

Minutes of the March monthly meeting of the Pontyclun Community Council held in Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Gymuned, Cefn yr Hendy, Pontyclun, at 7.00 p.m. on Tuesday, 9 March, 2010.

**PRESENT:** Community Councillors P Griffiths, J V Huish, S Jenkins, M Rea, and C Willis

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Five 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, R G Norman and S Rogers

2. **Declarations of Interest**

The following declarations of interest were made:

**Councillor J V Huish** for agenda item 7 (g) - "I am a member of the Borough Council's Planning Committee"

**Councillor S Jenkins** for agenda item 6 (g) - "I am the Chair of Miskin Mill Scouts Group"

**Councillor M Rea** for agenda item 7 (g) - "I am a member of the Borough Council's planning Committee "

3. **Residents' concerns**

(a) **Proposal to remove the 6<sup>th</sup> form from Y Pant Comprehensive School, Pontyclun**

Following the proposal of the Education Authority to establish a tertiary college in the Treforest area and the consequent disbandment of 6<sup>th</sup> form classes at comprehensive schools, the Council received a presentation from an action group opposing the disbandment of the 6<sup>th</sup> form at Y Pant Comprehensive School.

The Group had called itself S.O.S. and had established its own website. The Group had written in strong terms to the Leader of the Borough Council opposing the plans for disbandment of Y Pant 6<sup>th</sup> form. The Group was very active in its opposition to the plans of the local education authority and met each evening between 6.00 p.m. and 7.00 p.m. The Group sought the support

of the Community Council to oppose the disbandment of the 6<sup>th</sup> form.

Several Members spoke in favour of retaining the 6<sup>th</sup> form at Y Pant and pointed to the school's long history of excellent academic achievement. The Council believed that if the local education authority's proposals went ahead experienced teachers would leave and educational standards would drop. The Council believed that the educational achievements of the 6<sup>th</sup> form should be celebrated and not allowed to be subsumed into a tertiary college. There was a strong feeling that the local education authority had not thought through the consequences of the disbandment of 6<sup>th</sup> forms.

**RESOLVED:** (i) That the Community Council strongly support the Action Group's opposition to the plans for the disbandment of the 6<sup>th</sup> form at Y Pant.

(ii) That a letter be sent to the Leader of the Borough Council pointing out the excellent academic achievement of the 6<sup>th</sup> form at Y Pant over very many years and requesting the local education authority abandons its current plans.

(b) **Financial effect of boundary change**

Mr A R Lane asked whether the Community Council had received a cash transfer of £10,000.00 as a result of the inclusion of additional residential areas following the alterations to the Community Council's boundaries on 1 April, 2009.

The Clerk explained to Mr Lane that there was no "cash transfer of £10,000.00". Instead, the Council Tax Base for the Community of Pontyclun had been increased by the inclusion of additional residential properties. As the Community Council had agreed at its previous meeting to keep its precept for 2010/2011 at the same amount as the previous year, the effect was to reduce the precept element of each householder's council tax in the Community.

It was unclear whether Mr Lane had understood the reply and he repeated his question.

**RESOLVED:** That the Clerk confirm the explanation in writing to Mr Lane.

4. **Police matters**

(a) **Reports from the police**

In the absence of a representative from the police no reports were received. In response to a question from Members, the Clerk confirmed that notification of the meeting had been given to the police.

**RESOLVED:** That Councillor Huish contact the police with a view to getting police representation at future meetings.

(b) **Reports from Members**

No reports were received.

5. **Minutes of the Council's meeting of 9 February, 2010**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the Council's meeting of 9 February, 2010, be approved as an accurate record.

6. **Matters arising**

(a) **Fidelity Guarantee**

The Clerk reported that following the report of the External Auditor on the 2008/09 Annual Return he had given instructions to the Council's insurers to increase the sum assured to £150,000.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

(b) **Standing Orders and Financial Regulations**

The Clerk reported that he had received copies of updated model standing orders and financial regulations from One Voice Wales. He intended circulating the model documentation to all Members for consideration by the Council at its April monthly meeting.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

(c) **Financial Risk Assessment**

The Clerk reported that he had received a model financial risk assessment from One Voice Wales. The model document would need to be amended to suit to the requirements of the Community Council. The Clerk intended to bring a draft of the amended financial risk assessment to the April meeting of the Community Council.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

(d) **Bus shelters**

(i) **Site for a bus shelter in Brynsadler**

The Clerk reported that the Community Council's request to the Borough Council for the identification of a site for a bus shelter on the western side of Cowbridge Road, Brynsadler, had been listed for a site meeting with the police. Due to the high demand for site visits involving the police there would be a delay before the site meeting took place.

**RESOLVED:** That the report be noted.

(ii) **Surplus bus shelters**

The Clerk reported that the surplus bus shelters earlier advised by the Borough Council to be in storage at Borough Council's Depot at Aberaman would be available for inspection by community councils until 31 March, 2010. After this date, any remaining bus shelters were likely to be scrapped.

**RESOLVED:** That Councillor Rea and the Clerk make arrangements to view the bus shelters at Aberaman Depot before 31 March, 2010.

(e) **Car parking**

(i) **Day Centres**

The Clerk advised that he had received clarification from the Borough Council that no parking charges applied at the Tonyrefail Day Centre. The Clerk had been informed that the only parking charges to apply at a Day Centre in the Borough were at the Mountain Ash Day Centre.

(ii) **Pontyclun Community and Day Centres**

The Clerk reported receipt of an e-mail he had received from the Borough Council. in response to the Community Council's enquiry about the possibility of the sale of the car park to the Community Council.

**RESOLVED:** That discussion on the contents of the letter be deferred to the end of the Council's agenda.

(f) **Ynysddu footpath and lighting scheme**

The Clerk reported that work on the footpath and lighting had been completed and that a sum of £1,555 had been paid to the Borough Council as a contribution to the lighting scheme. A further contribution of approximately £1,900 had been made by Ynysddu residents to the Borough Council towards the lighting scheme. The Borough Council had confirmed that it would meet the cost of maintenance of the lighting scheme and all energy charges.

The Clerk reported that an invoice had also been received from the Borough Council for £3,000.00 as the Community Council's contribution towards the construction costs of the footpath.

- RESOLVED:** (i) That the Council re-affirm its earlier intention to make a contribution of £3,000 towards the cost of constructing the footpath.
- (ii) That the Council note that its contribution towards the cost of the lighting scheme had been made and that the Borough Council would be responsible for all energy and maintenance costs associated with the lighting scheme.

(g) **Miskin Mill Scout Group**

(Councillor Jenkins declared an interest in this item of business and **vacated?** the Council chamber)

The Clerk reported that the Group's secretary had provided invoices to the Council in respect of building works carried out under Phase 1 of the rebuilding project. The invoices showed that an amount of £2,197.11 was still owed by the Group to the builder. Acting on the earlier decision of the Council the Clerk had released a sum of £2,197.11 of the £10,000.00 grant previously awarded to the Scout Group.

**RESOLVED:** That the action of the Clerk be approved.

(h) **Youth provision in Pontyclun**

The Council received a presentation from Mrs Caroline Wool.

Mrs Wool highlighted the lack of provision for the youth of the Community on Friday evenings. She stated that in her post with the Borough Council, under the E3 programme, she was working in a "cluster" of schools and was planning how to deliver

services for the youth of the Community as the Pontyclun Rugby Football Club had agreed to provide premises for youth activities on Friday evenings.

Mrs Wool recognised that it would be necessary to recruit one male and one female qualified youth workers. The youth workers would be attached to her “cluster”. In agreeing to provide a sum of £5,000 towards the provision of youth workers, the Community Council would be entering into a contract with Mrs Wool’s “cluster”.

- RESOLVED:**
- (i) That before proceeding with the arrangement written confirmation be obtained from Mrs Wool on the respective parties’ responsibilities.
  - (ii) That when the arrangement is operational Mrs Wool be required to provide regular updates on progress to the Community Council.
  - (iii) That the Community Council’s financial contribution to the project be by periodic payments.
  - (iv) Delegated authority be given to the Chairperson and Clerk to authorise periodic payments.
  - (v) That a report on the Community Council’s proposals to provide youth facilities in the Community be prepared by the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson for inclusion in The Diary.

(i) **Council’s responses to questionnaires**

- RESOLVED:** That where the Council has offered comments to questionnaires, a copy of the completed questionnaires be reported back for information to the next Council meeting.

7. **Matters reported for decision**

(a) **Proposals for a budget for 2010/11**

- RESOLVED:** That the draft budget produced at Appendix 2 to the Council’s agenda be approved subject to the deletion of the provision for a replacement vehicle.

(b) **Code of Conduct – Member Development Training**

The Council discussed the letter from the Director of Legal Services at the Borough Council about a refresher training course on the Code of Conduct.

Several Members commented that they had recently undergone training in this area.

**RESOLVED:** That the letter be noted.

(c) **Litter in the vicinity of Pontyclun railway station**

The Council discussed a complaint made by a member of the public about accumulations of litter in the vicinity of Pontyclun railway station.

It was noted that the Clerk had taken up the complaint with the Borough Council who had confirmed that the land in question was private land and the Borough Council had no authority to enter private land to remove litter. The Borough Council also confirmed that the problem was long standing and resulted in regular complaints being forwarded to Network Rail. Certain railway stations in the Borough were particularly prone to accumulations of litter. The Borough Council had agreed to forward the complaint about litter at Pontyclun station to Network Rail.

**RESOLVED:** (i) That the Clerk write again to Network Rail asking for the removal of the accumulations of litter at the Pontyclun railway station and the adjoining land. Further, that Network Rail organise a regular programme for the removal of litter from the station. In the event that a regular programme is not introduced that authority be given to the Highway Authority for the removal of litter with the cost being borne by Network Rail.

(ii) That copies of the letter to Network Rail be sent to the Deputy First Minister at the Welsh Assembly and the Keep Wales Tidy campaign.

(d) **Pontyclun Foodbank Project**

The Council discussed the letter from Mr Adrian Curtis the regional development officer for a network of foodbank projects across Wales. Mr Curtis stated that he is working with Bethel Baptist Church in Pontyclun to launch a foodbank serving communities across south Rhondda Cynon Taf.

The Council was fully supportive of the project and was aware of the steps already taken at Bethel Baptist Church.

- RESOLVED:**
- (i) That the Council write to Mr Curtis confirming its support for the project.
  - (ii) That the Council invite Mr Curtis to provide posters for display in the Council's noticeboards.
  - (iii) That the Council invite Mr Curtis to apply, on behalf of the Foodbank project, for a grant at the Council's annual grants distribution meeting.
  - (iv) That an invitation be extended to Mr Curtis to address the Community Council should he wish to do so.

(e) **Accessibility of railway stations in Wales**

The Council discussed an invitation from the Welsh Assembly's Equality of Opportunities Committee to comment on the accessibility of railway stations in Wales.

The Council believed that accessibility to the railway station in Pontyclun was reasonable but had deep concerns over the difficulties faced by those residents of the Community who needed to access Cardiff Central railway station by bus. It was necessary for these residents to cross the city from the Greyfriars Road terminus often with heavy suitcases. The Council was unclear whether passengers from other villages in South Wales faced the same difficulty.

- RESOLVED:**
- (i) That the Council advise the Committee that there are no access difficulties at the Pontyclun railway station.
  - (ii) That the Council advise the Committee of the overwhelming need for an integrated transport system to serve the needs of the public in Cardiff.
  - (iii)

(f) **Councillors' Training Event**

The Council received details of a training and development opportunity for councillors across unitary authorities in Gwent and town/community councillors as part of One Voice Wales.

**RESOLVED:** That the letter be noted.

(g) **Planning**

(Councillors Huish and Rea declared a personal but not prejudicial interest in this item of business and exercised their right to remain in the Council chamber)

Following the above declarations the meeting was inquorate.

No further discussion took place under this item of business.

(h) **Payment of creditors**

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

8. **Urgent matters reported for decision since the despatch of agendas**

(Councillor Huish declared a personal but not prejudicial interest in this item of business and exercised his right to remain in the Council chamber)

**Condition of grass verges outside properties in Merthyr Street and Maelog Close, Pontyclun**

The Clerk distributed copy letters and photographs from four residents of Maelog Close requesting the Community Council's assistance in preventing the grass verges outside their homes becoming deeply rutted and unsightly as the result of the parking of vehicles. It was suggested that that the Council might be able to help by erecting concrete bollards in the grass verges.

The Council discussed what help it might be able to offer and the possible reaction of residents in the area who may have been accustomed to parking their vehicles on the grass verges.

**RESOLVED:** That the Clerk write to all residents of Maelog Close and Merthyr Street to gain their reactions to the suggestion to the erection of concrete bollards in the grass verges.

9. **Matters reported for information**

(a) **Local Health Board & NHS Trust appointments in Wales**

The Council received a copy of the advertisement issued by the Welsh Assembly Government.

The Clerk advised that copies of the advertisement had also been displayed in Community Council noticeboards.

**RESOLVED:** That the information be noted.

(b) **Local Government Legislative Competency Order**

The Council received details of a link on the BBC website whereby the debate that took place on 9 February, 2010, on the Local Government Competency (LCO) could be heard.

**RESOLVED:** That the information be noted.

(c) **Miskin Residents' Association**

The Council received a copies of correspondence between Mr F M Yates and the Clerk about the disbandment of the Miskin Residents' Association.

**RESOLVED:** That the information be noted.

10. **Further matters for decision**

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

**RESOLVED:** By virtue of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 the press and public are excluded from discussions on the following item(s) on the basis that disclosure thereof would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

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

The Council discussed Appendices 11, 12, 13 and 14 to the agenda.

The Clerk also advised the Council of the considerable amount of work involved in meeting the request made under the Freedom of Information Act.

**RESOLVED:** (i) That the organisers of the proposed trust be informed that the Borough Council has advised that a planning application for a change of use is not considered necessary.

- (ii) That the adjacent landowner's solicitors be asked to provide a plan showing the line of the re-aligned fence.
- (iii) That the Council note the action of the adjacent landowner's solicitors in contacting the Welsh Assembly Government.
- (iv) Before proceeding with the transfer the Community Council needs to be of the view that the constitution serves the best interests of the Community of Pontyclun.
- (v) The purpose of the trust as specified in the constitution should be limited to the management of the land which is being transferred.
- (vi) Membership of the proposed trust should be available to all residents of the Community.
- (vii) Any changes in the proposed trust's constitution should only be made after the changes had been agreed by a two-thirds majority of the members.
- (viii) The formation of the proposed trust should be initiated by a widely advertised meeting. Whilst the meeting will not be called by the Community Council, the Council will share responsibility for advertising the meeting.
- (ix) The Council will ensure that in the legal agreement which achieves the transfer of the land, the trust will be restricted from any development of the land and will be required to provide such public access to the land as is consistent with its environmental protection.
- (x) That the proposed trust should not carry out any works on the land

which is contrary to the current planning designation of the land.

- (xi) That the Clerk forward the Community Council's comments to the organisers of the proposed trust after a draft of the proposed letter had been sent to all Members of the Community Council.

(c) **Car Park at Pontyclun Community and Day Centres**  
**(Item 6 (e) (ii) above**

The Council discussed the letter received from the Borough Council in response to the Community Council's earlier enquiry about purchasing the car park.

Councillor Rea proposed that the Council buy the car park from the Borough Council. The motion was seconded by Councillor Huish.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) That in principle agree to the purchase of the car park.
- (ii) That the Clerk arrange a meeting for a negotiating committee to meet with the Borough Council comprising Councillors Huish, Rea and Griffiths. In the event that one of the nominated Members is unable to make the meeting, Councillor Willis be nominated as a replacement Member.
- (iii) That in negotiating a sale of the car park the Members bring to the Borough Council's attention the significant benefits which would accrue to the Borough Council through a sale by:
- considerably improved traffic management in the village.
  - underwriting the future of the Pontyclun Day Centre.
  - relieving the Borough Council of expenditure on maintenance and energy

consumption for lighting  
columns.

11. The meeting ended at 8.40 p.m.