

Minutes of the May monthly meeting of the Pontyclun Community Council held in the vestry of the Babel Chapel, Groesfaen, Pontyclun, at 7.10 p.m. on Tuesday, 11 May, 2010.

PRESENT: Community Councillors P Griffiths, Ms S Jenkins, R G Norman, M Rea and Ms C Willis

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Eleven members of the public

1. **APOLOGIES:** Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Community Councillors V A Cale, D Clayton-Jones, J G Davies, J V Huish and S Rogers

2. **Declarations of Interest**

The following declaration of interest was made:

Councillor M Rea for agenda item 6 (a) - "I am a member of the Borough Council's Planning Committee "

3. **Residents' concerns**

Ownership of land

Mr A R Lane addressed the Council about the ownership of the land on which the Pontyclun Community Council had been built.

Mr Lane stated that while the Borough Council contended that the land was in their ownership, the Management Committee of the Community Centre was of the view that ownership lay with the Management Committee. Evidence in support of the Management Committee's claim was produced. It was stated that the evidence had been forwarded to

the Borough Council with copies having been sent to the Chairperson of the Community Council.

The Chairperson had advised the Management Committee that it should seek legal advice on the matter and had suggested that contact should be made with Planning Aid, Wales, who would be in a position to offer advice free of charge.

The Community Council discussed a number of possibilities to progress the matter. One was a "low risk" option where the Community Council could lease the car park adjacent to the Community Centre for a limited amount of time until the legal position had been resolved. Another possibility was that the Community Council should take no action until the question of ownership had been finalised.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk establish whether the challenge to ownership had been resolved by the Borough Council.

4. **Minutes of the Community Council's meeting of 13 April, 2010**

The Clerk distributed copies of an amended page 8 to the draft minutes already circulated to Members. He asked that the amended page 8 be substituted for page 8 of the draft minutes.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Council's meeting of 13 April, 2010, including the substituted page 8, be approved as an accurate record.

5. **Matters arising**

(a) **Review of the Council's Standing Orders, Financial Regulations and Financial Risk Assessments**

The Clerk reported that he had reviewed a substantial part of the Council's Standing Orders in order to arrive at suggestions for amendments to the Council. He had not yet started work on the Financial Regulations or the Financial Risk Assessment.

It was unlikely that the reviews would be completed in time for the Council's June meeting, given the need to concentrate on the completion of the Year End Returns for 2009/10, but the Clerk was hopeful of completing the reviews in time for the July monthly meeting.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk's report be noted.

(b) **Community Council owned land in Brynsadler**

(i) **Proposed constitution for a trust**

The Council discussed the amended constitution of the proposed trust at Appendix 2 to the Council's agenda.

RESOLVED: That the Council support the amended constitution proposed by the organisers of the trust.

(ii) **Proposed lease**

The Council discussed the request by the organisers of the trust for a draft copy of the lease. The organisers asked if the draft copy could be provided by 25 May, 2010.

The Council felt it was unable to comply with the request since it first wished to be able to support the amended constitution. As the Council now felt able to support the amended constitution it would now be necessary to instruct a solicitor to draft a lease.

RESOLVED: That authority be given to the Clerk to select a solicitor with instructions to draw up a lease.

(iii) **Advice offered by Brodie Smith and Mahoney**

Following the request made the Council at its last meeting, the Council considered the legal advice given earlier to Councillor Dan Clayton-Jones.

On a point of clarification it was pointed out that although the advice was addressed to Councillor Dan Clayton Jones, it was private advice obtained through the financial contributions of Councillors Dan Clayton Jones, Paul Griffiths and Sarah Jenkins.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the Council re-affirm its earlier decision for the Clerk to instruct a solicitor to draw up a lease.
- (ii) That in parallel with the appointment of a solicitor to draw up a lease the Council ask One Voice Wales whether it would wish to offer any advice to the Council.

(c) **Youth facilities in Pontyclun**

In response to a question from a Member, the Clerk replied that he had not received any contact from Ms Caroline Wool following her presentation to the Council and her plans for the creation of a youth facility based at the Pontyclun RFC in September.

RESOLVED: That the Clerk contact Ms Wool to find out what progress there had been since her presentation to the Council.

(d) **Site for a proposed bus shelter in Brynsadler**

In response to a question about a date for the proposed meeting between Members, representatives of the Borough Council and the police to discuss a site for a replacement bus shelter in Cowbridge Road, Brynsadler, Councillor Rea stated that he had been in discussion with officers in the Borough Council and it was likely that a date for the meeting would be agreed shortly.

RESOLVED: That the position be noted.

(e) **Surplus bus shelters at Aberaman Depot**

In response to a question about the surplus bus shelters in storage at the Borough Council's Depot in Aberaman, the Clerk reported that he and Councillor Rea had viewed the bus shelters. The viewing had taken place to decide whether any of the bus shelters could be used in the Community.

The visit to the Depot had proved to be disappointing since the surplus bus shelters had been dismantled and constituted little more than a heap steel sections in very poor condition. Councillor Rea and the Clerk were of the view that the shelters were of no use to the Community Council.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

6. **Police matters**

(a) **Reports from the police**

The Clerk advised that earlier that day he had received an e-mail from PC Mike Perry of the Talbot Green Police Station to say that he would not be able to attend that evening's meeting.

However, PC Perry had provided his monthly report which comprised 24 recorded crimes. The Clerk read out the detail of

the crimes for Members' information and indicated which crimes had been detected.

PC Perry's report also advised of joint action between the police and Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council which had targeted a local take away restaurant for serving alcohol to under 18 year olds. A prosecution was imminent.

P C Perry also reported on action being taken against the drivers of scramblers driving their machines at the rear of Sovereign Gardens, Miskin.

Finally, Pc Perry reported that he had spent a number of hours attending a local youth club. Following his attendance he had received a "wish list" of items required at the youth club. A copy of the list had been sent to Councillor Rea.

Councillor Rea confirmed receipt of the list and pointed to the success of the youth club held in the Bethel Baptist Church where, on the evening referred to by PC Perry, around 80 youngsters had been in attendance. Councillor Rea believed that as a successful youth club was already established in Pontyclun the Community Council should talk to the Bethel Youth Club to obtain tips on the successful running of the sessions at the Pontyclun RFC.

- RESOLVED:**
- (i) That the police report be noted
 - (ii) That the subject of the youth club at the Bethel Baptist Church be placed on the agenda for the next meeting of the Community Council.

(b) **Reports from Members**

There were no reports from Members for this month.

7. **Matters reported for decision**

(a) **Highways issues in the Community**

Councillor Jenkins reported on the meeting which took place on 28 April, 2010 with the Principal Engineer (Transport Management) of the Borough Council.

Mr Higgins referred to the Borough Council's highways plans for traffic management in Pontyclun in 2006. The plans were never implemented but could be used as a starting point for planning future improvements.

Essentially, the plans centred around three options. These were:

- (i) the installing traffic lights at the junction of Palalwyf Avenue with Cowbridge Road.
- (ii) introducing a 20 m.p.h. speed limit through the centre of Pontyclun.
- (iii) installing a further pedestrian crossing in Cowbridge Road in the vicinity of the post office.

The merits and disadvantages of each of the potential schemes were discussed.

Mr Higgins pointed out that before any schemes were introduced it would be necessary to carry out further surveys since the surveys carried out in connection with the 2006 plans were now out of date.

Mr Higgins also underlined that the amount of finance available to carry out the work was limited to £50K and that this sum would need to be utilised for the survey work and the provision of appropriate signage.

Mr Higgins also commented that while in principle the Borough Council would have no objection to a scheme to pave over grass verges in Merthyr Street, Pontyclun, to provide more parking spaces, the funding of such a scheme was unlikely to be provided by the Borough Council.

Discussion also took place on a variety of other highways related issues in the Community. In particular, Mr Higgins commented favourably on the high quality of the Community Council's bid under the Safe Routes in the Community scheme received by the Borough Council.

RESOLVED: That the report be noted.

(b) **Possible erection of a gate**

The Clerk reported that he had contacted a representative of the Pontyclun RFC about a date for a site meeting to discuss the proposal for the erection of a gate.

The Clerk had been told that the best time for a meeting would be at 7.00 p.m. on a Tuesday evening.

RESOLVED: (i) That a meeting be held with Pontyclun RFC representatives on the evening of 25 May, 2010.

- (ii) That the Community Council be represented at the meeting by Councillors Griffiths and Willis.

(c) **Payment of creditors**

RESOLVED: That payment be approved to the creditors listed in Appendix 7 to the Council's agenda.

(d) **Planning**

(Councillor Rea declared a personal but not prejudicial interest in this item of business. He elected to remain in the Council chamber during the discussion)

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

RESOLVED: That the following comments be made to the Planning Authority:

Application No. 10/0228/13

That the Council advise that, given the history of ground instability in this area, suitable ground investigations be carried out before determination of the application.

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

Environmental Partnership Forum

The Council received an invitation from the Borough Council to attend the launch of the Rhondda Cynon Taf Environmental Forum being held at the Dare Valley Country Park, Aberdare, on 19 May, 2010.

The Forum is part of the Environmental Improvement Partnership and will be focussed on carbon reduction, climate change and wider issues of enjoyment and enhancement of open spaces.

Councillor Jenkins advised the Council that this was an event which she had planned to attend in a private capacity. Councillor Jenkins agreed to report back to the Council on developments at the meeting.

RESOLVED: That Council record its appreciation of Councillor Jenkins' offer.

9. **Matters reported for information**

(a) **Correspondence from Ms Betty Walker**

The Council received a letter from Ms Betty Walker, together with the reply of the Clerk, drawing attention to the poor condition of the play equipment in the children's play areas opposite the junction into Millfield and the Windsor Field, Pontyclun Park. Mrs Walker made comparison with the much better play facilities which were available in Talbot Green and Llanharry.

Mrs Walker also drew attention to a seat off Clun Avenue which was almost covered by a nearby hedge and the water logging which affected the Windsor Field.

Councillor Norman also spoke of his concern at the lack of action by the Borough Council in carrying out refurbishment of children's play areas in the area. This was despite several assurances having been given that the work was in the Borough Council's programme. Councillor Norman expressed concern, too, at the failure by the Borough Council to construct the promised footpath linking Brynamlwg with the new residential development on Cefn yr Hendy.

Councillor Rea responded that he had raised the latter issue at the Borough Council and been advised that work had been held up due a promised grant from the Welsh Assembly not being received by the Borough Council.

Councillor Rea had also been advised that a planning application was due to be submitted to the July meeting of the Borough Council when planning consent would be sought for the outstanding work in connection with recreational facilities at the new development.

- RESOLVED:**
- (i) That the Community Council give its complete support to the issues identified by Ms Walker.
 - (ii) That while the Community Council did not have authority to remedy the matters complained of, a copy of Ms Walker's letter be forwarded to the Group Director of Environmental Services at Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council for him to take action.

(b) **Car parking charges**

The Council received a letter of acknowledgement, addressed to Councillor Rea, for the submission of a petition to the Borough Council opposing the car parking charges at the car park adjacent to the Pontyclun Community Centre.

RESOLVED: That receipt of the acknowledgement be noted.

(c) **Council's Insurance**

(i) **Fidelity Guarantee**

The Clerk reminded the Council that in March, 2010, as a result of the receipt of the External Auditor's report on the Council's accounts for 2009/10, he had requested the Council's insurers, in writing, to increase the fidelity guarantee to £150,000.

No acknowledgement had been received from the insurers. Neither had there been notification of any increase in premium.

A reminder letter had been sent by the Clerk but again without any response.

(ii) **Insurance premium for 2010/11**

The Clerk advised the Council that its insurance premium for the new financial year is normally received in the last few days of the old or the first few days of the new financial year. No request for a premium had been received three weeks into the new financial year.

Rather than contact the insurers again the Clerk referred his concerns to One voice Wales and had queried whether the Community Council was still covered for insurance.

One Voice Wales immediately contacted the Council's insurers. An assurance was received that the fidelity insurance had been increased to £150,000 and that an invoice for the Community Council's insurance premium would be sent to the Clerk shortly. An apology was received from the insurers at their lack of earlier response. An invoice for the insurance premium for 2010/11 was subsequently received and been paid.

RESOLVED: That the position be noted.

10. **Further matter for decision**

(a) **Exclusion of the press and public**

RESOLVED: That members of the press and public be excluded from the meeting for item 10 (b), an item of confidential business, on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest.

(b) **Possibility of the purchase of car park**

(Councillor Norman, as a member of the Management Committee of the Pontyclun Community Centre, declared an interest in this item of business and vacated the Council chamber.)

The Council was briefed on the meeting between Members and the Director of Corporate Estates at Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That the Clerk contact the secretary of the Management Committee with a view to establishing the number of groups and volunteers using the Centre.
- (ii) That a further meeting be convened with the Director of Corporate Services of the Borough Council.

11. The meeting ended at 8.30 p.m.