



Solva Community Council Cyngor Cymuned Solfach

Mr I.A. Bowie
Penrhyn
St Brides View
Solva
SA62 6TB

2nd November 2021

Reference:

- A. Your email dated 16th October 2021 re SCC Matters.
- B. Freedom of Information Act 2000.

Dear Ian and Nigel,

Thank you for your email at Reference A and your letter requesting information under Reference B.

The addendum provides our response. Please note that Solva Community Council (SCC) does not hold recorded information on the registered charity, Solva Edge Festival Ltd (EFL), charity number 1180538, or the now deregistered Solva Recreational Ground (SRG) charity. Any request for information should be redirected to the Solva EFL or the Charity Commission.

From my personal experience as a founder member of the Edge Festival, the event and its impact on the village has been a wholly positive one. The community has embraced the festival and its aims for the 5 years that it has run, bringing internationally renowned musicians, actors, poets, and performers to our community as well as the donation of significant sums of money to the village itself. I am sure I can speak for many in the village who anticipate its return with much enthusiasm.

SCC is one of the most active community councils in Pembrokeshire if not Wales and our members undertake their duties bound by a code of conduct. The council is open and transparent, we publish all minutes in a timely manner, all meetings are advertised openly and conducted in a way that is an exemplar to other councils. During the pandemic SCC continued to meet remotely to support our community and we continue to offer remote access to our meetings.

I remain committed to supporting the people of our community.

Yours sincerely,

J Phillips

Joshua Phillips (Chair SCC)



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Addendum dated 2nd November 2021: Request for SCC Information from Ian and Nigel Bowie.

- 1. Has any member of SCC held any directorships in the Edge Festival and if so please advise of directors names?**

SCC answer: Yes. Josh Philips and Ifor Thomas (Note: Neither are now registered as a trustee of the charity and are not involved in its management).

- 2. Have any Council members of SCC received any financial benefit from the operation of the Edge Festival directly or indirectly.**

SCC answer: No. No member of SCC received any financial benefit from the EFL directly or indirectly.

- 3. Did SCC advance any funds to the Edge Festival Ltd? IF so then please specify the dates and amounts. We require a copy of those minutes agreeing the payment(s) showing who voted to make those payments together with the terms and conditions which have been applied to any payments made by SCC to EFL.**

SCC answer: Yes. £3,200 was advanced to the EFL as seed funding in 2015. Terms and details of the advance are set out in the May 2015 Minutes, attached as requested. In October 2015 the EFL repaid £1,600 to SCC. (Answer 5 also refers).

- 4. Did any member of SCC in their capacity as a councillor or director of EFL or SCC make any enquiries of the Solva Recreation Ground Charity (SRGC) seeking their approval of usage of the recreation grounds or did it go ahead without approval.**

SCC answer: No. No enquiries were made of the SRG seeking approval for the festival to go ahead.

- 5. Did any member of SCC involved in EFL raise monies from the public in any way and where did those monies raised go? Which individuals and or organisations received those monies? Were any monies paid to SCC?**

SCC answer: Yes. Numerous fund-raising events took place which were attended by the public. These were themed suppers. All the money raised went towards the costs required to run the festival each year i.e., hire of tents, deposits to bands, ticketing costs, publicity etc.



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From September 2016 to January 2019 SCC received £7,826.00 from the EFL grant scheme. These were restricted grants to specifically support Solva Youth Services, the Solva firework display, Solva play parks and the purchase of Solva AFC land.

6. Who were the members of SRGC at the material time and if approval given then no doubt SCC has evidence of that? We require sight of that approval.

SCC answer: SCC does not hold recorded information on the now deregistered Solva Recreational Ground Charity. Any request for information should be redirected to the Charity Commission.

7. What discussions were undertaken by SCC as to how the event was to take place upon the recreational ground?

SCC answer: None.

8. We note with interest your notice to cancel the public meeting (due to be held on 27th of July 2021) as you refer to new documents coming to light yet your minutes of 2nd June 2021 refer to a response from the Charity Commission of 11th May 2021. What new documents came to light? Was it the deed of gift in 1964? When was the transfer of the recreational ground first discussed by SCC? Did any counsellor have knowledge of this document prior to July 2021 and if so when?

SCC answer: The Charity Commission response of 11th May confirmed the Solva Recreational Ground was removed from their register on 29th November 2019. In addition, they also referenced provisions of sections 117-123 of the Charities Act 2011 re disposals of charity land. The transfer of the recreational ground was first discussed by SCC when it became known the Charity Commission had deregistered the SRG. The Benefactors of the Deed of Covenant drew the SCC's attention to the Deed and stated that they wanted the requirements of the Deed to be met. The binding nature of the Deed was the factor that caused the SCC to cancel the public meeting due to take place on 27th July. Ifor Thomas had knowledge of the Deed of Gift 1964 as it had been raised by another resident at the time of the second Edge Festival.

9. In your email of 30th July 2021 you state that SCC was never asked for an opinion on the use of the field by the Edge festival. Do you maintain that your counsellors did not have prior knowledge of the contents of this 1964 document? Did SCC give any opinion in view of the impact of this festival?



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SCC answer: In 2015, when EFL seed funding was advanced, SCC was unaware of the 1964 Deed of Gift. When, in subsequent years covenant information came to light, the SCC opinion was the Deed took precedent over land which SCC had no responsibility for at that time. The SCC opinion was that EFL aims wholly fitted the remit of the Deed. Covenant Benefactors supported the EFL and the Solva Recreational Ground Charity had not raised any concern with SCC.

10. In the deed of gift were members aware of the clause in the first schedule of that document which states “.... held upon trust for a recreation ground for the benefit of the inhabitant inhabitants of the Parish of Whitchurch in Dewisland in the county of Pembrokeshire in such manner as the Committee of Management from time to time shall see fit.” this provides you as the Community Council full discretion. Why was this not pointed out and reasons given why the council did not exercise the clear discretion which was and is available?

SCC answer: The Community council felt that the use of their discretion in this matter after consulting with the Benefactors of the Deed was not appropriate. The Benefactors opposed any temporary track across land gifted in the Deed.