



PENDINE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF EXTRA-ORDINARY MEETING

Meeting held at the Outdoor Education Centre: 7pm – 8.30pm 7th February 2023

Present: A Shaw (Chair), **Councillors:** H Thomas, S Bruce-Goodwin, S Rundle, C Davies, C Thomas-Iles.

Clerk: A Moody

1. Apologies:- Iestyn Comey

2. Declarations of Personal Interest - None

3. MOD sale of Slipway and Top Carpark. (Purchase price £130,000)

At the PCC open meeting on 17th January, the village was consulted for the first time about the 80:20 joint purchase proposal of the slipway with Carmarthenshire Country Council. The Community was not happy about this. Pastor Hadyn asked why the village could not buy the slipway outright from donations from villagers.

Subsequent to this meeting, two individuals came forward with two offers of funds to enable PCC to buy the slipway for the Community. One Community resident offered an interest free loan for the whole £130,000 or any part thereof.

This extra-ordinary meeting was called in order to discuss the potential outright purchase of the slipway with the village, to understand how this could be progressed and to gauge village support.

The Chair presented a PowerPoint presentation on the potential proposed purchase of the top carpark and slipway.

4 options were explained:-

- a. The original proposal of an 80/20 split with CCC having the 80% interest – CCC contributing £104,000, PCC contributing £26,000.
- b. Outright purchase by PCC for the full £130,000, funded by an interest free loan for the full amount from a member of the Community.
- c. Outright purchase by PCC with £104,000 (interest free loan) and £26,000 from allocated PCC funds.

- d. 50/50 split with PCC and CCC each contributing £65,000. PCC using £26,000 of own allocated funds and £39,000 interest free loan.

Affordable repayment terms for the interest free loan were talked through for options 2,3 and 4 on an excel spreadsheet.

Discussion

The 100% option of a full-purchase price loan in order to buy the slipway and top car park was raised in order to see what the Community feeling was on the matter. The other permutations including the joint purchase options with CCC were also put forward to gauge feeling.

A member asked as to when the slipway and top car park were going to be sold and the reply from Councillors was that the sale to CCC was in an advanced stage. DIO who manage sales of MOD land have been tasked with selling as many MOD redundant assets as they can due to the current economic climate.

PCC have managed the slipway in the past and have on occasions paid the MOD a sum of money based on a percentage of the beach parking earnings. Part of the agreement was that the Beach Warden would patrol the MOD section of the Beach to spot hazards so that visitors would not be endangered needlessly, thereby reducing public liability claims on the MOD section of the beach.

The MOD slipway has been used for many years by the public on foot and by vehicle so the question was raised regarding the possibility of there being a right of easement across the CCC roadway and through the MOD slipway onto the beach.

It was also asked whether or not the sale of the slipway could change any access rights which may exist. PCC explained that access rights may have to be negotiated with CCC.

PCC are meeting with a solicitor on Friday 10th Feb. to follow-up on these potential issues to better understand our legal position and will report findings back to the Community.

The question of the current beach access agreement was raised. It appears as though the last agreement with the MOD was in 2003, the year before the beach access was closed (due to the ROSPA report on safety on the beach).

It was revealed that PCC has in the past paid a fee to CCC for access over their roadway through the car park to the top of the MOD slipway.

The issue of maintenance of the slipway was raised. Several comments were made referring to this:-

- “We could lose the slipway in a big storm”,
- “Thirty years ago the slipway was dug out and repaired”,
- “PCC’s agreement has always required PCC to maintain the slipway and repair to their satisfaction”,
- “Partnership with CCC would spread the risk of major slipway repairs”,
- “Owning the slipway would mean that we could maximise events and put money away for future repairs to the slipway”,
- Rob Dorsett enquired into how much income the beach generate”,
- “We could be putting on music festivals as we used to and more events”,
- “Is the Joint Venture off?”,
- “Hot Rods produce £5000”,
- “Will income from the top car park pay for the loan”,
- “The beach is the only asset the beach has and is the safest in Wales”,
- “Will this be put out to a vote for the whole village?”
 - PCC stated that the purpose of the extra ordinary meeting was to gauge feeling of the Community so that a decision could be made in the meeting as the opportunity is slipping away with CCC and MOD rapidly closing the sale.
- “Do we want to open the PCC slipway?”,
- “MOD have the right to shut off their part of the beach”,
- Relationship with MOD is important for future relations”,
- “Finding explosives on MOD section is a big fear”,
- Paul Bowring stated that “CCC offered £35,000 plus the precept totalling £42,000 PCC income (a figure PCC can set a realistic budget with). But now they have done a complete U turn on that previous agreement/offer.”
- “Do CCC want Pendine to be a Blue Flag Beach?”,
- “Do CCC want to take control of the beach”,

PCC own the beach and will not give up the income stream which allows the Community to carry out its functions efficiently.

It was questioned why CCC were buying the slipway when the County Council were trying to close a lot of their facilities as part of their budget cuts in the current economic situation.

It was suggested that historically CCC had made promises to the Community and not live up to those promises.

PCC has assets which make money and any part of a joint agreement should ensure that PCC does not lose out in any way.

It was suggested that the reason CCC wanted to buy the slipway was for the income it generates so that they could be seen to be generating an income to the bodies which provided funds for the museum and hostel.

A show of hands by everyone in the room confirmed that the community was in favour of PCC buying the slipway and car park for the benefit of the Community. Simon Morris indicated that PCC (and its predecessors) have historically acquired land for the benefit of the Community. The loan repayments were deemed a “no brainer” by one villager, based on the top carpark earnings alone (£15,000 in 2022 vs a loan repayment of £5,000/yr for 26 year term).

On this basis, it was unanimously agreed to progress the slipway purchase and formalise the loan approval with Welsh Government,

PCC agreed to update on progress with MOD and CCC at the next meeting.

Other items brought up in the meeting as points of information to the Community

Any other Business

1. LifeGuards From 2023 RNLI has asked PCC to pay 15% of the wages bill for the lifeguard provision plus RPI, this will rise to 60% by 2028

a. 2023 = £3800

b. 2028 = £20,000 plus

2. Motor Home

a. Covenant has been negotiated down to £12,000 paid over 3 years plus MOD legal costs of £500-£600 +VAT. This will be progressed once MOD has finalised internal approval.

ACTION LOG

1. PCC to investigate whether we can claim act of Easement for access to the beach with solicitor on Friday 10th Feb and feedback at next meeting.

2. Progress proposal and loan approval process to purchase 100% of slipway which will involve discussions with MOD & CCC to facilitate this. Community update at next meeting.
3. Settle Covenant on Motorhome site once rubber stamped by MOD. £4,000/yr for 3 years.
4. Respond to RNLI to try and negate incremental costs. Potentially offer a bigger donation. Further update at future meeting to determine long term affordability.