

**Notes of Special Meeting Of Llanwrtyd Town Council and Interested Parties held on Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2014 at the War Memorial Institute at 7:00pm regarding the Closure of the public toilets in Llanwrtyd Wells.**

**Present:**

**Councillors:** P. Tonks, J Rowlands, L. Haines, R. Thomas, N. Price, B. Hodges, A. Jones

**Event representatives:** Mr L Ketteringham, Mrs. C. Ketteringham (Green Events)  
Mr. G Green (WAG)

**Interested Parties:** Ms. J. Duncan (Llanwrtyd Tourism)

**Officer from Powys County Council;** Mr. A. Knox

**In attendance:** Mrs Lynn Ball (Clerk to Town Council)

**Apologies for Absence:** Cllrs. P. Lambkin, T. Van Rees, P. James, G. Rowlands Mr N. Delafield (Red Kite Events)

Councillor Rowlands opened the meeting by welcoming all present and in particular Mr. A. Knox from Powys County Council.

A list of questions, compiled by the Chair Cllr J. Rowlands was circulated to all present (a copy of which Mr Knox and Councillors had had beforehand).

**1. What would happen to the ownership of the toilets?**

Mr Knox outlined two options:

- a) The Town Council could buy them for a nominal fee of £1:00 through a Community Asset transfer- PCC would set it out and take it to Cabinet for approval.
- b) The Town Council could take on a lease of 25years (with break clauses if needed).
- c) A trial lease of 12 months is available. The lease holder would be the Town Council.

**2. Can they be purchased?**

If a private body wanted to buy the property then Powys would put it on the open market.

If the Town Council bought it and then wanted to sell it privately then the PCC would claw back a certain amount of the sale. The Town Council would be most likely body to buy the toilets even if it allows another organisation to run them.

At present no deeds can be found for the building and Powys may need to go back to Land Registry to verify ownership if deeds can't be found.

**3. How is the insurance of the toilets currently arranged and why is it so difficult to get information from PCC about the cost?**

Insurance at Powys County Council is gained for a block of assets, not individual buildings, therefore it is difficult to identify individual insurance premiums. For working purposes we were informed that the building is 20square metres and insurance was based on £2400 per square metre plus 20%. Potential value for insurance purpose based on these figures would be £57,000

All liability would pass to the owner of the site.  
We would need ;  
Public liability  
Employers liability  
Professional Indemnity

#### **4. Does a valuation exist for the toilets?**

Not as such - see above for insurance purpose

#### **5. Will PCC carry out any repairs that are currently needed before a handover?**

NO

#### **6. What are the maintenance issues that might regularly occur?**

At present there is a light not working and one of the taps is dripping.  
Things that generally go wrong are:

- lights
- toilet seats
- hand dryers
- water issues

The lease for the hand dryers currently installed has been terminated but this does not mean that the dryers will be removed as the contract has "been bought out". Current hand dryers will remain in situ.

PAT testing needs to be carried out on a regular 3/5 year cycle. Powys County Council has recently done PAT testing (December 2013) and so this will not need doing for a few years. The report will be forwarded to Town Council should the ownership be transferred.

Legionella testing is done on a risk assessment basis on a rolling programme every 5/6 years. It was reported that shower head taps were a cause of concern as they tend to harbour Legionella bacteria.

We could just have a cold water supply in the toilets.

#### **7. What do we need to know about health and safety and risk assessment issues?**

Any employer with 5 or more employees needs to have risk assessments.  
COSHH training would be necessary for any cleaners to enable them to deal with hazardous substances effectively.  
All documentation relating to the Toilets would be handed over as a "transfer pack" should ownership be transferred.

#### **8. How often are the toilets inspected and by whom?**

Currently there are regular inspections - if transfer happened it would be the responsibility of the management committee to ensure there was a Record of inspection possibly in the form of an Inspection Record Book as an "audit trail". There would be no inspection from Powys or the Welsh Government.

#### **9. Why do we have to pay rates?**

As a precept receiving Council we cannot be exempt from rates.  
Currently Powys give grants but it is not clear whether this is to continue. If it is withdrawn the Town Council/Management Group would be responsible for the cost of rates. The current rate is believed to be £245.00  
Mr Knox then outlined the historical "damping scheme" where bodies were given monies on a sliding scale of £1500, £1000 £500 according to the size of the premises.

Questions were asked whether water was metered and what water charges are generally. The water is not metered in Llanwrtyd toilets and both water and sewerage would be charged according to our rates.

#### **10. What legal issues do we need to be aware of and what contractual arrangements will need to be made?**

The management Group would need to ensure they were "au fait" with

- COSH requirements,
- RIDDOR (reporting of injuries, diseases, dangerous occurrences regulations 2013)
- PAT testing
- Legionella Testing
- Health and Safety issues relating to volunteer workers.

All other legal issues relating to the handover would be dealt with by Powys County Council. If the Town Council employed legal advice it would be responsible for any costs incurred.

#### **11. Would members of the community involved in the cleaning need certificates and training?**

Yes- for the first two items at question 10

#### **12. How often should the toilets be cleaned?**

Currently the toilets are cleaned once a day, Monday to Friday, for half an hour but this would be at the discretion of the management group should ownership be transferred. Every other day cleaning seemed a reasonable possibility.

Discussion then ensued about having unisex toilets, having just one toilet open non-busy times and fully open for event days and making the building a changing facility. (It was pointed out that once we start changing the purpose of the building any changes would have to comply with current standards and could prove costly.)

We do have volunteer cleaners at the present time.

#### **13. When were electrical and legionnaires testing last done and how often do they need to be done? Will PCC carry out such tests before handover?**

This issue was answered in question 6

#### **14. What will PCC do towards helping with a transfer?**

Powys County Council would sort out all paper work regarding the handover. They would always be on hand for advice, before and after the transfer. They could provide relevant training

They would provide an annual grant of £1500.00 (when this was questioned as to how long this would continue Mr. Knox could not give a definitive answer but was fairly confident that the grant would be in place for some time.

Cllr. Rowlands outlined existing and estimated costings:

- Rates £245.00
- Electricity £410.00
- Water £452.00 (using Glasebury figures)
- Sewerage £563.00 (using Glasebury figures)

Total cost: £1670

This does not include the extra insurance premiums which might be incurred and as yet we have no indication what this might be nor the likely cost of repair and maintenance.

Questions were raised about the high potential cost of water and sewerage but it was pointed out that this would be charged under business rates rather than domestic rate.

**15. Should a community group agree to take over the running of the toilets what would be the responsibilities of the Town Council?**

The Town Council would have responsibility for the premises and would receive the grant. They could then hand over the responsibility for the actual running of the toilets to a management committee who would be responsible for the day to day running of the premises.

It was suggested that the issue of setting up the management group as a charity could be explored as this would make it exempt from rates.

Mr Knox gave us details of how to access other community groups that have been through the process and will forward us contact details for the Welshpool Town Clerk and the Llanidloes clerk to council.

Residual liability would always rest with the Town Council.

**16. Should following further discussions after this meeting we agree that the town is in a position to take over the running of the toilets what are the next steps?**

Decide ourselves whether or not we can form a management group to take over the running of the toilets. This must be done by 31<sup>st</sup> March.

All paperwork thereafter will be handled by Powys County Council.

**17. The Abergwesyn Public Toilets were transferred to Llanwrtyd Town Council a few years ago. Are we eligible for the £500 grant offered to communities under the Community Damping Scheme ?**

Mr. Knox to query this and report back.

**Other issues**

Possibilities of Charging the Public for the Service

The following were discussed:

- Charge on cubicles – this would be possible.
- Honesty box – this is viable.
- Turnstile charging (It was pointed out that the "Public Conveniences Turnstile Act" in Wales forbid the use of turnstiles as access to the "Gents".)

The issue of whether we could just have a disabled toilet was discussed together with the issue of change of purpose for part of the building.

Cllr. Rowlands thanked Mr Knox for coming to the meeting and everyone for attending. He suggested that the event representatives should arrange for a meeting with Town Council representatives to discuss all the issues and decide whether there could be a viable management group formed to run the toilets.

It was agreed that this should happen after the next Town Council meeting.

Alastair Knox would provide us with:

- Contacts for the town clerks at Welshpool, Llanidloes and Llandrindod who have been through this process.
- A breakdown of the costs of repair and maintenance for a 12 month period.
- Rateable value