

St Mary Out Liberty Community Council

Minutes of the meeting of the St Mary Out Liberty Community Council Held upon Tuesday the 9th January 2018 at New Hedges Village Hall

Present: Cllrs D Brace (Chairman), J Preston (County Councillor), D Nash, D Mitchell and H Rawson Humphries

In attendance: Melanie Priestley - Clerk

1. Apologies for Absence: Cllr Herrick

2. Chairman's Report

Cllr Brace advised the Council that the Village Hall Committee had successfully applied for Lottery Funding, he further requested the Clerk to make enquiries as to whether the Council would be eligible for funding to hold a Senior Citizens Christmas Meal or something similar. Cllr Preston brought up the fact of the 2nd home Council Tax payments monies that could be accessible through an application system. When Cllr Preston has further information regarding this scheme he will advise the Council accordingly.

Cllr Brace also reported that the daffodils are sprouting early this year with flowers being sighted on Christmas Eve.

3. Declaration of Interest

Declaration of interests will be made by Councillors as and when necessary.

4. To Receive the Minutes of the Meeting Held on the 13th December 2017

It was proposed by Cllr Nash that these Minutes be a true and accurate record of the meeting of St Mary Out Liberty Community Council held upon the 13th December 2017; Cllr Mitchell seconded the proposal with all Council in agreement.

5. Matters Arising from the Minutes

Cllr Brace confirmed that he had contacted the Pembrokeshire County Council regarding their free service to collect and dispose of the village Christmas Tree. The Council will collect the tree from the Village Hall Car Park when next in the area.

6. Presentation of Accounts and Invoices for Payment

A balance sheet of December 2017 was presented to the Council for their perusal along with the following invoices for payment:-

11066	The Clerk salary and home office (January)	£153.73
	Precept Payment Received	£1,467.00

Cllr Mitchell proposed that the accounts are a true record and that the payment should be made; Cllr Preston seconded the proposal with all the Council in agreement.

7. Planning Application(s) Received

None

8. Licensing Application(s) Received

None

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9. Consideration of Correspondence Received

Letter received from One Voice Wales upon request from the Lord Chamberlain's Office to inform Councils that the Out Going Chair is invited to enter into a draw with the successful Councillors being invited to attend a garden party at Buckingham Place hosed by the Queen. – Cllr Brace declined this invitation

10. Reports from Councillors Representing Committees Including County Councillor's Report

Cllr Jon Preston – County Councillor

Council Tax

At the December full Council Meeting Members were asked to consider the following options regarding Council Tax increases for the financial year 2018 / 2019. This is probably one of the toughest decisions Councilors have had to consider for some time. It is certainly one of the most controversial proposals that I have had since my term on Pembrokeshire County Council. The budget engagement and consultation process over recent years has highlighted increasing Council Tax as one of the most acceptable sources of increasing income, as Pembrokeshire continues to have the lowest Council Tax in Wales. The Leader of the Council has written to the Welsh Government Minister to explore increasing Council Tax in order to help protect local services and is awaiting a response.

The options put before members were:

Option 1. – Cost reductions / efficiencies / service transformations of £15.2m and the additional income from council tax of £2.4m at a 5% increase.

Option 2. – Cost reductions / efficiencies / service transformations of £14.8 m and the additional income from council tax of £3.8 m at an 8% increase.

Or Option 3. Cost reductions / efficiencies / service transformations of £11.6m and the additional income from council tax of £6m at a 12.5 % increase. In addition where any extra cost reductions over and above those required are identified prior to the next Full Council meeting March 8th 2018 then they will be used to reduce the proposed cut to individual school budgets. It is likely that cabinet will recommend this option to council at the March meeting.

Second Home Council Tax

When Council agreed to raise Council Tax on second homes by 50% last year it was originally planned that that extra revenue would be made available Pembrokeshire wide. However after engaging with second homeowners in the county I understand that funding will now be allocated to the communities in which it is raised. The wish being of many of the second homeowners is that they would want the money to be spent where they have their property. Under a 106 agreement extra revenue for St. Mary out Liberty with 13 second homes would be in the region of £6'500 per annum.

Swansea Bay City Deal

The Swansea Bay City Deal is quoted as being the biggest ever investment across the South West Wales region and was secured following the approval of £1.3 billion worth of funding. Those sat at the table on 20th March last year to sign the deal included former PCC Council Leader Jamie Adams along with UK Prime Minister Theresa May, Secretary of State for Wales Alun Cairns, First Minister of Wales Carwyn Jones and Mark Drakeford Cabinet Secretary for Finance & Local Government and the Leaders of the other three Councils of Carmarthenshire,

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Swansea and Neath Port Talbot. The City Deal is expected to give the Swansea Bay City region a permanent uplift in its gross added value of £1.8 billion and it is said will generate almost 10,000 new jobs over the next 15 years. What this actually means for Pembrokeshire still remains a bit of a mystery as does the lack of consultation prior to Pembrokeshire signing up to the deal which has allegedly already cost the Pembrokeshire tax payer £50'000 in 'Administration' fees. Pembrokeshire is said to be involved in three key schemes as part of the deal the detail of which have yet to be agreed. However I believe extensive work is planned to enhance the digital infrastructure of Pembrokeshire and the West. Projects with Milford Haven and Pembroke Dock are also planned, but at this time the actual benefits to the county as a whole given our financial commitment and our Western location remain to be seen. Given the huge importance of such an investment in our county, it is hard to believe that the first seminar to inform members of the finer points of the deal is to be held next week, almost ten months after the deal was signed up to be the previous council leader.

Cllr Rawson Humphries

Cllr Rawson Humphries reported that:-

- There has been considerable re-tarmacking works through the village in particular to the pavement on the left hand side coming down through the village.
- The manhole outside St Ann's Church is unfortunately broken again. Cllr Preston will report this to Pembrokeshire County Council.
- The First Responders defibrillator training sessions in Tenby, Saundersfoot and Penally have all gone very well and were well attended. Cllr Rawson Humphries advised that he is awaiting confirmation for a date when the New Hedges training will be held.
- One Voice Wales will be holding their local meeting upon the 16th January 2018. Cllr Rawson Humphries confirmed that he will be attending.
- The PACT Meeting held in Saundersfoot confirmed that it had been very quiet over the Christmas period with nothing to report regarding New Hedges.

Cllr Mitchell on behalf of the New Hedges Village Hall

Cllr Mitchell reported that the Phase 1 swings are now in place and the committee are discussing what to purchase for phase 2 now that the grant funding is in place with an allowance of 16 weeks to spend the granted money. The grant money will be added to the already collected money.

11. Agenda Items:

a. Cllr John Butland – Retiring as Councillor

St Mary Out Liberty Community Council was saddened to hear the news that Councillor Butland has resigned from the Community Council as Councillor. Mr Butland has been invited to sit on the Committee for Tenby Male Voice Choir and unfortunately many of the meeting dates clash with each other, Mr Butland felt that he would not be able to give both the Council and the Committee his full attention so he took the hard decision to resign from the Community Council where he has served for many years.

The Council requested the Clerk to write a letter of thanks to Mr Butland for his continued service and support to St Mary Out Liberty Community Council and New Hedges Village.

12. Date for next meeting

13th February 2018

Meeting closed 19.30