## **Ordinary General Meeting held on the 12th July 2021 by virtual platform zoom due to COVID-19 restrictions commencing at 6.45 pm**

## **Present:**

Councillor Ms R Phillips (presiding), J Nemeth, R Clapham, J Jones, A Richards (left the meeting at 7.05pm), V Hotten, A Nicholson, Reverend Ms S Northcott, H Davies, G C Davies, Ms C Ford, and Ms E Thomas (Co-Opted at the meeting)

## **Apologies:**

Councillor Ms L Purcell and Youth Councillor – Ms Issy Williams

## **11747: Disclosure of Personal and Pecuniary Interests:**

None

## **Resolved** to be noted**.**

## **11748: Signing of the Minutes of the Ordinary General Meeting held on the 14th June 2021:**

## **Resolved** that the minutes of the Ordinary General Meeting held on the 14th June 2021 having been read and confirmed as a true record be accepted by Council.

## **11749: Matters raised by Members of the Public:**

None

## **Resolved** to be noted**.**

## **11750: Councillor Co-Option – Trebanos Ward:**

There were two candidates for Co-Option, who provided applications which had been forwarded to Councillors prior to the meeting. Both Candidates were also provided with an opportunity to address Council prior to the Co-Option vote.

Councillors voted by a show of hands. The result was as follows:

Mr J Puzey – 2 votes

Ms E Thomas - 8 votes

One abstention

## **Resolved** that Ms E Thomas will be Co-opted as a Councillor for the Trebanos Ward**.**

## **11751: Defibrillator Mapping Project:**

Councillor R Thomas was not at the meeting and therefore an update was not available.

Council was keen for training in the use of the defibrillators for the community and they were advised that training was to be arranged by David Thomas via the NHS Trust once restrictions allowed

Council was aware of the restrictions however they felt that the training was especially important, and they hoped that it could go ahead even if the session were limited in size or held outdoors.

## **Resolved** the Clerk will contact David Thomas to attempt to arrange training as soon as possible for groups in the Town Council area.

## **11752: Eco and Wellbeing Committee including Cwmdu:**

An Eco and Wellbeing Committee was to be arranged shortly.

Tenderleaf would also be reviewing the remaining Ash Trees adjacent to paths or properties during the Summer when they could be viewed with a full canopy.

## **Resolved** that Council will be kept up to date with developments

## **11753: Police Matters:**

Signs requesting members of the public report low level crime via 101 had been placed in all the Town Council’s parks together with a notice of the QR code that would allow instant reporting.

No PACT meetings had taken place.

Pontardawe statistics – May total crimes fifty-three down from April crimes of 53 (Most Common: Violence, ASB, and Criminal Damage)

Trebanos statistics –May total crimes thirteen up from April crimes 2 (Most Common: Violence and ASB)

Given the significant increase between April and May in Trebanos, the Clerk had requested additional details:

* the two stolen motor vehicles had been found and returned. A third report was unfounded.
* Two domestic calls from the same family and one harassment by an ex-partner
* A neighbour dispute
* Accidental call to Police
* Threats from another person

A response had been received from the Police Commissioner re the Town Council’s request for additional powers for PCSOs

The response stated that there is a specific role for the PCSOs which was distinct from Police Officers

A list of the PCSO’s powers was provided for Council. They focused on three elements communication (giving information to the community and listening to the community to understand local concerns), problem solving in the local area, and collaborating with the community to resolve local issues, together with supporting the local community by empowering people locally to solve or contribute to solving local issues.

PCSOs were to remain in post long term to provide stability as Police Officers moved frequently between districts. The Commissioner did admit that PCSOs were currently not remaining in post long term for several reasons and the Commissioner and Chief Constable were attempting to limit this instability going forward.

The additional powers awarded to PCSO’s during Covid were a temporary measure which did not conflict with the original powers stated.

Council was very concerned with the increase in the severity of crime in the local area especially around the Riverside/ Recreation ground area. Two cars had been burned out in that area recently.

Although they accepted the Commissioners response they felt that the absence of PACT meetings, the lack of Police Officers in the local area and the lack of communication on actions being conducted by the local Police Force was concerning.

It was clear that more proactive rather than reactive policing was required. It was also disappointing that the Chief Constable had not responded to the original communication

## **Resolved** that the Clerk will chase the Chief Constable.

## **11754: Bypass crossing point:**

A response was received from Neath Port Talbot Council re the ‘lip’ from pavements to the road on the Bypass crossing point.

They stated that the lip was kept to a minimum but was necessary to prevent standing water at the site.

## **Resolved** to be noted.

## **11755: Planning:**

## **P2021/0545**

Applicant’s name and Address: Rachel Doyle, 258 Graig Road, Godrergraig, Swansea SA9 2NZ

Site Location: 47 Grove Road, Pontardawe SA8 4HH

Proposed Development: Proposed single storey rear extension and the creation of a raised patio to the rear. Works include the demolition of an existing rear extension and the existing garage.

## **Resolved** No objection provided there is neighbourhood notification.

## **P2021/0390**

Applicant’s name and Address: Mr Damian Evans, 16 High Street, Pontardawe SA8 4HU

Site Location: 16 High Street, Pontardawe SA8 4HU

Proposed Development: Change of former bank (Class A2) to café/wine bar with living accommodation to upper floors, two on first floor, single on second floor, to include external alterations

## **Resolved** No objection provided there is neighbourhood notification

## **P2021/0641**

Applicant’s name and Address: David Phillips, The Quays, Brunel Way, Baglan Energy Park, Briton Ferry SA11 2GG

Site Location: Gelligron House, Gelligron Road, Pontardawe, SA8 4NR

Proposed Development: Works to 1 x purple Beech (identified as T1) covered by Tree preservation Order T211/A4

Reduce crown by 2 to 3 meters, remove all deadwood, Remove old pruning stumps

## **Resolved** No objection

## **P2021/0571:**

Applicant’s name: Mr Jones, 5 Smithfield Road, Pontardawe, Swansea SA8 4LA

Site Location: Land to the rear of 5 Smithfield Road, Pontardawe, Swansea SA8 4LA

Proposed Development: Works to 1x Oak tree (identified as T1) covered by Tree preservation order T218/T2 – reduce large overextending oak branch by 3.5m

## **Resolved** No objection

## **Application to change the register of Common Land – CL25A Entry 142. Application NPT 0073:**

No representations in response to the Form 20 notice issued on the 5th January 2021

**Resolved** to be noted.

## **11756: Community / Place Plans:**

A physical meeting of the Steering Committee had taken place and the following actions were agreed:

* Set up a ‘Town Team’
* Identify Members of the Community who wish to join the ‘Town Team’
* First meeting of Town Team – Spot Analytics to determine strengths and weaknesses of the Town.
* Review from the ‘Landscapes and Settings’ section of the Shape my Town Web site (Town Views, Edges, Parks and Green Spaces)
* Factual Information to be collated
* Identification of any Areas of Outstanding Beauty and Special Scientific Interest
* Consult with LDP at Neath Port Talbot Council

## **Resolved** to be noted.

**11757: P&R Committee held on the 28th June 2021 to discuss Christmas 2021:**

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| The Clerk confirmed that the Christmas Lights would be provided by Lite as part of the rental contract in the same manner as Christmas 2020.  Currently the contract included Lamp post motifs on High Street and Herbert Street, Festoons, crossroad banners together with an artificial Christmas Tree at the Cross and lights for a real Christmas tree outside the Art Centre usually erected by the Town Council.  The real Christmas tree at the Art Centre was usually twenty-two foot high, it was purchased by the Town Council but chosen and transported to Clydach refinery by Vale, free of charge. Transport from Clydach and the removal and disposal of the tree was covered by the Town Council.  It was agreed that the lights during Christmas 2020 had been very well received and there might be a case not to alter the scheme for 2021 however additional information could be obtained prior to a final decision.  In Trebanos the Community Hall committee organised a tree and lights outside the Community Hall, however the proposal to place a tree at Heol y Fflin was abandoned as we were advised by our lighting contractors that it could not be lit.  Motifs or festoons on the lamp posts in Trebanos were also not possible as the County Borough had confirmed that the wooden posts were not suitable for this type of decoration.  Ordinarily, there would be a Parade and grotto organised in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce, the Town Council and the Art Centre and a Fireworks finale financed by the Town Council.  Due to current restrictions however the Town Council had been advised that no special events licences would be issued for Christmas events at present.  It was important therefore that contingencies were discussed. The Committee requested the Clerk obtain the following information prior to the next meeting:   * Could the Christmas Tree at the Art Centre be increased in height from twenty-two foot to thirty foot? What was the cost? Would Vale be able to transport it? Would our Christmas lights cover it? * Would the County Borough allow a real Christmas Tree to be planted at ‘The Cross’? If so what would the cost be? Would this be feasible for Christmas 2021 or for a future year? * If a tree were planted at the Cross, would our lighting contractors be able to dress it? Would there be an additional charge? * Would Special Events issues licences for Christmas Events in 2021? Also, would they allow fireworks from the Bypass Car Park? * What smaller events were being considered by the Chamber of Commerce if no licences were issued? * Would it be possible to arrange for ‘Santa’ or ‘Santa’s sleigh to tour the area if no other events could be organised due to restrictions?   The Committee requests that Council agree to obtain information prior to a decision being made.  The Clerk stated in the Ordinary meeting that Neath Port Talbot Council had requested all legal documents from Town and Community Councils plus contractors by September 2021 and therefore any changes in the location of lights etc would need to be reviewed for the Christmas of 2022.  During the meeting, Councillor Jones confirmed that the local public houses were attempting to arrange a music festival during the Christmas period but there were no plans for children’s entertainment |

## **Resolved** that the Clerk will arrange for a 30-foot Christmas tree to be obtained by Vale and transported for Christmas 2021. The light arrangement would remain the same as Christmas 2020. The Clerk will also try to obtain details of a ‘Santa’ to drive the area during the Christmas period

## **11758: Personnel:**

The Crossing Patrol Officer for Swansea Road was currently absent due to illness. The absence was being managed under Neath Port Talbot Council’s sickness policy. Under the current agreement, there was not replacement cover for absence of this nature.

The Clerk requested permission for two weeks holiday from the 16th August 2021, cover would be required. A further shorter holiday of three days was also requested during September however additional cover would not be required.

One Caretaker had been absent during 2020 due to illness. Long term sickness rules state that holiday entitlement following long term sickness can be carried forward for two years however the employer was able to stipulate when these holidays were to be taken.

Other employees had not fully utilised holiday entitlement during 2020. It was suggested that two weeks could be carried forward to 2021. This deferment had been historically accepted for many years.

## **Resolved** that Council will agree the Clerks requested holidays and will employ cover during August.

Holidays due to long term sickness will be carried forward for two years but with the Clerk stipulating the dates.

Two weeks holiday for staff could be carried forward from 2020 to 2021

Council will be kept up to date with the absence of the Crossing patrol officer

## **11759: Account Schedule 382:**

## **Resolved** that Account Schedule 382 totalling £18099.68 together with bank reconciliation.

## should be accepted by Council in line with Standing Orders.

## **11760: Consultation on Qualifications of Clerks in Wales Regulations:**

Councillors were provided with details of the consultation prior to the Meeting. The Clerk confirmed that she did hold the preferred qualification (CILCA)

## **Resolved** that the proposals from the consultation will be accepted.

## **11761: Urgent Road Safety Matters:**

* A burned-out car on the cul-de-sac in adjacent to Riverside was a danger

## **Resolved** that the Clerk will contact both the Police and the County Borough to arrange removal.

## **11762: Next Meeting:**

The next Ordinary Meeting will take place on the 13th September 2021. Venue to be advised commencing at 6.45pm.

Signed ………………………………………………………………………

Dated ……………………………………………………………………..