

PORTHCAWL TOWN COUNCIL



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD (ELECTRONICALLY) ON THURSDAY 11th November 2021

PRESENT:

COUNCILLORS: T Hill

M Chegwen	R Lee
M Clarke	B Lewis
N Clarke	S Maitland Thomas
L Desmond-Williams	J Manley
M Emmet-Lewis	J Perren
A Harris	J Pratt
B Jones	M Rock

TOWN CLERK: K Grabham

ASSISTANT TOWN CLERK: S Watkins

120. To receive apologies for absence

Apologies received from: Cllr's R Lee, D Fussell and L Tallon-Morris

121. To receive Members' Declarations of Interest in respect of the business to be transacted.

Cllr N Clarke	Items 9 & 10	Personal, Member of BCBC
Cllr M Clarke	Items 9 & 10	Personal, Member of BCBC
Cllr B Jones	Item 9	Personal, Member of BCBC

122. To confirm and sign minutes of Full Meeting of Council held on 14th October 2021

Cllr L Desmond-Williams advised that the minutes are incorrect as she did not suggest replacing the whole building as another Councillor had mentioned this at the meeting.

Cllr S Maitland Thomas advised that it was resolved at the last meeting to place an item

on the next Full Council agenda to discuss on how the Veterans can be supported in the town. The Clerk apologised for the error and advised that this item would be placed on the next Full Council agenda in December.

Cllr L Desmond-Williams advised that at Item (d) on the agenda she had asked for recorded votes on all proposals. The Clerk advised that her re-collection of the meeting is that there was only a recorded vote requested for the recruitment of the Deputy Clerk position. Cllr Desmond-Williams mentioned that the vote from Cllr Perren was not included. The Clerk advised that Cllr Perren did not participate in the vote as he had experienced technical issues during the meeting.

Resolved: To approve the minutes of the Full Meeting of Council held on 14th October 2021 as a true and accurate record with the above amendment.

123. To adjourn, if necessary to take Public Question Time

Three members of the public were present; however, no questions were raised.

124. For information – Mayoral Events & Engagements

Resolved: To note for information.

125. Presentation from Jamie Strong & Gemma Lewis – A Voice for the Future Porthcawl

The Mayor introduced Jamie Strong & Gemma Lewis, A Voice for the Future of Porthcawl discussing Salt Lake car park and the ideas and plans that could be discussed and put forward to BCBC.

Gemma began her presentation by informing Members that they started a group, A Voice for the Future of Porthcawl, about 5 months ago. It initially grew out of a small number of people who wanted to know a little bit more about the impending vision for Salt Lake. It started when they discovered that Aldi was being built on the land as they feel perhaps a bit concerned that this had happened quite quietly so they set about trying to find out a bit more and the group quickly grew from 3 to 700 on Facebook. They know that the Porthcawl Regeneration is going ahead and that there is a need for houses and BCBC have said that there needs to be around 900 to 1200 houses which would be over Sandy Bay, the Fair and Salt Lake. Their suggestion is that they wanted to preserve Salt Lake for the community, having the environment and the community and future generations at the heart. They do not believe that there should be any houses ideally on Salt Lake and that they had put together some architectural plans of what they believe should be there and they are in the process of talking to different groups in the community to hear their views on what they want. BCBC have said that they want Porthcawl to be a premier seaside destination but with the removal of the fair and all these houses what is it that they are proposing to be the attraction in the destination. The group want to make sure that the land remains

flexible and agile for future generations and provides an area that can become a real community hub.

Jamie continued by saying that the Welsh Government have stated the number of houses that need to be included in the LDP etc. The group felt that this location is such a unique area and does not deserve to be taken up totally with houses, however, there is an element of it that everyone could accept for a small number of affordable and sustainable housing.

As it stands there is a covenant on Sandy Bay, which everyone should be aware of. It was mentioned in the July Cabinet Report and it basically stated on the appropriation of this land which enables the CPO's to take place that the covenant will be taken away due to the selling of the land, which means that the person who bought the land can remove the covenant from it. On that basis the history that is behind us and in protecting our interests we have a duty to move forward and protect our interest in future generations and is not limited only to Sandy Bay. Councillors and residents should have a say in the future development of Porthcawl. The whole community should get together to protect this element of land at Salt Lake before the land is sold off and is too late - we need to act quite strongly on this.

The Town Clerk shared the map included on the Full Council agenda distributed to members that illustrates the visions that could be planned for Salt Lake car park and the surrounding area. The video was unable to be played due to system restrictions.

It was explained that the group had put together the architectural plans and devised a short video to get point across and had met with various groups within the town to seek their views and how we can become more of a united front.

Members were informed that there is a Dragon Den Event taking place Friday 26th November, four Dragons, 8-10 contestants to pitch their ideas on what they would like to see at Salt Lake Car Park. Looking to create a bit more conversation on the area with the general public. Free event from 6.30-8.00pm.

Jamie ran through all their suggestions included on their map which was screen shared by the Town Clerk. It was mentioned that two other items that were not included on the map were access for swimmers into the sea and also an idea from a member of the RNLI crew for a public baths at Cosy Corner as there was historically which was located next to the Harbour Bar. Looked into measurements on Google maps and potentially we could have a 25m x 10m public bath and a children's pool at Cosy Corner and felt that was a viable and wonderful thing that we should be looking at.

Jamie lastly mentioned that it is important that the Planning Inspectorate at BCBC realise what the Porthcawl people are looking for and asked people to respond to the CPO's. Group asking in their letter that is being circulated for conditions to be placed alongside the approval on any CPO's to retain land in Porthcawl to get some

assurances in place. The group advised that they would be hand delivering 4,000 letters from next week including template of CPO letter and details of the Dragon Event. Tickets for the Dragon Den Event can be obtained from Eventbrite under the Porthcawl Waterfront Regeneration.

Members were very enthusiastic and were in full support of all Jamie's and Gemma's proposals and thanks were given to them for their presentation.

126. To receive update from a BCBC Member

Cllr M Clarke advised Members that he had attended a meeting today with a BCBC officer from Legal who had informed him that the list of yellow line requests, requested by Councillors, is getting very near to the top of the pile.

Resident parking - Bridgend County Borough Council has issued an update on its ongoing efforts to introduce new resident parking permits in the Bridgend town centre area.

With a new policy and updated on-street traffic orders in place, informal consultation has been completed with residents living in zone eight (Cheltenham Terrace, South Place, Suffolk Street, Free School Court and Jenkins Street).

This has enabled the Council to address a number of issues and concerns. A 21-day period of formal public consultation is now being organised and will be announced soon.

The consultation process, which is being carried out one zone at a time in order to address issues that are specific to each individual area, will then move on to zones two, six and four.

Zone two features Sunnyside Road, Cae Dre Street, Newcastle Hill Pedestrian zone and Newcastle Hill. Zone six is made up of Caewallis Street, St Marie Street, Phyllis Avenue, South Street and Grove Road), and zone four includes Morfa Street, Vernon Street, Acland Road, High View, Charles Street, Herbet Street and Minerva Street.

Housing - Following a question from Cllr Brian Jones

Further alarming update on housing following Cllr B Jones' query - the housing options service is still under considerable demand as a result of the Covid pandemic which has resulted in emergency legislative procedures for housing services. In practice this has resulted in a considerable number of more applications being made to our service which in turn, has impacted on timescales for processing and reaching decisions on applications. BCBC are currently receiving approximately 350 applications per month, with an additional 30 – 40 homeless applications in addition to that, which are resource intensive.

Social Care - The service both in house and through external partners is under severe pressure. There is an urgent requirement to recruit more employees into front

line and support care staff. BCBC has set up a special recruitment package which supports anyone interested in finding out more about being part of such an essential and valued community service.

Social Work - There is also a need to recruit more people into social work. This can be a really rewarding career where promotion opportunities are encouraged to be locally filled. BCBC are keen to stress the career opportunities and the support available to achieve qualifications and progress. There are many senior posts across healthcare and beyond where the individual worked their way up through the social work scheme. Social work can be a very rewarding career offering good pay and flexible work packages.

Anyone interested can find out more without any commitment but may find the opportunities and support may surprise them.

The fast track way to find out more is to ring BCBC HR direct line on 643205 via email BCBC HR on recruitment@bridgend.gov.uk or visit website <https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/my-council/jobs/social-care-vacancies>

Cllr M Clarke advised that he will arrange for links to be placed on Porthcawl Town Council website.

Home to School Transport - This part of the education service is under real pressure due to Covid 19. BCBC contracts a significant number of buses and taxis however drivers are absent often at very short notice because they have contracted Covid or are having to isolate.

Members gave thanks to Cllr M Clarke for the update.

Resolved: To note for information.

127. **To re-appoint committees and representatives**

Cllr L Desmond-Williams questioned as to whom the current aligned and non-aligned Councillors are. It was advised that Councillor's R Smith, M Clarke and B Jones are the aligned Councillors.

The following representatives were appointed on the following committees:-

Planning - Cllr's J Pratt, M Emmet-Lewis, J Perren, B Jones, L Desmond-Williams and A Harris, leaving three vacancies.

Finance & Governance – Cllr's B Lewis, J Pratt, M Rock, T Hill and S Maitland Thomas, leaving two vacancies.

Staffing – Cllr's J Pratt, R Lee, A Harris and M Chegwen, leaving one vacancy.

Promoting Porthcawl – Cllr's M Emmet-Lewis, D Fussell, T Hill, J Manley and J Pratt, leaving no vacancies.

Operations - Cllr's R Lee J Pratt, J Perren, B Jones, S Maitland Thomas and

M Chegwen, leaving one vacancy.

128. To consider item – Griffin Park Transfer Documents

Cllr M Clarke informed Members that Porthcawl Town Council own Griffin Play Park and the old bowling green. Porthcawl Town Council own all the land as it's charity land which is held by Porthcawl. It is the same arrangement as BCBC own the equipment but Porthcawl Town Council are the Trustees for the land at Griffin Park.

Cllr S Maitland Thomas raised concerns about Porthcawl Town Council having to dispose of all the waste if we took over the responsibility for Griffin Park. The Clerk advised that BCBC could provide us with a quote to outsource the collection to us of which would be at a cost to Porthcawl Town Council.

Some Members raised concerns of the controls that BCBC would still have if Porthcawl Town Council agreed to take on Griffin Park and queried as to whether Porthcawl Town Council have fully considered costs to take over Griffin Park. Cllr B Jones advised that it was agreed by Council approximately two years ago to proceed with the CAT transfer and that the Community Gardening group would be responsible for the gardening and the Bowlers would maintain the green themselves as they currently do.

Cllr A Harris advised that costs would need to be factored-in to the precept for 2022/2023. The Clerk advised that she has requested costings from the Park's Section at BCBC and is currently awaiting a response.

Concerns were raised that the bowling greens would be used as a depot for when the new road is erected by BCBC through the park. Cllr B Jones advised that this would only be a temporary measure whilst the works at the park are being undertaken.

Cllr M Rock suggested that as Porthcawl Town Council are not experienced in landlord management we should check our rights legally before signing any documents.

Cllr B Jones advised that after the tenancy at will lease expires for Griffin Park it would then be a freehold transfer to Porthcawl Town Council. Cllr B Jones further advised that BCBC have guaranteed a sum of £30,000 to install heating inside the Bowls Pavilion and that Porthcawl Town Council has also got £30,000 set aside to undertake remedial works at the park.

Cllr B Jones asked to be noted that he abstained from voting.

Resolved: To seek legal guidance on the tenancy and obtain full costings from BCBC in relation to Griffin Park including Bowls Pavilion and playground initially before Council reaches a decision.

Resolved: To seek legal guidance on the tenancy and obtain full costings from BCBC in relation to Griffin Park including Southern Bowling

Green and Tennis Courts initially before Council reaches a decision.

129. To consider item – Porthcawl CPO's and Sandy Bay regeneration (Cllr B Jones)

Cllr B Jones advised that the appropriation would not take the covenant away from the land. The area of land at Sandy Bay was originally paid for by the ratepayers of Porthcawl as was previously purchased by the Urban District Council.

Cllr B Jones advised that the BCBC Owners Agreement is now in the public domain and that he can provide a copy of this document to Councillors if they wish to have a copy.

Concerns were raised by Members that if the LDP goes ahead and that Sandy Bay is covered in houses Porthcawl would lose approximately 2,000 parking spaces and that there will be no parking facilities in Porthcawl.

Members were informed that two objections only are needed to prevent a CPO going ahead and that should the CPO's be successfully opposed it would prevent any development on Sandy Bay. BCBC cannot CPO land that they already own.

Following discussion:-

Resolved: That the Clerk on behalf of Porthcawl Town Council sends an official objection letter to BCBC. Cllr L Desmond-Williams to provide details to the Clerk.

Resolved: That the Clerk arranges a Special Full Council meeting for Members to consider the 'draft' objection letter prior to submitting to BCBC.

130. To consider item – Bank Account Signatories

The Clerk advised that we are looking for cross party signatories.

Resolved: The following Members were confirmed as the new Town Council bank signatories:- Cllr J Pratt, M Chegwen, S Maitland-Thomas, B Lewis (Cllr B Lewis only to be a signatory should Cllr R Smith choose not to remain as a signatory). The Clerk to query with Cllr R Smith as to whether or not he wishes to remain as Council signatory.

Cllr T Hill evoked standing order 3Y to extend the meeting by 30 minutes.

131. Town Clerk Reports

a) Payments for Authorisation

The Clerk introduced the report and sought the council's approval to make the payments as listed in appendix a.

Resolved: For payments to be made as per appendix a.

b) Christmas Opening Hours

Members queried why the public toilets were closed on Christmas day and the Clerk advised that this was the agreement last year. Members were in agreement that the toilets should remain closed on Christmas day again this year. Details of the opening and closure times should be circulated on the Town Council website.

The Clerk advised that Griffin Park would be passed on to Porthcawl Town Council from 1st December should Members agree to the contract and therefore it is prudent that we have a plan in place for a staff member to open/close the park on overtime if required.

Following discussion:-

Resolved: To accept the Christmas Opening Hours as presented.

c) Griffin Park Funding Application

Resolved: To place a tender specification onto Sell2Wales website.

Resolved: That the Clerk proceeds with completing and submitting the funding application in relation to Griffin Park once costings from interested parties have been received.

d) Internal Audit Recommendations 19 & 20 Porthcawl Hub

The Clerk read out the report in full.

Cllr N Clarke advised that the internal report 2020/21 ran from 1st April 2020 to 31st March 2021 so Claire Lingard of Auditing Solutions Ltd should never have included this item in the report as the hub was closed to the public on 17th March 2020 which fell into 2019/2020.

Cllr N Clarke also advised at this point that she has never, ever agreed with the internal audit report. Cllr L Desmond-Williams also re-iterated the comment in that she felt the same regarding the internal audit report.

Cllr M Clarke commented that he was really pleased that the Clerk and Cllr Brian Jones have been able to clear up this matter and by doing so they have lifted the air of suspicion off both our staff and the Veteran Hub Co-ordinator which emanate from the internal audit report.

The Clerk was asked to chase the outstanding payments relating to the Porthcawl Hub.

Cllr N Clarke asked to be noted that she abstained from voting.

Resolved: That Council accepts the contents of the report as presented.

Meeting concluded at 9.15pm