

PONTHIR COMMUNITY COUNCIL CYNGOR CYMUNED PONTHIR

Minutes of Monthly Meeting Held on 12th March 2014

1. **Present:** Cllr. R. Davies (Chair), Cllr. S. Bailey, Cllr. Mrs. J. Morgan, Cllr. Mrs J Bold, Cllr. P. Matthews, Cllr. T Roberts, Cllr. D. Green and Christina Harrhy, Torfaen CBC - Chief Officer Neighbourhood Services.
Members of Public Attending: T. Bold
Clerk: Karen Price
2. **Apologies:** None
3. **Declarations of Interest:** Cllr. Bold declared an interest in Item 22, as her son had applied for the role of Youth Representative, and took no part in the discussions concerning his application.
4. **Matters Raised By Members of Public Present** – None
5. **Impact of Torfaen CBC Budget Reductions** – Christina Harrhy informed Council that Torfaen CBC had to make savings of £11 million during 2014/15 with £1.5 million of that coming from the Neighbourhood Services budget. This would have a direct impact on many front line services. Ms Harrhy explained that they had taken a three way approach to reviewing this budget which was efficiency, cost recovering and income generation. Council noted the following:
 - Savings of £254K from the restructuring of the regeneration team, the library service and the countryside and ecology departments. This included a review of the support provided to arts centres within Torfaen and changes to the mobile library service.
 - Savings of £65K resulting from a review of the school crossing patrol service. Torfaen CBC has proposed that it will no longer fund patrols that do not meet certain criteria. There is an option for schools to take over the funding for their own crossing patrols. This will affect the patrol for Ponthir School.
 - A saving of £20K resulting from the removal of timetables at bus stops.
 - Leasing arrangements for sports clubs using Torfaen CBC pitches are being reviewed with the result that clubs will in future have to pay for the maintenance of the pitches they use.
 - The introduction of a ‘wild flower corridor’ throughout Torfaen will lead to an anticipated saving of £37.5K as the grass cutting of these areas will be reduced. However, this may need to be reviewed if the introduction of this scheme leads to an increase in fly tipping in these areas.
 - A review of residents’ black bin collection service.Ms Harrhy explained that in future a good working relation between Torfaen CBC and its community/town councils was essential and was looking to explore ways in which we could work together with the possibility of community/town councils providing services that Torfaen CBC have previously provided. The following points were raised:
 - Cllr. Roberts highlighted the Gateway Project that we are currently discussing with Torfaen CBC. Whilst the Community Council appreciated the costs associated for the first year of this scheme it could not justify the same costs being quoted by Torfaen CBC for

the maintenance of this scheme in subsequent years. Cllr. Bailey suggested that a way forward would be for the Community Council to maintain the site after the first year. Ms Harrhy suggested that the Community Council look for an additional site as this may lead to economies of scale. Additionally the Community Council suggested that it could purchase the planters which it could maintain afterwards which was generally agreed as a way forward. **(Ms Harrhy to look at the costing for the Gateway Project. Community Council to look for an additional site)**

- Cllr. Bailey commented that, whilst accepting that Torfaen CBC needed to make some additional money, this should not be at the expense of the Community Councils and cited the high cost of the Village Christmas Tree as an example.
- Clerk commented on a recent enquiry that was sent to the Neighbourhood Services Dept. concerning a number of ideas that the Community Council had e.g. a community litter pick and the cleaning of the bus shelters in our area but to which a reply had not been received. Ms Harrhy confirmed that there was no reason that the Community Council could not make its own arrangements for the bus shelters to be cleaned. **(Action: Clerk to forward details of this enquiry to Christina Harrhy)**
- Cllr. Bailey commented that the street cleansing teams did a good job but there were areas that would still need to be done by Torfaen CBC e.g. the picking up of litter along the non-paved side of Caerleon Road from Edgehill through Lower Lanfrechfa and into Ponthir (which we as a Community Council were unable to undertake for safety reasons). He suggested that maybe the paved side could be left occasionally so that areas such as the above example could be undertaken on a more regular basis by Torfaen CBC.
- Council welcomed the news that Ms Harrhy is considering the removal of Bring Sites, such as the one at Ponthir Village Hall, as all the items can now be recycled using resident's kerbside collection boxes. It was also noted that the recycling centre at New Inn is to be extended.
- Ms Harrhy noted that community/town councils in Torfaen had not been consulted on the wildflower corridor proposals. This proposal identified two sites in Ponthir. **(Action: Ms Harrhy to scope out ideas that can be worked on with the Community Council as well as advice and training that Torfaen CBC could provide.)**
Christina Harrhy left the meeting at 7.55pm.

6. The minutes of the meeting held on 12th February 2014 were approved as a true record and duly signed. Proposed By Cllr. Bailey and seconded by Cllr. Morgan.

7. **Matters Arising from the Meeting held on 12th February 2014.**

- a. **Speed of vehicles through Llanfrechfa** – PSCO Oliver has informed the Clerk that he has written to Torfaen CBC's Highway Department and been informed that the speed limit along this stretch of Caerleon Road will be looked at as part of a national review of speed limits to be conducted this year. Council agreed to wait for the results from this review to decide if any additional action was needed.
- b. **Design of a new Ponthir Community Council Logo by pupils of Ponthir School** – Chair to meet with Mrs Spooner, Headteacher, tomorrow.
- c. **Community Council Insurance** – Clerk has arranged for a quote from an alternative insurance company.
- d. **2014 Christmas Tree Lighting Event** – Clerk has written to the Village Hall Committee enquiring about available dates in December and is awaiting a reply.
- e. **Community Foodie Project** – **(Action: Cllr. Bold to contact Kate Blair)**

- f. **Gwent Best Kept Village Competition** – Clerk has contacted Highways Dept. to arrange for the removal of the estate agents signs on the verges adjacent to the bus shelters at Hafod Road and Lamb Lane. See Also Item 11
- g. **The Removal of the Community Council pages from the Torfaen CBC Webster Site -**
Clerk has contacted Torfaen CBC to request the removal of these pages.

8. **Planning**

- a. **14/P/00073 – Single storey rear extension & enlargement to front bay window at 33, Barnfield, Ponthir, Cwmbran, Torfaen.NP18 1TN** – No Observations

9. **Finance and Accounts**

- a. Balance of Direct Plus Account as at 28th February 2014 = £26,678.08
- b. **Authorisation of Cheques**
 - i. K Price (Stamps £7.20, Travel Expenses to OVW Training Course £3.15) = £10.35
 - ii. One Voice Wales (Training Session 20th February) – Invoice not received.
 - iii. Ponthir District Sports Club (Oct 2013 – March 2014 Rent) = £105.00

The two cheques for invoices received were approved. Proposed by Cllr. Morgan and seconded by Cllr. Roberts.

- c. **To Approve Invoices already Paid**

- i. Torfaen CBC (Christmas Tree) = £1020.00 (£170.00 VAT to be reclaimed)

The above invoice was approved. Proposed by Cllr. Morgan and seconded by Cllr. Roberts..

- d. **To Note Standing Order Payments**

- i. TCBC (Clerk's December Salary) on 20th January 2014.

The above payment was noted.

- 10. **One Voice Wales Membership 2014/2015** – Council agreed to renew its membership and a cheque for £166.00 was duly completed and signed. Proposed by Cllr. Bailey and seconded by Cllr. Bold.

- 11. **To consider setting up a Best Kept Village Committee or Working Party** – Council agreed with the Clerk's recommendation that on this occasion, a working party be set up. Proposed by Cllr. Bailey and seconded by Cllr. Bold. It was agreed that Cllr. Bold and Cllr. Matthews should represent the Community Council on this group. Proposed by Cllr. Roberts and seconded by Cllr. Bailey. Clerk has already written to a number of local organisations inviting their members to join this working party and has already received an acceptance from All Saints Church. **(Action: Clerk to arrange an initial meeting for this group for the beginning of April to be held at Ponthir District Sports Club)**

- 12. **Voting arrangements for the projects in the Community Council Newsletter** – Cllr. Davies has spoken to the printers and a numbered card will be produced to enable residents to vote for their preferred project. Council agreed that secure collection boxes need to be placed at various locations in Ponthir. Cllr. Bold suggested that the work the Community Council does should be mentioned in the Newsletter and Council agreed. **(Action: Clerk to look into the cost of collection boxes)**

13. Community Council Website – Tom Bold is continuing to work on this.

14. Update on the GateWay Project – See Item 5. Council noted the display of daffodils near the entrance to Barnfield that Cllr. Roberts had arranged last year. **(Action: Cllr. Roberts to contact Christina Harray and the design team at Torfaen CBC)**

15. Reports and Updates

- a. **Chair's Report** – Chair informed Council that he has arranged to attend a conference 'Conserving and Maintaining Welsh War Memorials' on 27th March 2014. The aim of this conference is to look at issues around war memorials, particularly in light of the forthcoming First World War centenary, and is designed to provide advice, information and details on available grants.
- b. **Report from a meeting arranged with Dave Congreve, Torfaen CBC** – Chair informed Council that Dave Congreve had not attended this meeting but Jacqui Rue and Emma Cambrey-Smith had attended instead. It was a useful meeting but unfortunately Ms Rue was unable to provide the required paperwork for this meeting. **(Action: Ms Rue to send the paperwork to Clerk and schedule another meeting)**

16. Consultations:

- a. Removing surplus secondary school places in the South of Torfaen- No Comments
- b. Local Government (Wales) Byelaws Act 2012 – No Comments
- c. School and College Transport Review - Torfaen CBC – No Comments
- d. Proposed Regulations regarding Disposal of Local Authority Playing Fields – Welsh Assembly - No Comments

17. To propose motions to be submitted to 2014 One Voice Wales Annual Conference and AGM – No motions were proposed.

18. Correspondence Received

- a. Consultation on Changes to By-Laws on Acupuncture, Tattooing, Semi-Permanent Skin Colouring, Cosmetic Piercing and Electrolysis – Torfaen CBC
- b. Aneurin Bevan Health Council Meeting 20th February 2014
- c. Cwmbran Community Council Summer Playschemes Recruiting
- d. Community Engagement Workshops - Gwent Police (E-Mail)
- e. Articles for the next issue of The Voice – One Voice Wales (E-Mails)
- f. Invitations to civic events on 1st & 7th March – Blaenavon Town Council
- g. Copy of correspondence sent by Gwent Police to Llanfrehfa Village Association in response to traffic concerns.
- h. Adjudication Panel for Wales Annual Report 2012-2013 - One Voice Wales (E-mail)
- i. E-mails from Ms N Davies concerning speeding vehicles along Caerleon Road
- j. E-Mail from Mr J Palmer concerning a number of village issues
- k. E-Mail from Mrs Buffery concerning proposed community council projects
- l. WWI Centenary – Ponthir Baptist Church (E-Mail)
- m. Public Appointments Opportunities – One Voice Wales (E-Mail)
- n. Refusal of a request to hold Community Council meetings in Ponthir Village Hall – Ponthir Village Hall Committee
- o. Invitation for Chair to attend the Torfaen Spring Showcase Concert – 24 March 2014

- p. Invitation for Chair to attend the Annual Charity Curry Night - 16 March 2014
- q. Consultation on the introduction of no smoking signage in Playgrounds – Torfaen CBC
- r. Invitation for Chair to attend the Senior School Prize Day – Caerleon Comprehensive
- s. Invitation for Chair to attend ‘Fly the Flag for the Commonwealth’ event - 10 March 2014 - Torfaen CBC (E-Mail)
- t. The Statement of Public Participation for the Welsh National Marine Plan – One Voice Wales (E-Mail)
- u. Response by One Voice Wales to the Positive Planning Consultation (E-mail)
- v. The Independent Remuneration Panel - Annual Report 2014/15

The content of the above correspondence was noted. Council was disappointed that a request to hold future community council meetings in the Village Hall had been refused but would continue to liaise with the committee when organising community events such as the Christmas Tree Lighting and the Best Kept Village Competition.

19. Ponthir Community Council’s Risk Management Policy and Risk Register – Clerk had previously circulated the current Risk Management Policy and an updated Risk Register and recommended that these documents be approved. Council agreed with this recommendation. Proposed by Cllr. Bailey and seconded by Cllr. Davies

20. Ponthir Community Council’s Financial Regulations - Clerk had previously circulated a draft version of the updated Financial Regulations and recommended that this document be approved. Council agreed with this recommendation. Proposed by Cllr. Roberts and seconded by Cllr. Morgan.

21. Community Council’s diary procedures for February 2014/March 2014 – Clerk confirmed that the review of Council’s Standing Orders, Asset Register and Annual Welsh Language Report were all underway and as previously mentioned an alternative insurance quote has been sort. There are no other outstanding diary procedures.

Tom Bold left the meeting at 8.35pm

22. Ponthir Community Council Youth Representatives – Chair confirmed that a number of applications had been received, details of which were circulated. Council noted that Tom Bold had been attending the Community Council’s meetings for some time, even before it was agreed to look into the possibility of Youth Representatives and approved his appointment. Proposed by Cllr. Bailey and seconded by Cllr. Roberts. Two applicants were then shortlisted for the remaining vacancy and it was agreed that the Chair should have an informal meeting with both candidates before any final decision is made. Cllr. Bailey suggested that either Cllr. Morgan or Cllr. Bold should also attend these meetings. Council approved that Cllr. Bold should attend with the Chair and that following these meetings Chair and Cllr. Bold should invite the successful applicant to attend a number of Council meetings before Council makes a formal appointment. Clerk suggested that all successful applicants should read the Code of Conduct policy and sign a form confirming this when they accept their appointment. Council agreed with this recommendation. **(Action: Clerk to arrange meetings with the shortlisted candidates. Clerk to write to the unsuccessful candidates and invite them to take part in the Best Kept Village Working Party)**

23. Date of the Next Meeting

The next Meeting of the Council will be held on Wednesday 9th April 2014 at 7.00pm at Ponthir District Sports Club.

Meeting Closed at 9.05pm

A copy of this document could be made available in Welsh. Please contact us on the telephone number or e-mail below/Mae copi or ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg. Cysylltwch a ni ar y rhif ffôn neu drwy e-bost isod.

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