

15 November, 2022

LLANELLI RURAL COUNCIL

Minute Nos: 230 – 238

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 November, 2022 at 4.45 p.m.

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

Cllrs.

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

230. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

231. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr J. P. Hart declared a personal interest in Minute No. 237 below, because he was associated with the project in his capacity as county councillor for the ward and being a member of Llwynhendy and Pemberton Forum and because he also served as a member of the steering group, Llwynhendy Hub, which was overseeing the project.

232. COMMUNITY FACILITIES – MAINTENANCE WORKS

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

233. MULTI USE GAMES AREA, HEOL GWILI, LLWYNHENDY - FLOODLIGHTING ELECTRICITY SUPPLY

Members considered the report of the Technical and General Operations Manager informing of the problems relating to securing a new electricity supply contract for Gwili Fields Multi Use Games Area.

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A new floodlighting scheme had been installed in the Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) at Gwili Fields, Llwynhendy. The scheme required a new electricity supply connection. The electrical connection to the national grid was completed by Western Power in August 2022.

When the new connection was completed, Western Power issued the council with a completion certificate. This certificate was needed before an application could be made to a utility provider for a new energy contract.

Upon receipt of the completion certificate officers attempted to secure a new contract with the council's existing electricity providers but were consistently informed that due to the volatility of the market no new contracts were being quoted at that time and so it had proved virtually impossible to secure a new contract in a timely manner. However, the matter continued to be progressed as a priority.

Members were informed that officers had also engaged the services of a specialist broker who was working with the council to secure a new electricity supply contract. Moreover, and since the production of the committee report, the council had received some positive news from its current electricity provider that it was now finally in a position to offer a new contract to supply electricity to the MUGA. However, the council was advised that the supply of a new electricity meter could take up to 12 weeks to install because meter installers were now trying to clear the backlog of new account requests that had accumulated nationwide since August 2022.

The Technical and General Operations Manager added that Carmarthenshire County Council had been approached in attempts to combat the problem, all to no avail. However, the county council was assisting the council to secure its inclusion on the Crown Commercial Service (CCS) energy framework. CCS played an important role helping the public sector save money when buying common goods and services and was the biggest public procurement purchaser of energy in the UK. Inclusion on the CCS energy framework would allow the council to secure its utility supplies at a greatly reduced rate in comparison to current market costs. The county council was registered on the framework and was sponsoring the council with its registration application, which had been submitted to Welsh Government for processing. The council was liaising with Welsh Government officers about its registration and had raised the issue of procuring a new electricity contract for the MUGA as an immediate priority over migrating the council's various other electricity accounts on to the framework. However, the deadline for new framework registrations to take effect from 1 April 2023 was set for the 15 December 2022.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED that:

1. The difficulties in securing a timely new energy contract for the MUGA floodlighting electricity supply be noted.
2. Officers continue to pursue a new energy contract having due consideration of the potential impact on the council's acceptance and inclusion on the Crown Commercial Services energy framework given the impending December 2022 deadline. Notwithstanding this the MUGA electricity contract shall be pursued as a priority.
3. A further report shall be presented to committee in relation to the council's inclusion on the Crown Commercial Services framework and the impact of this on the council's various other

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electricity accounts once the new contract for the MUGA electricity supply had been determined and activated.

4. In regard to the postponed community football sessions delivered by the Swansea AFC Skills Academy at the Llwynhendy MUGA that the Dafen MUGA facility be offered to the Academy to use as an interim measure.

234. AIR POLLUTION – SANDY ROAD LLANELLI

Cllr. W. E. Skinner informed members of the air pollution issues in the Llanelli area and in particular Sandy Road, Llanelli.

Following discussion, members commented that the Llanelli area has a whole should be discussed and the impact this had on residents, it was

RESOLVED that:

1. The Clerk be authorised to send a letter of concern as an initial measure to the Climate Change, Decarbonisation and Sustainability Scrutiny Committee, Carmarthenshire County Council about the air pollution issues.
2. A meeting of the council's Climate Change Steering Group be convened to discuss what further measures could be pursued with the county council. The meeting shall also serve as an opportunity to review progress with the council's adopted and planned measures to tackle the impact of climate change in regard to the council's own actions and activities.

235. SARON COMMUNITY HALL – BLUE PLAQUE

Members considered correspondence from a member of Cŵr Meibion Llanelli for a blue plaque to be erected to the exterior of Saron Community Hall to commemorate the inception of Cŵr Meibion Llanelli and to agree the Council's response.

RESOLVED that permission be granted to Cŵr Meibion Llanelli for the blue plaque to be erected to the exterior of the community hall.

236. 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.

237. LLWYNHENDY HUB PROJECT

Cllr J. P. Hart declared a personal interest in the following matter because he was associated with the project in his capacity as county councillor for the ward and being a member of Llwynhendy and Pemberton Forum and because he also served as a member of the steering group, Llwynhendy Hub, which was overseeing the project.

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Further to Minute No. 195, members received the Community Development Officer's (CDO) update report on progress with the project. Annexed to the report was a revised project cost estimate prepared by the council's consultant architect together with a Public Works Loan Board loan borrowing illustration with estimated repayment costs.

The original cost estimate included in the project feasibility study in 2020 amounted to £1,650,000, whereas the revised cost estimate prepared by the consultant architect's quantity surveyor was now estimated at £2,871,923. This represented an increase of £1,221,923 and provided a more accurate projection of project costs as it was prepared using a bill of quantities which itemised costs in greater detail.

This latest cost estimate translated to a substantial increase in cost meaning the delivery of the project was unaffordable in its present form. This was because the total of capital sum pledges from the project partners namely: Llanelli Rural Council; Our Llwynhendy and Carmarthenshire County Council when combined with the potential grants presently available, fell well short of the revised cost estimate.

A meeting to discuss the revised cost estimate was held with the architect, quantity surveyor, council officers and representatives of Our Llwynhendy on 9 November, 2022.

Previously a commitment to match fund up to a maximum sum of £600,000 by securing a loan from the Public Works Loan Board was agreed in principal by the council. This was on the basis that it would cost the council £37,140 per year over the course of 20 years. This annual repayment sum had been allocated in the council's current revenue budget.

A sharp rise in interest rates over recent months had adversely impacted the cost of borrowing. Up to date equivalent loan costs had been obtained. The equivalent loan would now cost £57,828 per year over 20 years. This represented an increase of £20,688 per year on annual loan repayments.

To progress the project, a series of meetings with the architect and extended design team would now need to follow and it was suggested that the Recreation and Welfare Sub-Committee be authorised to do this.

Members were then informed that Pro-Vision Llwynhendy, the Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) set up to support the project continued to meet monthly and was strengthening its trustee base in order to start proactively working in the community and with stakeholders.

Members having discussed the report and the financial implications of delivering the project in its present form together with the revised cost of council borrowing, it was unanimously

RESOLVED that:

1. The report be noted but particularly the increase in the Public Works Loan Board's loan repayment rates.
2. To move progress, the Recreation and Welfare Sub-Committee be authorised to engage in all future architect meetings with Our Llwynhendy and that any proposals made by the sub-committee impacting upon the project shall be reported to the Recreation and Welfare Committee for subsequent consideration and agreement.

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3. Any future council financial commitment to the project shall be reported to the Recreation and Welfare Committee at the appropriate time for consideration.
4. The council shall continue to support the endeavours of the CIO as it establishes itself within the Llwynhendy and Pemberton community.

Cllr. T. M. Donoghue left the meeting.

238. FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Consideration was given to applications received for financial assistance and it was

RESOLVED that:

1. Llanelly House – that an invitation be extended to representatives to attend a future Recreation and Welfare Committee meeting to further discuss the application.
2. Eisteddfod Yr Urdd 2023 – further to Minute No. 211(2) – that the request for financial assistance be approved in principle but that a maximum upper expenditure limit of no more than £2,500 be carried forward to a special meeting of the Recreation and Welfare Committee for possible inclusion in the council’s draft financial estimates of income and expenditure for 2023/24.

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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 13 December, 2022 adopted by the Council.