

**PONTHIR COMMUNITY COUNCIL
CYNGOR CYMUNED PONTIR**

**Minutes of Monthly Meeting
13th May 2015**

1. **Present:** Cllr. S. Bailey (Chair), Cllr. R. Davies, Cllr. D. Green, Cllr. Mrs J Bold, Cllr. L. Adams, PC Sian Wigley (Gwent Police)
Members of Public Attending: Cllr. Jeff Rees (TCBC)
Clerk: Karen Price
2. **Apologies:** Cllr. T. Roberts, Cllr. P. Matthews, PCSO Nicola Redman, Cllr. Huw Bevan (TCBC)
3. **Declarations of Interest:** Cllr. Bailey, although not having a personal interest, took no part in the discussions and decisions for Items 8g and 19g as he knows Colin Richardson socially.
4. **Matters raised by the members of the public present** – None
5. **Police Matters**
 - a. **Community Speedwatch Initiative** – As a result of residents’ concerns re speeding along Caerleon Road, PCSO Redman is looking to set up a Community Speedwatch Initiative. Seven residents able to volunteer an hour a week are needed. Together with PCSO’s they would record vehicle speeds. Anyone exceeding the speed limit would receive a letter and if caught 3 times a fixed penalty notice would be served. Details have been posted on the Community Council’s noticeboards and Facebook page. Any residents interested in volunteering should contact PCSO Nicola Redman at Cwmbran Police Station.
 - b. **Police Report** - Since our last meeting there has been one burglary in Station Road. Cllr. Bailey noted we are starting to see a trend in this type of burglary and requested some targeted advice for inclusion in our next newsletter. PC Wigley stated that Gwent Police will be promoting the OWL scheme again. **(Action: PC Wigley to forward OWL details to the Clerk to add to Community Council Website and Facebook Page)**

7.35pm – PC Wigley left the meeting.
6. **Report from Cllr. Huw Bevan (TCBC)** – None
7. Council approved the minutes of the 8th April 2015 as a true record and they were duly signed. Proposed by Cllr. Davies and seconded by Cllr. Bailey.
8. **Matters Arising from the Minutes held on the 8th April 2015**
 - a. **Police Report** – Cllr. Bailey reported that Llanhennock Community Council had also raised concerns re suspicious packages being found in lanes in their community area. **(Action: Clerk to contact Llanhennock CC to inform them of mutual concerns and projects e.g. Afon Llwyd Greenway)**
 - b. **Youth Representaive Role Specification** – Clerk had drawn up and circulated a role specification for the Youth Representative’s Role. Council approved the role specification. **(Action: Article to be included in the next newsletter. Clerk will also send details to secondary schools that cover this community area including Ysgol Gyfun Gwynllyw)**
 - c. **Freedom of Information and Data Protection** – E-mail addresses have been assigned to each Councillor. **(Action: Councillors to confirm receipt of a test e-mail)**
 - d. **Report from the meeting held at Gwent Police Headquarters on 23rd February** – Clerk confirmed that PC Joanna Skinner’s presentation has been posted on the website and Facebook page.

- e. **Planning** – Clerk confirmed that a statement had been included at TCBC’s last planning meeting stating that contrary to a statement made by the agent of Seren Fach no Ponthir Community Councillor had signed a petition against the application 14/P/00448.
- f. **Christmas Tree Lighting Invoice** – Clerk confirmed that she had queried the invoice received from Commercial Christmas, which had included a charge for the storage of the lights, and had subsequently received a revised invoice (See Item 10ciii)
- g. **Christmas Tree Lighting Event 2015 – (See Item 3 – Cllr. Bold took over as Chair whilst this item was discussed)** Clerk has received a quote from Colin Richardson to provide a Christmas Tree as well as store, test, install and remove the Christmas Lights. Details of the costs for the past two years were circulated for comparison. It was agreed that the Council’s preferred option was to have all the arrangements undertaken by one company and to avoid the uncertainty of when the lights would be installed as had occurred with Commercial Christmas. Council agreed to accept the quote from Colin Richardson. **(Action: Clerk to inform Colin Richardson)**
Cllr. Bailey resumed as Chair.
- h. **Community Council Newsletter** – Clerk informed Council that the Llanfrechfa Scarecrow Event will be taking place on 6th September 2015.
- i. **Welsh Language Report** – Clerk confirmed that this report had been sent to the Welsh Language Commissioner.
- j. **Flooding along the footpath running from All Saints Church, Llanfrechfa** – Cllr. Bailey reported that he had visited the site on a number of occasions and it was impassible. The Clerk had subsequently contacted All Creatures Great and Small who confirmed that they were aware of this problem and they had arranged for a contractor to investigate. **(Action: Clerk to follow up.)**

9. **Planning**

- a. Application 15/P/00206 - New signage and lighting and retrospective consent for the blocking up of window at Ponthir House Inn, Caerleon Road, Ponthir, Cwmbran, Torfaen, NP18 1PG – No Observations
- b. Application 15/P/00230 - Extension and alteration to provide two storey dwelling at Southgate, Church Road, Llanfrechfa, Cwmbran, Torfaen, NP44 8DQ – No Observations

10. **Finance and Accounts**

- a. Balance of Direct Plus Account as at 30th April 2015 = £23,846.47

b. **Authorisation of Cheques**

- i. Graham Holmes (Internal Audit) = £100.00
- ii. Cllr. Robert Davies (Travel Expenses) – No claim presented
- iii. Cllr. Joanne Bold (Compost and Plants for Village Planters) = £57.15

The above cheques for Graham Holmes and Cllr. Bold were approved for payment. Proposed by Cllr. Green and seconded by Cllr. Davies.

c. **To Approve Cheques already Paid**

- i. Zurich Municipal (2015/2016 Insurance) = £403.09
- ii. Greenbarnes Ltd (Noticeboard) = £1,292.38 (£215.40 VAT to be reclaimed)
- iii. TRA Imports (Installation of Christmas Tree Lights 2014) = £788.70 (£131.45 VAT to be reclaimed)
- iv. B Pudge of Q Gardens (Preparation of Wildflower Bed) = £175.00

Council approved the above payments.

d. **To Note Standing Order/Direct Debit Payments**

- i. TCBC (Clerk's Salary) on 20th April 2015
- ii. SWALEC (Telephone Kiosk, Tram Lane) on 13th April = £5.97
- iii. Barclaycard (Stationery & Mobile Phone top up) = £34.14

Council noted the above Standing Order and Direct Debits.

e. Council noted the change in terms of the Community Councils bank account resulting in a reduction in the amount of credit interest paid in future.

f. Council agreed that for 2015/16 Cllr. Bold would replace Cllr. Davies as a bank account signatory. **(Action: Clerk to arrange change of signatories)**

11. Council approved the payment for 9 extra hours worked by the Clerk during April 2015. Proposed by Cllr. Davies and seconded by Cllr. Green. **(Action: Council to review Clerk's hours)**

12. **Annual Audit**– Council noted the internal auditors report and approved the Annual Audit Return for the Year Ending 31st March 2015. Proposed by Cllr. Davies and seconded by Cllr. Bold. The Annual Audit Return was duly signed by Cllr. Bailey. **(Action: Clerk to forward Annual Return to External Auditors)**

13. **TCBC's request for Community Council's to contribute financially to the running costs of The Cwmbran Big Event** – Cllr. Davies reported on a meeting that he and the Clerk had attended between TCBC and the Community Councils from Henllys, Cwmbran and Croesyceiliog and Llanyrafon. The following points were noted:

- An initial meeting had been held in December 2014 but no further meetings had been held up till now.
- All the Community Councils had set their budgets for this year.
- The Cwmbran Big Event is to be held on the second Saturday in June.
- There is a shortfall of £8K because a rural development grant is no longer available. TCBC were looking at the possibility of the Community Councils contributing towards this shortfall.
- Cwmbran CC has already budgeted £2K to contribute towards this event.

Whilst discussing this matter the following points were considered:

- Our budget had already been set.
- When the £2K budgeted by Cwmbran CC is compared to their precept of £561K then any possible contribution that Ponthir Community Council could consider making on the same basis, with a precept of £17K, would be minimal. To make any meaningful contribution then Ponthir CC would have to make a greater contribution proportionally than the largest community councils.
- What would be the perception of our residents should the Council financially support The Big Event?
- Why isn't The Cwmbran Big Event self-funding e.g. sponsorship, entrance fee etc.?

After taking the above into account Council agreed that it was unable to contribute towards this year's Big Event but would consider requests to support future events if a request was made before next year's budget is agreed. **(Action: Cllr. Bailey and Clerk to attend a second meeting with TCBC on 21st May)**

14. **Grant application from The Friends of Ponthir School** – Council noted that a reply had been received responding to the queries raised at our previous meeting. The following grant was approved using the appropriate power:

The Local Government Act 1972 s 145

| Organisation | Amount | Proposed | Seconded |
|---------------------------|---------|--------------|-------------|
| Friends of Ponthir School | £400.00 | Cllr. Davies | Cllr. Green |

15. The Council reviewed the Community Council’s grant application form and criteria for 2015 and agreed an amendment to Q9 to include that applicants state how beneficial any previous community grant had been. No other amendments were made.

16. **Revised Guidance on the Code of Conduct issued by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales** – Content Noted

17. Council noted the request from Station Road residents to assist with the removal of vegetation near the level crossing and the Clerks subsequent response. Whilst the Council welcomed the fact that residents were keen to rectify an issue themselves it noted that as the land in question was owned by Network Rail permission had to be obtained from them beforehand. Cllr. Adams suggested that if Network Rail were unwilling to remove the vegetation but would allow the Community Council to place a skip on site could the Council then consider recovering the cost of the skip hire from Network Rail. **(Action: Clerk to contact residents for an update)**

18. **Access to Information on Community and Town Councils** - Clerk informed Council that as a result of this guidance additional information needed to be included on our website e.g. each councillor’s political affiliation and whether they had been elected or co-opted onto the Council.

19. **Updates**

- a. **Children’s Play Area** – Clerk has been in contact with Lauren Gregory, TCBC, who will be sending a report to the Council during the next week which will provide some ideas of the equipment that we could have for the allocated £12K budget.
- b. **Community Newsletter** – Cllr. Davies is waiting for details from TCBC of the Play Area Equipment before the next edition is published.
- c. **Afon Lwyd Greenway** – Cllr. Bailey reported that a meeting had taken place on 11th May. It was noted that:

- TCBC have included the route within the LDP.
- Possible site of new river bridge identified in vicinity of Star Trading
- Llantarnam Abbey Trustees interim response received
- John Palmer has identified a number of issues along the proposed route

Cllr. Davies noted that from the public meeting of the Llanfrechfa SCCC he had obtained contact details for the developer. **(Action: Cllr Davies to forward contact details to John Palmer.**

John Plamer will be asking Clerk to contact Newport CC for response)

- d. **Gwent Best Kept Village Competition/Community Litter Pick/Village Handiman** – Council noted that:

- The Sports Club is available for use
- The Clerk has put up posters in the noticeboards and on Facebook. To date no residents have contacted the Clerk to volunteer.
- A risk assessment has been circulated and will be forwarded to TCBC.

- Sara Bubela has confirmed that a banner can be placed on the Village Hall fence notifying residents of the competition and that the Community Council can use the hard standing in the Hall car park as a collection point for any rubbish bags collected.
- TCBC have confirmed that they will collect the rubbish bags on 28th May.
- TCBC will be weed spraying during the first week of June.
- TCBC will be replanting the Gateway planter next week and will water it during the summer.

After discussion it was agreed that the start time of the community litter pick should be earlier than the 7pm that had been stated on the poster. It was also agreed that as TCBC are cutting the grass on schedule there was no need at this time to employ a handiman but that Cllr. Davies should contact B Pudge to gage an idea of what work could be undertaken in future. **(Action:**

- Clerk to contact residents who completed the online survey and who had offered to help with future council projects.**
 - Clerk to contact TCBC to arrange the cleaning of the bus shelters.**
 - Clerk to amend start time of the litter pick and advertise accordingly.**
 - Clerk to produce community litter pick posters to include details of equipment residents could bring.**
 - Clerk to produce poster providing information on the Best Kept Village judging criteria.**
 - Cllr. Davies to contact B Pudge.)**
- e. **Gateway Site** – Council noted that the Wildflower Bed had been prepared and although the Clerk, having taken a look at the flower bed, believes that TCBC have sown the seeds she is still waiting for confirmation from TCBC.
- f. **Community Library, Tram Lane, Llanfrechfa** – Council noted that a quote has been received but due to the amount quoted, and in line with our Financial Orders, the Clerk will have to try to obtain a further two quotes. It was also noted this work would have to wait until the new noticeboard is installed. **(Action: Clerk to obtain two further quotes)**
- g. **New Noticeboard in Tram Lane, Llanfrechfa** – **(See Item 3 Cllr. Bold chaired the meeting for this item)** The new noticeboard has been delivered. Council noted that Greenbarnes had provided an estimate in excess of £500.00 to remove the old board and install the new one and so the Clerk obtained a further two quotes. One from a company based in Caerphilly and one from Colin Richardson. There was only £5 difference between these two quotes and they were both significantly cheaper than Greenbarnes. Council agreed to accept the quote of Colin Richardson. Proposed by Cllr. Davies and seconded by Cllr. Adams. **(Action: Clerk to contact Colin Richardson)**
- Cllr. Bailey resumed as Chair

20. Community Council's diary procedures for June/July 2015 – Council noted that the Annual Return has been approved and that the quarterly bank reconciliation and the renewal of the data protection registration would be actioned in July. **(Action: Cllr. Davies and Clerk to inspect assets and report back to Council with any maintenance issues)**

21. Correspondence Received

- ICO e-newsletter April 2015
- Code of Practice on Workforce Matters – Completion of Annual Monitoring Return
- We are.South Wales Fire and Rescue Service Campaign
- Invitation for Chair to attend The Monmouthshire Regiment Commemoration Event on 10th May 2015
- Have Your Say Torfaen County Borough Council Planning Service Customer Survey
- South Wales Fire and Rescue Service Improvement Plan 2015/2016

- g. The Voice – Issue 26
 - h. Youth Contract Scheme - TCBC
 - i. David Alston in conversation with John Selway – Llantarnam Arts Centre
 - j. Notice that the fencing has been removed from the Barnfield Play Area – TCBC
 - k. Torfaen Business Exhibition 6th May (9am -1pm) at Cwmbran Stadium - TCBC
 - l. Programme 2015 for Cymru'n Cofio Wales Remembers 1914-1918 - OVW
 - m. Mayor's Charity Movie Night – 27th April 2015 - TCBC
 - n. Litter levels in Llanfrechfa – Mrs Necreus
 - o. Clean Coast Week 8th to 17th May 2015 - OVW
 - p. Code of Practice on Workforce Matters - OVW
 - q. Invitation to Guidance Events – OVW
 - r. Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013 (Commencement No. 2) Order 2015
 - s. One Voice Wales Response to the White Paper, Reforming Local Government: Power to the People
 - t. Quotes for 2015/2016 – Aon Insurance
 - u. Civic Visit to Blaenavon & Big Pit - TCBC
 - v. Land Transaction Tax - Short Questionnaire - OVW
 - w. Trustee Shared Learning Seminar – OVW
 - x. Query re Play Area Project & Network Rail Land – Mr Miles
 - y. War Memorial Grants – OVW
 - z. Positive Planning: Planning (Wales) Bill – OVW
 - aa. Grant Request – Ponthir WI
 - bb. Grant Request – Gwent Dolphins
 - cc. Natural Resource Management Bulletin – April 2015 - OVW
 - dd. Community Asset Transfer - OVW
 - ee. National Children's Day UK 2015 - OVW
 - ff. Adopted Road Limits in School Close – TCBC
 - gg. Land in Candwr Road – TCBC
 - hh. Invitation to a free film show of "Gaslands 2", about fracking – Torfaen Friends of the Earth
- The content of the above correspondence was noted. Cllr. Davies noted that the fencing surrounding the play area in Barnfield had been removed

22. The date of the next Meeting of the Council will be held on Wednesday 10th June 2015 at 7.00pm at Ponthir District Sports Club. Cllr. Bailey gave his apologies as he is unable to attend this meeting.

23. **Vehicles parking on Ponthir School Playing Fields** – Cllr. Green stated that he had received a complaint that some drivers whose vehicles were leaving the school playing fields after junior football games had been inconsiderate to people walking on the fields. **(Action: Clerk to inform the football club)**

Meeting closed at 9.25pm

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