

**18 October, 2022**

**LLANELLI RURAL COUNCIL**

**Minute Nos: 189 – 195**

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, 18 October, 2022 at 4.45 p.m.

**Present:** Cllr. D. M. Cundy (Chairman)

**Cllrs.**

S. L. Davies	J. P. Hart
T. M. Donoghue	S. N. Lewis
A. Evans	A. G. Morgan
N. Evans	A. J. Rogers
R. E. Evans	W. E. Skinner
B. M. Williams	

**189. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. S. K. Nurse (Cllr. S. L. Davies deputising) and E. M. Evans (Cllr. N. Evans deputising).

**190. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The following members declared an interest in the following matters:

<i>Minute No.</i>	<i>Councillor</i>	<i>Interest</i>
195	S. L. Davies	Personal interest – involved in the project in her capacity as a county councillor and also being a member of Llwynhendy and Pemberton Forum.
192	N. Evans	Personal interest – Member, Royal British Legion Llanelli
192	R. E. Evans	Personal interest – Chairman, Royal British Legion Llanelli
193	J. P. Hart	Personal interest – children were members of Felinfoel RFC junior section.
195	J. P. Hart	Personal interest - involved in the project in his capacity as a county councillor and also being a member of Llwynhendy and Pemberton Forum.
193	A. G. Morgan	Personal interest – sponsor of Felinfoel R. F. C.

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**191. COMMUNITY FACILITIES – MAINTENANCE WORKS**

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

**192. PREPARING FOR REMEMBRANCE THIS NOVEMBER**

*Cllr. N. Evans declared a personal interest in the following item as she was a member, Royal British Legion – Llanelli. Cllr. R. E. Evans declared a personal interest in the following item as he was the Chairman, Royal British Legion – Llanelli.*

Members considered correspondence from the Royal British Legion Industries informing of the national period of remembrance this November.

In order to show support to the Armed Forces community over the month of November the council could consider purchasing a Tommy Solider statue, Unknown Tommy or an Unknown Woman in War Statue.

Following discussion, it was

**RESOLVED** that the council procures a pair of “Tommy” military war silhouettes (one male and one female) in support of the Armed Forces Community at a cost of £350 per pair to be displayed externally at Vauxhall Buildings.

**FURTHER RESOLVED** that the correspondence be circulated to the council’s hall management committees for consideration.

**193. FELINFOEL RECREATION GROUND**

*Cllr. J. P. Hart declared a personal interest in items (1) and (2) below as his children were members of Felinfoel RFC junior section. Cllr. A. G. Morgan declared a personal interest in items (1) and (2) below as his business sponsored Felinfoel R. F. C.*

**(1) BENCH**

Further to Minute No. 155(2), members considered correspondence from the Secretary, Felinfoel R. F. C requesting permission from the council to install an oak bench in memory of Mr Phil Bennett O.B.E. at a particular location near the rugby pitch and as indicated on the diagram included within the correspondence bundle circulated with the agenda.

The club secretary confirmed that the bench had been already made. Photographs of the bench were also attached in the correspondence bundle. The secretary had given an undertaking that if the request was approved, the club would take on the responsibility for its maintenance and upkeep as well as carrying out periodic inspections to mitigate risk. The secretary enquired whether the council would agree to install a concrete foundation base to receive the bench.

Following discussion, it was

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**RESOLVED** that:

1. Permission be granted to install the bench in memory of the late Mr Philip Bennett O.B.E at the marked location on the diagram, namely the south east flank of the rugby pitch on the understanding the club accepts full responsibility for the upkeep, maintenance and periodic inspection of the bench so as to indemnify the council against any claims arising from its general use once installed. Moreover, the said undertaking shall be regulated by a written agreement to be entered into by the respective parties.
2. The council shall install a concrete foundation base to receive the bench.

**(2) PROVISION OF PUBLIC CONVENIENCES AND A VIEWING BALCONY AT FELINFOEL COMMUNITY RESOURCE CENTRE**

Further to Minute No. 88 (18 June, 2019, refers) the Technical and General Operations Manager informed members of a re-submitted request received for the provision of public conveniences at the recreation ground and also a viewing balcony at the Felinfoel Community Resource Centre.

Due to the large volume of spectator attendance at sports matches at Felinfoel Recreation Ground there were no public conveniences available to use, other than opening up the Resource Centre to use its facilities. However, for various reasons this wasn't possible owing to security and the configuration of the building coupled with the lack of volunteer support to supervise access. As a short-term remedy, a portaloos had been hired to accommodate spectators but a single portaloos was deemed insufficient and was not regarded as a long term sustainable solution.

The club secretaries representing the local rugby, football and cricket teams requested in-principle permission from the council to consider providing a permanent external toilet facility at the Resource Centre for the public to use on match days and also a spectator balcony on the first floor of the building. In re-submitting the request, the writers recognised that the provision of these extra facilities would be subject to grant funding and not necessarily provided and funded by the council via its capital scheme budget.

Following discussion, members agreed with the principle of providing public conveniences but the erection of a balcony was not deemed essential. Comment was also expressed that the council's capital projects programme was growing steadily and reference was made to plans for the current financial year and moreover, what was planned in the future, and so it was

**RESOLVED** that the committee re-affirms its decision contained in Minute No. 88, whereby it supports the request in-principle for the provision of public conveniences to be attached to the eastern external elevation of the building. However, the sports club(s) shall be responsible for seeking grant funding opportunities as well as performing other fund raising activities to meet the cost of the provision of the external toilet facilities. Moreover and given the balcony was not viewed as essential, permission for this be refused as this was likely to entail considerable internal reconfiguration of the first floor of the building at significant cost with such alterations not serving the best interests of the first floor building tenants, namely Hywel Dda University Health Board.

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**194. PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT, 1960**

**RESOLVED** that in view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, the following matter 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.

**195. LLWYNHENDY HUB PROJECT**

*Cllrs. S. L. Davies and J. P. Hart declared personal interests in the following item, in their respective capacities as county councillors for the ward and because both members were members of Llwynhendy and Pemberton Forum and also served as members of the steering group, Llwynhendy Hub, which was overseeing the project.*

Further to Minute No. 117, members received the Community Development Officer's (CDO) update report on progress with the project.

Members were informed that since the matter was last reported, the Clerk, CDO, together with the local ward members had met with Our Llwynhendy on 7 September, 2022 to request whether that organisation could provide additional funding to meet the cost of the next phase of preliminary work, which included preparing the project to RIBA stage 4 standard and getting it ready for tender. A request was also made for additional funds to further support the original funding pledges already committed by the stakeholders including that of Our Llwynhendy. Our Llwynhendy informed officers that it would meet again to determine both requests at a meeting planned for 5 October, 2022.

Subsequently and following the October meeting an email outlining the intention of Our Llwynhendy was received on 11 October, 2022 which had been appended to and circulated with the CDO's report. The email confirmed that Our Llwynhendy had agreed to commit a further £35,000 towards the next preliminary stage on the basis that the sum was deducted from its original commitment of £350,000. The current balance of Our Llwynhendy's capital commitment stood at £333,027, as part of the funding had been already spent on certain preliminary work performed by the architect up to this point. No additional funding from Our Llwynhendy would be committed for the time being. However, the organisation did state it would reconsider providing more funds towards the project at a later date, as the project developed. Our Llwynhendy's latest support offer stipulated the following conditions, namely: Our Llwynhendy being represented at all meetings with the project architect and being in receipt of all project updates; moreover, the council was to draft a press/media release outlining the project support provided thus far by Our Llwynhendy (subject to its agreement) and as specifically detailed in the email correspondence.

The CDO then reported upon the sources of project funding currently available and which were potentially open to the council as the lead grant bidder or alternatively open to the Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) – Pro Vision Llwynhendy acting as lead grant bidder, to apply for. The funding opportunities open to the council was limited to the Lottery People and Places Fund, whereas the CIO could potentially source grants for large capital projects from multiple funding bodies but these could only be accessed by non-public funded organisations such as Pro-Vision Llwynhendy.

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If the council led as applicant, grants of £500,000 would be available and VAT could be reclaimed.

If the CIO applied, it would be able to access grants worth at least £1,270,000 however it would have to pay VAT on the majority of all spend so the net proceeds would equate to £1,016,000. Also it would have to process and administer the drawdown of the grants and process the payment of invoices in accordance with the tender contract. This would be an administrative burden with a degree of responsibility.

In regard to the council's unsuccessful stage 1 lottery bid, conceivably the council could look to re-apply for stage 1 lottery funding but this would require fresh community consultation. There was little community appetite for further consultation exercises given the extensive consultation process conducted thus far. The community now wanted to see positive progress. This was confirmed by Our Llwynhendy representatives to officers when attending the 7 September meeting. The CDO opined there was also an element of risk with the council re-applying; there was no guarantee the council would be successful second time around. Moreover, if the council was to re-apply for stage 1 lottery funding then the Lottery Board commented, it expected the council to lead on all other potential sources of funding, so this automatically discounted the CIO also applying for funds alongside the council as previously intended. This was a set back to the original grant funding plan.

The set back with the unsuccessful lottery bid required a re-assessment on how to deliver the project for the community. The CDO remarked that consideration could be given to handing more responsibility to the CIO in its attempts to establish the project. This could be accomplished by the CIO leading on and working towards getting the grant applications submitted, instead of the council. There were pros and cons in adopting this approach.

With reference to the report, the CDO then illustrated the point that the architect and other professionals that make up the design team, could be approached to provide an alternative plan to try and bring the overall project costs down. In terms of the building, was finding the funding for the existing architectural footprint achievable? Could the needs identified by the community be achieved with a smaller building footprint/extension? Likewise could the greening of the area be whittled down to providing for example, a children's play area. Alternatively, could some project elements be put on hold for a potential 'phase two' project approach in future years? All these points needed to be contemplated.

Attention then focussed on how best to use Our Llwynhendy's latest funding offer instead of merely utilising the full sum to proceed directly to tender stage now. The cost of the remainder of the preliminary work in getting to tender stage amounted to £35,000. However, the results from the tender process was likely to reveal inflated costs far in excess of the original project estimate of £1.65 million, thereby potentially taking the project out of the economic reach of the project partners, making it unaffordable in its current form. Given the global economic climate, inevitably costs would have increased in line with the current rate of inflation, nevertheless it was essential to establish a true reflection of what the costs resembled at current market prices. Therefore, before committing further spending on the preliminary work by proceeding to draw up tenders based on the original project parameters, it would be helpful if the architect provided a revised project cost estimate in the first instance. This would orientate stakeholders and influence the future general direction of travel, without necessarily spending all or a significant amount of the funding offered from Our Llwynhendy. Officers felt this was a prudent course of action to pursue without incurring

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extra risk as it would have minimal financial impact and was likely to result in a more efficient and effective use of the funding on offer from Our Llwynhendy, without spending more than was necessary from the organisation’s original capital pledge. Options could then be determined on how best to progress the project with the project partners.

Lengthy discussion ensued about how best to proceed, during which it was moved to proceed with the CDO’s report recommendations. This motion was put to the meeting but was then subsequently amended with a request for a recorded vote on the matter to be taken. The effect of the amendment sought to obtain additional quotations for delivering or phasing the project in alternative ways by using Our Llwynhendy funds not only to request a revised cost estimate of the original project, but to also obtain further cost estimates for solely converting the library building into a community hub and similarly solely for the recreational development of the adjoining fields. The amendment was put to the meeting but was not carried by a majority of nine members to three members voting against it. A recorded vote was then taken on the substantive motion to support the report recommendations which was carried by nine member votes to three member votes in favour of the recommendations, with the names of members who voted on the matter so as to show whether they voted for or against the course of action as annotated in the resolution set out below being recorded as follows:

<i>For</i>	<i>Against</i>
D. M. Cundy	S. L. Davies
T. M. Donoghue	A. Evans
N. Evans	J. P. Hart
R. E. Evans	
S. N. Lewis	
A. G. Morgan	
A. J. Rogers	
W. E. Skinner	
B. M. Williams	

And it was ultimately

**RESOLVED** that:

1. The update report be noted.
2. The funding offer and related terms attached to the offer submitted by Our Llwynhendy be accepted in full.
3. The council’s project architect be instructed to provide an up to date cost estimate of the original project in order for the council to then determine how best to progress the project in consultation with Our Llwynhendy and other interested stakeholders.
4. Officers obtain an updated forecast of the loan repayments to be made by the council under any future potential borrowing approval application to the Public Works Loan Board (HM Treasury) in order to review the financial impact on the budget.
5. The information sought in points 3. and 4. above shall be presented to the committee as soon as both matters had been fully discharged.

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The Meeting concluded at 5.50 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 November, 2022 adopted by the Council.