



Solva Community Council Cyngor Cymuned Solfach

Minutes of the extraordinary meeting held on Monday 12th August 2024 at 6:15 p.m.
in
Solva Community Clubhouse.

Attended by:

Community Councillor's Gareth Chapman (Chair) Ifor Thomas,
Richard Davies, Rob Richards and Joe Griffin

County Councillor Mark Carter

Clerk & RFO: Bruce Payne

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1. **Welcome and Introduction.** The Chair welcomed all members and one resident..
 2. **Apologies.** Community Councillor's Alyssia Fiander-Houlden, Colin Reynolds.
 3. **Declarations of interest - Personal or Prejudicial.** None.
 4. **Public representations on items of business to be discussed.** None

Items of Business.

5. **Council Tax Premium Consultation 2024** [Council Tax Premium Consultation 2024 - Pembrokeshire County Council](#)

Members expressed strong opposition to the reallocation of funds originally intended for the Affordable Housing Programme (AHP) and the Enhancing Pembrokeshire Grant Fund (EPGF), both of which were supported by the council tax premiums on second and empty homes introduced in 2017. While these premiums were initially meant to be split equally between the AHP and the EPGF to mitigate the negative impacts of second home ownership on Pembrokeshire communities, recent shifts have diverted most of these funds to the general budget of Pembrokeshire County Council (PCC), leaving only 11.25% for the AHP and a mere 3.75% for the EPGF. No funds have been allocated to help bring empty homes back into use.

Members agreed the following actions:

- a. The online Consultation questionnaire to be submitted by individual members. **Action all**



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b. SCC would write to Jayne Bryant MS (Cabinet Secretary for Housing, Local Government and Planning) setting out the concerns SCC had with the proposed changes to Council Tax premiums that would apply for second and long-term empty homes in Pembrokeshire. **Action Gareth and Clerk**

c. Invite Henry Tufnell MP (for Mid and South Pembrokeshire) to talk about second homes and the proposed changes to Council Tax premiums that would apply for second and long-term empty homes in Pembrokeshire. **Action Josh**

6. **AOB.**

a. **AFC junior football kit – SCC Sponsorship Motion.** Proposed by Richard, seconded by Gareth that SCC donate £350 towards the purchase of AFC junior football kit. All members present agreed the motion. The Edge Festival paid £350 for use of the Clubhouse and sports pitch. This would be allocated for the AFC sponsorship grant. **Action Clerk**

b. **Winter Fuel Payments Scrapped.** Rob raised concerns for those in Solva who would suffer. The chancellor had announced that winter 2024 will be the first time pensioners in England and Wales will not be eligible for the payment. Instead, the payments will be restricted to those on benefits and pension credit. Many households in Solva Ward on low incomes may now face living in a cold home this winter, with many forced to make the impossible choice between heating or eating. The issue would be addressed at the SCC September meeting and how the community council could help i.e. "Warm Rooms", and advice made available to those who may be able to claim pension credit. **Action Clerk**

a. **St Davids WRC Threatened Closure.** Mark (County Councillor) updated members about the WRC. Recently I joined other County and Community Councillors from the St Davids Peninsula at a meeting in County Hall to discuss the future of St Davids Waste and Recycling Centre "The Tip". Residents will recall that PCC wanted to shut down this facility in the 2024-5 budget but there was a delay of a year and now the topic is to be reviewed again. PCC have a major financial shortfall predicted over the next 4 years of approx £84M and they are looking for every possible opportunity to make savings. Their argument is that the St Davids WRC is underused and can be replaced by residents using the Manorwen or Winsle, Tiers Cross facility with acceptable travelling distance and that closing the facility will save £70k per year. PCC also argue that Pembrokeshire has 6 WRC facilities whereas our larger Neighbour with more residents in Carmarthen has 4 facilities. It is also



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stated that the St Davids facility has been identified as needing major improvements to meet environmental standards which could cost £250k. There is a counter argument to closure, the most powerful of which was the petition created earlier in the year which produced around 2000 signatures. There will be a severe loss of facilities to the residents of the area and this will be highlighted even more when the black bags change to 4 weekly as has been proposed. The worst affected people will be second home owners who may never be resident when they receive their black bag collections. They will not have a local WRC center to attend.

Whilst some other residents may have little sympathy for part time residents, Second Home owners will be paying around £7k Council tax and receive very little for that large sum of CT, no education or social care and possibly no opportunity to dispose of their waste, hardly fair.. Other considerations are the increased travelling to dispose of waste which can hardly be on the green agenda, and the potential for increased fly tipping.

As your County Councilor, I do not support the closure of this facility at all but will consider supporting further reduction in hours opened if that safeguards its future. I have made my views very clear to Cllr Rhys Sinnett, who is the Cabinet Member for Residents Services and in the meeting he stated he is interested to hear residents' views as to whether the facility should be closed or what residents believe the alternatives are.

I invite and encourage residents in the Solva, St Davids and Llanrhian areas to email Cllr.rhys.sinnett@pembrokeshire.gov.uk by the 27th August 2024 ahead of the report to the Policy Overview and Scrutiny Committee where a recommendation on the way forward will be made

Residents may also wish to have their views heard at the Policy meeting and to do that you will need to email the officer who organises that Committee at least 10 days before the meeting on Tuesday 17th September Her email address isabelle.moorhouse@Pembrokeshire.gov.uk

Once again I am sure all the local Councillors affected by this proposed closure will do all they can to prevent it but please have your say and send an email with your concerns. **Action All**

7. **Date of next meeting.**

- a. Tuesday 3rd September 2024.

Compiled by:

Bruce Payne (Clerk) 14th August 2024



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Signed by: (Chair)

Community Councillor Alyssia Fiander-Houlden