

Carmarthen Civic Society-Executive Committee
Minutes of Meeting held on 5th September 2018
At Richmond Park Football Club, Priory Street, Carmarthen

Present: (in alphabetical order) Huw Iorwerth (Secretary), Carole Jones, Linda Jones (Chair), Jonathan Lewis, Janice Powers, Brian Rowlands, Ralph Siggery, Molly Thomas, Mary Thorley, Trefor Thorpe, Lee Whatley.

Apologies: Nigel Evans, Wendy Evans, Peter Hughes-Griffiths, Jeremy John, Iris Owen, Julie Rees, Peter Rowland

In attendance: Jo Carpenter

Personal: Linda welcomed new committee member Lee Whatley to the meeting. Congratulations were extended to Janice and to Jo on their forthcoming marriage and to Iris on becoming a grandmother. Members asked that their best wishes be sent to Shirley Griffiths who has suffered a further injury in hospital.

There were no declarations of pecuniary interest.

1. Minutes:

The minutes of the following meetings were received and approved:

- 13th June 2018
- 4th July 2018

The draft of the minutes of the Annual General meeting held on 4th July were received for information. Huw stated that Wendy had pointed out an error in Minute 3: the words 'gardening improvement schemes' should be replaced by 'the Norah Isaac Award'. The master copy would be corrected before being circulated with the papers for the 2019 AGM.

2. Matters arising:

- **Guildhall:** It was understood that a decision on appointing an inspector for the planning application was awaited from the Welsh Government Planning Inspectorate. An email from Peter Hughes-Griffiths intimated that the annual running cost of maintaining the premises, should the planning application fail, would be £180,000.
- **Penlan Workhouse:** Evidence prepared by Trefor had been submitted by the Society in support of the Enforcement Order issued by the County Council. It had originally been the intention to decide the appeal on the basis of an exchange of written statements but it had subsequently been decided to change the procedure to a Hearing. A date was awaited. It was reported by Peter Hughes-Griffiths that the site was now for sale but that it was the owner's responsibility to keep it safe.

3. Correspondence:

- **Mayor's Charity:** The Society had been asked, as a recipient of a grant during the year from the charity fund, to sell raffle tickets in aid of the fund. These were distributed to members who were asked to return stubs and money at the October meeting. A stand had been arranged at the coffee morning in St Peter's Hall on Saturday 15th September. Any member able to assist was asked to arrive by 9.30am.

4. Treasurer's report:

An email was received from Wendy reporting the balance of the Main Account stood at £2,303.96 on 25th July. After paying for this year's Norah Isaac Award the balance on the No 2 account stood at £315.50 on 18th July. More recent bank statements were awaited from the bank. Molly pointed out that the No 1 account includes £600 earmarked for gardening schemes.

5. Reports from sub-groups:

- **Green spaces:** Molly expressed her disappointment at the condition of the garden areas maintained voluntarily by the Society. The dry summer had made it impossible to keep them watered adequately. She was particularly concerned about the shrubs planted adjacent to the Toyota garage. A lack of active volunteers also made it difficult to maintain the desired standards. **AGREED: that Molly speak to the Town Clerk to ascertain whether the Town Council would be able to assist.**
- **Town appearance and image:** Brian reported on the proceedings of the sub-group since the AGM in July. A survey had revealed a total of 22 or 23 unoccupied retail units and a further 5 public buildings. Jonathan offered to let Brian have information regarding development plans lodged for any of them. The sub-group had been concerned that there were insufficient benches along public footpaths and that litter was also a recurring problem; possibly more bins were needed. In regard to traffic management in Nott Square and Guildhall Square, the situation continued to be of great concern with genuine fear that a pedestrian will be injured. In this respect Peter Hughes-Griffiths had pointed out in an e-mail that he had called a meeting for the 17th September between County Councillors, representatives of the Council's traffic department, the police and the Town Council. A reply was awaited from the Welsh Government for the County Council to be allowed to introduce new parking and access regulations, which would permit photographic evidence to be gathered of illegal parking. Finally, Brian referred to an application by Notts Bar for a licence to serve alcohol until 2am. Members considered that it was not within the remit of the Society to comment on such applications. Brian and the sub-group were thanked for their comprehensive report.
- **Publicity, marketing etc:** No report.
- **Riverside:** No report.
- **Landmark buildings (including Planning):** Trefor reported that a detailed submission had been made to the Planning Authority regarding the application by Lidl to develop on the site of the former police station at Friars Park. As the impact of the application would have a harmful effect on the fabric of the Bulwarks Scheduled Ancient Monument and its setting and was, therefore, contrary to LDP policies SP13, EQ1, GP1 and EQ5, the submission had recommended that the application in its present form be refused. Huw reported that Emma Keller, Conservation Enforcement Officer, had written without success to the owner of the now vacant former Co-operative building in King Street. She had promised to visit the site again to review the condition of the building and attempt to pursue the matter with the owner.
- **Blue plaques:** Mary reported that it was planned the plaques to Alice Abadam and Rachel Barrett be unveiled during the morning of Saturday November 3rd, followed by lunch in the Falcon Hotel. Conversations were continuing with the Old Girls' Association regarding a plaque in Quay Street to commemorate Miss Holmes.

6. Programme of meetings:

Huw asked for assistance with drawing up a programme of meetings for the year ahead. These could include talks by guest speakers or more open public meetings involving other organisations to discuss strategic issues affecting the town. Mary kindly volunteered to bring back some ideas.

7. Civic Society Awards 2018:

Huw reported he was in discussion with the Head of the Model school concerning a suitable date for presenting the school with its award for Promotion of Local Heritage, probably at a school assembly. He would keep the committee members informed.

8. Website:

A meeting arranged for 11th September to make progress on the website had had to be postponed. A new date would be arranged. In response to information that the material already prepared was on a domain that allowed advertising, the view was strongly expressed that this should not happen. If this meant a greater cost, then the Society should bear it.

9. Regeneration Forum:

Huw reported that at a recent meeting of the Carmarthen Town Regeneration Forum he had been asked to chair a sub-group which would review priorities set out within the fifteen year Masterplan, in relation to the public domain and the transport infrastructure. Trefor had also accepted an invitation to join the sub-group.

10. Any other business:

- **Future meetings:** Huw was asked to let Jeremy know the dates of meetings planned for the year ahead so that the room can be booked.