

20 June, 2023

LLANELLI RURAL COUNCIL

Minute Nos: 71 – 78

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, 20 June, 2023 at 4.45 p.m.

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

Cllrs.

T. M. Donoghue	A. G. Morgan
E. M. Evans	J. S. Phillips
R. E. Evans	A. J. Rogers
S. N. Lewis	A. G. Stephens
B. M. Williams	

71. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs. J. P. Hart and O. Williams.

72. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

73. COMMUNITY FACILITIES – MAINTENANCE WORKS

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

74. STREET LIGHTING – PWLL BACH, DAFEN

Cllr. R. E. Evans enquired with officers for an update for the programme of works scheduled for Pwll Bach, Dafen for the installation of up to 3 public lighting columns.

During the discussion, members were informed that an up to date quotation for the installation works had been sought from Carmarthenshire County Council (CCC) in order for the work to proceed. Costs associated with the temporary traffic management of vehicles along the lane while the work was being carried out would also need to be factored into the overall costs. These additional traffic management costs had yet to be confirmed by CCC. However, once this information had been received the matter would be reported to committee for due consideration and subsequent approval. CCC would then be issued with a purchase order for the work to commence. The local members opined that ideally the works should be

20 June, 2023

completed prior to the start of the autumn in order to take advantage of the weather and lighter evenings.

RESOLVED that it be re-affirmed to proceed with the installation of up to 3 public lighting columns at Pwll Bach, Dafen as soon as possible and once an updated quotation had been received from Carmarthenshire County Council for the works along with a breakdown of additional costs associated with organising and implementing temporary traffic management arrangements to regulate access along the lane.

**75. FELINFOEL RECREATION GROUND
CRICKET SAFETY NETTING**

This matter was listed on the agenda for discussion by Cllr. N. Evans, following receipt of a complaint from a local resident at Ynyswen, Felinfoel about cricket balls landing in the person's garden.

The Technical and General Operations Manager thereupon informed members that an incident had recently occurred where several cricket balls had been hit into a property at Ynyswen during a practice session because the players had not adhered to the standard training procedure adopted by the cricket club whereby all batting practice must be performed by batsmen with their backs facing the rear of the properties so that when striking a shot, the cricket ball travelled in the opposite direction to the rear property line. This had also been explained in correspondence received from the Chairman, Felinfoel Cricket Club and was viewed as a one-off event which was not typical of the normal training routine. Subsequently the club had re-affirmed the training arrangements to its players and felt the erection of a cricket net was unnecessary at this time.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED that the matter be noted but kept under review.

76. 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.

**77. FELINFOEL RECREATION GROUND
ANTI - SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR**

Members received the report of the Technical and General Operations Manager informing of anti-social behaviour at Felinfoel Recreation Ground.

Recently, anti-social behaviour and damage to property at the park had increased significantly, with incidents occurring almost every weekend and more regularly during the school holidays. Large numbers of youths, estimated at over 100 at times, were gathering at the recreation ground and leaving litter, food waste packaging and broken glass spread across

20 June, 2023

large areas of the grounds that affected the legitimate use of the facilities. Park facilities were being damaged and aggressive confrontations between youths and residents at Ynyswen were also increasing. Some health board staff recently decided not to attend their workplace office at the Phil Bennett OBE Community Resource Centre as they did not feel safe because both their privately owned and health board vehicles had been vandalised and so were fearful of any potential flashpoint or confrontation.

Members were informed that the local members held a meeting at the Resource Centre on Monday, 12 June, 2023, to discuss plans to resolve the anti-social behaviour issues. The neighbourhood policing team, officers from Llanelli Rural Council, Carmarthenshire County Council (Public Rights of Way Unit), local residents and representatives from the Resource Centre management committee and health board staff were in attendance.

All parties agreed that restricting access to the recreation ground at night would be a step in the right direction to prevent the large gatherings of youths and the resulting anti - social behaviour.

Public Right of Way footpath 36/88 crossed the recreation ground, therefore the county council would need to enact the legal mechanism to permit the council to install a gate to restrict access to the footpath at night. The Public Rights of Way Officer confirmed that due to the significant and serious nature of the anti-social behaviour issues, permission would be granted to gate off the access to 36/88 at the main park entrance off Ynyswen. The gate could then be locked daily by council employees from 9.00 p.m. until 8.00 a.m. along with other gated access points throughout the grounds. Dispersal Orders would also be sought to deal with the gatherings whilst other plans were put in place. The longer term solution would be to establish a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) at the recreation ground but this would take several months to enact. The PSPO would not permit alcohol to be consumed in the grounds and would empower the police to confiscate alcohol if found in the possession of people frequenting the recreation ground.

Members were informed it was proposed that the Resource Centre CCTV cameras would be utilised by the police to help monitor the recreation ground. The police would also investigate the installation of a real-time monitored CCTV camera unit in the grounds.

Following discussion, it was

RESOLVED that:

1. The recreation ground shall be secured with immediate effect to prevent access from 9.00 p.m. to 8.00 a.m. daily. To facilitate this new gates and fencing shall be installed at an estimated cost of £2,800, the cost of which to be met from general reserve balances given the serious health and safety implications brought about by the anti-social behaviour.
2. The council's Direct Labour Operatives shall be authorised to attend the recreation ground at weekends to clear litter and assess and make good any damage to the grounds throughout the summer holidays. Staff shall be provided with body cameras and Hi-Vis jackets when undertaking these additional duties.
3. The introduction of a Public Spaces Protection Order be supported.
4. The introduction of police controlled CCTV cameras at Felinfoel Recreation Ground be supported.

20 June, 2023

78. SWISS VALLEY LOWER LLIEDI RESERVOIR

Further to Minute No. 449 (18 April, 2023, refers) members received a progress report from the Technical and General Operations Manager on various matters affecting the development of the facility for recreational and leisure purposes.

Members were briefed on the five-year community adoption agreement entered into with Dwr Cymru Welsh Water (DCWW) which ran until November 2025. The agreement provided for the enhancement and maintenance of the surrounding environs at the Lower Lliedi Reservoir, Swiss Valley. The agreement allowed for water and land based activities to take place at the reservoir, together with a financial contribution from DCWW of £150,000.

In March 2021, £120,750 was received from Welsh Government Access to Water Scheme (ATW) grant. The schedule of works that was funded by the grant was to enable public access to water for recreation, water sports activities, angling etc. and included:

- Disabled access – improvements to access road and disabled parking. Disabled compliant paths and disabled access to the water.
- Installation of a pontoon that allowed easy access to the water for people of all abilities.
- Wash down facilities for watercraft for biosecurity.
- Zoning of recreational and exclusion zones.
- Refurbish redundant toilet block/store and creation of a shower facility.

The final costs of the ATW grant projects exceeded the initial estimates that the grant funding was based on. The increased costs were primarily due to spiralling material costs (post pandemic) and increased manufacturing costs associated with DCWW dam engineering requirements in regard to the installation of the access ramp structure as well as unforeseen issues with the foul drainage provisions at the service block that necessitated a complete replacement of the foul drainage system.

The shortfall in the ATW grant funding was met from the £150,000 DCWW contribution. The DCWW contribution was provided to fund ongoing facility maintenance and infrastructure improvements as agreed with DCWW at the start of the project and as set out in the Site Management Plan. Due to the overspend on the ATW project and the impact it had on the DCWW contribution it was recognised that prudence was required to limit any spend at the reservoir to absolute necessities so the remainder of the DCWW contribution could be conserved.

In 2022, £51,559 was received from the Welsh Government Woodland Investment Grant (TWIG). This grant award was to create new opportunities to access woodland areas. The grant afforded opportunities to progress a range of infrastructure improvements without using the remainder of the DCWW contribution. As well as providing improved and new access to woodland areas, an extensive suite of new signage was commissioned that provided information and guidance to visitors in regard to the history, heritage and biodiversity of the facility. Various new habitat opportunities were created across the site by installing bird, bat and dormouse nesting facilities. Other initiatives also increased opportunities to assist pollinators and a host of naturally occurring flora, fauna and fungi.

20 June, 2023

Members were then informed that Carmarthenshire County Council (CCC) continued to undertake outward-bound activities at the facility for young people. CCC also worked in partnership with Heol Goffa school on various projects and contributed £7,680 towards a hard standing/outdoor classroom area. CCC had also undertaken improvement works to the Public Right of Way footpath on the west shore and at the car park area between the upper and lower reservoirs.

A changing place facility where toilet/showering facilities that were designed to a national standard for children, young people and adults with profound or multiple disabilities was nearing completion. The facilities would be fitted with specialist equipment including a hoist and changing bench to facilitate personal independence and provide enough space for up to two carers to support the person with a disability if needed.

The overspend on the ATW grant meant this project was only partially completed. It was recognised that access to such facilities would need to be managed to prevent misuse and it was thought it would be prudent to delay the purchasing of the hoist, bed and the upgrade in electrical power supply until an on-site management solution could be found. In 2022 the council was contacted by Llanelli Rotary Club seeking to support a community project in collaboration with the council at the reservoir. A site visit was arranged and several Rotarians toured the facility along with officers.

The Technical and General Operations Manager was delighted to report that following the site visit written confirmation had been received from Llanelli Rotary Club that it was going to fund the purchase and installation of the Changing Places bench and electric hoist, the cost of which was £5,267.

Moreover, the original toilet block facility had a partially enclosed terrace. This area historically attracted anti-social behaviour and has now been partitioned off. Members were provided with floor plans for the building along with photographs displaying the condition of the building before the refurbishment and how it looked now. The ambition for the terrace area was to develop it as a visitor/office facility, or possibly a commercial outlet associated with reservoir activities, i.e. water sports, angling outdoor pursuits etc. Many visitors also regularly enquire if a tea/coffee outlet could be provided at the site.

Following the licencing of the water sports provider, developing this area into a usable enclosed space would be invaluable in providing visitors with information and a focal point to access information and the various activities on offer. The costs of fully fitting out the space with steel frame windows, doors and internal plastering, decoration etc. was prohibitive at this time. However, as the space already has a roof and was fully enclosed on two sides and partially enclosed on a third, there was an option to develop the space far more economically.

The proposal was to utilise the structures already in place and fit out the facility as a timber building. This would provide a usable, secure space to provide a facility that was in keeping with the rural surroundings. There would also be a need to provide basic electrical utilities in the space, i.e. electrical sub meter, outlets and lighting.

The estimated costs to develop this area as an office/visitor centre would be £4,000. If the council was able to provide the basic structure, the licenced operator had committed to fit out the internal space.

20 June, 2023

The existing electrical supply was limited to 20 amps. A larger 45kva supply was needed to operate the full suite of facilities if the service block was to be fully utilised, i.e. water heaters, shower, space heaters, electrical outlets and lights. A quote had been received from National Grid to upgrade the electrical supply. The non-contestable costs were £2,840.25. The contestable groundworks cost was estimated at £2,500. Electrical contractor works was estimated at £1,000.

Fish of various species thrive in abundance in the Lower Lliedi reservoir. There were large Carp of various varieties and a host of game fish. The reservoir was a popular angling venue. Recent years has seen a surge in popularity for Carp angling. The Lower Lliedi reservoir had been selected by DCWW and NRW to trial a control and eradication programme by introducing predatory species of fish that would target Top Mouth Gudgeon (TMG). The added bonus at the Lower Lliedi was the predators would also target other smaller shoal fish such as the Rudd and Roach that was already desired by the anglers. DCWW had funded the council to undertake a three-year stocking programme to the value of £14,630.

Reference was then made to the first launch pontoon installed under the Access to Water grant scheme located on the west shore. The pontoon was accessible via an accessibility designed ramp and also provided facilities at the pontoon to assist people of all abilities to use water craft and have access to the water. Since the completion of the accessible facilities the council had received numerous requests from canoe, kayak and paddleboard users for a second pontoon that allows larger craft access to the water without having to navigate the ramp which can be difficult for larger craft. The former rowing club dock was identified as a suitable location on the east shore and a plan to moor a second pontoon was formulated provided funds could be sought.

DCWW Dam Engineering had approved the design and funding had been successfully applied for by the council's Community Development Officer. The Canoe Foundation had awarded £5,000 to install a second pontoon. This was the maximum amount the council could access on this particular grant. There was an estimated further £1,500 needed to complete the project.

To assist in operating the water sports activities and to receive deliveries, the reservoir facility needed a registered postal address. The council would need to make an application to CCC to register the property as a new postal address. There was a £100 fee to register a new address. The proposed name/address was: Reservoir View, Lower Lliedi Reservoir, Swiss Valley Llanelli.

Officers were concentrating on completing the Clubmate angling booking portal for the Lower Lliedi reservoir. Members were shown rules and regulations that could be enforced at the reservoir.

The LiveFree Adventures team had been active on site preparing to commence activities since the council awarded the licence for the hire and or launch of water craft. The team had been assessing the reservoir and its environs and had been engaging with the community and regular users of the reservoir and have liaised with other local providers. The team was currently working on creating changing and storage facilities and awaiting delivery of their main equipment items to the facility.

20 June, 2023

Members were delighted with the progress of the work that had already been undertaken at the reservoir, but raised concerns about anti-social behaviour at the reservoir and opined it was wholly appropriate to include Swiss Valley Lower Lliedi Reservoir in the Public Spaces Protection Order that was being proposed to safeguard Felinfoel Recreation Ground and to which minute no. 77 above refers and it was

RESOLVED that:

1. The report and recommendations be accepted, namely:

- the contribution from Llanelli Rotary Club to purchase and install Changing Places equipment at the reservoir service block.
- the development of a visitor/office facility at an estimated cost of £4,000.
- the increase in the electrical supply at an estimated cost of £6,340.
- the fish-stocking programme was noted.
- the installation of a second pontoon to be financed with the shortfall in the grant funds estimated at £1,500 being met from the DCWW grant.
- the registration of a new address as ‘Reservoir View, Lower Lliedi Reservoir, Swiss Valley’ for the service block facility.
- the angling regulations and fee structure, noting the progress on the angling booking portal.
- the progress of the Licenced Operator activities be noted.

2. Swiss Valley Lower Lliedi Reservoir shall also be included in a Public Spaces Protection Order and that this be pursued with Carmarthenshire County Council so that it can be incorporated under the same Order as Felinfoel Recreation Ground.

.....

The Meeting concluded at 5.58 p.m.

.....

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 July, 2023 adopted by the Council.