

PONTHIR COMMUNITY COUNCIL CYNGOR CYMUNED PONTIR

Minutes of Monthly Meeting 12th April 2017

1. **Present:** Cllr. S. Bailey (Chair), N. Dominy, Cllr. M Barrell, Cllr. P Matthews & Tom Evans. (Youth Representative)
Members of Public Attending: Mr. P. Mishra
Clerk: Karen Price
2. **Apologies:** Cllrs J Bold and I. Glover.
3. **Declarations of Interest:** None.
4. **Matters raised by the members of the public present** – Mr. Mishra asked if the Brechfa Close road sign could be renewed and relocated to a more visible location. **(Action: Clerk to make enquiries with TCBC Highways Dept. and update Mr. Mishra)**
5. **Police Report** – None Received.
6. The minutes of the Monthly Meeting held on 7th March 2017 were approved and duly signed. Proposed by Cllr. Barrell and seconded by Cllr. Bailey.
7. **Matters Arising from the Monthly Meeting held on 7th March 2017.**
 - a. **Testing of Ponthir Christmas Tree Lights** - (Action: Cllr. Dominy to make enquiries but if unable to source someone to carry out an inspection/required maintenance then Cllrs Matthews and Dominy volunteered to carry out any required work)
 - b. **Ponthir Wildflower Bed** – Clerk confirmed that the wildflower seed had been delivered. **(Action: Clerk to confirm whether garden contractor has finished preparing bed)**
 - c. **Bus Shelters** – Council noted that a quote of £1,290 had been received to replace and fit one shelter with replacement Perspex screens. This included £750 for a site visit and installation costs. Clerk confirmed that she had subsequently spoken to John Jones, TCBC, to discuss the possibility of including any work we wanted completed with a future TCBC order and an agreement reached on paying a proportion of site visit and installation costs. Council agreed that Clerk should further these discussions to include the replacement of the Perspex screens in The Star bus shelter subject to any contribution level being agreed by Council. **(Action: Clerk to contact John Jones, TCBC.)**
 - d. **The Star Inn** – Council noted that despite last month's request to Punch Taverns the Christmas Tree had not been removed, rubbish has been left in the car park, beer barrels remained in the garden, banners remained on the fencing and planters were full of weeds. **(Action: Clerk to follow up with Punch Taverns)**
 - e. **VAT Return** – Council noted that a refund claim for £418.05 has been submitted.
 - f. **Village Planters** – Council noted that the stone planters located at Stokes Drive and School Close have been removed and the replacement planters delivered. Clerk confirmed that all the planters would be replanted towards the end of April at which time the new planters would be installed at Stokes Drive and School Close.
 - g. **Pot Holes in Station Road** - Clerk confirmed that she had contacted TCBC and received the following response '*the highways inspector visited site on Station Road however there were no potholes present that met the Authority's Intervention Criteria. However, I can confirm that regular cyclic inspections will continue to be carried out in line with Council Policy, and works orders issued to attend to any actionable defects.*' Contrary to the TCBC statement Tom Evans believed that some of the pot holes had been repaired. **(Action: Clerk to confirm with TCBC if work has been undertaken)**

8. **Finance and Accounts**

- a. Balance of Direct Plus Account as at 31st March 2017 = £6,989.83
- b. **To Note Standing Order/Direct Debit Payments**
 - i. TCBC (Clerk's Salary) on 20th March 2017
 - ii. Barclaycard (Stationery £3.00, Village Planters £142.18, Wildflower Seeds £24.00) = £169.18
 - iii. SWALEC (Telephone Kiosk, Tram Lane) = £5.97Council noted the above payments.
- c. **Quarterly Bank Reconciliation as at 31st March 2017** – Clerk reported that the bank statement had not been received. Clerk is awaiting a reissued statement and has informed our internal auditor that she will contact him once this has been received.
(Action: Item deferred until May meeting)
- d. **Review of 2016/2017 Budget and finalization of 2017/2018 Budget** – Council noted the content of the 2016/17 Budget Review and approved the Clerk's recommendations as follows. Proposed by Cllr Matthews and seconded by Cllr. Barrell.
 - i. **Room Rental** – An invoice has not yet been issued for meetings held from January 2017 to March 2017. Increase 2017/18 budget to £360.
 - ii. **Stationery and Postage** – 2016/17 spend to date was £156.34. Reduce 2017/18 budget to £200.
 - iii. **Staff Costs** – Increase 2017/18 budget to £6,740 to allow for potential pension contributions and TCBC payroll admin costs.
 - iv. **Community Events** – Increase 2017/18 budget to £2,300 to allow for Christmas Tree Lighting Costs.
 - v. **Election Budget** – As this year's community council elections for Ponthir are uncontested **(See Item 15)** this budget of £2,500 can be transferred into the Unallocated Budget.
(See Appendix 1 - Revised 2017/18 Budget)
- e. **End of Year Accounts as at 31st March 2017** – Contents Noted **(See Appendix 2 - Comparison of the End of Year Accounts 2016/17 to 2015/16)**
- f. **Statement of Internal Control for Year Ending 31st March 2017** – Statement approved by Council. Proposed by Cllr. Dominy and seconded by Cllr. Barrell. **(See Appendix 3)**
- g. **2016/17 Payments to Ponthir Community Council Members** – In accordance with Section 151 of the Local Government Measure 2011, Community Councils must annually publish, within their authority area, the remuneration received by their members. Council noted that no such payments were received by any of the Councillors during 2016/17.
(Action: Clerk to send a Nil return to the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales and publish on website and noticeboard)
- h. Council approved reimbursement of £31.50 to Mr John Palmer for the printing of maps for the Afon Lwyd Greenway displayed at the TCBC Active Travel Plan Consultation Event. (Power of Wellbeing, Local Government Act 2000 s2). Proposed by Cllr. Matthews and seconded by Cllr. Barrell.
- i. **Review of Banking Arrangements** – Council approved the Clerk's recommendation to continue with the current banking arrangements.

9. **Community Council obligations under the new pension regulations** – Council agreed to defer this item to the end of this meeting. **(See Item 17)**

10. **Updates**

- a. **Afon Lwyd Greenway** – Cllr. Bailey reported that the Afon Lwyd Working Group had taken on board points raised by residents at the recent Torfaen CBC Active Travel Plan Consultation Event and that the following alternative routes through Ponthir are being looked at:
- i. Removing plans for an off-road link along the footpath between Caerleon Road and Hafod Close. Instead the route through the village would be an advisory route using the existing public highway.
 - ii. Network Rail to be contacted to consider further options for a safe crossing of the railway line eliminating the need to use the underpass.
- Council noted that there were not, as some residents had been informed, plans to compulsory purchase land. Cllr. Bailey reported that Mr. Palmer had made a presentation to Croesyceiliog and Llanyrafon Community Council and its members had agreed to forward a letter of support. Council noted that Torfaen's Active Travel Plan would be subject to public consultation before being submitted to the Welsh Assembly in October/November 2017.
- b. **Llanfrechfa Village Association (LVA)** – Cllr. Dominy reported that:
- i. Peter Penwarden had stood down as LVA Secretary.
 - ii. A hog roast was being organized for 17th June 2017. Further details to follow.
 - iii. Community Library to be installed in the Tram Lane telephone kiosk over Easter.
 - iv. TCBC has been contacted to discuss possible locations for village planters
 - v. Discussions are ongoing with the British Heart Foundation concerning the installation of a heart defibrillator.

11. **Community Council's diary procedures for June/July 2017** – Clerk confirmed that the following procedures had been actioned as follows:
- a. Inspection of Assets – **(Action: Diarized for June)**
 - b. Quarterly Bank Reconciliation and Budget Review as at 30th June 2017 – **(Action: To be included in July's Agenda)**
 - c. Approval of Annual Return – **(Action: To be included in May's Agenda)**
 - d. Data Protection Registration – Annual direct debit in place.

12. **Community Improvements** - Cllr. Dominy reported that rubbish appeared to have been left on the service road on the other side of railway crossing in Station Road. Council unsure whether the removal of any rubbish was the responsibility of Welsh Water or Network Rail. **(Action: Cllr. Bailey and Clerk to investigate)**

13. **Planning**

- a. **17/P/0171/FUL Proposed placement and operation of mobile catering unit (change of use to A3) at Bough Spring, Caerleon Road, Ponthir** – Council agreed to make the following observations:
- i. The entrance/exit serving the site is narrow and any increase in traffic could have highway safety implications affecting both vehicles travelling along Caerleon Road and vehicles/pedestrians entering/leaving the site.
 - ii. It would wish to see the inclusion of areas to store and aid the collection of waste.
- b. **17/P/0238/TPO Proposed: Various works to trees T1, T2, T4, T5, T6 & T7 at Hafod Gardens, Ponthir** – No Observations

- c. Clerk reported that planning application SHEN/17/P/0292/FUL Proposed detached dwelling on land adjacent to 1 Laburnum Cottages, Caerleon Road, Ponthir had been received today. **(Action: Clerk to circulate paperwork to Councillors and confirm final submission date for any observations with TCBC. Item to be included on May's agenda)**

14. Correspondence Received

- a. Latest news from the ICO
 - b. SLCC Conference Information - OVW
 - c. Review of Post 16 Education Provision in Torfaen - Outcome of Statutory Notice Period – TCBC
 - d. Croesyceiliog School - Outcome of Statutory Notice Period
 - e. Donation Request – Wales Air Ambulance
 - f. Dementia: One Simple Thing - What could the NHS do better to support people, as well as their families and their carers, living with dementia? – OVW
 - g. Appointment of Vice President to the National Library of Wales – OVW
 - h. Appointment of Chair & Deputy Chair to the Initial Teacher Education (ITE) Accreditation Committee – OVW
 - i. Health Social Care & Wellbeing Information Update – TCBC
 - j. Nurse of the Year – Pontypool CC
 - k. Energise Wales Newsletter March 2017 – OVW
 - l. Invitation for Chair to attend Cwmbran Community Council's Primary Schools Choral Festival.
 - m. Greggs Foundation's Local Community Projects Fund Invites GB Applications
 - n. Appointment of Members to the Welsh Language Partnership Council – OVW
 - o. Pontypool Museum Launch on the 7th April 2017
 - p. New Inspector: Torfaen Sector Gwent Police
 - q. Pre-Election Information – TCBC
 - r. Agenda for Gwent Valleys Area Committee Meeting 2nd April 2017
 - s. Veterans' Campaign 30th March 2017
 - t. Welsh Government Administrative Support Vacancy - Closing 7th April
 - u. Llanfrechfa Specialist Critical Care Centre Detailed Questions – Cllr. Huw Bevan
 - v. Ymlaen /Forward Unison Branch - OVW
 - w. Quarter of a billion pound boost for Wales' rural communities – OVW
 - x. E-petition cuts to funding for maintenance and provision of Children's play areas – OVW
 - y. Latest news from One Voice Wales
 - z. The Good Councillor's Guide
 - aa. Spring TAFOD 2017
 - bb. Sponsorship Request – Rhiannon Archer, resident of Llanmartin
 - cc. Victims and Survivors' Consultative Panel – OVW
 - dd. Tree Charter: Become a Local Council Charter Branch – OVW
 - ee. Latest news from the ICO
- Contents Noted.

8.10pm - Mr. P. Mishra left the meeting.

15. Council noted that the TCBC Returning Officer has declared an uncontested election for Ponthir Community Council. Cllrs. Bailey, Morgan, Matthews, Dominy and Glover had been re-elected and Council would be in a position after 4th May to consider any person wishing to be co-opted for the two remaining vacant seats. **(Action: Clerk to include item on May's agenda)**

8.15pm – Cllr. Matthews left the meeting.

16. The next Meeting of the Council will be the **Annual Meeting held on Wednesday 10th May 2017 at 7.00pm followed by the Monthly Meeting at 7.30pm at Ponthir District Sports Club.**

17. **Community Council obligations under the new pension regulations** – Council discussed the new legal requirements placed on all employers regarding the provision of pensions for employees. Council agreed that the Council's employer contributions should be the minimum contribution levels as set by the UK Government and to proceed with enrolling on the NEST pension scheme. Proposed by Cllr. Bailey and seconded by Cllr. Barrell.
(Action: Pension enrolment procedures to be started)

Meeting Closed at 8.20pm

Appendix 1 – Agenda Item 8d

Ponthir Community Council 2017/2018 Budget

<u>Outgoings</u>		Revised Budget as at April 2017
Office Expenditure		
Room Rental	£	360.00
Stationery and Postage	£	200.00
Telephone	£	40.00
Staff Costs	£	6,740.00
Subscriptions	£	225.00
Insurance	£	420.00
Internal Audit Fees	£	100.00
External Audit Fees	£	230.00
Sub-Total	£	8,315.00
Other Expenditure		
Publicity (Including Newsletter)	£	650.00
Community Events	£	2,300.00
Travel Expenses	£	150.00
Training	£	330.00
Grants and donations	£	2,500.00
Community Improvements	£	1,800.00
Play Area Maintenance	£	1,000.00
Sub-Total	£	8,730.00
Election Contingency	£	-
General Contingency Fund	£	2,000.00
Sub-Total	£	2,000.00
Total	£	19,045.00
<u>Funded by</u>		
Actual Balance b/f	£	6,869.83
Precept	£	17,765.15
2016/17 VAT Refund	£	418.05
	£	25,053.03
Unallocated Budget	£	6,008.03

Appendix 2 – Agenda Item 8e

PONTHIR COMMUNITY COUNCIL END OF YEAR RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS 2016-17

YEAR ENDING 31/3/2016	RECEIPTS	YEAR ENDING 31/3/2017
£ 17,046.41	PRECEPT	£ 17,288.88
£ 14.79	BANK INTEREST	£ 1.21
£ 787.16	VAT REFUND	£ 6,596.67
£ -	GRANTS	£ 8,000.00
£ 85.00	CHARITY COLLECTION	£ -
	RESIDENTS DONATIONS TO COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENTS	£ 117.18
£ 17,933.36	TOTAL	£ 32,003.94
	PAYMENTS	
£ 1,040.08	GENERAL ADMINISTRATION	£ 971.93
£ 506.00	PUBLICITY	£ 447.20
£ 24.17	CHAIRS ALLOWANCE	£ -
£ 22.14	TRAVELLING EXPENSES	£ -
£ 6,611.98	CLERK'S SALARY	£ 6,536.16
£ -	EMPLOYERS NI CONTRIBUTIONS	£ -
£ 2,100.00	GRANTS: MISC PROVISION	£ 1,400.00
£ 100.00	GRANTS: SECT. 137 /POWER OF WELL BEING	£ 194.00
£ 211.00	SUBSCRIPTIONS	£ 216.00
£ 975.11	VAT	£ 6,039.51
£ -	TRAINING	£ 40.00
£ 135.00	RENT	£ 330.00
£ 2,863.69	COMMUNITY EVENTS	£ 2,439.62
£ 2,254.70	COMMUNITY IMPROVEMENTS	£ 1,808.19
£ 85.00	CHARITY COLLECTION	£ -
£ 83.07	IT DEVELOPMENT & OFFICE EQUIPMENT	£ -
£ -	PLAY AREA PROJECT	£ 27,161.18
£ 17,011.94	TOTAL	£ 47,583.79
	GENERAL FUND BALANCE	
£ 21,528.26	BALANCES B/F AS AT 1ST APRIL 2016	£ 22,449.68
£ 17,933.36	ADD RECEIPTS	£ 32,003.94
£ 39,461.62	SUB TOTAL	£ 54,453.62
£ 17,011.94	LESS PAYMENTS	£ 47,583.79
£ 22,449.68	BALANCE AS AT 31ST MARCH 2017	£ 6,869.83
Prepared By: Karen Price - Clerk		
Date: 3rd April 2017		

Ponthir Community Council

STATEMENT ON INTERNAL CONTROL

Introduction

Ponthir Community Council is responsible for ensuring that its business is conducted in accordance with the law and proper standards, and that public money is safeguarded and properly accounted for, and used economically, efficiently and effectively.

In discharging this overall responsibility, the Council is also responsible for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control.

THE SYSTEM OF INTERNAL CONTROL

The system of internal control has been in place at the Council for the year ended 31st March 2017.

The Accounts & Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 and Ponthir CC Standing Orders (October 2015)

The Community Council:

- elects a Chairman to be responsible for the smooth running of meetings and works with the clerk to ensure that all decisions are lawful;
- reviews its obligations and objectives and approves budgets for the following year at its November meeting as well as agreeing the level of precept for the following financial year and producing a three year budget forecast;
- meets regularly on the second Wednesday of each month (August meeting is optional at the discretion of the Chairman) and on exceptional occasions where urgent business is required. The agenda for all meetings is publically advertised three working days in advance of the meeting and minutes are produced, circulated and, once approved, displayed prominently on notice boards and the Council website;
- carries out regular reviews of its internal controls, systems and procedures.

The Clerk to the Council:

- is appointed by the Council to act as the Council's advisor and administrator;
- is the Council's Responsible Financial Officer and is responsible for administering the Council's finances;
- is responsible for ensuring that the council and councilors act within the laws and regulations including Data Protection (in accordance with Data Protection Policy – May 2014 (Reviewed 10th February 2016 and Ponthir CC Record Management and Security Policy - July 2014 (Reviewed 10th February 2016);
- ensures that the Council's procedures, control systems and policies are adhered to.
- maintains the Council website and circulates copies of the Council's records to members of the public when requested (in accordance with Model Freedom of Information Publication Scheme version 1.2.20151023 adopted 10th February 2016 and is responsible for collecting the appropriate fee (as defined in the Ponthir CC Freedom of Information Charging Schedule as amended 10th February 2016.

- is responsible for maintaining a diary (included on every agenda) ensuring that key actions are completed e.g. Quarterly bank reconciliations presented to council, budget agreed in time to set precept, audit & annual return completed within time scales etc.

Finance (Ponthir CC Financial Regulations 9th November 2016)

Payments:

- are reported to the Council for approval.
- are made by cheque signed by 2 Councillors or 1 Councillor and the Clerk
- are made by the Council credit card (as recommended by the Internal Auditor in Internal Audit Report on 2013/14 Accounts dated 6th May 2014) and approved retrospectively at the next Council Meeting
- Standing Orders and Direct Debits – Mandates are signed by two Councillors or 1 Councillor and the Clerk and payments are included on an agenda as and when payments are made
- The use of any Standing Orders and Variable Direct Debits are reviewed every two years.

Income:

- is banked in a timely manner and reported at the next Council meeting

Expenses:

- are submitted by each councillor retrospectively and validated by the Clerk (in accordance with Expenses Policy – September 2013 (Reviewed 10th February 2016)

The current financial position is reported by the clerk at every Council meeting and reconciled against the bank statement quarterly. In line with the amended Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 the reconciliation is now signed off by a Councillor who is not a bank account signatory. The budget v actual spend is reviewed quarterly at full Council and any adjustments authorised.

Risk Management

Risk Management Policy adopted 10th November 2010 (Reviewed 10th February 2016) and Risk Management Register (Updated 10th February 2016)

- Risk Assessments are carried out in advance of any organized events
- The Risk Management Register was adopted in March 2014 and updated following a review in February 2016. This register is designed to include the risks which might adversely and significantly impact upon the Council's Strategy and identifies how these risks may be managed.

All activities of the council are undertaken in a safe manner (in accordance with Health and Safety Policy September 2013 (Reviewed 10th February 2016)

Responsible Employer

The council currently has one employee, the Clerk. In its employment the council follows:

- Absence Policy – September 2013 (Reviewed 10th February 2016)
- ACAS Code of Practice on Disciplinary and Grievance procedures dated March 201 and adopted 10th February 2016
- Equality policy – September 2013 (Reviewed 10th February 2016)
- Any applicable policy mentioned previously in this report

Audits

The Internal Audit:

- is carried out by an Independent Internal Auditor who has no other role within the council reviewing and making recommendations on the Council's risk assessment, wider internal control arrangements, anti-fraud and corruption arrangements.
- Involves direct access to the Clerk and unhindered access to all records.

The External Audit:

- is carried out by external auditors appointed by the The Auditor General for Wales who submit and present to the Council an annual Certificate of Audit.

Action Plan for 2017/2018

- Councillors and staff to undertake relevant training offered locally by One Voice Wales.

Prepared by: Cllr Stuart Bailey - Chair

Approved by: Cllr. Iain Glover

Authorised by Full Council – 12th April 2017

Signature of Cllr. Iain Glover:

This document is available on our website 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 Mae copi or ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg.
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