

15 February, 2022

LLANELLI RURAL COUNCIL

Minute Nos: 421 – 428

At a Meeting of the **RECREATION AND WELFARE COMMITTEE** of the Llanelli Rural Council held at the Council Chamber, Vauxhall Buildings, Vauxhall, Llanelli, and via remote attendance on Tuesday, 15 February, 2022 at 4.45 p.m.

Present: Cllr. W. V. Thomas (Chairman)

Cllrs.

M. V. Davies	S. N. Lewis
T. Devichand	A. G. Morgan
T. M. Donoghue	S. K. Nurse
J. P. Hart	A. J. Rogers

421. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. P. M. Edwards, T. J. Jones and I. G. Wooldridge.

422. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The following members declared an interest in the following matters:

<i>Minute No.</i>	<i>Councillor</i>	<i>Interest</i>
424	W. V. Thomas	Personal interest – the applicant was a family friend.
427	T. Devichand	Personal interest – member, Dafen Welfare Management Committee.
427	S. N. Lewis	Personal interest – member, Dafen Welfare Management Committee.
427	A. J. Rogers	Personal interest – member, Dafen Welfare Management Committee.

423. COMMUNITY FACILITIES – MAINTENANCE WORKS

RESOLVED that the Facilities Manager's report on work undertaken be noted.

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424. DAFEN PARK – MEMORIAL BENCH

Cllr. W. V. Thomas declared a personal interest in the following matter as the applicant was a family friend.

Members considered a request from Ms Wastell seeking permission to install a memorial bench at Dafen Park in memory of her father.

The Facilities Manager informed members that he had met Ms Wastell on site and a suitable position for the memorial bench had been identified in the vicinity of the cricket score board close to other park benches.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED that the request be approved.

425. PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) 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.

**426. SWISS VALLEY RESERVOIR
FISH STOCKING**

Members considered the report of the Technical and General Operations Manager on introducing predatory fish at Swiss Valley Reservoir to improve the angling experience and to help control invasive fish species.

The reservoir was a diverse fishery with an extensive range of established species. Roach and Rudd were the dominant species and were present in large shoals. Monitoring by Natural Resources Wales (NRW) had identified a significant population of Topmouth Gudgeon (TMG) in the Upper and Lower Lleidi Reservoirs.

The TMG was an invasive species (INS) and was present in both the Upper and Lower Lleidi Reservoirs. It was a small freshwater cyprinid. It was a prolific breeder and out competes for food, habitat and spawning. It was also a carrier of parasites and disease. The large numbers of Roach, Rudd and TMG affects the growth of other species as they compete for food supplies. There were predator fish present but their numbers were relatively low and struggle to have a significant impact on the number of shoal fish.

In 2012 an eradication programme was carried out by NRW. Eight sites were selected for eradication using a piscicide. Regular monitoring had taken place since and none of the previously eradicated sites had tested positive. A five-year eradication programme funded by the Water Framework Directive was implemented by the Environment Agency in 2010, with the objective of total removal of the species from Great Britain by 2017. The Llanelli area was the only remaining location where TMG remains present in Wales and was under the control of NRW. TMG had also been discovered in the Afon Lleidi below the Lleidi

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reservoirs. However, TMG cannot breed or survive in these waters so their presence here was not concerning.

Members were informed there was a challenge in developing a safe process of eradication for the waters in the Llanelli area. It appeared at this time NRW officers were reluctant to attempt to eradicate using piscicides. The preferred method for all parties was to develop control and containment programmes. This methodology was strongly advocated by the NRW officers.

A renewed campaign to highlight the importance of biosecurity to prevent the spread of INS was launched by NRW and Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water (DCWW) in 2021. The national campaign had been embraced by all stakeholders at the Upper and Lower Lleidi Reservoirs.

Signage had been provided by DCWW that highlights the INS issue. Anglers and water sport users were responsible for washing and drying their equipment to prevent further spread. Council literature and communications concerning water sports activities and angling reinforced the campaign message.

The diverse range of species that thrive in the Lower Lleidi reservoir was a testament to the diversity and unique nature of the reservoir. An eradication program would be devastating to the biodiversity of the reservoir and its development as an angling venue.

NRW had yet to finalise an operational plan to eradicate TMG at the reservoirs. However all parties agreed that a commitment to control and contain the TMG was the preferred option and active engagement in support of this would help greatly in averting central government pressures to instigate an eradication programme.

The containment programme was already in place whereby the council, DCWW, NRW and the angling and paddle sports fraternities actively participate, promote and monitor habitual adherence to the biosecurity measures.

The control element of the plan would be to increase the predator species at the Lower Lleidi Reservoir by introducing more Pike and Perch.

Enhancing the predator species would also improve angling diversity whilst also providing benefits in developing the other species such as Carp, as by reducing the amount of the various shoal fish species, including TMG, the availability of food would increase which would allow fish to grow larger. Specimen fish and diversity would always attract anglers.

It was also important to consider the business strategy for the venue. There were several Carp fishery venues in the Llanelli area and more than twenty fisheries between Cardiff and the Llanelli area. All the venues compete with each other to attract anglers. As a means of demonstrating the council's commitment to controlling TMG, introducing more predator fish would also add to the angling experience at the reservoir. The nearest recognised Pike fishery was at Llangorse in the Brecon Beacons. Establishing the reservoir as a Pike angling water would attract a more diverse selection of anglers. Members were informed that predator fish suppliers were in short supply in a locality where it was practical to transport the fish safely to the reservoir. However, a reputable and licenced supplier for Pike and Perch had been sourced. The supplier was 'UK Coarse Fish Ltd' based in Louth, Lincolnshire. A maximum budget of £4,000 had been set aside for fish stocking.

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Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED that:

1. Predatory fish be introduced to the Lower Lliedi Reservoir, Swiss Valley to help control invasive fish species and to improve the angling experience.
2. The quotation received from UK Coarse Fish Limited, Mill Lane, Legbourne, Louth, Lincolnshire, in the sum of £3,912.50 plus VAT for fish stock be accepted.

427. DAFEN PARK – ASTROTURF

Cllrs. T. Devichand, S. N. Lewis and A. J. Rogers declared personal interests in the following matter as they were all members of Dafen Welfare Management Committee.

Members received the report of the Technical and General Operations Manager which sought views on the proposed management arrangements for the artificial sports surface facility, and to approve a code of conduct to regulate facility usage. The report also invited members to consider who would be responsible for meeting the energy costs associated with the facility's floodlighting provision.

Controlling access to the refurbished facility was a key consideration to ensure the artificial sports surface was not subject to abuse and so only approved footwear should be permitted. If access was not managed, the surface could become damaged from maltreatment or anti-social behaviour and unregulated usage. This would invalidate the artificial surface warranty. Introducing a code of conduct would set out the requirements for legitimate users with signage being in place at each entrance conveying the relevant information.

Presently the floodlights were connected to the pathway lighting system at the park. At the moment the council was not being charged by Carmarthenshire County Council (CCC) for the energy costs for the pathway lighting. However, when the asset transfer was finalised the council would become liable for the public lighting provision and subsequently the costs of operating the floodlights would need to be considered.

It would be prudent for the council to install an electric sub-meter to record the energy use for the floodlights to ensure that any potential usage fees to be imposed were fair and accurate. Consideration could be given to charging a fee to use the floodlights taking into account maintenance and lamp replacement as well as the energy use.

A further important consideration to determine was whether to introduce a general hire charge to use the facility and also who would control access to the facility in the evenings and at weekends. It was important to agree who should be responsible for this in advance of the facility being available for public use.

Members were informed that the council had already received a few local enquiries about the general community use of the facility so it was important to draw up a management plan to regulate activities to ensure fair access for all.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED that:

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1. The proposed code of conduct for regulating the use of the facility as prescribed in the report, be approved.
2. Officers initially arrange to meet with local stakeholders namely, Dafen Welfare Management Committee and representatives of Dafen AFC to discuss the wide ranging issues, in particular the costs, use and general management arrangements for the facility prior to reporting back to a future committee meeting to determine a preferred management model.

428. LLWYNHENDY MUGA – FLOODLIGHTS

Members were circulated with the report from the Technical and General Operations Manager on the management arrangements for the new floodlights at Llwynhendy Multi Use Games Area (MUGA).

The MUGA facility did not have a dedicated electrical supply at Gwili Fields. A quotation had been received from Western Power for £2,707 for the installation of a new supply.

An electrical meter would be installed on site to record the energy usage but the responsibility for the ongoing running costs needed to be agreed to co-ordinate the new power supply installation.

The floodlights would be controlled from a secure pillar cabinet adjacent to the main entrance of the MUGA facility. The energy consumption costs for the floodlights was difficult to assess as the amount of use and the supply tariff was unknown at this time. However an indicative cost estimate for energy costs for four LED floodlights was 30p per hour. A standing charge would also apply for the electricity supply. Members were then presented with a tariff estimate in the form of a table included in the report which set out potential costs ranging from 1 hour to 5 hours use per week.

The access to the MUGA facility was not controlled and there were no security gates in place to prevent access as this was a general hardstanding play area. Nevertheless a strategy was required to supervise the operation of the floodlights whenever required.

Following discussion of the management options available to the council, during which it was confirmed that the local neighbourhood policing team supported the floodlighting of the MUGA to help combat anti-social behaviour in the immediate vicinity, it was ultimately

RESOLVED that:

1. The council shall be responsible for the installation costs of the electricity supply and for meeting future floodlight energy costs.
2. The installation of a light sensor and timer be approved which shall operate daily during the autumn and winter months, initially from dusk until 10.00 pm but the timings be subject to review once the floodlights had been up and running for a short while to ensure the most economic and effective use of the MUGA by the local community.

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The Meeting concluded at 5.30 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 8 March, 2022 adopted by the Council.