes. The work involved and space required are far less than those for a full size burial yet the burial fees did not reflect this difference. Mr. Price undertook to report Councillors concerns to Cllr. Powell along with their request that the charges be reassessed and lowered to a more appropriate level.

**1. APOLOGIES:** Cllrs. C. Evans, W. Davies, J. Stuart, L. Price and M. Lloyd.

### **1a. CHAIRMAN’S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

Cllr. Walton had opened the Community Support’s Charity Fayre.

Cllr. C. Evans sent her congratulations to all involved with the organisation of the Service of Remembrance at the Clock. It had been extremely well organised, resulting in a very professionally event which was well attended. Councillors echoed her comments.

She had opened the St Clement’s Christmas Fayre which featured Rhayader Primary School choir and was well attended.

She had opened the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Round the Lakes Race which saw a record number of runners.

### **1b. MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION UNDER URGENT BUSINESS**

- Road near Dderw.
- Welcome to Rhayader road signs.

Certified as a true record .....  
Chairman Councillor C. Evans

Date .....

22<sup>nd</sup> November 2016

## 2. MINUTES TO BE AGREED

Minutes to be agreed were those for the meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2016. They were agreed to be a true record.

## 3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

**7.5 PCC: BT Programme of intended public telephone removals:** The Clerk had sent notice of RTC's opposition to the removal of any call boxes in the Elan valley area due to the lack of mobile phone coverage to PCC and to BT. Rick Thompson of BT had replied that their standpoint is that few emergency calls are in fact made from public payphones and it would not be possible to provide a service purely for occasional or emergency usage. Thus their assessments must be based on the actual usage being received. Councillors deplored BT's attitude. Cllr. C. Evans had spoken with the Welsh Chair of Ofcom's Communications Panel who strongly suggested that the Town Council forward its very real concerns to the Panel. It was resolved so to do. **Action: Clerk to contact Ofcom as stated above.**

**18<sup>th</sup> October 2016: Matters Arising, 6.6 Community Plan:** Cllr. C. Evans had attended the 8<sup>th</sup> November Collaborative Group meeting and presented her views of what she felt should be the format of the Community Plan. After discussion, it was agreed that the foundations of Community Plan should comprise 'Short, Medium & Long Term objectives/projects' of the constituent organisations involved along with any other agreed objectives/projects. Where there were synergies these could be grouped together. The attendees at the meeting would consult with their own organisations to determine each organisation's future proposals and bring the information to a further joint meeting to formulate a more cohesive plan which would work for benefit of the Community as a whole. It was anticipated that the initial Community Plan would be drafted in the financial year 2017/18.

## 4: REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORTS

Cllr. C. Evans had attended the AGM of the Rhayader and District Sports and Recreation Association (RDSRA). Cllr. K. Curry had agreed to continue as Chairman but Cllr. P. Dark had resigned as Treasurer. Further appointments will be announced at a future meeting. She had also attended the AGM of Rhayader Market Hall and Smithfield Trust and reported that all officers had been re-elected. Cllr. Curry informed that the Association's three main projects were: a Bike Park, a 4G Training Area and a Running Track.

Cllr. Williams reported that the RDCS Minibus fund had reached £17K. They are applying for a Grant from the Big Lottery Fund, but if they are not successful they will consider purchasing a pre-used vehicle.

Cllr. Walton gave a resumé of the recent Governors meeting at Bryntirion School.

## 5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr. D.O. Evans declared an interest in items 7.4 and 8.1. He left the room as appropriate.

## 6 AGENDA ITEMS

### 6.1 Bus Timetable.

Cllr. Narborough had received complaints from people who found it difficult to read the timetables posted on bus stops. She had made enquiries and was now aware that RDCS and the Rhayader Visitor information Centre based at the Museum will supply printed copies if requested. She was also aware that Traveline Cwmru have a Journey Planner for public transport on their website. It was resolved to add this information to the monthly press release.

**Action: Clerk to add the information to the Press Release.**

Certified as a true record .....

Chairman Councillor C. Evans

2 of 6

Date .....

22<sup>nd</sup> November 2016

## 6. AGENDA ITEMS (CONT)

### 6.2 Town Clock

The Clerk had received quotations of £3,811.80 to remove the eroded plaque from the north side of the Clock and replace it with a new one and £500 to supply and apply a shelter coat to the sculpture on west side and the eroded pillar at the north west corner (item 7.6 on the agenda and a subsequent e-mail). The quotations were supplied by Patrick Rowland, an associate of Jimmy Lloyd. Patrick had cleaned the stonework several years ago and was therefore familiar with it. The Clerk had informed Nathan Davies of PCC of the estimates, requesting that he consider raising the notional £2,000 maximum grant value to a figure more sympathetic to the figures which RTC had been quoted.

The Town Council had been informed by Harry Travis of PCC Regeneration and Corporate Property (item 7.5 on the agenda) that its application for a Community Asset Transfer for land at Dolgerddon was discussed at the last Strategic Asset Board (SAB) meeting. It was supported on the condition that the Town Council also take on the Town Clock as part of the application.

On discussion, Councillors resolved that the proposal was not one to which they could agree. The potential of future costly upkeep was immense. They felt that ownership of the Clock could have potentially huge impact on ratepayers over time, whereas cost impact of the land for which they had applied would prove to be negligible. It was resolved therefore that to assume ownership of the Clock would be totally inappropriate. The Clerk was instructed to thank PCC for their offer but decline it.

**Action: Clerk to write to PCC as above.**

### 6.3 Rhayader Library.

Cllr. C. Evans had compiled a CAT form for the Rhayader Library building and it had been submitted by the Clerk.

Councillors were concerned that PCC were still insisting that Community Councils should act upon the legal advice which they have received from their London based QC and which is contrary to that which has been given by Welsh Government and One Voice Wales. It was agreed that until this disparity is resolved it would be improper to enter into any firm agreement which would entail RTC going against the WG/OVW advice. Councillors further agreed that if the issue cannot be satisfactorily determined there may be a case for making the impasse known to the public and our Assembly Members / Member of Parliament.

### 6.4 RDCS application for grant.

RDCS had applied for a grant of £450 (item 7.15 on the agenda) towards the cost of staging this year's "A Very Rhayader Christmas". The sum would cover costs for Grotto Presents from Santa, costumes and props for the Christmas animal story, crowning the Winter Prince and princess, publicity posters and craft materials. It was resolved to make a grant of £450.

**Action: Clerk to make the payment from the Recycling Fund.**

### 6.5 PCAB application for grant.

PCAB had applied for a grant towards the cost of providing their advice services (item 7.14 on the agenda). It was resolved to make a grant of £50. **Action: Clerk to make the payment from the Recycling Fund.**

Certified as a true record .....

Date .....

Chairman Councillor C. Evans

## 6. AGENDA ITEMS (CONT)

### 6.6 Public Toilets Sub-committee

Cllr. Walton gave a resumé of the meeting of the Public Toilets Sub-committee held on 15<sup>th</sup> November 2016. It had been agreed that the drawings provided by the architect fully incorporated the specifications which the S/c had provided, that the proposed layouts ideally suited the space available and would result in vastly improved facilities at both sites. It had been resolved to instruct the architect to produce specifications against which quotations for the refurbishment of both facilities can be sought.

It had been agreed that the contract with Healthmatic to clean the facilities and supply all consumables was working well and required minimum input from RTC.

The Clerk had been instructed to purchase the signs for the 3 toilets from Semaphore.

The Clerk had produced a detailed estimate of running costs for all 3 toilets for the year ending March 31<sup>st</sup> 2017. The figures indicated that the spend above grants would not exceed the £3,500 allocated from the Precept but although RTC had now managed the facilities for 12 months, the running costs had not been affected by any repairs, testing, emergency work etc. To date PCC had paid the rates on RTC's behalf, but it is not known whether this arrangement will continue in the year 2017/2018. It was resolved therefore that it would be prudent to request that £3,500 again be allocated for the Toilets in the Precept for 2017/2018.

Cllr. Walton was concerned that despite PCC's agreement to disconnect them, the car park lights and the parking meter may still be connected the electricity supply to the Dark Lane toilet block. The Clerk had subsequently contacted Nicky Davies of PCC who undertook to check the situation and report back.

### 6.7 Leisure Centre / Events.

Cllr. Dark was concerned about the cost and booking procedures currently being experienced by people wishing to hold community events at Rhayader Leisure Centre. He recounted his own recent experience when arranging a charity event. He considered that the conditions which Freedom Leisure were applying were totally over the top when compared with previous arrangements. The experience left him with the distinct feeling that in truth, Rhayader no longer has a "Community Centre". He did however praise the members of staff for their will help and co-operation, without which the costs would have been totally prohibitive. Councillors were concerned that, if confronted by a situation like that experienced by Cllr. Dark, other people / organisations may be deterred by the booking process and associated requirements. This could result in the demise of community events at the Leisure Centre. It was resolved that the Clerk should write to Gwyn Owen, of Freedom Leisure, to clarify the booking arrangements and charges for use of the Hall. **Action: Clerk to write to Freedom Leisure as stated above.**

Cllr. Dark gave his apologies and left the 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.

**7.4 R2K:** Request for funding via the Precept. Rhayader 2000 had formally requested to be given funding via the Precept (item 7.4 on the agenda). It was resolved to consider this request when the Precept is determined in January.

**7.8 PCC:** Elections 2017 information. This communication notified estimated costs which would have implications to RTC in the year 2016/2017 whether the elections in each ward were contested or not and details of how to apply for a copy of the Electoral Register. It was agreed to use the information when the Precept is determined in January. The Clerk had applied for a copy of the Electoral Register.

Certified as a true record .....

Date .....

Chairman Councillor C. Evans

**7. CORRESPONDENCE (CONT)**

**7.10** Steve Harvey & Karen Roberts: Various correspondence about safety in South Street. Councillors shared Steve's & Karen's comments about the hazards presented by inappropriate speeds in South Street, a problem about which, over time, they had drawn to the attention of the Trunk road Agency and the Welsh Government. They were pleased to note that, despite refusing in the past to accept that traffic speeds were inappropriate for the situation in South Street, the Welsh Government state that they are, at last, considering the introduction of vehicle activated speed signs. Councillors re-iterated however that they do not believe that the situation would be improved by the introduction of Traffic lights at the Clock. In the past when this was done on a temporary basis it caused chaos throughout the Rhayader.

It was resolved to write to the WG fully supporting this latest move to improve road safety in South Street and to copy the letter to Steve & Karen.

Councillors also noted that whilst traffic movement in South Street offers potential dangers, other stretches of the Trunk Road through the town continue to be hazardous too.

**Action: Clerk to write to Welsh Government and copy the letter to Steve Harvey and Karen Roberts.**

**7.16** British Red Cross: Request for funding to support local services. It was resolved to make a grant of £50.

**Action: Clerk to make the payment from the Recycling Fund.**

An e-mail had been received from PCC after the agenda was issued, stating that due to kerbside collections and the presence of another site in Rhayader they propose to remove the Community Recycling Site at Cwmdaudwr. Councillors were dismayed at the suggestion, particularly so in respect of green waste.

Both sites are frequently full to overflowing and no free kerbside collections are offered for green waste. It was resolved to ask PCC to reconsider, particularly with respect to green waste.

**Action: Clerk to ask PCC to reconsider their decision, particularly with respect to green waste.**

An insurance renewal notice had been received from Zurich Municipal via email after the agenda was issued. RTC entered a 5 year agreement in with Zurich in 2013 which has given the Council up to 10% discount on its policy and kept the rates applied to the policy the same for 5 years. The proposed premium has risen slightly due to index linking applied to the buildings and all-risk items as well as an increase in wage roll. There has also been a slight increase in the insurance premium tax this year from 9.5% to 10%

It was agreed in principal to renew the policy but that Cllr. Walton & the Clerk should examine the schedule of asset values currently stated to ensure that they comply with RTC's requirements and if applicable, request that Zurich adjust the schedule accordingly before renewal. **Action: Cllr Walton & the Clerk to ensure that the Schedule is satisfactory. Clerk to renew the policy on completion.**

Play For Wales: Autumn 2016. The Council has received this publication in paper form for some years. Of late e-mail notifications of events, offers etc. have arrived with increasing regularity. The Clerk asked if Councillors wish to receive the paper publication and the on line information. It was resolved to continue to receive the paper publication but unsubscribe from the online information.

**Action: Clerk to unsubscribe from the online information.**

**8. PLANNING**

**8.1 P/2016/1137** for Extension and alterations to existing guest house and cafe at Penbont Tearooms, Elan Valley, Rhayader

There were no objections to this application & Councillors recommended approval.

**Certified as a true record .....**

**Date .....**

**Chairman Councillor C. Evans**

22<sup>nd</sup> November 2016

**8. PLANNING (CONT)**

**8.2 P/2016/1088** for Replacement and upgrade of existing public telephone kiosk combining public telephone service & ATM service (retrospective) at Pavement opposite Smithfield Market North Street Rhayader Powys.

There were no objections to this application & Councillors recommended approval.

**Action:** Clerk to inform PCC of RTC's decisions.

**9. FINANCE**

**Invoice received:** £108 Semaphore 3 toilet signs (£90 + £18 VAT) incl. Delivery. Agreed.

**Action:** Clerk to make payment

**10. URGENT BUSINESS**

Cllr. J. Jones reported that there is a lot of mud on the Mountain Road between the Tynpistyll turn and the entrance to Dderw alongside the stone wall. A lot of leaves have now fallen and added to the hazard. Some stones have been knocked out of the wall presumably by skidding vehicles.

**Action:** Clerk to report the hazard to PCC.

Cllr. Walton said that the Welcome to Rhayader signs on the approach roads to the town were looking extremely poor and suggested that they need to be renovated or replaced. It was agreed to approach the relevant Authorities to ask for action. **Action:** Clerk to write to the Trunk Road Authority and PCC.

**11. PRESS RELEASE**

- Poppy Day.
- Waste bins removal.
- Hire charges at the Leisure Centre.
- Travel information.
- Free parking for Christmas.
- Removal of phone boxes in the Elan Valley

**12. BUSINESS FOR NEXT MEETING**

1. Quarterly Budget Appraisal

**13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next monthly meeting will be held at 7.00 p.m. on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> December 2016.

The meeting closed at 9.30 p.m.

Certified as a true record .....

Chairman Councillor C. Evans

Date .....