

11 April, 2006.

LLANELLI RURAL COUNCIL

Minute Nos: 413 – 422

At a **COUNCIL** Meeting of the Llanelli Rural Council held at the Council Chamber, Vauxhall Buildings, Vauxhall, Llanelli, on Tuesday, 11 April, 2006, at 6.00 p.m.

Present: Cllr. D. V. Darby (Chairman)

Cllrs.

T. D. Bowen	M. P. Jones
S. M. Caiach	T. J. Jones
D. J. Davies	S. N. Lewis
M. Davies	A. G. Morgan
S. L. Davies	A. S. Peters
R. E. Evans	C. A. Rees
M. Howells	R. G. Thorne
M. B. Hughes	G. H. Wooldridge

Together with Ms. C. B. Thomas, A.M.

Apologies: Cllrs. T. Devichand, C. Edwards, M. L. Evans.

413. CATHERINE B. THOMAS, A.M.

The Chairman welcomed Ms. C. B. Thomas, A.M., to the meeting and invited her to address Members.

Ms. Thomas proceeded to give an overview of her role within the Welsh Assembly Government and to the main issues concerning Llanelli and surrounding areas.

Reference was made to the pace of development for the Town centre and also to the anticipated relocation of the Llanelli Scarlets to their new stadium and the need for appropriate infrastructures at Stradey and Pemberton following concerns being raised. Ms. Thomas stated that it was vital that all views were heard and that all partnerships were working together in order to resolve matters.

With regard to the future of sub-post offices, grants had been awarded for the substantial refurbishing of businesses which were a lifeline and the heart of communities, and that recent proposals were impacting negatively. Ms. Thomas also referred to Communities First areas and received feedback from Members as to how they felt matters were progressing.

The lack of adequate NHS dentistry was referred to, however there was progress in Llanelli with additional dental establishments taking up residency. A consultation, 'Designed to Deliver' was looking at acute services in Mid and West Wales and Ms. Thomas encouraged

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Members to participate in the consultation 'A Case for Change' which viewed the health service e.g a local Maternity unit, emergency surgery at Prince Philip Hospital and the proposed new replacement hospital centralising the services of Withybush and the West Wales General Hospitals.

Ms. Thomas responded to various questions and matters raised by Members, during which she was congratulated on an interesting and succinct presentation. The Chairman thereupon thanked Ms. Thomas for attending the meeting.

414. VERIFICATION AND CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RESOLVED that the following Minutes (copies of which had been previously circulated to Members) be taken as read and the same verified respectively:-

Council	14 March, 2006.
Policy and Resources Committee	15 March, 2006.
Recreation and Welfare Committee	21 March, 2006.
Finance and General Purposes Committee	29 March, 2006.
Community Development Grants Panel	30 March, 2006.
Planning and Liaison Committee	3 April, 2006.
Civic and Ceremonial Committee	4 April, 2006.

415. MATTERS ARISING

**(1) HOUSE OF COMMONS ALL-PARTY
PARLIAMENTARY SMALL SHOPS GROUP –
HIGH STREET BRITAIN:2015**

Pursuant to Minute No. 389, Cllrs. S. M. Caiach and M. Davies endorsed the sentiments with respect to small businesses and, it was

RESOLVED that the comments be noted.

**(2) DEVELOPING MODERN HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE
SERVICES FOR OLDER PEOPLE – PROPOSALS FOR
RE-SHAPING AND RE-PROVIDING DAY CARE
SERVICES IN 2006/07**

Further to Minute No. 391, Cllr. M. Davies referred to the potential use of Day Centres by Carmarthenshire County Council's Social Services.

RESOLVED that the matter be further discussed at the next meeting of the Policy and Resources Committee.

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**416. LOCAL GOVERNMENT OMBUDSMAN:
IMPORTANT CHANGES**

Correspondence was received from the Ombudsman, Public Services Ombudsman for Wales, which informed that, as from 1 April, 2006, the Commission for Local Administration in Wales would cease to exist. The role of Local Commissioner (Local Government Ombudsman) would be subsumed into the new role of Public Services Ombudsman for Wales, which had been created by the Public Services Ombudsman (Wales) Act 2005.

The new Act had important implications for community councils such as the procedure for complaints of maladministration against community councils, the investigating of complaints that councillors had breached the code of conduct, publicising the right to complain to the Ombudsman and compensation for the person aggrieved.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

417. EXTERNAL EVENTS

Members received invitations for the Council to be represented at the following events, and, it was

RESOLVED

- (1) National Association of Councillors - Seminar 'Delivering Services Through Partnerships and Opportunities for External Funding' – Scarborough - 7-9 April, 2006 – Retrospective – that the invitation be noted;
- (2) Community South West Wales Railway Partnership – Forum Meeting – Carmarthen – 5 May, 2006 – that Cllr. M. P. Jones be authorised to attend.

418. MATTERS REPORTED

RESOLVED that the schedule of matters reported be noted.

419. LLANELLI JOINT BURIAL AUTHORITY

Members received the following Minutes of meetings of the Llanelli Joint Burial Authority held on 11 January, 2006:-

“At a Meeting of the Llanelli Joint Burial Authority held at Vauxhall Buildings, Vauxhall, Llanelli, on Wednesday, 11 January 2006 at 4:00 pm.

Present:

Cllrs.

T. D. Bowen
D. J. Davies
M. Davies
D. J. Harries

M. Howells
C. C. Lucas
M. E. Prothero
E. Smith

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Together with Mr M Miller, Carmarthenshire County Council Housing Department, and Mr M Hicks, Gwalia Group.

Apologies: Cllrs. T. J. Jones and C. E. Richards.

57. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN PRO TEMPORE

RESOLVED that Cllr E. Smith be appointed Chairman pro tempore.

58. DECLARATION OF INTEREST

Cllr. T. D. Bowen declared an interest in Minute No. 65 as he was a Member of Carmarthenshire County Council's Planning Committee.

59. CEMETERY SECURITY ARRANGEMENTS

Further to Minute No. 49, the Secretary reported that further information had been obtained regarding the annual running costs of the CCTV security system. Traditionally maintenance costs were based on a figure of 5% to 7.5% of the total installation costs. This equated to £1500 plus VAT per annum.

However as an incentive and a gesture of goodwill the Company offering to supply the system was prepared to extend the 12 month product warranty to 18 months, together with a fully comprehensive 18 month preventative maintenance programme to run alongside it for £1500 plus VAT.

Members were informed that contrary to the Secretary's previous report on the subject of security, the Authority's security patrol officer did now in fact intend registering with the Security Industry Authority by March 2006, in order to provide continuity of service. Members also noted that the Secretary had not yet been able to visit an appropriate reference site to assess the effectiveness of CCTV technology.

Notwithstanding the above and following discussion, it was

RESOLVED that the installation of a CCTV security system be approved in principle, subject to finance being available to fund the installation.

60. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

RESOLVED that the following minutes (copies of which had been previously circulated) be confirmed (subject to the second sentence in paragraph four of Minute No. 49 being amended to read, "The report revealed that it was" and not "The report revealed that is was" as stated therein):

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61. MATTERS ARISING

(1) MEMORIAL BENCH

Arising out of Minute No. 55, and in response to Members, the Secretary informed that the Cemetery Supervisor and Mrs J. Corner had agreed upon a suitable location for the siting of her memorial bench in memory of her son.

62. INCOME AND EXPENDITURE REPORTS

RESOLVED that the income and expenditure report for November 2005 and the provisional report for December 2005 be noted.

63. SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS

Consideration was given to the schedule of payments for December 2005, which revealed expenditure for the month amounted to £14,501.77.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

64. LOCAL GOVERNMENT PAY SCALES
AND ALLOWANCES

RESOLVED that the National Joint Council circular 2/05 showing pay scales and allowances effective from 1 April 2006, be received and adopted.

65. CEMETERY CAR PARK - REAR OF BYNELLI

Cllr T. D. Bowen declared an interest in respect of the following matter because he was a member of Carmarthenshire County Council's Planning Committee. Cllr. Bowen took no part in the proceedings and left the room before the discussion commenced.

Further to Minute No. 26, the Secretary informed Members about the latest developments concerning the future of the cemetery car park. The Gwalia Group had submitted a formal planning application for extending the Bryngolau Estate. It was clear from the design brief submitted with the application that the cemetery car park was to be replaced with several housing plots.

The Secretary then reminded Members of the content of Minute No. 26 of the Committee meeting held on 14 September 2005, where Mr R. Staines, Head of Housing, Carmarthenshire County Council provided various assurances particularly as to how the drafting of the design brief would be taken forward, in consultation with this Authority. At the time Mr Staines suggested that the car park could possibly be retained as part of the scheme or else compensation could be offered to mitigate the loss. The Secretary informed Members that given the short timescale associated with the processing of planning applications, he had sent an urgent email to Mr Staines, reminding him of what was agreed at the September meeting

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and also to formally complain about the way the matter had been handled. Given the public assurances provided by Mr Staines, the Secretary was of the opinion that the Authority's exclusion from the drafting of the design brief amounted to maladministration and that legal redress ought to be obtained by referring the matter to the Local Government Ombudsman, if the situation could not be satisfactorily resolved. This point had been communicated to the County Council and consequently Mr Staines had asked his colleague Mr M. Miller, to attend today's meeting together with Mr M. Hicks of the Gwalia Group. Prior to receiving the representatives, the Secretary stated that he had also taken issue with Mr E. Bowen, Head of Planning, Carmarthenshire County Council over the planning application, because the Burial Authority had not been consulted as an immediate neighbour affected by the proposed development. Mr Bowen had acknowledged the Burial Authority's concerns and as such the Authority's views on the application were now being sought by the County Council's Planning Department, who were fully aware of the circumstances and what was at stake for the Authority.

Mr Miller and Mr Hicks then joined the meeting and the Chairman invited them to address the Committee. Mr Miller extended his apologies to Members for the way in which the matter had been taken forward as clearly there was never any intention of excluding the Burial Authority from the consultation process. A lengthy discussion ensued as to how the Burial Authority could be accommodated within the final scheme and several possibilities were considered ranging from partial to full relocation of the car park as well as some form of compensation if agreement could not be reached between the respective parties. Mr Hicks addressed Members and stated that the Gwalia Group could not run the risk of having any objection lodged against the project as this could push the scheme into the next financial year. If this was to occur there was no guarantee that the Welsh Assembly Government would support the funding of the scheme. Mr Hicks suggested that the design brief could be revised to offer a modified parking scheme to the Burial Authority and stated that he would endeavour to put forward amended drawings for consideration as a matter of urgency. These would be forwarded to Mr Miller and to the Secretary with a view to conveying an urgent meeting to discuss the same. At this point Mr Miller stated that he would contact the Secretary to set up the meeting as soon as possible. Prior to the representatives leaving the meeting it was made clear to them that the Burial Authority would object to the removal of the car park unless a satisfactory compromise could be agreed. The car park formed an important part of the service and was highly valued by the Burial Authority, however, Members would be prepared to consider various alternatives including converting another part of the cemetery into a car park if needs be, provided that it could be accommodated and it met the needs of the service. This was in addition to any proposals put forward by the Gwalia Group. However, if the options proved to be unacceptable then appropriate compensation would be pursued. All parties recognised the need to determine the outcome as quickly as possible and it was

RESOLVED that a sub committee comprising of Cllr C. E. Richards (Chairman), Cllr T. J. Jones (Vice Chairman), Cllr M. Howells, Cllr C. C. Lucas and the Secretary be formed to take the matter forward with representatives of Carmarthenshire County Council and the Gwalia Group and that the sub committee be granted plenary powers to determine the outcome on behalf of the Burial Authority.

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66. BUDGET MEETING

The Secretary reported that the date for the Authority’s annual budget meeting had been fixed for Tuesday 24 January at 4.00 pm.

RESOLVED that the information be noted.

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The meeting concluded at 5.35 pm”
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RESOLVED that the Minutes be accepted.

420. LETTERS OF APPRECIATION

RESOLVED that the letters of appreciation for the Council’s assistance be accepted with pleasure.

- 421. (1) ASSOCIATION OF LARGER LOCAL COUNCILS**
- (2) FRIENDS OF LLANELLI MUSEUM**

RESOLVED that the reports by Cllrs. G. H. Wooldridge and M. Davies, respectively on the above, be noted.

422. CHAIRMAN’S ANNOUNCEMENT

The Chairman conveyed her thanks to Members and Staff for their support during her term of office.

RESOLVED that the Chairman’s comments be noted.

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The Meeting concluded at 7.00 p.m.
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The afore-mentioned Minutes were declared to be a true record of the proceedings and signed by the Chairman presiding thereat and were, on 11 May, 2006, adopted by the Council.