

BUILDING AND FINANCE COMMITTEE

6th November 2023

In accordance with the provisions of Schedule 12 of the Local Government Act 1972 and Section 47 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 the **BUILDING AND FINANCE COMMITTEE** of LLANELLI TOWN COUNCIL was held REMOTELY and at The Old Vicarage, Town Hall Square, Llanelli on Monday, 6th November 2023 at 6.26 p.m.

PRESENT: Councillors A.S.J. McPherson (Chair), A.A Carter, M.D. Cranham J.P, S.A. Curry, D. Ll. Darkin (Leader of the Council), L. Fenris (Substitute for Councillor S. Greaney), G.R. Lloyd, J.G. Prosser (Substitute for Councillor J.R. Elliott), B.A.L. Roberts and P.T. Warlow (Deputy Town Mayor)

APOLOGIES: Councillors A.R. Bragoli, J.R. Elliott, S. Greaney and R. James.

53. MEMBERS' DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Declarations of interest were made on items 59 (1)(b) as noted below.

54. FINANCIAL REPORT

(1) BUDGET REVIEW

RESOLVED – that the Income and Expenditure report for the period 1st April 2023 – 31st October 2023, in the sums of £1,097,758 and £704,441 respectively, be approved.

(2) ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

RESOLVED - that the payment schedule showing Direct Debit Nos. 226 - 270 (inclusive) in the sum of £20,192.41, BACS Nos 163 - 191 in the sum of £22,608.96 and Electronic Payments Nos 253 - 284 in the sum of £43,007.41 respectively, be approved.

55. COMMUNITY CENTRES

(1) HIRINGS

Consideration was given to the summary schedule of hirings of all community centres during the month of October 2023 (copies having been previously circulated to members).

RESOLVED – that the information be noted.

56. TREE MANAGEMENT

Further to Minute No. 32 of the Committee meeting held on the 11th September 2023, consideration was given to the Town Clerk's report.

The report provided an update to the Council following consultation on the recommendation received for the trees at Stebonheath Park.

Consultation was carried out as follows:

- Stebonheath Management Committee;
- Carmarthenshire County Council, highways and grounds maintenance teams;
- National Grid;
- Nearby residents;
- Community Consultation via social media.

Responses received were as follows:

Stebonheath Management Committee - the general view was that should the recommendation be to remove the trees, that this should be carried out.

Carmarthenshire County Council – raised no objections and confirmed that the trees were not under a Tree Preservation Order.

Resident and Community consultation – 6 responses received:

- 1 agreeing that the trees should be removed and replaced with a steel sheet fence;
- 1 supporting removing the trees due to concerns about tree needles blocking nearby road side gutters;
- 1 suggesting removal of the trees and replacement with fruit trees;
- 1 noting that without detailed information on what will be put in place following removal of the trees, that they would contact the local Member of Parliament to object;
- 1 concerned at the possible loss of the trees but not formally objecting;
- 1 supporting the removal of the trees.

National Grid – A visit was undertaken with National Grid who were looking to arrange the pruning of the trees to ensure there was no interference with the cabling which runs through the tree foliage. This work was carried out by Birch Utilities on the 24th October.

Openreach Proposal – Contact had also been received from a contractor on behalf of Openreach, who were considering provision of a proposal to the Town Council for removal of the trees at their cost to enable a fibre line upgrade project to be carried out. Further information on this was awaited.

It was therefore noted that:

- General consultation responses support in principle the removal of the trees.
- It was clear that further consideration was required as to what the Town Council proposed to implement as an alternative should the trees be removed.
- There was a possibility that the removal of the trees may in fact be possible at no cost to the Town Council, should the proposal from Openreach be acceptable to the Council. This proposal was awaited, and approval would be required by the Town Council prior to any work being undertaken.

RESOLVED - That the Committee notes the report, and consideration be given to a scheme to replace the trees with new specimens pending receipt of the proposal from Open Reach to enable a final decision on removal of the current trees at site.

57. PADDLING POOL AND SPLASH PAD PROVISION 2023

Further to minute No.23 of the Committee meeting held on 10th July 2023, consideration was given to the Town Clerk's report on the Paddling Pool and Splash Pad facility provision during the 2023 summer period.

Splash Pads at Havelock and Penyfan Parks opened in readiness for the Easter Holidays in early April with the automatic timer providing the service from 9am - 7pm.

Paddling Pools at Crown Park and Peoples' Park were opened on 25th July with Parc Howard following on the 9th August (the delay caused by the late notice provided to the contractor of County Council approval for resurfacing works). The pools were staffed by temporary contract staff provided by Randstad Business Support.

Each pool had an attendant working an 8am – 6pm shift pattern with a cover attendant supporting and providing for lunch breaks. The filling of the paddling pools could take around 2-3 hours with emptying taking between 1 hour and 1.5 hours depending on the pool.

Randstad were unable to provide sufficient Attendant cover to enable full staffing, with Town Council Officers providing cover for lunch breaks on several occasions and meaning there were occasions when it was not possible to open all the Pools every day. The final day of operation was the 1st September and the 30th August for Parc Howard (due to sickness).

Paddling Pool	Days of Operation	Cost of operation (staff)	Cost of preparation of pool surface
Crown Park	24	£4,535	£2,600
Parc Howard	15	£2,652	£5,443
Peoples' Park	21	£3,891	£7,386

The cost of the contract to activate and close down the splash pads was £4,924.27.

The Splash Pads remained open until the 22nd September and were taken out of use on the 27th September.

Health and Safety

User safety had been closely monitored during the period. Some slips, falls and small cuts were noted at each pool during the period; however, no serious incidents have been reported to the Council by users or Attendants.

Additional effort had been put in place to monitor the use of Peoples' Park following the issues experienced in previous years. Fewer instances of glass were experienced at Peoples' Park with one widespread incident of smashed glass leading to a delayed opening of Parc Howard on one occasion. The vacuum cleaner purchased proved to be a useful piece of equipment and has been used at other Town Council facilities since its purchase (especially at the Cruyff Court in Penyfan).

Extensive arrangements involving Town Council Officers and Park Keepers have been put in place on a daily basis to support the Attendants and approve activation of each of the pools on a 7 day a week basis.

Both splash pads were inspected early every morning by Town Council Park Keepers with glass and litter noted on several occasions which was cleared prior to the sites being activated.

During 2023, an additional provision of portable toilets were provided at Crown Park and Peoples' Park. Some issues were experienced with the provision, however no severe problems were noted.

Conclusions

The paddling pools and splash pads remain very popular attractions in Llanelli during sunny days. The changeable weather experienced during the period did however lead to very low user numbers on a number of occasions.

From an environmental point of view the water usage with daily filling and emptying is very large with Crown Park using around 675 m³ (£2,682.06) of water and Peoples Park 835m³ (£3,179.68) during the period. This is also the case at the splash pads with Havelock using 750 m³ (invoice to end July received £1,675.70) and Penyfan 2,687 m³ (invoice to end July received £2,670.38).

It was the view of Officers that the extensive arrangements put in place to ensure as far as practical that no glass or other sharp objects find their way into the pools were necessary to enable the successful provision of the facilities in 2023. This does however

present a resource implication to the Council during what is also a holiday period for the Office Team.

RESOLVED – that the Committee notes the report.

58. CARMARTHENSHIRE TOYBOX APPEAL 2023

Further to Minute No.60 of the Building and Finance Committee meeting held on 17th October 2022 refers, the committee gave consideration to the Community Development Officer's verbal report following an email from Carmarthenshire County Council seeking financial assistance towards this year's Toy Box Appeal which supports families in Llanelli –

RESOLVED – that as in previous year's the Council would sponsor the Carmarthenshire Toy Box Appeal to the sum of £1,000 by buying toys and essential equipment to be spent in the Town Council area.

59. APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

(1) GRANT APPLICATIONS

Councillor B.A.L Roberts declared an interest in application (b) she is a member of the Committee, she felt this was a prejudicial interest Councillor Roberts left the meeting prior to the discussion and voting thereon.

Having considered the following applications (copies having been previously circulated to members), it was **RESOLVED** as follows: -

- (a) Llanelli Bowling Club – that a grant of £500 be made.
- (b) Seaside Community Association – that a grant of £500 be made.

60. PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETING) ACT, 1960

RESOLVED – that in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted the following matters be considered in private and that the power of exclusion of the public under Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act, 1960 be exercised.

63. LLANELLI SHOP MOBILITY

Further to minute number No. 51 of the committee meeting held on 9th October 2023 consideration was given to the Town Clerk's report providing an update to members in relation to Llanelli Shopmobility. A meeting was held on the 26th October with Llanelli Shopmobility, LTC Mobility, Carmarthenshire County Council, Llanelli Rural Council and Ymlaen Llanelli. The meeting provided an opportunity for information on

the management arrangements and financial position of Llanelli Shopmobility to be clarified.

Issues discussed included:

- Improved marketing of the service availability.
- Future viability of the service.
- Ongoing County Council contribution (confirmation could not be provided that this would continue into future years).

Further consideration was given to the matter and it was noted that at present the support being requested by Llanelli Shopmobility was financial. The ongoing financial sustainability of the service was noted to be made uncertain due to a lack of long-term financial guarantees from the County Council.

Following detailed consideration of the matter it was:

RESOLVED - That the Committee notes the report and:

- Approves continued discussion by Officers in relation to support to Llanelli Shopmobility.
- Will further consider a financial contribution for the 2023-24 year when more information was available:
- Considered that any ongoing annual financial contributions should be linked to an ongoing agreement arrangement relating to financial support by Carmarthenshire County Council and Llanelli Rural Council.

The Meeting concluded at 6.43 p.m.