

**Minutes of the hybrid meeting of the Management, Estates and Strategy (MES) Committee
held on Tuesday 6 February 2024 at 6pm in the Old Wool Market**

Present Cllr J Owens Chairman of Council / Mayor - Ex-officio
 Cllr P Lewis
 Cllr S Pearce MES Committee Vice-Chairman
 Cllr R Thomas-Turner
 Cllr T Moses

In attendance Vanessa Lewis Camacho Town Clerk

Apologies Cllr C Black, Cllr B Simister (MES Committee Chairman)

Observers Cllr R Thomas
 Member of the public

In the absence of Cllr B Simister the meeting agreed that Cllr P Lewis, who was present in person, to Chair 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 matters arising from minutes of the last meeting held on 9 January 2024 (approved by Full Council on 25 January 2025)

The Clerk has provided a summary report to Council covering Agenda items 3 and 4. The following items were discussed in more detail.

Priory Saltings – the Clerk read out the email exchange with insurers who had confirmed that the measures described by the Clerk which Council were taking to mitigate risk and ensure the safety of the public would allow for the Public Liability coverage to continue. Insurers had not wished to have sight of the latest (or previous) Risk Assessment but did state that a copy needed to be stored as in the event of a claim it may be requested. The measures the Clerk discussed with the insurers included:

- 1) installing signage (highlighting slip/trip hazards resulting from uneven/muddy surfaces and users enter at their own risk) at Clay Lane entrance and at North end of the board walk (Priory ruins entrance);
- 2) improving the surface using Gravel/hardcore in the area of the former board walk; and
- 3) maintaining the gravel/hardcore on the steps leading down to the board walk area, rectifying the one riser which is not parallel to the other risers at the base of the steps; and adding a handrail (albeit the latter was deemed to be an improvement not necessary for steps in similar settings).

The Clerk had also established that, under the policy, the board walk was insured as an ‘additional item’ and therefore the Council could submit a claim for its replacement. Council discussed the potential for increased premiums as a result of making an insurance claim versus not making a claim. The general consensus was that a claim for the board walk should be pursued.

Cllr T Moses proposed that signage is installed and the site is re-opened as soon as possible, while the other improvements are made. This was seconded and put to a vote with a result of 2 voted for and 2 voted against the proposal. Using his casting vote as Chair of the meeting, Cllr P Lewis, confirmed that the matter be brought to the Full Council meeting on 22 February 2022. Meanwhile the Clerk would speak again with insurers in pursuance of making a claim and to try to establish if the insurer would be happy for the site to be re-opened once signage is installed and while the other improvements (above) are being implemented.

Recommendation:	Priory Saltings to be added to agenda for the Full Council meeting on 22 February 2024. Clerk to report back on contact with insurer/board walk claim
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Sports Pavilion – Clerk confirmed that quotations are being obtained to replace the height restriction barrier in the car park (following approval at Full Council on 25 January 2024).

Old Wool Market (OWM) Development – no update other than general paintwork, immediate repairs and other improvements being carried out to make the offices more welcoming and comfortable for staff and members of the public attending the offices for meetings. More needs to be done to improve Council's meeting facilities as a priority.

Recommendation:	OWM Task & Finish Groups (T&FG) to meet as soon as possible and to bring a recommendation to Full Council
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Civic and other town events, including 2024 National Sheriff's Association AGM (being hosted by Council in Haverfordwest end-September 2024) – the Sheriff's AGM T&FG had met on 31 January. Cllr P Lewis proposed that updates are brought to Personnel, Policy and Finance (PPF) Committee meetings. This was seconded by Cllr R Thomas, who is leading this T&FG. Cllr S Pearce noted contact made by a jousting event provider, which Cllr R Thomas noted the T&FG had considered.

Recommendation:	Updates on the T&FG to be brought to PPF (not MES) Committee meetings
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Terrence Higgins Trust Memorial Garden – options for a suitable location for the garden were being discussed, including at the Upper Racecourse, and in conjunction with Pembrokeshire County Council (PCC). Cllr T Moses suggested making contact Hywel Dda Health Board in case there was potential to include the garden at a Withybush green location. Cllr J Owens noted that Scolton Manor was also being considered. She requested that if Councillors had any further suggestions to bring firm proposals back to Council. Cllr T Moses then proposed that all opportunities are therefore explored and brought to the Full Council meeting on 22 February. This was seconded. All voted in favour.

Recommendation:	Councillors to follow up opportunities and to bring firm offers to Full Council Meeting on 22 February 2024
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Cllr R Thomas-Turner left the meeting at 6.30 p.m.

Further updates on matters relating to:

- a) **Christmas Lights Sub-Committee** – had not yet met.
- b) **Cemeteries** – up-to-date quotations are being sought for repair works to the damaged wall at St Martin's cemetery, the railings and the Upper and Lower Prendergast cemeteries, and additional equipment for the groundsmen. Heras fencing had been removed from St Martin's cemetery.
- c) **Community Garden** – the completion and expenditure report had been submitted to the National Lottery Heritage Fund and the second and final tranche of the funding had been received. Cllr J Owens acknowledged, and relayed thanks on behalf of the Council, for the work by Vanessa Rawsthorne in bringing this matter to a conclusion. Cllr S Pearce noted the half-term event at the Garden on Friday 16th February which had been posted on the Council's social media page.
- d) **The Picton Centre** – the Clerk had responded to solicitors on the few points raised by PCC on the lease. A list of items of expenditure incurred by Council since PCC occupancy on 1 April 2022, which will be recovered from PCC at completion, is being drawn up, using information now being accessed from Edge Accounting system.

e) Website and Social Media pages – efforts are being made to improve the Council's website.

2024-25 Action Plans

The Clerk noted that activity against prior year plans and ongoing action plans were being reviewed as part of the budget/precept work using up-to-date information from the Edge Accounting system. In future years these plans would be developed earlier, in September, ahead of a budget/precept decision-making process in December.

Items for next agenda – none.

The meeting concluded at 6.50 pm.
