

**Minutes of the hybrid meeting of the Management, Estates and Strategy (MES) Committee  
held on Tuesday 5 December 2023 at 6pm in the Old Wool Market**

<b>Present</b>	Cllr B Simister Cllr J Owens Cllr S Pearce Cllr C Black Cllr P Lewis Cllr R Thomas-Turner Vanessa Lewis Camacho	MES Committee Chairman Chairman of Council / Mayor - Ex-officio MES Committee Vice-Chairman    Town Clerk
<b>Apologies</b>	Cllr T Moses	
<b>Observers</b>	Cllr J Hackett Cllr H Lewis Cllr M Lewis Member of the public	

Cllr B Simister welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**Declarations of interest from Members**

<i>Agenda Item</i>	<i>Member</i>	<i>Interest</i>	<i>Nature of interest</i>
No declarations made			

**Updates on the minutes of the last meeting held on 7 November 2023**

These would be covered as the meeting progressed through Item 5 – Consideration of Action Plans and updates on related matters.

**2023-2024 Action Plans**

**Christmas Lights Switch On**

The event was well attended and, from the feedback received by Council (including via social media) was very well received by the people of Haverfordwest. The Christmas Lights Committee would meet early in 2024 to prepare for the five year re-tender of our contractual partner for the lights.

<b>Resolved:</b>	<b>The Clerk to liaise with Cllr J Hackett to agree timing for schedule a meeting of the Christmas Lights Committee early in 2024.</b>
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**Cemetries**

As discussed at the Full Council meeting on 23 November, 2023 following the cemetery visits undertaken by Cllrs P Lewis, R Thomas and B Simister, the original survey relating to the repair of the wall below Prendergast Lower Cemetery is being reviewed by the Town Clerk to establish if the work which was carried out is complete and if so, what if any of the residual funding from the budget set aside is available to be applied to other repair works.

<b>Resolved:</b>	<b>The Clerk to locate original survey for wall repair at Lower Prendergast Cemetary for further review by the Committee at the next meeting.</b>
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**Community Gardens**

Cllr B Simister noted that Vicki Moller's organisation was happy to take on a sub-let subject to raising a few queries with the Landlord. Contact is being made with the Landlord in this regard. There are a number of interested parties wishing to get involved with the Gardens. 50% of the Lottery funding (£25,000) had already been drawn down. For the next 40% to be released, evidence of this spend would be required. Invoices totalling £41,333.51 (excluding VAT) had been identified which will be submitted to the Lottery organisation online, at which stage the balancing figure of £16,433.51 is requested.

Separately, Cllr P Lewis requested a total breakdown of Council spend on the Gardens for a comparison to be made with the income from the Lottery funding, to establish if there is an excess beyond that. Cllr B Simister noted that this would be difficult to establish due to the staff costs provided by Council which had exceeded the initial estimate of 2 hours per week. Cllr M Lewis suggested there was little point in spending much time on this as it is likely that the records are not complete. Cllr B Simister agreed and that a line needed to be drawn in order to move forward. Cllr P Lewis wished his dissatisfaction with the prior administration in relation to the Gardens to be recorded in the minutes.

### **Priory Saltings**

Cllr B Simister had contacted former Cllr Sue Murray to get a better understanding of the rationale behind former Council members entering into the lease. Her recollection was that there were 3 or 4 different organisations involved and that the cost of maintenance was split with PCC, which Cllr Simister noted was not the case. The Town Clerk had reviewed a copy of the 99-year lease, a copy of which will be circulated to Council. The lease was not transferable but, in general terms, a lease can be surrendered by the mutual consent of both parties or as a consequence of actions taken by the parties under the lease. Meanwhile the board walk (damaged by an act of arson) and steps, which Council members who visited the site feel are a hazard, as well as main entry into the Saltings had been fenced off and signage erected stipulating strictly no entry by the public.

<b>Resolved:</b>	<b>The Clerk to circulate a copy of the Priory Saltings lease to Council for further discussion at the next meeting.</b>
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**Sports Pavilion:** No update other than the Town Clerk and Groundsman were implementing regular legionnaires testing at the site.

**Picton Centre:** The Town Clerk had made contact with a representative in the PCC Legal team to establish what issues are outstanding which have delayed the signing of a lease, noting that PCC had been permitted to occupy the property based on some agreed Heads of Terms. At the time of the meeting a response had not been received from PCC (the individual had a vague out of office message on their email) but this will be followed up. Clearly, the matter of unpaid rent and other maintenance costs being incurred by the Council in the period since PCC's occupancy was totally unsatisfactory. The Committee discussed putting pressure on PCC. Cllr P Lewis proposed serving a Freedom of Information Request on PCC which was seconded by Cllr R Thomas-Turner. Cllr R Thomas noted that this would delay matters for another 28 days. Consequently, the motion was amended to allow the Town Clerk to speak with PCC to resolve the issue in the first instance before proceeding with a Freedom of Information Request. The Committee discussed PCC charges incurred by the Council i.e. for electoral services, and if these were up to date. The Town Clerk was asked to establish amounts raised by PCC and what, if any, were outstanding.

<b>Resolved:</b>	<b>The Clerk to speak with PCC and report back on progress of PCC/lease discussion and any outstanding monies owed by Council to PCC, at the next meeting.</b>
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### **Items for next agenda**

- 1) Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service (MAWWFRS) – Community Risk Management Plan 2040 (Engagement Presentation: Peter Phillips, Haverfordwest Station Manager)
- 2) Consideration of Draft Action Plans for 2024-25

**With no further business to consider, the meeting was at 6.32pm.**