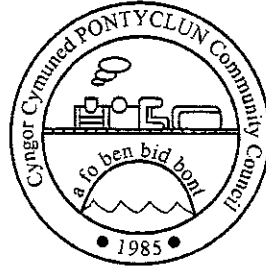


## Cyngor Cymuned Pontyclun

## Pontyclun Community Council

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Minutes of the March monthly meeting of the Pontyclun Community Council held in Ysgol Gynradd Gymunedol Gymraeg, Llantrisant, Ffordd Cefn yr Hendy, Miskin, Pontyclun at 7.00 p.m. on Tuesday, 13 March, 2012.

**PRESENT:** Community Councillors P Griffiths, R G Norman, M Rea, and C Willis

**Also in attendance:** Ten members of the public.

1. **Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors J V Huish and S Rogers.

2. **Declarations of interest**

The following declarations of interest were made:

**Councillor P Griffiths** for agenda item 6(a) – "I am a member of the Pontyclun Community Trust"

**Councillor R G Norman** for agenda item 7(b) – "I am a member of the Management Committee of the Pontyclun Community Centre"

**Councillor M Rea** for agenda item 7(g) - "I am a member of the Borough Council's Development Control Committee"

3. **Residents' concerns**

**Mr A R Lane**

- (i) **Pontyclun Action Group and Pontyclun Ward Community Trust**

*Cade A. Willis*

Mr Lane wished to advise the Community Council that he had resigned from both organisations.

Mr Lane's comments were noted.

(ii) **Proposed creation of flower beds**

Mr Lane referred to the sub committee meetings of the Council which had met and discussed the proposed creation of an additional flower bed in Pontyclun. He asked for the name of the organisation.

**RESOLVED:** That the Clerk research the matter and advise Mr Lane of the name of the group.

**Dr. Brendan O'Reilly**

Dr. O'Reilly referred to item 7(c) on the Council's agenda and the report of the Clerk contained at Appendix 5.

Dr. O'Reilly wished the Council to know that he was against the proposal to fill the vacancy by co-option for the remaining monthly meeting of the of the Council's term of office.

**RESOLVED:** That Dr O'Reilly's comments be noted.

4. **Police matters**

(a) **Reports from the police**

Councillor Rea reported that although a representative from the police was not present he had, earlier that day, spoken to PC Mike Perry and obtained a crime report for the previous month.

The report showed that there had been 23 crimes in the month. While this appeared to be a significant increase on the number of crimes reported in the previous month, this was due to the fact that some crimes needed to be recorded separately although in practice there had been one incident.

As examples, Councillor Rea highlighted incidents of the theft of ten batteries and four charity boxes. While there had been two separate incidents, the thefts needed to be recorded in police records as 14 crimes thus increasing the number of recorded crimes.

Councillor Rea also advised that during the previous month the police had been very active in targeting scrap metal dealers across Rhondda Cynon Taf. A number of issues had arisen

including waste management control and the use of "red" diesel for private purposes.

During the month the police had also carried out an operation on speeding vehicles in Groesfaen.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

(b) **Reports from Members**

There were no reports from Members.

5. **Minutes of the Council's meeting of 14 February, 2012**

A Member challenged the accuracy of minute 8(b).

The Chairperson gave a summary of the events that had led to a letter being sent on behalf of the Council in response to misleading public statements about the Community Council. The letter asked that the misleading statements be corrected at a later public meeting.

In the absence of a statement being made at the public meeting, or any response to the Council's letter, the Community Council had asked for a copy of its letter to be placed in Community Council noticeboards in order that the public were made aware of the facts.

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the Council's meeting of 14 February, 2012, be approved as an accurate record.

6. **Matters arising**

(a) **Proposed lease of land**

(Councillor Griffiths declared a personal but not prejudicial interest in this item of business. He elected to remain in the Council chamber but did not take part in any discussion)

The Clerk reported that he had referred the challenge to the map accompanying the proposed lease to the Community Council's solicitor.

The informal view of the Council's solicitor was that there was no validity in the challenge but that he would carry out further investigations into the claim.

In anticipation of a formal reply from the solicitor the Clerk had placed the item on the agenda for that evening's meeting. However, the reply had not yet been received.

A Member wondered whether the additional investigations being carried out by the Council's solicitor would result in the Community Council having to meet additional legal fees. If additional legal fees would be payable it would not be as the result of an issue raised by the Pontyclun Ward Community Trust.

**RESOLVED:** That the Clerk contact the solicitor for:

- (i) an indication on when a definitive reply to the challenge would be received
- (ii) clarification on whether additional legal fees would become payable.

(b) **Freedom of Information request**

The Clerk reported that following the recent request for information under the Freedom of Information Act, a response had been provided within the 20 working days period.

The Clerk highlighted the time-consuming nature of requests for information under the Act. He pointed to the fact that principal councils were in a better position to meet deadlines since they had greater resources. The Pontyclun Community Council had one part time employee to meet requests and to attend to other work of the Council.

The Clerk also reminded the Council of the additional pressures faced by the Council in 2012 due the need for the external auditor to audit all community and town councils' accounts three months earlier than in previous years. Before the accounts could be externally audited they needed to be balanced, internally audited, and reported to the Council before being provided to the external auditor in a specified format.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) That the Clerk's concerns be noted.
- (iii) That One Voice Wales be contacted to find out whether any advice was available in dealing with requests under the Freedom of Information Act which were considered by the Council to be frivolous.

(c) **Standing Orders**

A Member queried what he claimed to be an inconsistency in Standing Order 52 for the procurement of contractors.

The Clerk responded that Standing Order 52 made specific provision for recommendations by Members for the procurement of contractors provided that Members gave a written reference on ability and experience of the contractor. The Standing Orders had been approved by the Community Council and copies provided to all Members.

In the case of the of refurbishment work at the Pontyclun conveniences, the plan to also invite tenders on the Council's website, from notices in Council noticeboards, and from a public advert in the Pontypridd Observer had been endorsed, in writing, by the Procurement Division of the Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council.

**RESOLVED:** That the comments of the Clerk be noted.

7. **Matters reported for decision**

(a) **St. Paul's Church, Pontyclun**

Mr Dave Allen from St Paul's Church gave a presentation to the Council on the plans to improve community use of the Church by building an annex to the existing structure. Illustrations of the annex were shown to Members.

Plans had been drawn up for the annex to utilise a plot of "dead" land between the Church and the Church Hall. The proposed annex would contain kitchen and toilet facilities. Long term plans envisaged linking the proposed annex with a rebuilt Church Hall where provision would be available for an expanded youth club, exhibitions, demonstrations and other community activities.

Initial costings for the proposed annex had shown the cost of work to be in the region of £109,000 but with additional fittings the cost was likely to be in the region of £167,000. Around £72,000 had already been raised but a further £65,000 was needed to complete the work. Of this amount it was hoped that grants could be secured for around £35,000.

Mr Allen wondered whether the Council might consider making a grant towards the cost of constructing the annex.

The Council thanked Mr Allen for his informative presentation.

**RESOLVED:** (i) That in principle the Council is in favour of making a grant.  
(ii) That the Council further discuss the

proposal when the outcome of the Church's other grant applications were known.

(b) **Pontyclun Community Centre Management Committee**

(Councillor Norman declared a personal but not prejudicial interest in this item of business. He elected to remain in the Council chamber but did not take part in any discussion)

The Council discussed a letter from Mrs Maureen Hybart, Chairperson of the Pontyclun Community Centre Management Committee, in which she outlined the intentions of the Committee to make better use of the facilities at the Centre. The proposals involved the internal modification of the premises by the creation of a new door entry which would avoid the need to access the lounge through the hall.

Mrs Hybart stated that the Management Committee wished to apply for financial assistance of between £5,000 to £6,000 to enable the work to be carried out.

**RESOLVED:** That an invitation be extended to Mrs Hybart to address the Council on the Management Committee's plans to enable the Council to gain a better understanding of the project.

(c) **Absence from meetings**

The Council discussed the position of former Councillor Jenkins who last attended a meeting of the Community Council on 12 July, 2011.

The Clerk advised that under the provisions of the Local Government Act, 1972, a member of a local authority ceases to be a member of a council if he, or she, fails throughout a period of six consecutive months from the date of his, or her, last attendance to attend any meeting of a council unless his or her absence was due to some reason approved by the council.

In response to a question from the Chairperson the Clerk clarified that in a case where approval of a Member's absence from meetings was given by a council that approval needed to be given within the six month period. Approval could not be given retrospectively after the expiry of the six month period.

The Clerk further advised that legislation also provides that where a member of a local authority ceases to be qualified as a member of the authority the authority shall, except in the case in which a declaration has been made by the High Court, forthwith

declare the office to be vacant. No declaration had been made by the High Court in the case of Councillor Jenkins.

A Member of the Council challenged the advice offered by the Clerk and suggested that meetings of the Council, since the decision of the Council to move its monthly meeting days from Wednesdays to Tuesdays, was outside the Council's Standing Orders.

The Clerk stated that he did not agree that standing orders had been infringed and that statutory legislation always had precedence over any local standing orders.

- RESOLVED:**
- (i) That the Clerk write to Councillor Jenkins to wish her well and to thank her for her significant contribution to the work of the Council over several years and recognising that work commitments had prevented her from attending Council meetings. Further, that the Council was deeply grateful for Councillor Jenkins' offer to continue to update the Council's website until the May elections and after this to offer training in uploading information to the website.
  - (ii) That the Clerk advise the Borough Council of the vacancy.
  - (iii) That the Council does not co-opt to the vacancy for the remaining period to the elections in May.

(d) **Council's Internet Service Provider**

The Clerk reported that the Council's Internet Service Provider, Zen, had contacted the Council stating that it had undercharged the Council for provision of Internet services since 2006.

The correct charge for broadband service, is £21.27 per month and the charge would be applied immediately. An assurance had been received that Zen would not be seeking to recover arrears back to 2006.

- RESOLVED:** That the revised rate of monthly charge be accepted for the time being and that the Clerk make enquiries about the charges being made by other Internet Service Providers.

(e) **Condition of footways in Millfield, Pontyclun**

The Council discussed a copy of a further letter from Mr Keith Noakes, a resident of Millfield, Pontyclun, to the Leader of the Borough Council, Councillor Russell Roberts, complaining about the poor condition of the footways in Millfield.

Mr Noakes had earlier written to the Borough Council about defects in the footway only to receive a reply stating that while it was accepted that some paving slabs were cracked there were no defects which were considered to be "safety defects". The reply also stated that, ideally, the footways should be resurfaced but that conflicting priorities dictated that resources needed to be allocated elsewhere.

- RESOLVED:**
- (i) That Councillor Rea take the matter up with the Borough Council.
  - (ii) That the Clerk write to the Borough Council supporting the concerns of Mr Noakes.

(f) **Sustainable development**

The Council discussed a letter from One Voice Wales in which examples of sustainable development work had been carried out featuring community councils in Mold, Presteigne, Norton, Blaenau Ffestiniog, Pontypool and Talgarth.

The Council was asked whether any examples of sustainable development work by the Pontyclun Community Council could be added to the list.

- RESOLVED:** That there were no schemes in the Community which could be put forward for recognition at this time.

(g) **Planning**

(Councillors Rea and Willis declared personal but not prejudicial interests in this item of business. They elected to remain in the Council chamber but did not take part in any discussions)

The Council discussed planning applications contained in the latest Weekly Lists from the Borough Council.

- RESOLVED:** That the following comment be made to the Planning Authority:

**Application No. 11/1337/10**



That while the Council is not opposed to the application, it urges the Borough Council to examine closely the traffic implications of the proposal since traffic will be emerging on to the busy A4119.

(h) **Payment of creditors**

**RESOLVED:** That payment be approved to the creditors listed in Appendix 11 to the Council's agenda.

8. **Matters reported for decision since the despatch of agendas**

**Letter from P J Jones**

The Clerk reported the receipt of a letter from a P J Jones who had given his, or her, address as "Maesyfelin, Pontyclun". An examination of the Register of Electors for Maesyfelin had not been able to identify a P J Jones.

The letter complained of five separate highways matters including the sequence of flashing lights at the new pedestrian crossing, parking in Cerdin Avenue, condition of the lane connecting Heol y Felin, the need for parking restrictions in Llantrisant Road and the abuse by motorists of parking spaces designated for disabled drivers.

Due to the absence of an address it was not possible to let P J Jones know that the concerns had been forwarded to the Borough Council. The Borough Council was likely to be faced with the same problem in attempting to correspond with P J Jones.

**RESOLVED:** That the letter be forwarded to the Environmental Services Group of the Borough Council.

9. **Matters reported for information**

(a) **Vale of Glamorgan Local Development Plan 2011-2026**

Notification was received from the Vale of Glamorgan Borough Council that it had prepared its Deposit version of the Local Development Plan 2011-2026 and that a public consultations period would run from 20 February, 2012, to 2 April, 2012.

Copies of the Deposit LDP could be viewed on the Vale of Glamorgan Council's website and during the consultation period exhibitions would be held at Barry, Cowbridge, Penarth and Llantwit Major.

**RESOLVED:** That the information be noted.

(b) **Pontyclun public conveniences**

The Clerk reported that invitations to tender to carry out improvement work to ensure that the public conveniences meet the provision of legislation for disabled persons had been widely advertised.

Specifications and tender forms had been sent to 9 builders with an instruction for completed tenders to be returned in sealed envelopes to the Clerk's address by noon on 2 April, 2012.

After the sealed tenders had been opened it would be necessary for the architect to evaluate the tenders and provide a report before the successful tenderer was announced.

**RESOLVED:** That a Special Meeting of the Community Council be arranged for the evening of 2 April, 2012, for the opening of sealed tender envelopes.

(c) **New Town Centre proposals**

The Clerk read out a letter which had been received from Sainsbury's saying that the company had signed a deal with Valad Developments Llantrisant Ltd, to bring forward a proposal for a new supermarket in Talbot Green.

The letter stated that around 450 full and part time job opportunities would be created for local people and provide an alternative supermarket in Talbot Green.

The letter also pointed to other benefits such as free advertising for local businesses and invites to shopkeepers to host "sampling sessions" in their foyer to help promote their products to new customers.

Attention was also drawn in the letter to the policy of finding new local suppliers, Sainsbury's actions in donating over £2.5 million worth of sports equipment and experiences to local education authorities in Wales since launching the Active Kids scheme in 2005, and Sainsbury's involvement with Comic Relief where almost £60million had been raised to date for Red Nose Day and Sport Relief.

The letter gave an invitation to find to ring Sainsbury's community relations team to find out more about the company and what their plans could bring to Talbot Green.

**RESOLVED:** That the letter be noted.

(d) **Welsh Government Consultation**

The Clerk distributed a leaflet from the Welsh Government inviting the public to help to shape a strategy to reduce traffic congestion on the Magor to Castleton section of the M4 motorway.

The Welsh Government wished to know what problems the public experienced, understand the public's priorities and help the Government choose the best strategy to solve the problems.

**RESOLVED:** That Members be asked to submit their individual views to the Welsh Government and to encourage their electorate to express their views.

10. The meeting ended at 8.40 p.m.

