

## **MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF MACHYNLLETH TOWN COUNCIL**

**on Monday September 26th 2022 at 6.30pm in the Vane Tempest room**

### **PRESENT:**

Cllr J Paige (Mayor), Cllr M Williams, Cllr A MacGarry, Cllr J Honeybill, , Cllr P.Jones, Cllr N.McCarten, Cllr G.Jones, Cllr M.Atkins, Cllr K.Bryan, Cllr A.Evans and Cllr L.Griffith

### **APOLOGIES :**

Cllr R.Hughes.

### **ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:**

Dewi Jones (Town Clerk)

Nicole Beaumont (Finance Officer)

Freya Pryce

3 members of the public, no member of the press.

Before starting the meeting, the Mayor Cllr J.Paige called on all present to give a moment of reflection in view of the coming 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the tragic loss of April Jones.

### **1/ ATTENDANCE AND APOLOGIES:**

See list above.

### **2 / DECLARATION of INTERESTS :**

Cllr A MacGarry regarding item 14 & 15

Cllr G.Jones regarding item 26

### **3/ Public Participation :**

Freya Pryce of Eco Dyfi updated the Council regarding the Machynlleth Climate Action Groups set up in 2018 when this Council declared a climate emergency. It was decided, given the volume of information that it would be a good idea to arrange an extra meeting of the Council to consider what could be done in response to this update.

### **4/ Mayor's report :**

The Mayor reported on the following meetings / functions.

- Meeting regarding Urdd Eisteddfod 2024
- Meeting with Gerddi Bro Ddyfi regarding the Green Flag Award
- Various meetings regarding the Hen Stablau / Kennels
- A speech at the opening of El Sueno

The Mayor had also taken a lead organising the Council response to the death of Queen Elizabeth II as the Clerk was abroad at the time.

### **5/ Minutes of the last meeting :**

**5.1/ With a minor correction to minute for item 13, so it reads "to be the host of the Urdd Eisteddfod in 2022". minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 25/7/2022 were agreed to be a true record. (Unanimous)**

**5.2/ The minutes of the Extra Ordinary meeting held on 14/9/2022 were agreed to be a true record. (Unanimous)**

5.3/ Moved to item 26 for discussion due to the exempt nature of the business transacted. **The minutes of the Staffing Panel meeting held on 12/9/2022 were agreed to be a true record and all recommendations from the panel were approved. (Unanimous)**

#### **6/ Matters arising :**

As part of the project to transform the old public conveniences next to the Rose Garden a site container will be placed next to the building to allow broadcasting to continue whilst the work is undertaken.

#### **7/ Report from Cllr M.Williams - County Councillor :**

A written report was received from Cllr M.Williams relating to his role as County Councillor. It is attached to the agenda of the meeting.

**Council resolved to take the following actions in response to the contents of the report.**

- **To write to Ysgol Bro Hyddgen congratulating Staff, Board of Governors and the pupils on the excellent GCSE results. (Unanimous)**
- **To write to Powys County Council regarding the scaling back of the bricks and mortar side of the project seeking assurances that this will not lead to a scaling back of provision at the school. Also to invite representatives of Powys County Council to attend a future meeting of the Council to answer questions from Councillors. (Unanimous)**

#### **8/ Planning :**

Planning Application 22/1453/TEL

Telecommunications equipment and cabinets, Footway of Treowain Industrial Estate.

The town council comments are as follows

**“The paperwork supporting the application refers to the mast being ‘up to 20m’, we would like confirmation of the actual height. We note that the operator of the mast will be a mobile network, we are concerned that each network will require a mast and would welcome clarification on whether the mast can be used by multiple operators. The Town Council would welcome answers to these questions as the application goes through the full planning process”**

**(Passed by majority vote)**

#### **9/ Finance :**

**9.1 Received for information (By majority vote).**

**9.2 Resolved to pay invoices as presented (By majority vote).**

**9.3 Resolved to receive for information and to ask the Finance Panel at its meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> of October to scrutinise the report submitted to that meeting and recommend ways to resolve any overspends identified (Unanimous).**

**9.4 Receive for information (Unanimous).**

#### **10/ Town Council Training plan :**

The Clerk presented a training plan for adoption and during the discussion there was a request that the induction training for councillors include an explanation of how to scrutinise and reconcile financial reports / annual return.

**Resolved to adopt the training plan as presented by the Clerk and attached to the agenda (Unanimous).**

#### **11/ Members items :**

**11.1 Council resolved to write to Dyfi Valley Health outlining concerns regarding availability of appointments and collection of prescriptions as outlined by Cllr G. Jones at the meeting. (Passed by majority vote – Cllr Norma McCarten requested that it be minuted that she voted against the resolution on the basis of information she had received at the patients forum regarding efforts to resolve the matter)**

11.2 Deferred to future meeting following apologies for absence from Cllr R. Hughes.

**11.3 Council resolved to write to Ysgol Bro Hyddgen asking that they once again consult with parents regarding the demand for a Breakfast Club as Councillors had identified a clear need. (Unanimous).**

**11.4 Council resolved to ask the Clerk to bring to a future meeting a maintenance programme with regards to benches on the street in Machynlleth. (Unanimous)**

**12/ Removal of Recycling Facilities at the Maengwyn Car Park :**

**Council resolved to write a letter to Powys County Council objecting to the removal of some recycling facilities from the Maengwyn Street Car Park. (Unanimous).**

**13/ Loss of the Mid Wales Air Ambulance base :**

**Council resolved to write to the Air Ambulance and the Powys Teaching Health Board objecting to the proposed changes to the air ambulance service. Copies of letters to also be sent to Cllr Gary Mitchell. (Unanimous).**

**14/ correspondence from Ecodyfi regarding historic monies:**

**Council resolved to pay the sum of £840.95 to Eco Dyfi. (Unanimous).**

**15/ Premises request:**

A request from Eco Dyfi for to provide space at the Plas to install freezers and cold storage for usage by members of the public was considered and refused on advice from staff that there was no suitable space in the building.

**16/ Cor Meibion Machynlleth – Le Tour de Cor :**

Cllr J.Paige proposed that a £150 donation be made from the Mayor's allowance to support the endeavour of cycling from Holyhead to Cardiff to raise monies towards developing a new chemotherapy unit within Bronglais hospital in Aberystwyth. Council agreed.

**17/ Internal Audit 2022-23:**

**Council resolved not to accept the recommendation in the Clerks report but rather to request the clerk obtain a further quote in relation to appointment of an internal auditor for 2022-23 and bring the matter to a future meeting (By majority vote)**

**18/ Retention of Documents and Disposal policy :**

**Council resolved to adopt the document retention and disposal policy prepared by the Clerk and attached to the agenda. (Unanimous).**

**19/ 2021-22 Annual report:**

**Council resolved to adopt the annual report for the year 2021-22 as attached to the Agenda. (By majority vote)**

**20/ The council and social media :**

**Council resolved in principle to increase its social media presence and expressed a desire to do so through Facebook. Council further resolved that Cllr K. Bryan should prepare a social media policy for consideration at the October meeting and that accounts should set up as soon as possible after approval of that policy. (Unanimous).**

**21/ Clerk report :**

Clerk reported that all action points arising from the minutes of the previous meeting had been completed. The Clerk will work from the public library between 10.15am and 12.15pm on the 5<sup>th</sup> of October in order to provide an opportunity for members of the public to ask questions relating to the governance and responsibilities of the Council as part of a community engagement themed libraries week.

#### **22/ Reports from nominated representatives on outside bodies :**

Cllr N.McCarten reported on the meeting of the Patient forum, with special mention of attempts by the GP surgery to address concerns raised during item 11.1 of this meeting.

Cllr A.MacGarry reported on a cost of living meeting organised by the PAVO network.

#### **23/ Correspondence :**

**Received for information (Unanimous).**

#### **24/ Information from Members :**

None

#### **25/ Items for the next agenda :**

Cllr MacGarry asked that the council invites Powys Teaching Health Board to discuss the hospital project with special reference to the services that will be provided.

**Council resolved that press and public be excluded from the meeting during discussion of the remaining items as it was likely that exempt information as defined in part 4, Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 would be discussed.**

#### **26/ Staffing issues :**

**The minutes of the Staffing Panel meeting held on 12/9/2022 were agreed to be a true record and all recommendations from the panel were approved. (Unanimous)**

#### **27/ The Plas Endowment Fund :**

The report prepared by Dr Ian Gardner of Ennerdale Consulting on the status of the Plas Fund as a response to item 20 in the minutes of the Full Council meeting of July 25<sup>th</sup> 2022 was presented. There was a discussion of the report and of the wider questions regarding the status of the Plas and the Grounds and whether or not they constituted a charitable trust that arose in the course of answering the original question.

**Council resolved to halt any spending from the Plas Fund until such a time as the status of the fund in relation to permanent endowment is properly resolved. Council further resolved to re-engage Ennerdale consulting on the same terms to carry out the following, with the work managed by the clerk and reported to monthly meetings of the Town Council.**

- **A further visit to the Powys County archive to view relevant minutes and documents from Montgomery District Council and to obtain copies of correspondence between Machynlleth Urban District Council and the Open Spaces Society in 1947.**
- **Making enquiries with Durham County Council archives regarding relevant documents deposited by the Londonderry estate in connection with the Plas and grounds.**
- **Chasing up outstanding responses from the Charity Commission in connection with enquiries we made beginning on 28<sup>th</sup> July.**
- **Drafting a letter to Powys County Council in connection with the Plas and its potential status as an implied Public Trust and seeking the Council's views on the matter.**
- **Reviewing any further documents held by the Town Council which have now or will come to light in the coming weeks.**
- **Working with the Town Council to create an audit trail of expenditure on the Plas and Grounds since 1<sup>st</sup> April 2008**

to try to address concerns that some of the monies in the Plas Endowment Fund may have been spent inappropriately.

- Drafting a letter to the County Council asking relevant questions regarding its treatment of the Plas Endowment Fund, its initial categorisation as an 'endowment fund', its subsequent categorisation and the deduction of £19.5k from the fund to its transfer to the Town Council.
- Sourcing appropriate financial and legal advisers that can provide the Town Council with further advice regarding the present day value of the original Plas Endowment, the financial implications of adopting a Total Investment approach to withdrawing monies from the Fund and the legal issues arising from our report.
- Drafting briefs for the above based on our – initial and follow up research.
- Preparing agendas and background documents for the Plas Endowment Fund Charity Trustees to facilitate calling of meetings and consideration of the matters raised in our research (only if the Clerk requires assistance in this area).
- Subject to the above, preparing a letter for submission to the Charity Commission, containing our research and the resulting relevant legal and financial advice.

**28/ The next Full Council meeting will be on 31<sup>st</sup> October 2022 at 6.30pm in the Vane Tempest room at the Plas.**