KIDWELLY TOWN COUNCIL

6th DECEMBER 2022

At the Hybrid MEETING of the FULL COUNCIL held on Tuesday 6th December 2022 at 6.30pm.

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| Present | Town Mayor | C.Peters |
|  | Deputy Mayor | J.James |
|  | Councillors | J. Gilasbey, G.Beer, G.Bras, H.Griffiths, S.Ratty, C.Peters-Bond J.Tarsnane, J.Westlake, A.Herbert, C.Morgan, D.Lloyd-Waterford, C.Davies, E.Reeves-Davies |
|  | Town Clerk | Virginia O’Reilly |
|  | Town SecretaryAdmin Assist. | A PadgettOwain Davies |
| Apologies | Councillors |  |

Members were informed that Halberdier Lewis has passed away. Flowers have been sent.

Polly Seaton, Chair of the Twinning Association attended and presented the mayor with a hand painted marine buoy, a gift from the people of St Jacut de la Mer. Thanks were given.

221 MEMBER’S DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Minute 235 – Councillors C.Davies, J.James and J.Tarsnane left the meeting.

**222 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES**

It was **RESOLVED** that the following minutes be confirmed:-

* Full Council 1st November 2022
* Policy & Community Development 1st November 2022
* Estates Committee 8th November 2022
* Finance Committee 8th November 2022
* Extraordinary Full Council 29th November 2022

**223 TOWN CLERK’S REPORT**

The report had been circulated and was accepted. Noted:-

A rates rebate has been obtained from the county council for payments made in relation to the Gwenllian Centre. Telemat is still not responding. A breach of the Data Protection Act has been reported to the IOC. A confidential document containing personal data which had been e-mailed to councillors had been posted on Facebook. This is not just a contravention of the Code of Conduct but also a breach of the law. Both council as a body and/or individual councillors may be found liable and fined. Damage to individuals has also occurred. Investigations are ongoing.

**Matters arising from Full Council on 1st November 2022**

**224 DEVELOPMENT OF TOWN SQUARE**

Concept designs had been prepared and put on view at the Co-op and town square. The architect had attended both sites and had been available for consultations. Comment slips had been made available to the public. A final plan was previously agreed and resolved to send for planning permission.

**225 PRINCESS GWENLLIAN CENTRE – FUTURE GOVERNANCE**

The Nurture Centre is unable to take over the lease of the hall at present. Various options for future management are being investigated. Setting up a charity will be considered, as a charity would be exempt from the non-domestic council tax charge of £63k. It had been recognised that the current operation is functioning well. It was previously agreed to keep the status quo until the end of March 2023.

**226 APPOINTMENT OF COUNCILLOR**

The Elections Office has issued a Notice of Vacancy. These notices have been displayed as required. If 10 electors do not request an election by 23rd December 2022 a co-option process will begin.

**227 ASSISTANT FOR ESTATES OFFICER**

It was recognised that the workload of the estates officer has increased exponentially due to the level of development work being carried out in the town. The Establishment Committee *“in camera”* agreed to the appointment of an assistant. It was **RESOLVED** to accept the recommendation of the committee and begin the recruitment process.

**228 OFFICE CLOSURE ON FRIDAYS**

Due to staff shortages it was **RESOLVED** to accept the recommendations of the Establishment Committee to close the office on Fridays and change the opening hours from 9.15am – 1.15pm Monday – Thursday. Opening at 9.15am would enable any prospective applicant with children the opportunity of taking them to school without the added cost of a breakfast club. This will be reviewed in April 2023. Note and **close** this item.

**229 COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT**

County councillor C.Davies had provided a written report. Noted:- planting of trees. A tree planting initiative has been proposed. It was noted that trees should only be planted in the dormant season. A commemorative tree to celebrate the coronation was also considered. This matter was referred to the estates committee.

**230 COMMUNITY HALLS SCHOOLS AND ORGANISATIONS**

**Mynydd hall**: 5th December Christmas Craft Fayre was very successful. The bar refurbishment is progressing, the opening being held on 23rd December.

**Llanelli Rural and Police meeting**: Concerns were expressed over incidents at the town toilets and in Parc Stephens. Police are continuing patrols with additional patrols over the Christmas period. Police are to meet with councillors to improve communication links.

**231 MAYOR’S DIARY / FORTHCOMING EVENTS**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| | DATE | APPOINTMENT |  |
| 01/12/2022 | An evening to welcome Father Christmas | 6:30 |
| 02/12/2022 | Felinfoel Brewery event | 6:00 |
| 03/12/2022 | Kidwelly Christmas Market | 09:00 |
| 05/12/2022 | Glanmorfa Care Home Carols Evening  | 6:45 |
| 05/12/2022 | Mynyddygarreg Hall Committee meeting | 6:30 |
| 06/12/2022 | Full Council and Policy and Community Development Committee | 6:30 |
| 11/12/2022 | St Teilo’s Community Carol Service  | 6:00 |
| 13/12/2022 | Estates and Finance Committees | 6:30 |

**FORTHCOMING MEETINGS**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| DATE |  |  |
| 10th January 2023 | Full Council and Policy and Strategy Committee | 6.30pm |
| 17th January 2023 | Estates and Finance Committees | 6.30pm |

**232 TRANSFER OF SILICA SITE**

A proposal to transfer management of the former Silica site at the quay from the county council to the town council have been received. This matter was referred to the estates committee. Note and **Close** this item.

**233 MOBILE CONECTIVITY AND SMART METERS**

Communication within the Kidwelly area is poor. Technology is not in place to enable smart meters to be used, possibly preventing electricity users to attract reduced tariff deals from their suppliers. Base line infrastructure is not present, making working from home difficult. Market traders are loosing trade because of poor signals. The county council is already working with providers but more needs to be done urgently. A working group to progress the matter was proposed.

**234 CORRESPONDENCE – OCTOBER/NOVEMBER 2022**

There was no correspondence not considered above. Note and **Close** this item.

The Strategy Report below was considered last on the agenda so that the 3 councillors who left the meeting at this stage could participate in the previous part of the meeting.

**235 BLACK CAT TOURISM STRATEGY REPORT**

Richard James, Director of the Hub, and contractor to the strategy project attended and presented a statement to clarify certain issues that had arisen at the Extraordinary Full Council meeting held on 29th November 2022:-

1. Extensive public consultation was undertaken
2. An action plan was given to the Lottery stating that the project can be completed
3. Budget was reallocated to the festival
4. Festival costs were much lower than comparable events
5. Heatwave - additional costs: water, gazebos for cover, reduction in bar income
6. £7k owed to the council can be repaid from the final Lottery payment
7. £12k – 5 months salary for the event planner, branding, £4½k for web designer
8. Closure of project would incur staff costs and may jeopardise any future Lottery bids

**Further comments made**

Negativity had been received from the community with the project workers being subjected to extreme abuse. A police complaint has been made. A breach of confidentiality of a financial report is a serious matter – reported under the Town Clerk’s report above.

He wished to thank councillors who had been supportive and helped and wished to enhance the spirit of co-operation in the future.

He agreed to forward his statement to members by e-mail.

**The chamber was then opened up for comments by councillors and for responses by Mr James**

Website:

Deadlines were queried. The site is in the planning stage but members were assured that it can be completed by the end of March. The contractor will be paid £4½k, recoverable if there is a failure to achieve the objectives. The Hub has agreed to maintain the website.

It was recognised that a tourism website would be advantageous to the community.

Branding:

Banners have been designed but no costs have been received. The design must be approved by the council.

Income;

The festival had no means of accepting payments for tickets. Due to the need for speed the card payment system used by Nurture was used. Ticket sales have been received from Nurture but £5640 is owing.

It was noted that it was possible to set up a card system in 48 hours.

Virements;

It was noted that the money has not been spent on the original project objectives. Key deliverables have not been achieved. Members were informed that the Lottery had approved the virements.

Deadlines:

It was noted that project/financial deadlines have consistently not been met despite many requests.

Project Staff:

A web designer and events planner remain working on the project. All project staff have been employed by the Hub and are under contract there. The clerk stated that the council is not responsible for their employment.

Financial reports;

Lack of confidence in the figures was expressed. Updated project report and financial statements had not been forwarded to members, who were unable to come to a decision on the project future. It was suggested that an external auditor be engaged. Mr James welcomed this.

**Outcomes**

Two options are available;

1. Close the project
2. Continue with the website, branding and events

Due to the lack of data provided it was **RESOLVED** to suspend a decision until Full Council on 13th December 2022. A fully costed business plan and project risk assessment will be expected before the meeting.

It was **RESOLVED** to suspend Standing Orders at 9.00pm. The meeting concluded at 9.30pm