

Town Clerk:
Ms C.A. Paterson

Technical Officer:
Mr R.H. Griffiths



The Shire Hall
Carmarthen Street
Llandeilo
Carmarthenshire
SA19 6AF

**Minutes of the Meeting of Full Council held at the Shire Hall, Llandeilo, on
Tuesday 21 January 2003 at 7.30p.m.**

Present: Councillors: Cllr D.A. Jones (Chair, Deputy Mayor), Cllr Burge, Cllr I. Gwyn, Cllr G. Vaughan-Jones, Cllr G. Price, Cllr R. Bellamy, Cllr C. P. Jenkins, Cllr H. Ladd-Lewis.
Other: C. Paterson (Town Clerk), R. H. Griffiths (technical officer), I Jones, H. Towns.

5637: Apologies: Cllr K. Day, Cllr D. Williams (Mayor)

5638: Minutes of Special Meeting to discuss plans for the Civic Hall held on 17.12.02
The Deputy Mayor moved that the minutes be passed as an acceptable record of the meeting. Motion seconded and passed.

5639: Matters Arising

5615: The Deputy Mayor expressed a wish that the Issues arising from the discussion regarding the Civic Hall be entered as a formal agenda item for a Full Council meeting. Cllr. Bellamy stated that it was assumed that it was decided at the Special Meeting that the Council would take a lead and also that the next step was the establishment of a Management Committee. Cllr. Jenkins noted we await County Council response. It was said that we need to create a forum of all the interested parties and all the groups that already use the hall. Then the County Council will advise on how to proceed, as the grants application assumes involvement from the grass roots upwards. This should stem from the Llandeilo Community Association and the Council. The Council awaited a response from Richard Mead. *The motion was put forward that as the Community Association already exists and as all members of council have involvement with the organisation this was the appropriate organisation to be used as the foundation for*

the Establishment of the Management Committee to drive forward the development of the Civic Hall. This was proposed, seconded and carried.

5940 Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 17.12.02

5616: Minute amendment - the establishment of a town website to be discussed in the February Meeting.

It was proposed, seconded and agreed that the sets of minutes from the meetings of the 17 December 2002 be accepted as a true record of the meeting subject to the above amendment. The Minutes were signed by the chair and each page initialed. The minutes are passed to the Town Clerk for filing.

5941 Matters arising

5616: With regard to the establishment of a new monument in town, a request was made that, in consultation with the Mayor, a list of all the Town Organisations is drawn up so that a public meeting can be called to further this end. The list could be drawn up from the Mayor's dinner file. Cllr H. Ladd Lewis and Cllr G. Vaughn Jones will write a letter to all the organisations to set up the meeting.

5617: The trial period of the translation system will begin on 18 Feb 2003.

5621: The establishment of the Town Web site to be an agenda item for February Meeting.

5622: The only copy of the lease is in the keeping of Cllr Gwyn. No time scale for the renegotiation of the Lease with the Trust has been put forward. There is a need for the beginnings of consultation perhaps a meeting between the Trust Solicitor and the Council Solicitor. It was rather recommended that an informal approach is made to discuss the needs of the 2 parties between E.G. Hughes and Cllr Gwyn. It is noted that the Council has in the past used the Solicitor of the Higher Authority, latterly, Linda Rees Evans from the Legal Dept in County Hall.

5624: R. Huw Griffiths is waiting for notification from the Carmarthenshire County Council regarding replacement of the benches from the crescent in the park (Le conquet) The authority in charge of the park and playground need to give their permission.

5627: There has been no report from the granting authority regarding the planting of trees at the bridge site. As there was no copy of the original grant application it was suggested that the grant authority was contacted for a copy of this via Mr Brian Harris, Ty Alwyn, Town Hall, Llanelli.

On Thursday 23 Jan 2003 at 6.pm there is a meeting of the

Carmarthenshire County council Tywi/Gwili Area Committee at Tregib School. There is a requirement of ten days notice to add any issues to their agenda. To this end it was proposed by Cllr Ladd Lewis that a notice board be established in the Meetings room so all notices could be posted here.

5642: The minutes of the meetings of the Finance and the Planning and General Purposes Committees held on 17.01.03

It was noted that due to the short period of time between meetings and some technical troubles experienced by members in retrieving emails sent by the Town Clerk, members had not had a chance to read and digest the minutes from this meeting. The Town Clerk agreed to the need to get minutes to the Council in good time before Council Meetings. The Town Clerk noted the need to make more specific the minute statement declaring what precisely was being approved, passed or rejected by the council.

5630: Minute Amendment - To include the sum of £25.00 requested by Daphne. G Davies. *The payment of this sum was proposed by Cllr. Jones, Seconded by Cllr Bellamy and passed.*

5633: Minute Amendment- Cllr. I. Gwyn did tender his apologies.

5634: Minute Amendment - The correct Spelling and Name of the Housing Association is Gwailia Housing Association.

5635: Minute Amendment - The correct Name and Spelling of the House passed by the footpath is Crug Manor.

Subject to these amendments the minutes were agreed as accurate.

5643: Matters Arising. Some time was afforded to allow the Council to read through the minutes.

Cllr Jenkins presented a bill for the putting up and taking down of the Christmas lights. This was to be re- presented at the next meeting of the Finance sub-committee.

5635:As regards the Town Twinning association placement of the Le Conquet buoy in the Traffic circle on the A40, the question as to whether or not the Town Council is allowed to contribute outside the Council area was raised. It was noted that the Twinning association had shown much consideration and researched their decision to place the statue here, and it was assumed consideration had been given to a sympathetic aesthetic appeal. The issue of Indemnity and Liability insurance would be further discussed between the Council, the Council from Salem

and Manordeilo and the Parks Authority. It would be established exactly what the liabilities are and how it could be ensure that something outside our area be covered. As regards financial assistance with this matter. Section 137 says that contributions can be made towards anything that benefits the townspeople, singly or as a whole. *The Council agreed The Town Clerk would write a letter formally inviting the Twinning Association to request a donation as help towards the cost of this project.*

5644: It was noted that there had not been a representative from the Police recently at meetings. This had implications on the stated agenda item 'Police Matters.' *It was proposed, seconded and passed that the Town Clerk write a letter to the Police Sergeant expressing the Council's regret that a representative had not been attending meetings.*

5645: The presentation of the Financial Report

The Deputy Mayor Cllr. Jones expressed the Council's gratitude to Mr. Towns for an extremely professional and thorough report. The Town Council recognised that it was deserving of chastisement in the situations arising over the previous year's finances and in the monitoring of the state of affairs, resulting in the Councils present position.

It was noted that there is a shortage of both information and training for the position of Town Clerk. It was recommended that a request was made to the County Council requesting that training for this position be provided in the same way as it is done for School Governors.

Hugh Towns was then asked to present his report. It was noted that there was as yet no minute electing Mr. Towns as the internal auditor even though he was acting as such. The layout of the report was such as was generally accepted as the minimum requirement for such a report.

The Deputy Mayor moved that we considered each recommendation in parallel with each statement, or issue arising from this report. Each recommendation would then be proposed or amended and minuted.

5646: Recommendation 1. The Council Consider appointing a Member (possibly the Chair of the Finance Committee) to carry out on a quarterly basis

1. Checks to ensure the receipts and payment books are up to date and the appropriate bank reconciliation has taken place
2. Take a sample of entries (possibly 5) and check them for accuracy against the relevant minute entries, cheques and invoices. Such checks should be recorded and relevant member should make a written declaration as to what checks are made.

It was necessary to produce a set of Financial Procedures to be either appended to or incorporated into the Standing Orders. At

the same time there should be a review of the Standing Orders. Each Member of council should have a set of Standing Orders. To this end the Town Clerk will photocopy and circulate a copy of said Standing Orders to each member of council.

Recommendation 1. was amended to state that it is the Chair of the Finance Committee who carries out the Quarterly inspection.

The inspection worded along the lines of 'I, ----- have carried out the following checks 1.----, 2.----, 3.----, 4.----, 5.---- ' will then be filed with the invoice file. And then reported, and minuted, at the next meeting. Minute proposed, seconded and passed

It was further proposed by Cllr Gwyn that minute numbers were entered onto the cheque stubs and into the Invoice book so that everything is double checked.

Mr Towns recommended that it should not simply be allowed that the Town Clerk also took on the role of Proper Financial Officer by default. This should be raised to full council and passed as a minute.

5647: Recommendation 2. Authorised chequebook signatories must satisfy themselves that any cheque that is being signed by them is for the correct amount, is properly supported by appropriate documentation and that the matter has been authorised by council.

This placed the onus onto the chequebook signatories. *It was proposed that added to this recommendation was the addition that it was NOT recommended that The Town Clerk was an Authorised Signatory.* Proposed Cllr. Bellamy, seconded Cllr Ladd-Lewis. Passed by council.

A further recommendation was made that at the next meeting of the Finance Committee the list of authorised signatories was reviewed and re-established.

On a separate issue it was agreed that Colin Jenkins had three additional sets of keys made.

5648: Recommendation 3. The council to produce and agree a Financial Calendar specifying when relevant financial issues such as VAT reclaims, Budget Calculations and Reports etc should be addressed.

This was proposed by Cllr Jenkins, seconded by Cllr Ladd Lewis and agreed.

5649: The issue of Risk Management need to be address, this was pointed out as a major problem area. Every year the council need to carry out some kind of risk assessment. Insurances need to be high enough to meet the Council needs. Cllr Gwyn moved that the Town Clerk be instructed to contact Zurich Municipal insurance and increase the Fidelity Insurance. Each year this insurance needs to

be at a level high enough to cover all monies in Council Bank accounts. This action was a recommendation of the Last Audit and as such should have been raised in the last financial year to £30 000.00. This was not done.

The Deputy Mayor moved that the insurance should be raised to £45 000.00 for this financial year. This was Seconded by Cllr Gwyn and passed with all in favour.

5650: Recommendation 6. The council carry out a risk assessment on an annual basis. In practice this means going through the financial controls and regulations and ensuring they are adequate and appropriate and ensuring the levels of Insurance are sufficient. *This review should take place in September and be triggered by the arrival of the renewal notices from the insurance companies. The wording in the Financial statement to include ' the council carry out a risk assessment of Financial Controls and Insurance on an annual basis.* Proposed by Cllr Bellamy, Seconded by Cllr Jenkins passed with all in favour.

5651: Recommendation 4. The Clerk/responsible Financial Officer must provide the council with reports indicating actual expenditure against the budget on a Quarterly basis. *This was proposed by Cllr Ladd-Lewis, Seconded by Cllr Vaughn Jones and passed with all in Favour.*

5652: Recommendation 5. The council review the level and appropriateness of Earmarked Reserves on at least an annual basis. Budgetary Control. The levels of reserves were high and this was explained in Mr Towns report. However, the Budget calculation need not to be the same in the next financial year and the allocation of funding to various projects needs to be given serious consideration. The council and its finance committees need to consider their earmarked reserves and reallocate funds at their next meeting. These considerations and reallocations need to be minuted. The amount of County Council Precept needs to be minuted. *The review of levels and appropriateness of earmarked reserves should happen at the same time as the Risk assessment and review of levels of insurance. This would ensure that money was kept in the best possible accounts earning the best possible level of interest.* This was proposed by Cllr Gwyn, seconded by Cllr Burge, passed with all in favour.

5653: *The formal appointment of Mr H. Towns as the internal auditor was proposed by Cllr Bellamy, Seconded by Cllr Burge and passed with all in favour.*

5654: It was now necessary to adopt this statement with stated amendments. This report with the Attached Statement of

Assurance needs to be adopted by the council and submitted for audit by February 12th 2003. *Formal acceptance of the Internal Auditors report.* Proposed by Cllr Vaughn Jones, seconded by Cllr Price and passed with all in favour.

5655: The council now moved to discuss the Statement of Assurance that is a requirement of audit. The responses to the questions asked are formally minuted as follows:

1. We have approved the accounts which have been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit regulations 1996 and proper accounting practice - **Yes**
2. We have maintained an adequate system of internal control, including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption - **No**
3. We have taken all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and codes of practice which could have a significant financial on the ability of the council to conduct its business or on its finances - **Yes**
4. We have carried out an assessment of the risks facing the council and taken appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required - **No**
5. We have appointed an internal auditor who is both competent and who has acted independently from influence by the council - **Yes**
6. We have taken what we consider to be appropriate action on all matters raised in previous reports from the internal and external auditors - **No**
7. We have provided proper opportunity for the exercise of the electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit regulations 1996 - **Yes**
8. We are not aware of any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the end of the financial year being reported, other than those included in the accounts - **Yes**

Mr Towns was thanked for his valuable report and his continuing status as a consultant.

5656: Other Financial Matters

Cllr Bellamy proposed that the council keep the precept as it was in the previous financial year as the council does not have enough information about the financial position of the Town Council to make an informed change or alteration. This was seconded by Cllr Gwyn and passed with all in favour.

At this point Town Clerk and Technical Officer were asked to temporarily leave the room. The Deputy Mayor Dr D A Jones informed the meeting that the Mayor Cllr D Williams had suggested that for a limited period of three months the Town Clerk should be offered an extra 3 hours per week (ie a total of 13 hours) to cope with the extra work resulting from the situation that she had inherited. The council unanimously agreed to this with a proviso that a worksheet of hours used and work done is completed. In the interest of fairness it was also decided to ask the Technical Officer to fill in a similar worksheet. This item was minuted by Cllr Dr D A Jones. The Town Clerk and the Technical

Officer were then asked to return to the meeting.

5657: Correspondence

Bill for payment of £50.00 for the bringing of the Mayoral Board up to date. Payment of this bill proposed by Cllr Bellamy, seconded by Cllr Price and passed with all in favour.

An Outstanding Electric bill for the sum of £273.41 to be paid, proposed and seconded, passed with all in favour.

Letter from Dr Peter G. H. Davies (Treasurer Llandeilo Parish Church). R. H. Griffiths was asked to check the meter readings on the electricity as soon as possible and then to take readings on a regular basis. *The amount of the electric bill for floodlighting the church was £431,00. It was proposed that this be paid,* seconded by Cllr Bellamy and passed with all in favour.

The second issue arising from this letter was a request for financial assistance for grass maintenance. The Council makes an annual contribution of £500.00 and this has not been paid for two years. *It was proposed by Cllr Ladd-Lewis that the Council send the Llandeilo Parish Church the sum of £1000.00 in payment of two years of grass maintenance.* This was seconded by Cllr Bellamy and passed with all in favour. A letter of apology would also be written to the Treasurer as his previous letters had not been answered.

Standing Order 7 was suspended to deal with Finance matters.

5658 It was necessary to offer a candidate as the L.E.A. appointment to the board of School Governors for Llandeilo County Primary School. *Cllr Vaughn-Jones proposed Cllr Ladd-Lewis to this position.* This was seconded by Cllr Jenkins and passed with all in favour.

The Bill from the Town Council Association for £149.00 membership fees was referred to Finance Committee. There needed to be a discussion as to what the Council received as a result of membership of this organisation and whether a request for information on training for the Town Clerk and the Councillors should be sent to the Town Council Association.

Councillor Burge stated that there was a metal rod sticking out of the pavement on Rhosmaen Street. R. Huw. Griffiths to investigate and report to next meeting of Planning and General Purpose Committee.

The meeting was ended at 9.45p.m