

**PONTHIR COMMUNITY COUNCIL  
CYNGOR CYMUNED PONTIR**

**Minutes of Monthly Meeting  
11<sup>th</sup> March 2015**

1. **Present:** Cllr. R. Davies (Chair), Cllr. S. Bailey, Cllr. Mrs J Bold, Cllr. D. Green, Cllr. T. Roberts  
**Members of Public Attending:** 6 residents present from 7.00pm to 7.40pm  
**Clerk:** Karen Price
2. **Apologies:** Cllr. P. Matthews, PCSO Nicola Redman, Cllr. Huw Bevan(TCBC)
3. **Declarations of Interest:** Cllr. Bold declared an interest in Item 6 as she is a neighbour of the applicant and took no part in the discussion and subsequent observations agreed.
4. **Youth Representatives**
  - a. Council noted the resignations of Natasha Owen & Lloyd Harris.
  - b. Council agreed that it would advertise for new Youth Representatives. Letters would be sent to the local secondary schools and adverts placed in the noticeboards, website, facebook page and newsletter. This would all be timed to go out at the same time as the next edition of the newsletter. Council agreed that a job specification for this role would be drawn up. (**Action: Clerk to draw up job specification**)
5. **Matters raised by the members of the public present** – All the residents present wished to comment on Items 9c & 9d on the agenda, the planning applications 15/P/00101 & 102. Chair agreed to alter the order of the agenda to so these applications could be discussed next.
6. **Planning (Items 9c & 9d on the Agenda)**  
**15/P/00101 - Fell English Oak tree and treatment of stump at Paizefield, Caerleon Road, Ponthir, Cwmbran and 15/P/00102 - Fell English Oak tree and treatment of stump at Springfield, Caerleon Road, Ponthir, Cwmbran**  
Council noted that both applications were as a result of an insurance claim from the residents of 36, Candwr Park who contend that the root systems of two trees, located on the properties of Paizefield and Springfield, are drying out the ground and causing damage to their property. Tree Preservation Orders (TPO's) are on both trees. Present at this meeting were the residents of Paizefield and Springfield as well as residents from neighbouring properties. The following views were expressed by the residents present:
  - a. The two trees in question are healthy mature oaks.
  - b. There would be a loss of habitat for wildlife should these trees be felled.
  - c. These trees together with 4 others in neighbouring properties form a corridor of TPO's.
  - d. There is a ditch running alongside the properties that is usually damp.
  - e. The removal of these two trees would increase the risk of flooding.
  - f. It was a later edition of a conservatory that was suffering from damage.
  - g. The conservatory had extended the building line closer to the two trees.
  - h. When the conservatory was built were the TPO's taken into account?
  - i. This was the second insurance claim that had been made by the residents of 36, Candwr Park. The first claim had been rejected.
  - j. 36, Candwr Park had a Leylandii hedge surrounding the property which would also take up water through its root system.

- k. If these proposals were agreed then the use of poison to destroy the root systems could result in the ground level sinking which could damage properties. There is also a danger of poison entering the water system via the nearby ditch.

Following discussion Council agreed that it would not support the proposals to fell these trees. Cllr. Bailey suggested the following statement:

‘Whilst we are sympathetic to residents suffering damage to their property, we strongly support maintaining the rural aspect of our village and its trees particularly those with Tree Preservation Orders and any precedents set. We have received strong representations from immediate residents and several other residents which we support and urge TCBC to consider’.

Council agreed that this statement would form the basis of its observations but should also include specific points highlighting the loss of habitat, the value of the trees to the area and the fact that the conservatory extended from the original building line closer to the trees. The residents were advised to write individually to TCBC and confirm with the case officer whether the decisions on these applications would be made at the next TCBC Planning Meeting or whether delegated powers would be used by TCBC Officers.

**(Action: Clerk to forward observations to TCBC)**

7.40pm – All the residents left the meeting.

The following items had been numbered 6 – 19 on the agenda and were renumbered 7 – 20 to take in account the change in order to discuss Item 6 above.

7. **Police Report** – Council noted that PCSO Redman had sent a written report stating that no incidents had occurred in our area since the Council’s last meeting.
8. Clerk noted that in the minutes of 11<sup>th</sup> February 2015 the action points for items 9g & 9h should have stated that the TCBC officer was Lauren Gregory and not Lauren Clerk. Council agreed that subject to these amendments the minutes of the 11<sup>th</sup> February 2015 were a true record and duly signed. Proposed by Cllr. Green and seconded by Cllr. Bailey.
9. **Matters Arising from the Meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2015.**
- a. **Report from David Morgan, Inspector of Torfaen Local Policing Unit** - Insp. Morgan has e-mailed a copy of his first blog as Inspector which will be included in our next newsletter. Clerk is unaware if the PCSO’s have visited School Close to monitor traffic issues but the situation has recently improved. Council noted that the pupils are currently being encouraged to cycle or walk to school.
- b. **Report From Cllr. Bevan** – Cllr. Bevan had asked, on behalf of Ponthir resident, Dr Grossi, if the Community Council would review the 2009 Ponthir Community Travel Plan. This plan was originally written to support the case for the funding of The Safe Routes for Ponthir School. Clerk noted that there is no scheme currently being looked at which an updated Travel Plan could be used to support. It was therefore recommended that, until such time as there was such a project, there was not a strong case for reviewing the Travel Plan. Council agreed with this recommendation.
- c. **Freedom of Information and Data Protection** – Clerk confirmed there had been some progress on the arrangements for new e-mail accounts. **(Action: Clerk and Cllr. Bailey to finalise arrangements)**
- d. **Letter Headed Paper and Compliment Slips** – **(Action: Clerk to arrange for 3 quotes to be obtained once e-mails finalised)**
- e. **Dog Fouling on Playing Fields/School Fields** – Steve Horseman, TCBC, will bring two signs to the meeting to be arranged with the Clerk, Councillors and Lauren Gregory. Alison Hughes has contacted the Clerk as there as more signs available and Alison has

also contacted Ponthir School.

- f. **Items to be raised at the Local Council Partnership Meeting – (Action: Cllr. Davies to raise points made at the March meeting.)**
- g. **Update on Candwr Park Meadowland Proposals –** Clerk confirmed that Lauren Gregory has returned to work. **(Action: Clerk to arrange a meeting with Lauren Gregory)**
- h. **Update on Children’s Play Area –** As per Item 9g
- i. **Telephone Kiosk, Llanfrechfa –** Cllr. Davies took details to a Llanfrechfa Village Association (LVA) meeting of a community library in a telephone kiosk that had been published in a BT publication. The LVA agreed that it would be suitable for the kiosk in Tram Lane. Clerk has written to the resident of Tram Lane who had previously offered to fit the shelves for the LVA and is waiting for a response.
- j. **Best Kept Village Competition 2015 –** Clerk confirmed that four new planters have been ordered. **See also Item 19h**
- k. **Adoption of updated version of Financial Regulations and resulting amendments to Standing Orders –** Clerk confirmed that the updated documents have been added to Website. **(Action: Clerk to assist Cllr Bailey in rewording Financial Regulations for next year’s review.)**
- l. **Community Councils’s policies –** Clerk confirmed that the amended policies have been added to the Website.

## 10. **Planning**

- a. 15/P/00051 - Remove boiler flue and roof vent from plain tile roof. Reconfigure female WC and relocate boiler with new flue through wall of 1960s extension at rear of property. Remove unauthorised attachments and vents to external elevations. Regularise blocked up openings and essential wall attached services at Ponthir House, Caerleon Road, Ponthir, Cwmbran, Torfaen, NP18 1PG – No Observations
- b. 15/P/00078 - Rear single storey extension at 12 Hafod Road, Ponthir NP18 1GH – No Observations

## 11. **Finance and Accounts**

- a. Balance of Direct Plus Account as at 28<sup>th</sup> February 2015 = £22,601.96
- b. **To Approve Cheques already Paid**
  - i. Torfaen CBC (PAYE Admin 13/14 £55.00 and NI Contributions £16.93) = £71.93  
Council approved the above payment. Proposed by Cllr. Green and seconded by Cllr. Roberts.
- c. **To Note Standing Order/Direct Debit Payments**
  - ii. TCBC ( Clerk’s Salary) on 20th February 2015
  - iii. Barclaycard (Stationery £ 39.88, Leaving gift and Flowers in recognition of Cllr. Judie Morgan’s 15 years as a Community Councillor £ 72.10) = £111.98  
Council noted the above Standing Order and Direct Debit Payment.
- d. Council agreed to increase the Staff Costs Budget for 2014/2015 by £150.00 to take into account the TCBC payroll invoice received this month. Proposed by Cllr. Roberts and seconded by Cllr. Bailey.

12. Council approved a request by the Clerk for time off in lieu of 10.5 hours overtime worked during January and February 2015. Proposed by Cllr. Green and seconded by Cllr. Roberts.

13. **Grant Request from the Friends of Ponthir School** – Following discussion Council agreed that there were a number of items that required clarification in the financial statement provided with this application. It was agreed to defer any decision until these matters had been clarified. (**Action: Clerk to contact the Chair of The Friends of Ponthir School**)
14. **Annual Review of Internal Audit** – Council noted that further information had been received on the requirements for this review. (**Action: Cllr. Bailey to finalise review and provide a report for April's meeting**)
15. **Community Council's diary procedures for March/April 2015** – Clerk confirmed that:
- The report for the Welsh Language Board would be produced for April's Meeting.
  - The Council is entering into the second year of a three year contract with the same insurance provider.
  - The figures for the 2014/15 Audit will be prepared following the end of the financial year on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2015.
  - Portable Appliance Testing (**Action: Cllr. Matthews to confirm how often Portable Appliance Testing is required**)
16. Council noted that the Clerk had put in a request in February for TCBC to include a litter pick along Caerleon Road on the TCBC maintenance schedule. Cllr. Bold stated that the litter was worse today. (**Action: Clerk to follow up the original request with TCBC**)
17. **Consultations**
- Welsh Government Consultation Document - Tax Devolution in Wales - Land Transaction Tax – No Comment
  - Welsh Government Consultation Document - Tax Devolution in Wales - Landfill Disposals Tax - No Comment
  - Consultation: Evidence on the general principles of Regulation and Inspection of Social Care (Wales) Bill – No Comment
  - Draft Revised National Training Strategy 2015-2019 – OVW – Council noted that, whilst it agreed in principle to this Training Strategy, a comment should be made that the role of a Community Councillor was voluntary and if the training was too onerous it may put people off putting themselves forward to serve as a Community Councillors. (**Action: Clerk to submit response to OVW**)
  - Proposal to establish a new Welsh-medium secondary school on the site of the current Duffryn High School in Newport for September 2016 – TCBC - No Comment
  - Reforming Local Government Power to Local People White Paper – (**Action: Each Councillor to send Clerk a copy of their proposed answers to section 4 and 5. Clerk will then bring a list of the questions where Councillors have different views to the next meeting and the response to these questions will be finalised.**)
18. **Correspondence Received**
- Appointment of Members to Community Health Councils (CHCs) – OVW
  - Gwent Valleys Area Committee - Presentation
  - Invitation for Chair to attend Fly the Flag for the Commonwealth & Single Commemorative Act marking the Centenary of WW1 - Monday, 9 March 2015
  - Invitation for Chair to attend Mayor's Command Performance - Saturday, 14 March 2015
  - Traffic correspondence file from Dr Grossi – Cllr. Huw Bevan
  - Invitation to a Welsh stakeholder event on the Marine Strategy Framework Directive (MSFD) Programme of Measures consultation
  - Launch of the New One Voice Wales Website

- h. Invitation for Chair to attend Torfaen Spring Showcase - Monday, 16 March 2015
  - i. Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Annual Report - February 2015
  - j. Women in Public Life Invitation – OVW
  - k. Membership of One Voice Wales 2015-2016 – Confirmation of payment
  - l. Pontypool CC's Annual Dinner – Invitation for Chair to attend
  - m. Cwmban Community Council's Annual Primary School Choral Festival 2015 - Invitation for Chair to attend
  - n. Change of Office Address – Mazars
  - o. Walk for Life 2015
  - p. Consultancy Services Available to Member Councils – OVW
  - q. Natural Resource Management Bulletin – February 2015 - OVW
  - r. Fuel poverty forums- March 2015 - OVW
  - s. Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales - Board Member Opportunity
- The content of the above correspondence was noted.

## 19. **Reports and Updates**

- a. **Christmas Tree/Lighting Event 2015 Arrangements** – Clerk confirmed that she had tried to contact Commercial Christmas via phone and E-mail to request an invoice and the return of the Council's lights but no response has been received. Quotes have been requested from Colin Richardson and the company in Wentwood Forest. As mentioned at February's meeting letters to book the Village Hall and The Gatecrashers have been sent but confirmation has yet to be received from both. (**Action: Clerk to contact Commercial Christmas and follow up booking confirmations with both the Village Hall and The Gatecrashers**)
- b. **Afon Llwyd Greenway** – Council noted that a meeting of this group had taken place on Monday 9<sup>th</sup> March. Copies of the minutes for this meeting were circulated. Cllr. Roberts reported that he, together with John Palmer and David Price, had attended a meeting with Welsh Water details of which were in the circulated minutes.
- c. **Gateway Site** – Council noted the improvements made by the residents of 41 Barnfield to the hedging at the rear of their property on the Gateway Site. (**Action: Further improvements and planting to be discussed at the meeting arranged with Steve Horseman and Lauren Gregory of TCBC as mentioned in Item 9g**)
- d. **Children's Play Area Project** – See Item 9h
- e. **Report from the TCALC meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup> March** – Clerk reported the following:
  - i. A report attached to a TCBC agenda stated that discussions had been held between TCBC and Community Councils for the Community Councils to financially support events. Explanation to be given at the next LCPC meeting in two weeks' time.
  - ii. Community Council representation at meetings was discussed and all Councils were asked to ensure a representative attends the AGM of TCALC in June.
  - iii. Notification of the SCCC public meeting hadn't been received by the other Councils.
  - iv. An update on planning e.g. 6<sup>th</sup> Form College adjacent to Morrisons, was requested for the next LCPC meeting.
  - v. Concern over the new cemetery in Cwmbran being waterlogged.
- f. **Community Council newsletter** – Cllr. Davies confirmed that he is waiting for the meeting to be held with Lauren Gregory to discuss proposals for the Play Area before the next issue is produced. This will allow an article updating residents on where we are with this project.
- g. **Proposals for a Village Handyman** – Following on from February's meeting, Cllr. Davies and the Clerk met to discuss what the role of the proposed Village Handyman

could entail. Cllr. Bold had suggested that we contact Steve Horseman to confirm what the TCBC maintenance schedule would be for the forthcoming year and whether there was anything that the Community Council could consider to supplement this work. This will be discussed at the meeting to be arranged with Steve Horseman and Lauren Gregory.

- h. **Best Kept Village** – Council agreed to advertise for community volunteers to help with work in prepare for this competition. (**Action: Clerk to write to Llanfrechfa Village Association to confirm whether they wish to be included within our application. Clerk to add a post to our Facebook page asking for community volunteers**)
- i. **Report from a meeting at Gwent Police Headquarters on 23rd February** – Cllr. Davies reported that he had attended a meeting, instigated by Cllr. Huw Bevan, TCBC, which was also attended by members of Gwent Police and TCBC Highways Dept. Cllr. Bevan had raised concerns over the issue of speeding vehicles through Ponthir and Llanfrechfa. The following points were noted:
- i. The figures produced by Gwent Police/Highways Dept. suggested that speeding wasn't any more of an issue than in other areas.
  - ii. Speeding wasn't the cause of any of the most recent accidents along this road.
  - iii. During the 63 visits of the speed monitoring van 71 speeding offences had occurred.
  - iv. It was agreed that the speed monitoring vans will visit this area 5 times a month for 90 mins at a time.
  - v. New vans had recently been purchased which had the additional capability of being able to be used at night time. These new vans would be used in this area.
  - vi. There will be additional data gathering of vehicles speed along Caerleon Road.
  - vii. Gwent Police are looking to set up Speed Watch Teams with community volunteers. The Community Council will publicise any details that Gwent Police issue about this project.
  - viii. Gwent Police confirmed that it is very difficult to monitor the correct use of this route by large lorries given the level of available officers during a shift. It is not just a case of stopping a vehicle and asking for details of their deliveries. A heavy vehicle has to be followed to its destination to confirm whether or not it has a legitimate reason for travelling along Caerleon Road and is not just using this route as a short cut.
  - ix. Inspector Morgan confirmed that he is due to meet with Ponthir resident, Dr Grossi, to discuss this issue.
  - x. A report will be sent to the Community Council in the next four to six weeks
- j. **Chairman's Report** – Cllr. Davies reported that he had been contacted by Mick Bubela, Ponthir Village Hall, to arrange a meeting to discuss TCBC plans for Community Centres and how that would affect Ponthir Village Hall. A date had been arranged but was subsequently cancelled by Mr Bubela.

20. The date of the next Meeting of the Council will be held on **Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2015 at 7.00pm at Ponthir District Sports Club.**

Meeting closed at 9.20pm

This document is available on our website [www.ponthircommunitycouncil.gov.uk](http://www.ponthircommunitycouncil.gov.uk)

A copy of this document could be made available in Welsh. Please contact us on the telephone number or e-mail below/Mae dogfen yma yn ar gael mewn gwefan ni [www.ponthircommunitycouncil.gov.uk](http://www.ponthircommunitycouncil.gov.uk)

Mae copi or ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg. Cysylltwch a ni ar y rhif ffôn neu drwy e-bost isod.

Telephone/ Ffôn: 07971948351 E-Mail/ E-bost: [ponthircc@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:ponthircc@hotmail.co.uk)

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