

RHAYADER TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 24TH JANUARY 2017 AT 7.00PM AT THE OLD SCHOOL CWMDAUDDWR

THOSE PRESENT

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

1. APOLOGIES: Cllr. D. Jones

1a. CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair had attended and enjoyed the Luncheon Club's Christmas Dinner on 21st December last. She also commented that the Gwastedyn Churches Sheep Trail had proved to be very popular and that the telling of the Christmas Story at Rhayader Library was well attended by many children.

1b. MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION UNDER URGENT BUSINESS

- Caravans parked by the Weirglodd Allotments.
- Councillor Vacancy on the Allotment Sub-committee.

2. MINUTES TO BE AGREED

Minutes to be agreed were those for the meeting on 13th December 2016. They were agreed to be a true record.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Cllr. Walton reported that negotiations on the disposal of the Council's mower were in hand and that he would report to a future meeting.

6.7 Leisure Centre / Events: it was agreed to request a meeting with Gwyn Owen, Tim Davies and Christopher Bennett, officers at the Leisure Centre, at 5pm one evening early in February to get an update on recent and planned activities at the Centre since the Consultative Committee has been disbanded by Powys County Council.

Action: Clerk to arrange a meeting.

6.2 Town Improvements: The Clerk had obtained a quotation of £1,075.00 including VAT and carriage from CIS, the original supplier of the fingerposts for four replacement arms. It was resolved to make a claim from the Council's insurers to purchase the new arms. It was agreed to seek shorter arms so that they were less likely to be knocked by passing lorries in the future. **Action: Clerk to make the claim and purchase new arms.**

The Clerk had been contacted by Keith Nixon of PCC who agreed that the fence at Dark Lane car park required attention. He is awaiting sight of the relevant lease to determine which department of PCC is responsible.

Cllr. Walton had received a quote from Rhayader Building Supplies of £44 per pane for laminate glass to replace the Perspex in the triangular notice board near the Leisure Centre. It was resolved to go ahead on this basis.

Action: Cllr. Walton to order the glass.

The publication used by R2K was actually the Coach Touring Magazine and the Clerk was awaiting contact details and sight of the advertisement from R2K.

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4. REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORTS

Cllr. Williams reported that sales of Poppies this year in Rhayader and Cwmdauddwr had raised £2,980.89.

Rhayader School Governors: Cllr. Walton updated the Council on the current situation at Rhayader School.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

6. AGENDA ITEMS

6.1 Bench marking.

The forms had all been distributed and some had been returned. It was anticipated that all would be completed in time to return to R2K before the end of January.

6.2 Community Plan.

The Town Council discussed at length suitable areas to be included in a future Community Plan to be developed from the short, medium and long terms aims/projects of organisations from the community.

It was agreed that the following aims/projects would bring added value to the Community:

Short term: Retain Library facilities in Rhayader; refurbish the Clock Tower war memorial; improve the Rhayader street scene.

Medium term: Secure the Library building and the land at Dolgerddon via Community Asset Transfers; relocate the Council chamber to the library building.

Long term : Research into developing an income stream for Rhayader, potentially via a renewable energy project.

Action: Cllr. C. Evans to inform the Collaborative Committee of RTC's aims.

6.3 Town improvements.

Councillors discussed a report, submitted by Cllr. C. Davies and the Clerk, of a "walk round" the centre of Rhayader. It was agreed that the area by the Leisure Centre is dominated by the three trees which have out grown their space. It was resolved to have the side branches cut back (up to the height of the tree guards – it will depend on how to trees will trim) to restore the feeling of space. It was understood that R2K had planted the trees. Out of courtesy it was resolved to inform them of RTC's intention prior to authorising the work.

The pavers in this area appear particularly untidy and dirty due to the amount of algae which has grown over time. It was resolved to have the area around the trees and notice board pressure cleaned (washed) to restore the open feel of the paving. Councillors were pleased to accept Cllr. Dark's offer to test the effectiveness of pressure washing the paving by doing a trial area. **Action: Cllr. Dark to do a trial and report back.**

It was agreed that if the trial is successful, the area near the ATM kiosk would also benefit from being pressure washed.

It was agreed to look into spraying weeds growing in cracks between paving slabs and walls.

Councillors were aware that the seat by the wall near the Smithfield toilets which is accessed down steps is regularly used by cyclists. It was agreed to look into the cost of providing some cycle racks at this location.

Action: Clerk to investigate prices.

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6. AGENDA ITEMS (CONT)

Further to previous discussions in the Chamber over recent years, it was agreed that there were trees on the land near Dolgerddon Hall, the loss of which would have a real detrimental effect on the amenity value of the area and of the town and that RTC should consider applying for Tree Preservation Orders on the important ones. It was resolved to meet on site at 4.30pm on Tuesday 31st January to identify which trees needed to be preserved.

A manhole in the road by the Clock appears to move when vehicles pass over it.

Action: Clerk to inform PCC.

Some letters had become removed from the free parking sign at the Smithfield. It was resolved that they be replaced. **Action: Cllr. D. Evans to arrange for the signs to be restored.**

6.4 Rhayader Library.

The Chair gave a resumé of the meeting with Kay Thomas at the Library on the previous evening. It had been indicated that the Library would be moving to the balcony area at Rhayader Leisure Centre. Some aspects of the move have still to be resolved, but the move would result in no contribution to running costs being requested from RTC. It was stated that only the Portfolio Holder would need to authorise the move.

Councillors welcomed the news of the potential move since it indicated that, although there might be slight changes at the user interface, library services would continue in Rhayader. They were particularly pleased to hear that there may be extended 'borrowing' hours as a result of the move. The Council expressed some concern at a suggestion that the Librarian could become an employee of Freedom Leisure. The Council's express wish was that the position would need to be maintained as a Powys employee as the library provision is a statutory service. Cllr. J. Jones suggested that the new venue might even attract new Library members by exposing it to members of the public who use the Leisure Centre. It was agreed the move could prove mutually beneficial to the Library and the Leisure Centre.

6.5 Town Clock Memorial.

Nathan Davies had supplied a copy of the report on the "Rhayader Memorial". It reported on the condition of the Clock Tower stonework and carvings, outlined a conservation philosophy, provided associated fact sheets and provided details of associated trades people. No estimates of costs were included. Nathan Davies stated that Powys War Memorials Project would be willing to provide funding of up to a maximum of £2,700 for repair / maintenance work to the Clock Tower war memorial in Rhayader. This figure must not represent more than 90% of the total cost of the approved work. The remainder of the cost of the work must come from match-funding. Councillors were aware that the Clock was the property of PCC and it was considered that at this point in time, whilst the grant was still available, it would be best to concentrate on preserving the names engraved in the war memorial rather than the carvings and structure. It was therefore resolved to restore the name plaque on the north face. They were in possession of a quotation from Patrick Rowland. It was resolved to seek an additional quote elsewhere.

Action: Clerk to seek an alternative quote(s) initially from contacts listed in the report.

6.6 Community Asset Transfers.

Land at Dolgerddon.

A message recently received from PCC indicated a reluctance to transfer the whole of the surplus land at Dolgerdden to RTC. Councillors were disappointed that PCC were attempting to dilute RTC's request because the area as a whole comprised one of the few Urban Green Areas remaining in Rhayader and they were fearful that if the remaining area of land was sold off, many mature trees would be sacrificed. It was suggested that an application for tree preservation orders would avoid the wanton decimation of the trees concerned. It was resolved to meet at the site at 4.30pm on Tuesday 31st January for further discussion.

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6. AGENDA ITEMS (CONT)

Rhayader Library building.

It was resolved that despite PCC's intention to move the Library to the Leisure Centre, RTC should continue to seek a CAT for the Library building for use as a community centre. PCC had asked for further details of community organisations who had expressed a need for accommodation. There is a distinct lack of accommodation available for community use in Rhayader and Councillors recalled that, over time, they had been approached by Rhayader Players who were desperate for space for storing costumes and for rehearsal space. They were also aware that WI were no longer able to meet in the Wye Lounge at the Leisure Centre since it had been changed to a Fitness Suite. Exercise classes, the Bridge Club, the cubs have all sought accommodation. Councillors are acutely aware that the room which they have hired over many years for Town Council meetings is not fully compliant with modern regulations, but no other suitable space is available in the town. The Library building would present an ideal location to have a fully compliant meeting room for the Town Council which could be made accessible to other community organisations when not being in use for Town Council business. It was suggested that RTC should now inform the community of its aspirations to use the Library building as a Community Centre and to ask for expressions of interest from Community Organisations seeking access to such a space to be sent to the Town Clerk.

Action: Clerk to issue a press release about the Town Council's proposal

6.7 Public Toilets Sub-committee update.

On behalf of the sub-committee, Cllr. Walton informed that most teething troubles had been fully addressed, other than the timing of the Dark Lane urinal flush valve (which PCC had installed immediately prior to RTC assuming responsibility for the facility). It had been flushing excessively and Healthmatic had re-adjusted it. If this does not prove satisfactory, they will replace the unit.

The Wallgate units have never blown heated air in the drying cycle and consequently do not dry hands.

Healthmatic has received instruction from the manufacturers and have made the advised adjustments. If this does not correct the problem Healthmatic will replace the items.

He also informed that the Sub-committee were in receipt of the plans and specs from the architect for Cwmduddwr and the Cemetery toilets. The Sub-committee would discuss the material and subject to approval, members would initiate the tender process.

6.8 Precept requirement 2017/2018.

Councillors were provided with details of current and anticipated spends for the current year and estimated requirement for next year including likely extra commitments which they may accrue as a result of PCC policy of devolving services to Town and Community Councils.

They had also received a request from R2K for funding of £1,000 to assist with the Town website hosting, print the Newsletter and towards their running costs. It was resolved that the request was reasonable and that RTC should make a grant of £1,000, but the money should be paid out of the current budget, not as an item on the precept for next year.

Action: Clerk to inform R2K of the decision and make the payment during this financial year.

After discussion of the Council's commitments and anticipated costs it was resolved that the Precept value for the year 2017/2018 should be maintained at the current level of £33,500.

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6. AGENDA ITEMS (CONT)

The resultant breakdown was:

General Admin	£210	Groe	£1,000
Rent	£600	Xmas Lights	£500
Clerk's Salary	£10,000	Cwmdauddwr Community Centre	£500
Mayor's Allowance	£1,200	One Voice Wales	£400
Insurance	£1,880	EV Social Club Bonfire & Fireworks	£300
Auditor	£400	Carad upkeep of Museum	£1,000
Carnival	£1,000	Toilets	£3,500
Churchyard Upkeep	£400	Election Costs	£2,730
Town improvements	£3,000	Unallocated Funds	£4,880
		TOTAL	£33,500

Clerk to inform PCC of RTC's requirement for the Precept for 2017/2018.

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.

7.3 Steve Gealy: Work in Waun Capel Parc. Councillors were pleased to note that the work is to go ahead on the Pavilion and in the event of the renovations over-running the financial year funding will not be affected. Disappointment was expressed at being informed that no money was in hand nor was any expected in the next financial year to carry out remedial work on the drainage of the waterlogged field. However Cllr. Curry informed Members that the Parc Trust was seeking quotes to cure the drainage problem.

7.4 OVW: Battle's Over – A Nation's Tribute: In commemoration of the end of WW1 it is intended to light a chain of beacons at 7pm on 11th November 2018. Councillors were unanimous in agreeing that RTC would take part in the event on behalf of Rhayader and resolved that Cllr. Stuart would be the "Beacon Co-ordinator" **Action: Clerk to inform the sender of RTC's decision and Cllr. Stuart's contact details.**

7.10 Macmillan Cancer Support: request for consideration as a nominated charity. The letter asked that Macmillan Cancer Support be added to RTC's list of nominated charities. It was resolved to inform the writer that RTC does not routinely support any charities.

The Town Council will, however, consider direct requests for donations on an ad hoc basis.

Action; Clerk to inform the sender as above.

PCC: Clerks Briefings – May Elections. The Clerk had arranged to attend.

Wales Holiday Lets: Press release. Councillors were pleased to learn that following on from the partners' success in the Powys Business Awards they had been nominated for the Welsh Business Awards and had reached the final of the LABC South Wales awards.

Action: Clerk to send RTC's congratulations on their achievements.

Lindy McGuinness: Dark Lane recycling facility. Councillors were sympathetic to the writer's comments (received via Facebook) about the removal of the tins and plastics part of the facility but were aware that it was owned and run by PCC and understood that the removal had taken place after public consultation. The Portfolio Holder was Cllr. John Powell. **Action: Clerk to acquaint Ms. McGuinness with the facts as RTC know them.**

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8. PLANNING

8.1 P/2016/1336 Grid Ref: 296860.1/267787.41 for Erection of detached double bay garage with store room above at Watergrist Mill, Water Lane, Rhayader, Powys.

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

ACTION: Clerk to inform PCC.

P/2017/0077 for Installation of 20m high telecommunications tower and associated infrastructure at Nannerth Fawr, Cwmdauddwr, Rhayader, Powys.

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

ACTION: Clerk to inform PCC.

9. FINANCE

There were no outstanding invoices

10. URGENT BUSINESS

Allotment Sub-Committee

Cllr. Price wished to relinquish her membership of the Allotment Sub-committee. Councillors were very appreciative of her contribution to the Sub-committee as Chair since its inception but fully understood the personal reasons which gave rise to her decision. They expressed their sincere thanks for her work and dedication during her time in office. It was resolved that Cllr. D. Jones should become the Chairman and Cllr. W. Davies would become a member of the Sub-committee.

Caravans parked at the Weirglodd.

Cllr. Walton had been approached about two caravans which had been parked for some time near the Weirglodd Allotments. Councillors were aware that the land on which they were parked belonged to PCC and it had been suggested that RTC ask them if they were parked there with their permission and if not, ask that they be removed since it could encourage others to park there long term. Councillors had been led to believe that the caravans possibly belonged to a Rhayader resident and that a car also belonging to that resident had been parked long term in the Smithfield. It was resolved that, before informing PCC of the situation, to write to the resident to ask if the vehicles did belong to her and if so would she remove them. **Action: Clerk to write to the resident believed to be the owner of the caravans and car.**

11. PRESS RELEASE

- Library
- Precept maintained at same value.
- Poppy appeal raised £2980
- Dolgerdden CAT

12. BUSINESS FOR NEXT MEETING

1. Bryntitli funding.
2. Town Improvements.
3. Caravan Park.
4. CAT transfers.

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next monthly meeting will be held at 6.30 p.m. on Tuesday 21st February 2017.

The meeting closed at 9.00 p.m.

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Date