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Minutes of the **remote Assets, Resources and Projects Committee**, held via Zoom video-conferencing **27 September 2021** at 6.30pm.

**PRESENT:** - Councillors: Mair Rowlands (Chair), Medwyn Hughes (Deputy Chair, *joined the meeting at 7.12pm*), Elin Walker Jones, Huw Wyn Jones, John Wynn Jones, Enid Parry, Nigel Pickavance (*left the meeting at 8.00pm*), Gareth Roberts, Luke Tugwell, Derek Hainge, John Wyn Williams (*joined at 6.42pm*), Dylan Fernley (*joined at 6.40pm*)  
Officers:- Iwan Williams (City Director), Delyth Davies (Translator), Sioned Jones (Minutes); Dafydd Einion Jones and Alys Lloyd Jones (Gwyedd Council, for Agenda Item No.4)

### **109/21 APOLOGIES**

Apologies were received from Their Worship the Mayor, Councillor Owen Hurcum

### **110/21 DECLARATION OF FINANCIAL INTEREST OR PERSONAL CONNECTION**

Dim.

### **111/21 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

None. Freddie Jones (Bangor Market Company) was invited for agenda item No.5.

### **112/21 'OUR AREA 2035 REGENERATION FRAMEWORK: DISCUSSION WITH GWYNEDD COUNCIL**

Dafydd Einion Jones, Gwynedd Council Community Support Officer was welcomed to the meeting, along with Alys Lloyd Jones. Dafydd gave some background to the Framework, explaining that he was not just asking for a wish list, but for ways of achieving any aspirations. There was a strong emphasis on forming partnerships, something which is already happening in Bangor. As the first step in the process, members had already received a letter with questions to consider, which could be summarised as what is good and not so good about Bangor. There followed a lively discussion, where it was noted that some of the good points also brought problems in their wake.

- The University is a huge presence, bringing jobs and wealth to the city. However, there was a feeling that the city centre has been submerged by student accommodation.
- The railway is an asset for Bangor but it needs to be joined up to other means of transport in the city.
- The city centre has deteriorated significantly over the years, with shops and offices moving out of the centre. There is a need to think of imaginative way of using the High Street. Bringing entertainments into the centre, such as cinemas, bowling alley etc. Consider changing opening and closing times for shops and possibly having some areas under cover.
- Some units could be reconfigured so that they're more attractive to small businesses.
- Is there too much emphasis on the High Street? Should think about taking advantage of other areas, e.g. the Pier could be an attractive and vibrant area in the evenings.
- One member felt that too much focus was given to the High Street. Bangor is a regional centre, thanks to the hospital and the university. It lies within reach of several areas that are protected for their scientific interest and natural beauty, and it is literally between

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the mountains and the sea. While proud to be multi-cultural, it is also the most Welsh city in the world. "Let us celebrate what we've got!"

- One thing everyone agreed on was that it is the people that are Bangor's biggest asset. Several community groups were mentioned, groups that have done excellent work in the past e.g. Maesgeirchen Partnership, The People of Bangor Community Group, Friends of Bangor Garth Pier; these have been responsible for organising large and small events in Bangor such as the Carnival. Funding is a constant problem and the Regeneration Department could help with writing bids for external funding.
- Need to think about partnerships/ systems that have worked well in the past and consider using these in a more efficient way or build new partnerships. It was also stressed that the residents of Bangor need to be included in discussions as well.

Dafydd thanked everyone for their valuable comments. He said that the intention was to include more ideas from the public over the next few weeks. He said that members were welcome to send any further comments to him.

## **113/21 BANGOR MARKET PROPOSALS: DISCUSSION**

Freddie Jones from the Bangor Market Company was welcomed to the meeting. Bangor Market Company will be responsible, with the Council, for co-ordinating the work of setting up a new market. Freddie talked about the company's background as well as the legal context. Bangor Market Company is now keen to organise a market in Bangor once more, in order to attract much needed footfall to the city.

Two proposals had been received from companies expressing an interest in running the market and members had already seen and discussed these in a previous meeting.

Following discussion, there was a consensus for the favoured option. Everyone was enthusiastic about the prospect of having a market in Bangor again but there were one or two concerns -

- the layout of the market will need to be planned carefully so that it doesn't intrude too much on nearby shops
- consideration will have to be given to parking for the vehicles coming with the market
- the Council's language policy will need to be made clear to operators

Freddie Jones agreed with the Council's favoured option and said that he was looking forward to working with the Council on setting up the market.

## **114/21 'WELCOME TO BANGOR' PROJECT UPDATE**

Councillor Pickavance had led on the campaign to upgrade the 'Welcome to Bangor' sign on the Llandygai approach to the city. A new sign had been designed and members had been sent two versions of it for their consideration. Cllr Pickavance explained that the idea was to move the sign further down from its present location, and to improve that area generally by placing the sign on a low wall, surrounded by raised beds, trees and benches. The preparatory work had been a partnership effort and several applications for grant funding had been made with some success, to e.g. the Conwy Valley Railway Fund, Môn a Menai, Keep Wales Tidy. The cost of one sign is around £650 and the intention is to replace the signs at the other two approaches to Bangor as well.

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The information was noted and Cllr Pickavance was thanked for his efforts. The final design would need to be approved and members also expressed their willingness to help in a practical way when appropriate, e.g. planting flowers etc.

This led to a general discussion about signage in the City, especially to direct people to the Pier, as it was believed that the present signs are not very clear. A suggestion was made to erect a sign that would direct people to the car park by the Crossville Club so that they could walk from there to the Pier.

## **115/21 MAESTRYFAN COMMUNITY PROJECT UPDATE**

Councillor Elin Walker Jones reported on this item as she, together with Cllr Gwynant Roberts, had been working on the project with local residents. A group had formed to try and improve the playing field which was in very poor condition. Since then, many of the area's residents had come together, with one of them inspiring everyone with his enthusiasm. Securing funding to improve the playing field is a long term target but a grant application to the Môn a Menai fund is ongoing and Gwynedd Council has approved planning for a community garden on 'Cae Doctor'. The idea is to plant raised beds, picnic benches and fruit trees.

Members were very supportive, however, one member believed that it was time to consider all of Bangor's playing fields as they all seem to look faded and uninteresting. He felt that it was even more important to upgrade them these days, with people not being able to move from home so much. He asked that the Council give attention to this issue in the next meeting.

It was noted that lack of funding from Gwynedd was responsible for the poor condition of these play areas, and it was time to seek funding from elsewhere. Cllr Pickavance said that if an Adventure Trail is created in these parks, then grants can be applied for from Sports Wales as they are considered good for physical well-being. Sources such as *Comic Relief* can be useful here too.

## **116/21 COMMUNITY ASSETS: CITY DIRECTOR UPDATE**

The City Director had already circulated an update to members. To add to the paper:

Bangor Pier: The City Director elaborated on the bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund, he said that there had been very useful discussions but now it is necessary to seek funding that will allow the Council to recruit someone to work on the project. The advice from HLF is that there would be more chance of success were the Council to bid for the larger projects category, worth £250k-£300k.

Because of the general problem with supplies coming through, there is a delay with the Linkspan project and the pumping station. Because of the latter, the toilets in the café remain closed and the public conveniences by the Pier were supposed to close at the end of October. However, Gwynedd Council has given an assurance that they will be open until the end of the year.

Although the scheme to offer an annual pass for the Pier was approved and seems to be working well generally, thanks to the effort of Friends of Bangor Garth Pier, there was a

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general feeling that £25 year for visitors not living in the LL57 area was too high, and the suggestion was to reduce this to £10.

It was proposed to reduce the price for visitors to £10 and introduce a lifelong pass for £25. **IT WAS RESOLVED** to accept this.

Parking on the Pier has become difficult at busy times as the scaffolding is still in place, also parking permits had been given to Garth residents in the past. The City Director explained that the scaffolding and portacabins would remain in place for some time until work on the projects was completed. It was proposed not to issue parking permits for Garth residents in order to give priority to visitors to the Pier and **IT WAS RESOLVED** to accept this.

One member said that there was an intention to hold a Halloween event on the Pier and volunteers would be welcome on the night.

The other items were as on the update. The excellent collaboration with Adra housing association in Diana Gardens was praised; and **IT WAS RESOLVED** to send a letter to Adra thanking them for their co-operation.

Forthcoming events. The City Director drew attention to the following:

31 October – Bangor Half Marathon and 10k (using the Pier)

5 November – the Bangor Lions Club does not intend holding the Fireworks night this year due to a lack of volunteers. What about the Council? It was noted that only 5 weeks remain to organise it. The City Director to discuss internally. The Pier would be one option.

14 November – Remembrance Sunday. Invitations will be sent soon.

10 December – the Awyr Las charity has expressed a wish to reorganise an event on the Pier. They would like to launch their campaign on this date. This would be to raise funds for Awyr Las but also to have a defibrillator on the Pier.

December – Christmas lights. The cost will be shared with Bangor First. There could be a delay in the delivery of the lights so locations for placing the lights this year will need to be considered.

## **117/21 WELSH GOVERNMENT PLACE MAKING GRANT APPLICATION: CITY DIRECTOR UPDATE**

The City Director stated that the application was still live. Members were reminded that this was a bid for £100k encompassing 6 themes. Welsh Government could contribute £70k but match funding would have to be found for the remainder. The detailed applications had already been sent to members. The money would have to be spent before the end of March 2022. The City Director asked members to consider committing £10k of the match funding. **IT WAS RESOLVED** unanimously to commit £10k match funding.

## **118/21 INVOICES FOR PAYMENT AND COUNCIL FINANCES**

Member approved the payment of invoices as detailed on the schedule to a total of £23,877.

**119/21 ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING**

- (i) City's Playing Fields – see 115/21 above
- (ii) Appearance of the High Street – members said that the city's pavements are still looking unkempt and there have been instances of anti-social behaviour recently. A letter had been received from the mother of a new student, concerned about what she had seen on the High Street around the Wood Fired Shack/Cathedral area. The City Director said that a meeting was planned in a few days with Siân Gwenllian MS, to discuss reports from the police and the business community, and he will report back in the next meeting.

**The meeting came to an end at 8.41pm**

CITY DIRECTOR– Iwan Williams – CYFARWYDDWR DINESIG