##  **Ordinary General Meeting held on the 14th February 2022 by virtual platform zoom due to Welsh Government restrictions, commencing at 6.45 pm**

## **Present:**

Councillor Ms R Phillips (presiding), Mrs L Purcell, A Richards, D Williams, G C Davies, J Jones, Heath Davies, Mrs J Ashton-Mears, Hywel Davies and Ms I Williams (youth councillor)

**Apologies:**

Councillor J Nemeth, A Nicholson, Reverend Ms S Northcott and Ms E Thomas

## **11883: Disclosure of Personal and Pecuniary Interests:**

Councillor Purcell expressed an interest in Personnel and left for the duration of the meeting on the confidential redundancy discussion as she is a personal friend.

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

## **11884: Signing of the Minutes of the Ordinary General Meeting held on the 10th January 2022:**

## **Resolved** that the minutes of the Ordinary General Meeting held on the 10th January 2022 having been read and confirmed as a true record be accepted by Council.

## **11885: Matters raised by Members of the Public:**

None

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

## **11886: Defibrillator Mapping Project:**

The Clerk was still awaiting a licence to place the external box at Pontardawe Art Centre from Neath Port Talbot Council. The grant to the Leon Fund for external boxes had been paid.

## **Resolved** to be noted.

## **11887: Eco and Wellbeing Committee including Cwmdu:**

Councillors John Jones attended the Neath Port Talbot Nature workshop on the 18th January 2022 and found it provided a good overview of plans to be implemented by Neath Port Talbot Council and details of contacts for networking. It was also attended by a large number of groups. There were however no specific plans for the Pontardawe Town Council area at present.

Neath Port Talbot Council have a new project running at Cwmdu called ‘Connecting Green Infrastructure which will run until 2023.

They will also have a volunteer co-ordinator employed as a contractor to lead volunteering who will be employed after March 2022

The Team would be happy to attend a future Council meeting to provide details of the project.

## **Resolved** to be noted.

## **11888: Police Matters:**

No PACT meetings had been arranged.

Pontardawe statistics –December 25 down from November 44 (Violence 12, Public Order 3, Criminal Damage 2 and Anti-Social Behaviour 4)

Trebanos statistics –December 4 down from November 6 (Violence 2, Criminal Damage 1 and Other 1)

An email had been received from Sergeant Matthew Jones who had taken over the position as Neighbourhood Sergeant covering the Pontardawe area to introduce himself.

The County Borough Members were to meet the new local Policing team this week and details of the meeting would be advised to Council in due course.

The County Borough Members and other Councillors were concerned that there were still no PACT meetings arranged and that initiatives such as the Community Alcohol Partnership seemed to not now be supported

Several Councillors including the Youth Member felt that a meeting when current issues could be raised with the new team would be very beneficial

## **Resolved** that Sergeant Jones will be invited to attend a future meeting of full Council

## **11889: Grants applications and letters of thanks:**

Several Grant applications had been received for review

## **Resolved** that a Finance Committee be arranged to review grants, the Financial regulations and the current Financial risk assessment

## **11890: Office and Facilities:**

Correspondence from Neath Port Talbot Council was still awaited re Office.

The new Office laptop had been purchased following discussion with Councillor Nemeth which was extremely efficient and purchased within budget.

Currently the Town Council’s email was provided by the designers of the web site however an issue had arisen due to a change in the IMAB Protocol at Vision ICT. The email is therefore not now compatible with the Town Council’s Cloud management system at Microshade which is leading to several difficulties within the system.

Microsoft do however host a Microsoft enterprise class mail solution which is compatible with the system. The Microshade solution is also compliant with cabinet office requirements for public bodies and is fully supported by Microshade VSM and hosted on their own hardware, however there would be an additional to adopt the microshade offer

The Clerk confirmed that Councillor specific emails were required due to issues relating to GDPR

## **Resolved** that the Clerk will make enquiries to determine if there are other solutions to the problem that would not create additional costs.

## **11891: Summer Floral Displays:**

In accordance with the recommendations of the Internal Auditor the Clerk reviewed different methods of providing the Summer floral display for Pontardawe.

The companies reviewed were Plantscape, The Old Nursery and the City and County of Swansea.

All three companies had been used by neighbouring Towns to provide Summer floral displays but only one offered a full watering provision throughout the season.

The Clerk had contacted the Town Council’s contractors to identify if they could provide watering for the 2022 Summer season, but was informed that this would not be possible. They did however confirm that to provide a full watering provision throughout the Summer season would be an approximate cost of £7000.

The total cost of the fully serviced baskets for the Summer of 2022 from the City and County of Swansea was £7685 and therefore the current suppliers would be the most cost effective

## **Resolved** that the City and County of Swansea will be contracted to provide the Summer floral display as in previous years.

## **11892: Planning:**

Reviewed in the Ordinary meeting.

## **P2021/1277**

Applicants name – Mr Mat Nicholson, 3 Sidings Court, White Rose Way, Doncaster, DN4 5NU

Site location – Pwllfawatkin Refuse Tip, Pontardawe link road to Baran Road, Pontardawe SA8 4RX

Proposed Development – Revised restoration profile of Tip 890 including constitution of waste importation to 31st October 2023 with restoration completed by 31st October 2025

Council were informed that the proposals would lead to the structured closure of the site. It was necessary to include a continuation of waste importation to ensure that the closure could remain regulated

Issues with odour should be reported to Natural Resources Wales by residents and an incident number obtained

## **Resolved** to accept the proposals in order to support the regulated closure of the site

## **P2021/1209**

Applicants name – Mr Peter Boden-Ryan, Mount Pleasant Llanguicke Road, Pontardawe SA8 4PS

Site location – Mount Pleasant Llanguicke Road, Pontardawe SA8 4PS

Proposed Development – Retention of ground floor extension and proposed first floor extension to include first floor access ramp to public right of way

**Resolved** No Objection provided there is neighbourhood notification

## **P2022/0010**

Applicants name – Mr S Haeney, Ardwum, 6 Birchfield Road, Pontardawe, SA8 4PF

Site location – 6 Birchfield Road, Pontardawe, SA8 4PF

Proposed Development – Proposed guest accommodation to be built in the grounds of the application site

**Resolved** No Objection provided there is neighbourhood notification

**Neath Port Talbot replacement Local Development Plan (2021-2036) – Call for Candidate sites.**

Councillors were advised that the call for candidate sites would be held from the 1st March 2022 to the 31st May 2022.

**Resolved** to be noted.

## **11893: Policy and Resources Committee held on the 17th January 2022:**

## **The Committee discussed the following consultations (Plenary Powers had been awarded for all discussions):**

## **Consultation on the refresh of the violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence National Strategy for 2022 to 2026**

The Consultation was forwarded to Councillors for review prior to the meeting:

The consultation approach covered the following principles:

Whole society approach, tackling male violence, A comprehensive understanding of VAWDASV, an equalities approach, Survivor’s voice, A public health approach, Trauma informed and Collaborative working and co-production.

## **The Committee agreed with the objectives stated by the Consultation but wished the following additional comments included:**

* **Education should begin at an early age and should include teaching respect for all.**
* **There was no indication of how enforcement ‘on the street’ was to be funded. There needed to be visible Policing, and significant additional funding for first responders to support the initiative.**

## **Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021: Community and Town Councils statutory guidance**

The consultation covered the following:

eligibility to exercise the general power of competence

access meetings from multiple locations

provide opportunity for public participation at public council meetings

publish an annual report

publish a training plan to support training for councillors and council staff.

The Clerk provided details of the actions that had been carried out and a timescale for the introduction of the actions currently outstanding at Pontardawe Town Council

## **The Committee agreed with the objectives stated by the Consultation but had no further comments.**

## **Consultation on Planning Legislation and policy on second homes and short term lets**

The Consultation was for the following:

* Amendments to the Town and Country Planning (Use Classes) Order 1987 to:
* amend the current use class for ‘Dwelling houses’,
* create new use classes for ‘Second Homes’ and for ‘Short-term Holiday Lets’
* Related amendments to the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995
* Related amendments to Planning Policy Wales.

The consultation was discussed in full and the committee agreed that legislation was required to limit the impact of second homes and holiday lets on Welsh communities.

## **The Committee agreed with the objectives stated by the Consultation but wished the following additional comments included:**

* **There needed to be additional clarity on the details of the proposed compensation. (Details of the circumstances for available compensation together with monetary limits should be included)**

## Plenary Powers were awarded to the Committee in the Ordinary General Meeting held on the 10th January 2022 and therefore the Committees responses had been submitted to the various consultations

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

## **11894: Personnel Committee held on the 24th January 2022:**

## **The Committee discuss various Personnel matters as follows:**

## **Update of Staff Contracts of Employment:**

Following a review by the Internal Auditor it was suggested that the staff contracts of employment (non-Clerk) be updated utilising model Contracts of Employment as provided by One Voice Wales. This was suggested as the employees (non-Clerk) had contracts signed in 2000 which now required more up to date wording.

No changes to the Terms or conditions of the Cleaners-in-charge or the Park Officer were suggested.

The Clerk provided updated Contracts for review.

**The Committee agreed with the updated contracts but requested that the sections listing the specific dates of the bank holidays should be altered to state ‘statutory public holidays only’**

## **Review of Policies:**

The Committee reviewed the following draft policies:

Employee Code of Conduct

Lone Working

Sickness and Absence

Staff and Councillor Training

**The Committee agreed with the draft policies with the following clarification:**

**Lone Working – The majority of the policy was agreed however there was no indication of actions to be taken in the event that there was a medical emergency while lone working**

**Sickness and Absence Policy – The majority of the policy was agreed however any indication of ‘days should state ‘calendar days’**

**Staff Councillor and Training – Initial policy agreed however this should be revisited following the Election in May 2022**

## The Clerk confirmed that the alterations requested by the Committee to the Contracts of Employment and Sickness and absence policy had been made.

With regard to the issues surrounding the Lone working policy, the Clerk had obtained advice re the issue surrounding a medical emergency while working alone.

It was impossible to prevent an unknown issue arising whilst a Member of Staff was working alone however the Council did have a responsibility to risk assess the circumstances and to limit the risk as far as possible.

The Town Council’s risk assessment did include a review of lone working and provided actions to be taken to limit risk.

An online course was also available to draw employee’s attention to risk associated with lone working that could be completed by staff to raise awareness. The Clerk suggested that completion of the course could be added as an action point to the risk assessment for lone working staff

## **Resolved:** Council ratified the Committee and Clerks recommendations.

## **Redundancy:**

Councillor Purcell expressed an interest and left the meeting during the discussion

Freedom of Information exemption section 40 (personal information) – applied

Appendix – 1 Confidential

## **Resolved:** For Information only as this is a statutory requirement.

## **11895: Clerks Report on the Internal Audit recommendation including Health and Safety Policy:**

Council had been provided with the current Health and Safety Policy for review prior to the meeting.

The Clerk also confirmed that points from the Internal Audit had all now been reviewed and completed apart from the suggestion to implement Accounting software.

The Clerk explained that she found completing manual book keeping, budgetary tools and reconciliations enabled a far greater level of understanding of issues and wished for the present to retain the current system.

## **Resolved:** that the Health and Safety Policy be accepted and the Clerk be permitted to retain a manual system of accounting for the present.

## **11896: Change of date for the May Ordinary and Annual General Meeting:**

Council was asked to alter the date for the May Ordinary and Annual General Meeting in 2022 due to the Election.

## **Resolved:** that the Ordinary and Annual General Meeting should be held on the 16th May 2022.

## **11897: Budget/ Actual Report for the 3d Quarter:**

Council was provided with the Budget/Actual report for the 3rd quarter prior to the meeting.

## **Resolved:** that the Budget/Actual report for the 3rd quarter will be accepted

## **11898: Annual Report:**

Council was advised that following legislation an Annual Report detailing Council work would need to be prepared and published for 2021/22.

## **Resolved:** to be discussed at a Policy and Resources Committee

## **11899: Town and Community Council Liaison Committee held on the 27th January 2022:**

Unfortunately, Councillor Phillips was unable to attend the meeting.

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

## **11900: Account Schedule 389:**

## **Resolved** that Account Schedule 389 totalling £13353.04 together with bank reconciliation will be accepted by Council in line with Standing Orders.

## **11901: City and County of Swansea Pension:**

Employee Pension rate for 2022/23 which begins on the 1st April 2022 will be 24.1%

## **Resolved** to be noted.

## **11902: Email from Andrew Scott Ltd:**

Councillor reviewed the request from Andrew Scott and felt that no comment should be made at this point. Council would however be more than happy to liaise with the contractors to provide local knowledge should their tender be successful

## **Resolved** to respond as stated.

## **11903: Consultation – Implementation of the Regulation and inspection of Social Care (Wales) Act 2016:**

Councillors were provided with details prior to the meeting

## **Resolved** to be noted.

## **11904: Urgent Road Safety Matters:**

Councillor Purcell stated that information from dash cams were a very important resource for the detection of crime. Still from dash cam footage could be forwarded to the Police via SWP101@south-wales.police.uk

## **Resolved** to be noted

## **11905: Next Meeting:**

The next Ordinary Meeting will take place on the 14th March 2022 by virtual platform commencing at 6.45pm.

Signed ………………………………………………………………………

 Dated ……………………………………………………………………..