

COEDFFRANC TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a Statutory Meeting of the Council Meeting held on 20th November 2019 at the Memorial Hall.

Attendance: Cllrs APH Davies, A Wingrave, P Davies, J Thomas, K Whitehead, C Wingrave, TJ Bevan.

A minutes silence was held in respect of the passing of previous Coedffranc Councillor HR Richards. The Clerk informed the Members of the date of the Funeral.

1646: Apologies: Cllrs B Richards, LJ Pocock, A Aubrey, C Fletcher, JS Jones, M Harvey, D Harvey, K Amos, DK Davies.

1647: To receive Declarations of Interest.

Cllr APH Davies Declared an Interest in items 1652 - P2019/5527 and 1671 and left the room during the discussions and decision making process.

Additionally, it was noted that no Member that had declared an interest in the last meeting took any part in the approval of the minutes for that meeting.

1648: To approve and sign the Minutes of Previous meetings: -

a) Council Meeting held on 16th October 2019.

Approved as a true and accurate record.

b) Finance & General Purposes Committee 13th November 2019.

Approved as a true and accurate record with the exception that item 3 should state Vice Chair.

1649: Matters arising from the minutes. (FOR INFORMATION ONLY)

Cllr APH Davies commented on item 1640 and gave an explanation as to why he read out from his notes. He reported that this was to provide an in-depth knowledge of the background and the discussions from the previous meeting. Cllr APH Davies stated that he had assumed that Cllr A Aubrey was ill, and therefore, he deferred the item as a matter of courtesy.

1650: To receive and approve the accounts schedule for payments and to select two account numbers for a full explanation at the next meeting.

Accounts were received in the sum of £12,719.89 Account No's 465 and 529 were selected at random for an explanation by the Clerk at the next meeting. Copies of the accounts were circulated and the Clerk responded to member's queries.

Resolved: That the payments are approved.

1651: To receive an explanation from the Clerk concerning Account No's: 451 and 460.

The Clerk provided explanations, which were accepted by the Council.

1652: Planning Applications:

To receive a Report on Planning Applications that have been dealt with between meetings.

The information was noted by the Members.

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1653: To receive a report from any Member concerning meetings at which he or she represented the Council.

The Clerk reported on the Remembrance Service held at Carnegie Hall and informed the Members that the service was well attended. Cllr P Davies reported that he had attended a Coedffranc School Governors Meeting. Cllrs DK Davies & APH Davies attended the Remembrance Service at St. Johns Church and commented on the Coedffranc Crest at the centre of the Wreath and how professional it looked. Cllr APH Davies also complemented the staff on the organisation of the Remembrance Service which was held at Carnegie Hall, including the Clerk and her husband providing tea and coffee, and on the timings of the sound system.

1654: To receive a report from the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

Cllr APH Davies reported on the new format of the Quarterly Accounts. The Clerk informed the Members that the new financial accounting system installed to provide compliance with Making Tax Digital could not produce Reports in the same format as her previous Quarterly Reports. Cllr APH Davies stated that he felt that the new Accounting Systems format is not as good as the Clerk's previous Quarterly Reports. He also thanked the Clerk and staff, reporting that they had done a good job coming to terms with the new financial software.

4) To receive Qtr 2's accounts.

Resolved: That Qtr 2's accounts are approved. The Members agreed that the Clerk should proceed with the virements she suggested and create more budget nominal codes for ease of analysis going forward.

5. To receive details of Aged Debtors.

The information was noted by the Members.

6. To receive details of vandalism during the Qtr.

The information was noted by the Members.

1655: To receive updates from the Members concerned regarding the request for an additional date for a Santa visit in Jersey Marine raised in the Council Meeting held on the 16th October.

The Clerk reported that she had only received the possible dates for Santa to Visit Jersey Marine from Cllr C Fletcher on Wednesday 20th November. It was stated that if the Council were to provide a Santa visit to Jersey Marine, the Town Council could receive complaints from Elba Crescent and Llandarcy residents who could also want a Santa visit in their villages. The question was raised as to whether Santa would be available at such a late stage of the arrangements.

Resolved: That this request should not proceed this year due to time constraints and the availability of Santa at this late stage. It was agreed that the issue of going into outlying villages should be discussed/decided as part of next year's Christmas arrangements to allow plenty of time to arrange for them if they are agreed.

1656: To receive information from the Clerk from Briton Ferry Town Council regarding the costs of CCTV.

The Clerk reported on the information and costs she had obtained from Briton Ferry Town Council. The Clerk reported that the costs provided did not include any ground works, cabling or monitoring costs. The Clerk reported that Briton Ferry Town Council had been discussing the issue with NPTCBC because they would be using their lighting columns for their CCTV. The Clerk reported that Briton Ferry could not provide their estimated costs for monitoring because NPTCBC had not confirmed a cost or even if they would be able to provide this service to Briton Ferry Town Council.

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It was also reported that Briton Ferry Town Council have been trying to come to an agreement with NPTCBC in regard to CCTV for in excess of two years. Cllr APH Davies reported that as well as the initial start-up costs, money would need to be put aside every year into an earmarked reserve fund because the Camera's would have to be replaced every four years. The Clerk reported that a dummy camera had been destroyed in the park and another one damaged due to vandalism. The Members discussed the issue.

Resolved: That the matter is deferred to F&G to discuss specifications for costings.

1657: To receive information and quotes from the Clerk for the design/initiation and hosting of a new website to ensure compliance with the new website accessibility legislation introduced by the Government in September 2019.

The Clerk read out information regarding the new accessibility legislation required for public sector bodies which have been in place from September 2019. The Clerk also reported on the London Bridge Protocol that all public sector websites should have in place. The Clerk reported that our current website provider could not provide the London Bridge Protocol service, and therefore, the Town Council are not currently compliant. The Clerk reported that she had contacted several website design companies that deal with the public sector, but had encountered difficulty in obtaining quotes from companies interested in undertaking the work, and therefore, she was only able to present two quotes for consideration. The Members discussed the issue.

Resolved: That the item is deferred to a later date, in order for more information to be gathered.

1658: To discuss the current postage costs of Agenda's and Minutes etc and discuss/decide if Agenda's should be accessed via a secure portal on the new website.

The Clerk informed the Members that this item was reliant upon the previous item being approved as the Members would have needed to download their Agenda's Minutes etc. from a secure Members Site on the new website. As the previous item was deferred this item could not be discussed.

Resolved: That the matter is deferred to a later date, in order for more information to be provided on costs. It was also agreed that item 1657 and item 1658 are to be put onto the Agenda as one item when the information is considered next year.

1659: To receive an update from the Clerk regarding the request for O'Conner's, the contractor working on behalf of Welsh Water to use the Tennis Courts as a temporary storage area.

The Clerk reported that O'Conner's had withdrawn their request to use the tennis courts as their temporary compound whilst they are working in the area for Welsh Water.

Resolved: The information was noted by the Members.

1660: To receive information from the Clerk regarding the advertised Vacancy for the East Central Ward and to proceed with nominations for the Council to fill the Vacancy by way of Co-option.

The Clerk reported that the Vacancy for the East Central Ward had been advertised for Election, but no one had applied to NPTCBC. The Clerk informed the Members that NPTCBC had authorised her to advertise a Vacancy for Co-option which had been done. The Clerk reported that the closing date for the applications to be returned to her by was the 19th November 2019. The Clerk reported that she had received three expressions of interest for the post and read out details from the three applicants. The Members discussed the issue.

Resolved: That Mr Victor James is to be selected for Co-option.

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1661: To receive/approve the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Draft Annual Report.

The Members discussed the Report.

Resolved: That the Report is approved. It was re-confirmed that at this time, no Members wished to take any of the payments with the exception of the Mayors Annual Allowance.

1662: To receive a request from Cllr B Richards for a further 6 months Dispensation due to her personal circumstances.

The Members discussed the issue

Resolved: That Cllr B Richards should be given a further 6 months Dispensation due to her personal circumstances.

1663: To decide whether the staff should receive Christmas vouchers this year.

The Members discussed the issue

Resolved: That the staff are to receive the same amount as last year.

1664: To receive/approve the Annual review of the Internal Audit.

Cllr J Thomas reported on the findings of the Annual Review of the audit arrangements.

The Members discussed the issue. Cllrs P Davies & J Thomas thanked the Clerk and staff for doing a wonderful job.

Resolved: That Annual Review of the Internal Audit Arrangements is approved.

1665: To receive information from One Voice Wales regarding 3 Planning Consultations and associated advice and guidance.

The information was noted by the Members.

1666: To receive information from One Voice Wales regarding VE Day 75 “Town & Parish Councils take the lead in the VE Day 75 celebrations”.

The information was noted by the Members.

1667: To receive information from the Older People’s Commissioner for Wales Report

The information was noted by the Members.

1668: To receive a request for Financial Assistance to waiver the costs of Hall Hire for a Charity Halloween Party for children with Downs Syndrome.

The Members discussed the issue

Resolved: That the request is approved.

1669: To receive a request for Financial Assistance to waiver the costs of Hall Hire for a Fund raising Halloween Party for Coedffranc Nursery.

The Members discussed the issue

Resolved: That the request is approved.

1670: To receive information from NPTCBC regarding Local Service Revisions.

The information was noted by the Members.

1671: To receive a request from Skewen Historical Society to be reimbursed for the room hire during the renovation works at Carnegie Hall.

The Members discussed the issue

Resolved: That £30 is to be reimbursed to cover their additional costs.

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1672: To receive information from Welsh Water regarding work that is due to be carried out in Skewen Park.

The information was noted by the Members.

1673: To receive information from the Community Health Council regarding a Health Questionnaire.

The information was noted by the Members.

1674: To receive a Menu from The Travellers Wells for the Councillors Annual Christmas Party which is to be funded by the Councillors.

The information was noted by the Members.

1675: To sign/approve the Seasonal Decorations Agreement with NPTCBC.

The Clerk informed the Members that the Lease Agreement is for 5 years with NPTCBC. The Members discussed the issue.

Resolved: That the Lease Agreement is signed and approved.

1676: To receive a letter of thanks from the Skewen & District Industrial Heritage Association.

The Members discussed the issue.

Resolved: That the Railway Model is to be kept until ownership of the model can be ascertained.

1677: To receive a request from the Skewen Historical Society for a letter of support for a funding bid.

The Members discussed the issue.

Resolved: That the Mayor Cllr M Harvey writes a letter of support.

1678: To approve/sign a 5 year Lease agreement between NPTCBC and Coedffranc Town Council for Skewen Library to relocate into Carnegie Hall.

The Clerk informed the Members that she had requested that NPTCBC supply a revised Lease Agreement showing the amendments that were discussed in a meeting some three weeks earlier, which she felt were needed before the Town Council could move forward to sign the Lease Agreement. The Clerk reported that she had requested on several occasions that the amended Lease Agreement was supplied to her in time for it to be included in the Agenda pack being posted out to the Members on Thursday 14th November so that the Members had the opportunity to fully review Lease Agreement before approving it. The Clerk reported that the email attaching the revised Lease Agreement was only received at 3.30pm on Wednesday 20th November, and as she was in a meeting that afternoon, she had not seen the email until after 5pm. The Clerk reported that she did not have enough time to read the revised Lease Agreement before the Council Meeting, and therefore, was not prepared to sign the Lease Agreement on behalf of the Town Council.

The Members discussed the issue.

Resolved: That the Clerk, Mayor and Cllr K Whitehead meet at 11am on Thursday 21st November to read through the Lease Agreement to check if the alterations requested had been made, and to decide if any further alternations were needed. It was Resolved that once Cllr M Harvey and Cllr K Whitehead were satisfied with the Lease Agreement, that the Clerk should sign and seal the Lease Agreement and return it to NPTCBC for execution.

1679: To receive a request from Welsh Water to allow a community van to park in the Memorial Hall Car Park.

The Members discussed the issue

Resolved: That the request is approved. It was agreed that a request should be made to Welsh Water to provide a donation for the use of the carpark.

1680: To receive a request from Skewen Short Mat Bowls Club to continue with their Friday night sessions on an availability basis of the Hall.

Cllrs A Wingrave & M Harvey reported that they had both met with the Bowls Club on 16th September 2019 to discuss the Short Mat Bowls Clubs bookings at the Memorial Hall. Cllr A Wingrave reported that the Bowls Club were asked in the meeting if they would voluntarily reduce their hours due to the Town Council losing money on their bookings. It was agreed by the Bowls Club that they would give up a Friday evenings' practice in order for parties and other bookings to use the hall. It was also agreed that extra time of one hour, would be permitted at the beginning of their match evenings on a Monday and Wednesday evening in order for them to practice before their matches, as they would be losing practice time on a Friday evening. Additionally, it was agreed that they could have extra practice time on a Wednesday from 5.30pm to 9pm when they did not have a match. The Clerk reported that she had received a regular booking on a Friday evening and that the hall would not be available to the Bowls Club.

Resolved: That the request is refused.

1681: Correspondence.

None.

Cllr K Whitehead

Acting Chair