

WELSHPOOL BUSINESS FORUM MINUTES

Of a meeting held in the Council Chamber of the Town Hall on
Monday 20th January 2014 at 7pm

PRESENT WERE:

Cllr S Kaye (Chair), Cllr A Bowen, Cllr B McWhinnie, Cllr D Simms, Alan Crowe, Val Edwards, Freda Davies, Simon Ebres, Christine Holmes, A J Flintham, Susanna Lindsay, Tom Harris, Carol Alexander, Duncan Alexander, Heather Parkes, Mel Parkes, Heather Sherlock, Dean Hammond and Robert Robinson (Secretary).

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllr E Bleivas, Cllr H Evans, Ryhanne Humphreys and Kay Derwas.

2. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting were accepted as a correct record.

3. Actions taken since last meeting

The secretary reported on actions taken since the last meeting as follows:

a) Alcohol Order

The DPPO can only go forward after a survey has been carried out of residents wishes, this is being done within the Community Plan consultation between 17th February and 23rd March.

b) Drainage in Boot Street

The drains have been cleaned in Boot Street.

c) Motte and Bailey

The Town Council has completed the leases on the above project and work starts on the car park and access later this week. The works to the trees and provision of paths to open up the Castle will be completed at the same time, as will the CCTV system.

d) Stead and Simpson Shop

The change of use application from A1 shop to A2 betting shop was refused by Powys County Council but the decision has been appealed by the applicant.

e) Art Project

The Art project for the TIC land is the subject of a planning application and an approval is expected in the next 3 weeks. A meeting with the Artist is taking place tomorrow and it is hoped that the project will be complete not long after Easter.

f) Winter Festival and Christmas Lights

The meeting agreed that both events were good but felt that perhaps the events could be enlarged with more support from the Forum.

g) Large tourist attraction for Town Centre

The secretary has made contact with Visit Wales and they have advised that the first stage is gain public support for a Town Centre attraction. This has been arranged to take place within the Community Plan consultation from 17th February to 23rd March.

h) Cycle Routes

The cycle route plans are progressing and it is hoped they will be able to go forward in the next few months. This is a Powys County Council scheme supported by Welshpool Town Council.

i) Bunting for Town Centre

The new bunting has been purchased so that it can be erected by 1st March ready for St David's Day.

4. Budget Cuts by Powys County Council

The meeting proposed a vote of 'no confidence in the management of Powys County Council'. A letter confirming the dissatisfaction of the businesses in Welshpool is to be sent to Cllr B Thomas and Jeremy Patterson at Powys County Council.

The following statement is to be issued to the media:

WELSHPOOL BUSINESS FORUM

On Monday 20th January 2014 the Businesses of Welshpool attended the Monthly Business Forum hosted by Welshpool Projects.

The businesses discussed the budget cuts proposed by Powys County Council and many had attended the Consultation last Thursday in Welshpool Town Hall.

After much debate a motion of 'no confidence in the management of Powys County Council' was put and voted upon and unanimously passed. A spokesman for the Forum said 'The Welshpool Businesses felt they wanted to give a clear message to Powys County Council that they are very unhappy with the way Powys County Council conducts its business.'

A letter confirming the vote is to be sent to both the Leader of the Council (Cllr Barry Thomas) and the Chief Executive (Jeremy Patterson).

The meeting agreed to invite Cllr M Alexander to the next meeting.

5. Williams Report on County Councils

The meeting noted the results of the Williams Report and in particular that Powys County Council was left as a single unit in the recommendations.

7. Tourism and Marketing

The meeting discussed in some detail the Tourism situation at Powys County Council and what publicity is needed for Welshpool and Mid Wales.

The secretary informed the meeting of the Tourism Meetings held with the attractions and their requests for the type of material produced.

The meeting agreed that the next meeting should discuss in more detail what the businesses might wish to see for 2015. Members were asked to seek out ideas for the meeting to consider.

8. Welshpool Town Council Community Plan

The meeting was updated on the Community Plan consultation which takes place from 17th February to 23rd March.

9. Main Line Train Service

The meeting was updated on progress towards the first phase of an hourly service, improved Coast line service and a scenic train stopping at Welshpool.

10. Ally by W H Smith to Puzzle Square

The secretary is to contact W H Smiths to gain to renovate by decoration the ally next to them and to provide some lighting.

Dean Hammond offered to pay for the works if permission is forthcoming.

11. Puzzle Square block paviours

The secretary is to contact Powys County Council again over the block paviour repairs needed to the area by the paint shop in Puzzle Square.

12. Web site

The secretary is to look into the Discover Welshpool site which appears not to be working properly. There is a new Tourism web site for Welshpool due to be in place by Easter.

13. Date of next meeting

The date of the next meeting is to be Monday 17th February 2014 at 7pm in the Council Chamber of the Town Hall.

14. Actions to be taken forward:

The following actions are to be taken forward:

- i) Alcohol order survey to be carried out.
- ii) Attraction for the Town Centre survey to be carried out.
- iii) W H Smith contact to be made regarding ally repairs
- iv) Contact to be made with PCC over block pavements in Puzzle Sq.
- v) Letters and media release to be arranged regarding the vote of no confidence in Powys County Council.
- vi) Agenda and minutes to be issued early for next meeting.
- vii) Check the discover Welshpool web site.
- viii) Invite Cllr M Alexander to the next meeting.