

Minutes of the Second Monthly Meeting of the Council on Monday 22nd January 2024 in the Memorial Hall at 7.00pm.

Present: Mayor Cllr ES Evans, Deputy Mayor Cllr BS Sehmi, Cllr DJ Griffiths, Cllr JT Jeremy, Cllr FD John, Cllr B Lloyd, Cllr BT Price, Cllr RJ Thornton, Cllr N Walsh, with S Mann (Clerk) (left meeting 9.00pm), JE Foster (Deputy Clerk) (left meeting 9.00pm) & W Mann (RFO) (left meeting 9.00pm).

164 Apologies for Absence: Cllr R Price (Leave), Cllr S Williams.

165 Declarations of Interest: Members were requested to identify any declarations of personal or prejudicial interests that they might have in relation to items on the agenda.

Cllr ES Evans declared a personal interest in item 175.

166 Confirmation of Minutes for:

166.1 Monthly Meeting of the Council on Monday 8th January 2024 were RESOLVED to be approved.

167 Public Representations from members of the public in attendance about any business to be discussed: None.

168 Matters Arising

168.1 Visit from Pembrokeshire County Council Library Services Mike Cavanagh, Anita Thomas & Tracey Johnson to offer the City Council guidance in the planning process for the proposed repurposing of the City Hall premises, with the aim of optimising the Library service facilities. The Mayor welcomed the Library representatives to the meeting and invited them to present their insights to the council – with reference to the most recent statistics, issued 22.1.24:

St Davids Library is experiencing a surge in new memberships and footfall levels are returning to pre-COVID levels. The library's computer/IT usage is offered for free but rarely being used due to the increase in mobile/personal devices. E-books are provided as a complimentary service and map archives are increasing.

Despite its relatively smaller size, St Davids Library is the most used library facility within Pembrokeshire. The current library is constricted for space, and ideally, there would be a larger reading space to facilitate even greater services & allow for groups such as *Stori Plant*.

In reference to SDCC's future planning for repurposing of City Hall premises Library Services clarified that a ground floor location is preferred, but a first-floor open plan would be possible with careful consideration of layout plan to account for bookcases which cannot be placed against windows etc. It was explained that fire safety regulations require two members of staff to deal with any emergencies/injuries in need of assisting with exiting the library from the first-floor – any plans for a first-floor library would need to consider the associated costs for two members of staff.

Library Services confirmed other libraries throughout Pembrokeshire that function dual-purposefully, such as Newport Library & Nayland Community Hub both of which share as a meeting room/community space for local residents & Fishguard Library is currently situated on the first floor of the Town Hall and also used as a Warm Room. An invitation was extended to City Councillors to visit these other libraries to see how they function.

Mike Cavanagh confirmed Library Services could assist SDCC with grant opportunities such as Welsh Government annual funding of £150,000. EOI needs to be submitted by September of each year. This collaboration could assist with eventual City Hall development. The guests were thanked for their positive visit, and the offer to collaborate in the future was enthusiastically received by the meeting.

168.2 Bryn Road Toilets. The City Council will make a conclusive decision whether to proceed with the asset transfer after it has reviewed all the necessary information: Update received from PCC including confirmation that water is not stored/legionella testing not required; current cleaning procedure; copy of most recent maintenance tasks; confirmation that electricity testing will be commissioned once confirmed toilet is remaining open. Asbestos Report & Covenant Restrictions - still awaited. The meeting acknowledged the progress made and agreed that additional information would hopefully assist with the review of the proposed asset transfer at the next meeting.

168.3 Memorial Plaque – St Davids Airfield. PCNPA Confirmation that the Memorial cannot stay where it has been installed on the landing strip given the advice from both PCNPA Archaeologist and Dyfed Archaeological Trust and any application to retain it in that location was unlikely to be granted. PCNPA suggestion that the Memorial be carefully removed from the runway and relocated to a position further south which is adjacent to the public footpath and near the entrance from the carpark - planning permission will be required for the re-siting of the Memorial in this location. It was RESOLVED that the Clerk requests the Archaeological Report & Details of Grievances to assist the City Council in its further consideration.

168.4 Child/Pedestrian Crossing Sign. Concerns raised in 8th January AOB regarding the safety of children crossing at the junction between Warpole Court and Caerfai Road. County Councillor BT Price agreed to assume responsibility of addressing the situation with PCC.

169 Council Property

169.1 City Hall Kitchen. The council approved the transition from gas to an electric stove, as well as the purchase of a cooker and extraction hood. Quotation had been approved for the electrical works required for the installation, as well as other remedial works that had been identified. The

meeting acknowledged the approval and the Clerk confirmed that the remaining tasks were scheduled to be complete by the end of the week.

169.2 City Hall Key Safe. The Caretaker had requested the installation of a key safe to facilitate hall-hire. The meeting RESOLVED to approve the proposal, pending confirmation of additional details including insurance requirements to be provided by the Clerk & frequency of use, to be provided by the Caretaker.

169.3 Whitesands Carpark Trading Concessions. Consideration to extend the existing Ice-Cream Concession Licence and postpone the renewal process until 2025. Due to considerable delays in the planning permission application process, which might mean that planning permission will not be granted in time for the council to issue invitations to tender for a next 3-year term beginning April 2024, it would not be appropriate to invite tenders for a 3-year licence to trade when there is no guarantee that planning permission will be granted to enable a new license-holder to do so. The meeting RESOLVED to extend the existing contract to include the current 2024 season only, on the basis that the license would be effective from April 2024 subject to planning approval.

169.4 Whitesands Beach Toy Library. Council consideration for the possibility of setting up a Beach Toy Library at Whitesands. The meeting acknowledged that the proposal might have an adverse effect on the current trading and environmental habitat of the beach. The meeting RESOLVED to direct the Clerk to refer the proposal to the Whitesands Café, Porthmawr Life Saving Club & EcoDewi and postpone the decision on the matter until the next meeting, when the relevant responses could be reviewed.

170 St Davids Day

170.1 Cross Square Market Friday 1st March. Council consideration for providing free pitches to stall holders for the St Davids Day Market - as per previous years. It was RESOLVED that the stalls would be offered free of charge for this year's event.

171 Correspondence

171.1 Email dated 1st January from community member expressing concerns about being unable to visit Whitesands Beach due to being asked to pay a parking charge outside of the seasonal period. The meeting RESOLVED to instruct the Clerk to respond to the community member, apologising for the incident and explaining that the charity event organisers of that occasion had not been authorised to demand a charge for parking & the Clerk to write to the Penknife Club, referring to the complaint and requesting that such an incident does not occur again.

171.2 Email dated 4th January from Tour of Pembrokeshire 2024 event organiser requesting permission to include a Samba band/Steel Drummer playing for a few hours from 1pm at the Cross Square Saturday 27th April. The meeting RESOLVED to approve the request.

- 171.3 Email dated 12th January from Cllr R Price on behalf of St Davids RFC requesting to use Waunfawr Playing Field for car parking facilities for the Tour of Pembrokeshire 2024 event Saturday 27th April. The meeting RESOLVED to approve the request provided that the following clarifications were confirmed including the addition of funds to the Floodlight Appeal if the event was being paid for by Tour of Pembrokeshire.
- 171.4 Email dated 9th January from Unearthed Festival event organiser proposing to use the City Hall as venue for a New Years Eve 2024 party. The meeting RESOLVED to approve the proposal.
- 171.5 Email dated 12th January from Pembrokeshire Seaweeds informing the City Council of a new collaboration between Car y Mor, Pembrokeshire Seaweeds and Eco Dewi & requesting support from the council to disseminate news of the development on its social media platforms. The meeting RESOLVED to support the collaboration.
- 171.6 Email dated 15th January from Porthmawr Surf Life Saving Club requesting support from the City Council ahead of its fundraising event in the City Hall Saturday 30th March. It was RESOLVED to support the event and provide the venue free of charge.

172 Donations

- 172.1 St Davids RFC Floodlight Appeal. Breakdown of associated costs to assist further consideration of SDCC donation. The meeting RESOLVED to purchase a single floodlight.

173 Staff Matters

Due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, which could be prejudicial to the public interest if disclosed, the press and public were not present during discussions on this item, as per The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

- 173.1 Staff Point Scales. It was RESOLVED that the item was moved to the end of the meeting and subsequently deferred to the next financial year, starting from April 1st, 2024. During the discussion of the item, the Clerk, Deputy Clerk, and RFO left the meeting.

174 Finance

To agree the 2024/2025 budget and consideration of the 2024/2025 precept.

- 174.1 Consideration of Precept for the 2024/25 Financial Year.

Consideration of Precept for the 2024/25 financial Year

The annual consideration for a precept is now due.

In previous years this Council has operated without claiming a precept. However there has been significant increases in certain accounts and cost centres between the year ending March 2023 and the anticipated figures for the year ending March 2025.

You will note that the budget that I have prepared for the year ending March 2025 does not include any anticipated spend on the Caretaker House apart from £8000 set aside for professional fees. The budget also excludes any costs relating to asset transfers which have yet to be decided. If these transfers take place then these additional costs will be introduced into the budget at that time.

I have attached a summary of the significant accounts mentioned above for you to see. The impact of these increases means that between the years ending March 2023 and March 2025 the figures have risen in total by £43092.

The impact of these increases can be seen in the anticipated reduction of council reserves at March 2024 of £14385 and the further anticipated reduction at March 2025 of £35681. The current reserves at 31st March 2024 were £127,255.14 which means that by March 2025 these reserves could be reduced to as much as £77,189. This is not critical in itself but it does mark a trend in terms of this council's capability to sustain reserves without precepting.

I have also included a "profile" illustrating the impact of a precept on Council Tax payers in the St Davids community. This shows that for an imposed precept of £50,000 the additional cost for a "Band D" household would be £2.81 per month. The "profile" also shows the impact in monthly terms on the other household bands.

W Mann

RFO

January 2024

174.3 Summary with Precept Report.

SUMMARY WITH PRECEPT REPORT					
Significant Accounts - Cost Changes					
		To	To	To	
		31st	31st	31st	
		March	March	March	
		2023	2024	2025	
Salary Contract changes - increasing to 30 hours		£7,826	£15,500	£19,000	
Council Tax House		£1,129	£1,642	£2,150	
Non Domestic Rates Hall		£3,238	£4,250	£5,469	
Non Domestic Rates Whitesands		£7,624	£15,728	£23,550	
Hall Development		£0	£0	£8,000	
Heat & Light		£7,360	£10,000	£12,100	
Totals		£27,177	£47,120	£70,269	
Increase in These costs Between March 2023 and March 2025 Therefore				£43,092	

174.4 Illustration of the Impact of the Precept.

TOTAL NUMBER OF BAND EQUIVALENTS THEREFORE (NOTIFIED BY PCC)	1485.39
THE REQUIRED PRECEPT FIGURE BEING	£50,000
ADDITIONAL BAND D (PRECEPT) COUNCIL TAX THEREFORE	£33.66

BAND	Factor	Number of Households	BAND D Equivalents	ANNUAL PRECEPT COUNCIL TAX	Additional Amount Monthly
A	2/3			£22.44	£1.87
B	7/9			£26.18	£2.18
C	8/9			£29.92	£2.49
D	1			£33.66	£2.81
E	1 2/9			£41.14	£3.43
F	1 4/9			£48.62	£4.05
G	1 2/3			£56.10	£4.68
H	2			£67.32	£5.61

174.5 Council Tax Base – Financial Year 2024/25. PCC has set the tax base for area as being a band “D” equivalent of 1485.39.

With reference to the reports (174.1 to 174.5) the meeting RESOLVED to approve the precept at £50,000 for the 2024/2025 year.

174.6 Mayor’s request: Review of current spending limit contained within the Standing Orders of the City Council & Review of the addendum of transactions reported in the monthly financial report. The meeting acknowledged paragraph 47.b of the Standing Orders: *A resolution to add, vary or revoke a Standing Order shall when proposed and seconded, stand adjourned without discussion to the next ordinary meeting of the Council.* The item was RESOLVED to be referred to the Clerk and Cllr JT Jeremy for review in conjunction with the adoption of the Model Standing Orders 2023 (Wales) published by One Voice Wales.

Planning: Details of these can be found on the PCNPA website.

175 NP/23/0627/FUL Rear & Side extension. Llysgenydd, St Davids, SA626BX. The City Council considered that the proposal was deemed unlikely to have a detrimental visual or environmental impact on the surrounding area. It was RESOLVED to support the application.

176 NP/24/0008/TCA Tree 1 – Ash tree with ash dieback shedding branches onto neighbours garage and property due to ill health, complete dismantle to ground level. Tree 2 – Diseased cherry tree with Ganoderma fungi at the base within close proximity to the house, complete dismantle to ground level. 52 Bryn Road, St Davids, SA626QU. The City Council considered that the proposal was deemed unlikely to have a detrimental visual or environmental impact on the surrounding area. It was RESOLVED to support the application.

AOB

Items for information only:

- Cllr ES Evans: St Davids bench design update in the hope to purchase new benches using grant funding – *further to item 155*. The Clerk confirmed that the bench designer had been in contact and would investigate the design as it was an old project.
- Cllr BT Price: PCNPA has not received a response for a planning application that was considered for support by SDCC at its 4th December meeting.
- Cllr FD John: Grants Committee needs to schedule its next meeting.
- Cllr RJ Thornton: The King of Lesotho has announced his intention to visit St Davids in 2025.

Items for the next agenda:

- Cllr B Lloyd: CWRBR Youth Event in City Hall 20th February details of proposed event.
- Cllr JT Jeremy: Pembrokeshire Peninsular Stakeholder Group.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.15pm.

Signed

Date

Chair