

# Criccieth Town Council

Public Minutes of the Town Council held at 7.00 p.m., Tuesday, **12 November 2019** Council Chamber High Street, Criccieth.

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## Opening prayer

### **1-11/19: Present**

Chair: Cllr. Robert Cadwalader

Cllr. Eirwyn Williams; Cllr. Phil Jones; Cllr. Robert T Price; Cllr. Wayne Roberts  
Cllr Nan Davies Hughes  
Clerk – Dr Catrin Jones.

Mr Cynan Jones for item 10-11/19 a

### **2-09/19 Apologies:**

Cllr. Dr E Tudor Jones; Cllr. Dr Ian Rees; Cllr. William A Evans; Cllr. Dafydd Lloyd; Cllr. Angela Hughes;  
Cllr Sian Williams;

### **3-11/19: Declaration of Interest**

### **4-11/19 Ratification of September 2019 minutes**

The minutes were ratified and signed in accordance with the law.

### **5-11/19 Urgent items and for information (raised by Chair/Clerk)**

*Matters for information only – no decisions allowed*

- a. A public invitation to attend a session by Natural Resources Wales in order to prepare an Area Statement for North West Wales had been received – this information had been shared on the Town Council's website and Criccieth Hub. Registration was necessary. The session to be held at Criccieth Memorial Hall on Wednesday 27 November 2019 between 10 am – 2 pm.
- b. It was noted that Croeso Dolig Criccieth Christmas would be held on Thursday evening 28 November 2019.

### **6-11/19: Correspondence**

- a. Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales draft Annual Report consultation – February 2020 – 15 October 2019  
The draft report had been circulated – the only change being to Decision 47 – Town and Community Councils would be able to pay compensation for financial loss to each one of its members, where this loss was as a result of attending and carrying out an approved duty: Up to £55 for each period not exceeding 4 hours and £111 for each period exceeding 4 hours and not more than 24 hours.

#### **Decision:**

To refer the report to the Finance, Policy and Management Committee for consideration at its meeting on 27 November 2019.

- b. Gwynedd Council – Playgrounds in your Town – 1 November

A letter had been circulated which referred to a series of further efficiency cuts to services and which asked whether the Town Council had an interest in taking over the responsibility for playgrounds in the town: namely Golff Bach and Ty'n Rhos or whether the Town Council knew of any registered community groups willing to take responsibility for managing these playgrounds.

**Decision:**

To respond to Gwynedd Council by declaring the Council's disappointment, concern and objection to cuts which could affect children's playgrounds in the town as these were an important community resource for socialising and which encouraged families to be out in the open air. They offered opportunities to develop children's key skills including physical, emotional and socialisation and was an obvious investment in future generations. Learning through play is important – by making new friends, sharing and networking. However it was too much of a responsibility to transfer management of the playgrounds to the Town Council and more information was required as to what was meant by working in partnership with Gwynedd Council including financial and legal obligations before considering further.

- c. Betsi Cadwalader Stakeholder Reference Group Meeting – September 2019 – 14 October 2019

The report had been circulated.

**Decision:**

To receive the information

- d. BT – consultation of intended public payphone removals – 14 October 2019

The intention of BT to remove a number of public payphones had been circulated – none affected Criccieth

**Decision:**

To receive the information

- e. Un Llais Cymru and VE Day 75 – 15 October 2019

Details had been circulated noting that the Town Council had already agreed in principle to work in collaboration with the Memorial Hall. It would be possible to apply for a grant in support for a community activity and also add to any grant by the Town Council in support of the Memorial Hall.

**Decision:**

To agree to collaborate with the Memorial Hall via the Chair and Clerk and to support the event with financial support the level of which was yet to be decided. The possibility of applying for a grant for a community activity should also be explored.

- f. Welsh Government Guidance re duty under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016 – 23 October 2019

The report by Cllr. Ken Lloyd from Carmarthen Town Council on a workshop "Managing Green Areas for Biodiversity" had been circulated.

**Decision:**

To receive for information noting that the Town Council's measures were being prepared following discussion at the last meeting. One Voice Wales had circulated guidelines on this.

- g. Planning Consultations – 16 October 2019  
Details on the Welsh Government’s consultations had been circulated.

**Decision:**

To receive for information

**7-11/19: Planning Applications**

- a. C19/0991/35/LL A two storey rear extension: Ivy Cottage, Arfonnia, Criccieth LL52 0BD

**Decision:** No objection

**8-11/19: External Audit of Town Council Accounts for 2018-19**

The correspondence from the BDO confirming that they had completed the above audit on 24 September 2019 and also the Annual Return and report of the BDO had been circulated. On the basis of their audit, in their opinion no matters of concern had come to light that the necessary legislative and regulatory requirements had not been satisfied. In accordance with the requirements the Clerk had posted the notice of the result of the audit on the Council’s noticeboard and website for a period of 14 days to note that the public had a right to see the information. The BDO report referred to minor issues in order to make sure that empty boxes in Part 1 of the accounting statements of the annual return should be completed to confirm that there were no figures. Also the BDO recommended that the Council implement the recommendation mad by the internal auditor. The recommendation referred to the income and expenditure spreadsheet which listed individually under the title contributions and donation made during the year and that the power under which the contribution was made should be noted and whether it was under section 137 or not. The Town Council had acted on this (Minute 9-05/19) and had added the power to the spreadsheet. The minutes of the Town Council clearly noted under which power each donation was considered and therefore made. In addition, this had been a criterion tested during the external audit of the 2017-18 accounts.

**Decision:**

The annual return was received and confirmed and it was agreed to act on the minor issues which had been raised and noting that the Town Council had already implemented the recommendation of the internal auditor. The Clerk would write to the BDO to confirm this. The Clerk was thanked for her work.

**9-11/19: Town Council Bank Account**

A letter had been received from HSBC to confirm that they were looking in to the complaint and also an e-mail to confirm that the “safeguarding” verification process had not been completed. It appears that there is a big backlog for July and August. The bank’s system had produced an letter to say that the Council’s bank account had been closed but this was not true as confirmed by the Porthmadog branch. The situation was totally unsatisfactory and unacceptable and it was hope that the situation would be resolved very soon.

**Decision:**

To receive the report and note the unacceptable situation with the bank. It was noted that it had taken up much time to try to resolve this matter.

## **10-11/19 Criccieth Community Plan – update**

### **a. Unique Streets**

Mr Cynan Jones was invited to present his written report which had been circulated to members. This included a satisfactory financial report to confirm that the project spend was within the allocated budget. The unveiling of Howard Bowcott's sculpture on the theme of Robert Graves' "Welsh Incident" on the Maes, 2 November by Lord Dafydd Elis-Thomas, Deputy Minister for Culture, Sport and Tourism had been a very successful and lively event. He said that "This project has combined a number of very important creative and cultural elements – namely a sculpture inspired by a poem based on a specific place, namely Criccieth". It was of enormous benefit to Criccieth as was the Robert Cadwalader's book on Criccieth Shops. The sale of the book would ensure the sustainability of events in support of the High Street. The event had also received attention by S4C's Heno programme. There were a number of tangible legacies to the project in addition to the sculpture and book, namely the Coloured Pencils, the Welsh version of the poem by Twm Morys and the sculptures in the Lion Garden. The creative incident in August had been a great success and had attracted 1,000 people to the Lion Garden which had resulted in a buzzing High Street. The most important unseen legacy was the enthusiasm and hard work of the Business Forum in collaboration with the Town Council which will be the basis of many more activities to be of benefit to the town's economy over the next number of years. It was noted that Criccieth in Bloom had paid for a board of the Welsh Incident poem which would be placed on Criccieth station. However an email had been received from an officer in Gwynedd Council asking questions about the sculpture's positioning – the officer had not responded to prior communication by the Project Officer. The Clerk had responded.

### **Decision**

To thank Mr Cynan Jones for his report, and also the Business Forum and all who had been involved in the work to ensure the success of this special project in collaboration with the Town Council. The Chair was thanked for his work in preparing the book.

### **b. Jet skis**

Nothing to report back – the Clerk had written following the last meeting to ask whether the matter could be considered at the Porthmadog Harbour Meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> October. It was intended to send a copy of the signed petition in support of banning jet skis to the officer at Gwynedd.

### **Decision:**

The Clerk to write to the officer at Gwynedd Council to ask for an update following the meeting on 9<sup>th</sup> October and to ask what timely measures would be put in place for the next season. The concerns of the Town Council should also include the fact that it did not seem to be sufficient investment in appropriate monitoring of the jet ski users to ensure the safety of the public despite the substantial income from licensing which Gwynedd Council received.

### **c. Needs assessment affordable housing –**

Waiting for a report.

### **d. Feasibility Study Old Library**

The draft report had been circulated.

**Decision:** To receive for information and grant time until the next meeting to give members the opportunity to collect observations on the draft report noting that it was essential to resolve legal matters relating to the building with Gwynedd Council before proceeding to consider the report. See below minute 11/11-19. Without a legal agreement on the ownership of the building, it will be difficult to progress this development.

**e. Evacuees' Show and Exhibition – Criccieth Memorial Hall – Remembrance Sunday 2019**

The resounding success of the events in the Memorial Hall on Remembrance Sunday – following the Remembrance Service in the morning there was an exhibition, film and community show to celebrate the Evacuees who came to Criccieth 80 years ago as a result of WW2. The Memorial Hall was full. It evidenced the importance of the Memorial Hall in holding community events thanks to support by Adra Tai and Grwp Cynefin and voluntary work by many including the Starlight Players, the Spyders, U3A, Criccieth in Bloom and many businesses and residents. Gwyneth Glyn and Twm Morys had produced an excellent bilingual script and the art work produced by Ffion Gwyn and students from Coleg Meirion-Dwyfor was special. Pupils from Ysgol Trefferthyr and Ysgol Llanystumdwy had also taken part.

**Decision**

To congratulate the Memorial Hall and everyone involved and to note the Town Council's willingness to consider financial support for extra costs incurred by the show. The Chair and Clerk were thanked for their work on the project.

**11-11/19 Future of Criccieth Town Council Building and Library**

A response had been received from Gwynedd Council offering Criccieth Town Council a "Tenancy at Will" in relation to the use of the building in order to formalise the use of the building in the short term. Also to put measure in place in order to claim that the Town Council was a rightful inheritor of the building including appointing a barrister at an approximate cost of £2,000.

**Decision**

To follow up with the legal department the obligations of a "Tenancy at Will" and agree to pay for a barrister and to share these costs with Gwynedd Council. The Clerk to communicate the decision of the Town Council with the solicitor.

**12-11/19 Groynes and Sea Defences Criccieth**

Cllr. Eirwyn Williams confirmed that a report was being prepared by Gwynedd Council and was likely to be available in the New Year.

**Decision:**

To receive the information

**13-11/19 Transport in Criccieth – complaints and serious incidents**

Nothing to report – to wait to see how the plans put in place by Gwynedd Council worked to slow down the traffic coming in to the town.

**14-11/19 Grass and hedge cutting in the town**

Nothing to report

### **15-11/19 Parking in Criccieth**

Nothing to report.

### **16-11/19 Tree felling Criccieth**

The Town Council was keen to have plan for planting appropriate trees in the town and this was part of the Community Plan. This concurred with the duty of the Town Council as a public body in promoting biodiversity. The excellent being undertaken by Friends of the Nature Garden in the wild garden was noted and how they were working with an officer at Gwynedd Council to ensure appropriate work of quality. This work was of great benefit to the community.

#### **Decision**

Cllr Phil Jones to contact the Woodland Trust and also a specialist to undertaken a survey of the trees in Criccieth. The Clerk to write to the Friends of the Nature Garden to thank them for their work. The Town Council had also written a letter in support of their proposals to extend the Group's licence in order to develop the work.

### **17-11/19 Benches in Criccieth**

The good work by Criccieth in Bloom to renovate the benches around town was noted and another invoice for materials had been presented for payment.

#### **Decision:**

To receive for information noting that the Clerk had written to thank them for their work.

### **18-11/19 Public Footpaths – including Path 11**

Awaiting a response.

#### **Decision**

The Clerk to write again to the Officer at Gwynedd Council.

### **19-11/19 Receipts**

### **20-11/19: Payments**

• HMRC (PAYE)	£34.09 (cheque 101360)
• Clerk's Wages (October)	£755.66 (cheque 101361)
• Clerk's Costs (travel)	£9.90 (cheque 101362)
• Gwynedd Council (audit)	£228.00 (cheque 101363)
• Gwynedd Council (toilets)	£6,000.00 (cheque 101364)
• M Jones	£70.95 (cheque 101365)
• C & M Jones	£1000.00 (cheque 101366)*
• BHIB Ltd	£16.93 (cheque 101367)*

\*Invoices submitted after the publication of the agenda

**Decision:** Permission was granted to the Clerk to pay the bills.

### **21-11/19: Reserved Matters (for members only)**

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The meeting ended at 8.30 p.m.

The next meeting of the Town Council will be held on **Tuesday evening 10 December 2019**.

**\*\*The agenda will close 2 December 2019\*\***