



Fishguard & Goodwick Town Council Cyngor Tref Abergwaun ac Wdig

Town Hall, Fishguard, Pembrokeshire, SA65 9HE

Neuadd Y Dre, Abergwaun, Sir Benfro SA65 9HE

Clerk/Clerc: Catherine Bannister

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The **MINUTES** Town Council Meeting
held virtually, under COVID-19 Regulations (Wales)

at 7pm on **Thursday 8th April 2021**

The Mayor, Cllr. Jackie Stokes, was in the Chair

Cllr. Jackie Stokes – *J. Stokes*

Cath Bannister, Town Clerk – *C. Bannister*

MINUTES

PUBLIC SESSION: CLLR. STOKES

The public session offers members of the public, the opportunity to comment on items on this agenda or those previously requested and agreed.

The public will be limited to two minutes per comment or question.

The Mayor will update those present, with regards to previous actions and ideas proposed by the public during this session, should there be any.

This session will also allow County Councillors to update the Town Council and those members of the public present, on matters of interest and for the Pembrokeshire County Council Liaison Officer to update the Town Council.

PUBLIC PRESENT:

No questions were raised but Jeremy Martineau requested that the Town Councillors pass ideas through to him as a matter of urgency for revenue projects, along with costs.

COUNTY COUNCILLORS PRESENT:

Cllr. Pepper was present but advised he had no update for the Town Council

PRESENTATION BY FISHGUARD AFC – MATTHEW GRIFFITHS.

Matthew made a presentation to full Council that would hopefully assist Town Councillors in reaching a decision with regards to the recent grant application submitted to the Town Council for £5k towards their car park improvements.

The April meeting had been postponed from Tuesday 6th April to Thursday 8th April due to the bank holidays on 2nd and 5th April and giving Cllr's. the full three clear days' notice required of a council meeting.

STANDING ORDERS TO BE ADOPTED

48/21 APOLOGIES: CLLR. STOKES

To formally record apologies for absence and to record the attendance of those Town Councillors present:

Apologies were received from Cllr. Davies and Thickett – work commitments
Those Cllrs. present were:
Cllrs. Sturman, McCarney, Owen, Perkins, Shaw, Price, Porter, Price, Mason, Ryan, Murphy and Stokes.

49/21 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST: CLLR. STOKES

To formally record any personal or pecuniary interests that a Town Councillor may have in any of the agenda items listed below:

There were no declarations of interest made.

50/21 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING: CLLR. STOKES

To record the previous meeting minutes, held on 2.3.21, as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

It was resolved to accept the minutes of the meeting held on 2.3.21 as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

51/21 CLERKS REPORT: TOWN CLERK

Follow up actions taken by the Clerk from the last meeting.
On the evening:

Flags	Will be displayed in the next few days.
Christmas Tender	Has purposely been delayed and documents will be sent out before the end of April
Annual Leave	The Clerk is on annual leave after today until 19.4.21

52/21 REPORTS: CLLR. STOKES.

The following committee minutes have previously been circulated to all Town Councillors. If there are any questions with regards to their content, can they be addressed here.

Planning Committee
Finance Committee
Governance Committee
Events Committee

There were no comments made in respect of the previously circulated committee minutes.

53/21 TOWN COUNCILLOR UPDATE SESSION: ALL

An opportunity for Town Councillors to update the Town Council with regards to what

has happened, what is happening and if anything needs attention, within the community that they represent.

Cllr. Porter:

Has been involved in the judging of the 15 murals submitted for the Ancient Connections project. An announcement with regards to the winner, will be made in the coming weeks.

Had attended an online seminar with regards to light pollution.

West Street surfacing car parking issues had been highlighted to the PCC

May 14th is Dylan Thomas Day.

54/21 GRANT APPLICATION FOR THE FISHGUARD SPORTS AFC: CLLR STOKES

The Town Council has received an application for funding for £5k from the Fishguard Sports AFC. The application has previously been circulated to all Councillors. The request has been initially reviewed by the Finance Committee, but due to the amount requested, it is forwarded for a full council decision.

In light of the presentation made earlier in the meeting, the Town Councillors were able to have a better understanding of the grant application request and a constructive discussion took place.

It was resolved to revisit the application at the June meeting.

55/21 FINANCES EARMARKED FOR THE PROPOSED AMPHITHEATRE: CLLR. STOKES

A proposal for an Amphitheatre on The Slade in Fishguard, minute reference 115/20 dated 3.11.20, has previously been discussed. It has been proposed by the Finance Committee that £10k of the £11k earmarked for the library payment which is no longer needed this financial year, is now earmarked towards the Amphitheatre project.

Please discuss.

It was resolved that £10k of the £11k savings from not paying for the library opening 2020/21, should be earmarked towards the Amphitheatre project.

56/21 WI-FI UPDATE: CLLR. STOKES

Cllr. Stokes will update you with regards to the progress she has made to date and ask for feedback on a small report that she had made with regards to the circulation of promotional emails.

Please discuss

Following a general discussion, it was resolved to take this matter to the June meeting.

57/21 REPORT FROM THE TOWN CLERK: TOWN CLERK

The Clerk had written a report which had been emailed separately, suggesting the introduction of two further committee's for the full Town Council to consider.

Please discuss

Parts of the report were read by Cllr. Stokes and were discussed by Cllrs. It was resolved to form a separate HR committee and not a joint Governance and HR committee as proposed by the Clerk.

Cllr. Ryan raised a point of order but this was overlooked and his request was not dealt with. This was possibly due to delayed feedback and poor signals on the virtual platform.

It was resolved not to form a Neighbourhood Plan Committee, despite the Clerks recommendations, as submitted in the presented report.

58/21 NOMINATION FOR THE ROLE OF MAYOR: TOWN CLERK

The date has now passed for proposals for the role of Mayor. There has just been the one nomination – Cllr. Stokes, who has been proposed and seconded correctly. You will now need to vote to secure her term of office for 2021/22

The Clerk asked Town Councillors to vote with regards to supporting Cllr. Stokes bid in continuing in office until May 2022. There were no other nominations for the role of Town Mayor.

It was resolved, by way of a unanimous vote, to progress Cllr. Stokes as the Mayor Elect and she will continue in office by making a further declaration to office at the Annual Meeting in May.

59/21 TELEPHONE BOX DAMAGE: CLLR. STOKES

The cost to replace the glass in the phone box at Dyffryn, is £74.45. Before authorisation is given to get the glass replaced, Cllr. Stokes was requested to make further enquiries to see if it was malicious damage or a structural fault. Please discuss.

This matter was not discussed as the person who had previously replaced the glass, had offered to replace it again at no cost to the council.

60/21 NEW YEARS EVE EVENT: CLLR. STOKES

The New Years Eve Committee are proposing to hold their event this year and are asking for a letter of support from the Town Council, to assist them in their bid to close off the square to assist in managing attendances at the event. Please discuss.

There was a general discussion by Councillors but they were not in possession of the facts. Standing orders were dropped between 20:03hrs and 20:11hrs. to allow members of the public to comment in support of the request.

It was resolved that the Town Council will support the New Years Eve committee in their bid to hold close off the square and that a letter of support should be written in order support this.

The Clerk will progress this.

61/21 CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED: CLLR STOKES

All correspondence is emailed out upon receipt, wherever possible.

1. Thank you letter to Cllr. Ryan from Paul Sartori
2. Letter from the Folk Festival Event Organisers advising of a cancelled event.
3. HMRC reference end of year instructions for payroll
4. Thank you letter to Cllr. Ryan from MD UK
5. Acceptance letter of engagement from William Marshall for the internal audit.

The above were noted.

62/21 DATES OF THE NEXT MEETINGS: CLLR. STOKES

It is proposed that all meetings are scheduled to start at 7pm, unless otherwise agreed:

4th May 2021 – Annual Meeting

1st June 2021

6th July 2021

63/21 URGENT MATTERS: CLLR STOKES

Any matters that have come to the attention of the Town Council after the Agenda has been circulated, can be discussed here.

The Chair and the Town Clerk will need to be advised before the start of the meeting.

Please be aware that no resolution can be reached on non-agenda items, but, they can be discussed and deferred to the relevant committee for further discussion or taken to the next full town council meeting as an agenda item.

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was closed at 8:14pm

REPORT BY THE CLERK/RFO TO FULL COUNCIL 6TH APRIL 2021

BACKGROUND:

In this report, I will advise Town Councillors how specific matters can be managed and dealt with by the Council.

In this report, I am suggesting some improvements that will evidence that the Council considers not only its duty to its communities and councillors, but also to staff employed by the council.

All committees are open to attendance by members of the public, except in circumstances where personal or confidential matters are to be discussed and decided upon.

The Town Council currently holds the approved committee meetings which are formed each year, at the Annual Meeting each May:

1. Finance Committee
2. Events Committee
3. Governance Committee
4. Planning Committee

The Town Council's Committees are currently all executive committees, which means that they have delegated responsibilities, functions, decisions and sometimes a budget. Each committee has its own Terms of Reference which is reviewed annually and approved by full council. Each executive committee has its own Chairman and Vice Chairman.

Members of the public can be appointed onto any committee, with the exception of the Finance Committee. If Members of the public are appointed to a particular committee, they would need to sign the Councillor Code of Conduct before joining a committee and to declare interests at meetings.

Each committee can also make use of a sub-committee or a working group. A sub-committee, has the same powers as a committee but reports its findings back to the full committee. A working group is a "think tank", where ideas are discussed in order to speed up the decision making process of a matter under review or discussion, at a committee or council meeting. Sub-committee's need to be formally called by the Clerk with agenda's and minuted accordingly.

Working groups do not need to be called by the Clerk, or even include the Clerk, but notes should be made of all recommendations, in order for them to be taken back to the relevant committee as supporting evidence of the discussions.

PROPOSALS:

I make the following two suggestions, for the discussion of the Full Council:

1. GOVERNANCE AND HR COMMITTEE

That a Human Resources (HR) Committee is formed in conjunction with the Governance Committee and becomes known as the **Governance and HR Committee**. The combining of committees is common practice amongst medium sized councils, where only one or a few staff members are employed.

Currently, there is very little support in place for the role of the Town Clerk. There is no monitoring of performance, monitoring of workloads or well-being. There is no formal support mechanism in place for any matter. This needs to be addressed as a matter of urgency and changes made.

Initially, the Governance and HR Committee, if formed and Terms of Reference agreed and adopted, the HR part could be scheduled in between meetings of the Governance Committee. For example, the Governance Committee have just moved from meeting quarterly, to meeting monthly so there is an opportunity to meet the requirements of an HR committee. Once established, the Governance and HR Committee would then decide how frequently the HR side of the committee needs to be on the Agenda.

The Clerk/RFO is employed by the Town Council as a whole and as such, is answerable to the Town Council and not to any particular or individual Councillor. The Clerk does not have an immediate line manager. By forming a constructive HR Committee, the Town Council would be enabling this to happen and would be reassured that the role of the Town Clerk is managed fairly and in a positive way. It would also ensure that the council is fulfilling its legal obligations as employers.

The HR part of the Committee would need to review the following:

1. Job Descriptions and Contracts of staff
2. Identify a point of contact for the Clerk to refer matters to
3. Annual pay awards and salaries of staff
4. Holiday and TOIL of staff
5. Staff personal development plans (PDP'S) on an annual basis
6. Six monthly reviews of PDP's
7. Grievance and disciplinary matters

2. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN COMMITTEE

The Town Council has already identified a need to look at regeneration in the local area. There is an opportunity for the Town Council to work in partnership with interested members of the public and other community and business groups.

I suggest that an Advisory Committee, reporting to the Town Council, is set up. Consideration should be given to members of the public joining the committee, who can offer specialist advice and information.

An advisory committee can meet to research and discuss issues, but they have no delegated powers and no member of the committee have any voting rights. All matters would be reported back to full council for ideas and suggestions to be discussed and reviewed.

The frequency of the meetings would not be as frequent as an executive committee, the usual timescale is quarterly, but meetings do need to be called by the Clerk with Agenda's and Minutes, as other committee meetings.

Members of the public and members of external community groups joining the committee, would need to agree to adhere to the code of conduct and to declare interests where necessary.

OPENNESS AND FAIRNESS

Current practice:

The Chairman and the Vice Chairman of the Town Council, are automatically *ex officio* members of every committee.

I further suggest that each executive committee, continues as with current practice, to operate with a different Chairman and Vice Chairman, wherever possible and that no Councillor Chairs or Vice Chairs more than one committee - unless no other member of a particular committee member wishes to take on either role.

The Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Council have always had the opportunity to Chair or Vice Chair any of the committee's and I propose this practice continues.

By adhering to good practice wherever possible, it offers members of each individual committee, the opportunity to progress their skills and to gain confidence, whilst having the support and experience of the Chair/Vice Chair, as well as displaying fairness and transparency.

SUMMARY:

I have carefully considered the outcomes of the above report.

I believe the above would be positive for the Town Council, councillors and the Town Clerk. I suggest that if this report is reviewed in full and accepted.

Consideration would need to be given to the following:

1. Changes and amendments would need to be made to Standing Orders to incorporate the above if supported.
2. Further councillor training may be identified with regard to a newly formed Governance and HR Committee.
3. Training for all Town Councillors and staff, is strongly supported by the Town Council by using the various training programmes on offer from One Voice Wales and other external agencies.

NOTE

All Councillors are encouraged, regardless of length of service, to join a committee of their choosing. Whilst an effective committee would consist of a number of engaged and motivated members, the numbers on each committee should also be sufficient to allow for the occasional absence, allowing the committee to remain quorate and to operate effectively.

Current Committee's as at March 2021

Finance Committee:

Chairman, Cllr. Paul Mason

Vice Chairman, Cllr. Jackie Stokes

Members: Cllrs. Thickitt, McCarney, Ryan and Davies

Governance Committee:

Chairman, Cllr. James Thickitt

Vice Chairman, Cllr. Jackie Stokes

Members: Cllrs. McCarney and Ryan

Planning Committee:

Chairman, Cllr. Edward Perkins

Vice Chairman, Cllr. Gareth Davies

Members: Cllrs. McCarney, Stokes, Price and Ryan

Events Committee:

Chairman, Cllr. Jackie Stokes

Vice Chairman, Cllr. Sharon McCarney

Members: Cllrs. Ryan, Murphy and Davies