

Minutes of the Annual Grants Meeting of the Pontyclun Community Council held in the Pontyclun Community Centre, Pontyclun, at 7.00 p.m. on Tuesday, 22 July, 2008.

**PRESENT:** Community Councillors Ms V A Cale, J G Davies, J V Huish, R G Norman, M Rea and Ms C Willis

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** One member of the public for part of the meeting.

1. **Apologies for absence:**

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Community Councillors D. Clayton-Jones, P Griffiths, S Jenkins and S Rogers

2. **Declarations of interest**

No declarations of interest were received from Members.

3. **Minutes of the Council's Meeting of 1 July, 2008**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the Council's meeting of 1 July, 2008, be approved as an accurate record.

4. **Matters arising**

(a) **Purchase of land – Independent Review**

The Clerk reported that after a delay of many weeks a member of staff at the Wales Audit Office had come back to him to report that the Wales Audit Office would not be prepared to undertake the review of the procedure followed by the previous Council in the purchase of land at Brynsadler Mill, Pontyclun

The substantive reason given for this decision was that if, at annual audit, the Community Council's actions in the purchase

were challenged, the Wales Audit Office's position would be compromised if it had already carried out a review of the purchase procedure.

A discussion ensued on who should carry out the review.

**RESOLVED:** That the Council's former auditor, Mr Peter Morgan, be approached and asked if he would be prepared to carry out the review.

(b) **Community Council's Annual Allotment Competition**

Councillor Norman reported that judging of this year's competition had been delayed by a week due to inclement weather. A schedule of prizewinners for both allotment sites had been produced.

A discussion followed where the possibility of the Council playing a more prominent role in the competition in future years was discussed.

**RESOLVED:** (i) That the list of 2008 competition prizewinners be displayed in the Community Council's noticeboards.

(ii) That consideration be given to organising a special presentation evening for prizewinners in future years.

5. **Matters reported for decision**

(a) **Minutes of the Council's meeting of 14 May, 2008, and the exclusion of the press and public**

The Clerk confirmed that all Members of the Community Council had received a copy of the e-mail dated 6 July, 2008, from Dr B O'Reilly of Clos Brenin, Brynsadler.

The Clerk reported that he had made enquiries with the Borough Council and the Society of Local Council Clerks about Dr O'Reilly's claim that "There can be no conceivable reason that the public should be excluded on any matter that does or may affect them".

The Borough Council had confirmed that it was in order to exclude the press and public from a meeting when a confidential matter was under discussion. Furthermore, having excluded the press and public from a meeting it would be inappropriate to minute the contributions to the discussions made by individual councillors. In these circumstances it was the practice of the

Borough Council to only record the resolution resulting from the meeting.

The advice received from the Society of Local Council Clerks was similar. Under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act, 1960, "The Council can exclude the press and public if it considers that discussion of the terms would be prejudicial to the public interest if they remained. There does not have to be a specific reason explained in the resolution although the council should be satisfied that the item would be better discussed in private"

In response to other points made by Dr O'Reilly, the Society advised ".....it is not for the Audit Commission to determine whether an item should be discussed in private or in open council. Also, you do not have to pass his letter on to the Audit Commission."

Finally, the SLCC expressed the view that "When an item has been excluded you do not then detail the discussion in the minutes and in my view your minute is more than adequate"

A discussion by the Council followed the Clerk's report. Disappointment was expressed at the tone of Dr O'Reilly's e-mail. Concern was also expressed about the inaccurate content of the communication. Councillor Huish advised that he had made separate enquiries with the Local Government Association and established that the factual position was as reported by the Clerk.

**RESOLVED:** (i) That a reply be sent to Dr O'Reilly advising him that the Council had acted properly in excluding the press and public from the meeting of 14 May, 2008.

(ii) That the minute reflecting the decision of the Council on the matter was considered to be suitable and accurate.

(ii) That the Council express its unanimous support for the way in which the Clerk handled the matter.

(b) **Reviews of Electoral Arrangements**

The Council discussed the letter from the Welsh Assembly Government of June, 2008, explaining that the Boundary Commission for Wales would, soon after the 2008 elections, be undertaking reviews of electoral arrangements in Wales for all 22 principal council areas.

It is intended that any changes should take effect from the elections due in 2012. The Welsh Assembly Government would expect the Commission to recommend one elected member for each electoral division within a Welsh county, although the Minister would have power to direct otherwise.

The Council discussed the current arrangements in Rhondda Cynon Taf where there are a number of multi-member divisions and the likelihood of changes. The Council also considered the consultation questions posed by the Welsh Assembly Government.

**RESOLVED:** That the following response be given to the Welsh Assembly Government:

- (a) The Commission should be requested to consider the appropriateness of multi-member divisions.
- (b) If multi-member divisions are to continue, they should be in the same areas as they are now.
- (c) The Community Council considers that the minimum figure of 30 members per council to be artificial. Numbers of members should reflect local circumstances.
- (d) The Community Council considers that a maximum number of 75 members per council to be artificial. Numbers of members per council should reflect local circumstances.
- (e) The existing ratio of councillors to electors of 1:1,750 does not work at present. It should be reviewed.
- (f) While making allowance for the sparsity of population in rural areas would appear to be a good idea, it does not work in practice.

(c) **Regional Conference of the Society of Local Council Clerks**

The Council considered an invitation from the Society of Local Council Clerks for the Clerk and any Members to attend the SLCC Regional Conference at Llandrindod Wells on 8 September, 2008.

**RESOLVED:** That the Clerk be nominated to attend the Conference.

(d) **Planning**

Councillors Huish and Rea declared personal, but not prejudicial, interests in this item of business. They elected to remain in the Council Chamber but did not participate in the Council's discussions.

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

**Application No. 08/0908/10**

While the Council does not have any objection to the proposal, it would urge the Planning Authority to impose a condition on any consent requiring the developer to carry out all external work in materials sympathetic to the surroundings.

Note: Councillor Davies wished it recorded that he was opposed in principle to barn conversions

**Application No. 08/0448/10**

That the Planning Authority be informed that the Community Council believes that the proposal constitutes an over-development of the plot.

**Application No. 08/0978/01**

That, on the understanding that the proposed sign is not a fluorescent sign, the Community Council has no objection to the proposal.

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

**RESOLVED:** That the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the next item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of information for a service provided by the Council.

(f) **Financial grants for the 2008/09 financial year**

Before allocating any grants the Community Council considered the guidance given by the former District Auditor for deciding awards, namely:

- (a) whether the payment was of direct benefit
- (b) whether benefit is in proportion to the payment made
- (c) whether the organisation's own resources are sufficient and other potential income considered including other councils'

- (d) whether the money was being used circumvent any limitation on specific powers
- (e) whether the award of grants would result in a precedent leading to applications from other groups

**RESOLVED:** That the following grants be made:

Organisation	Amount of grant
	£ p
Merched Y Wawr	75.00
Cantorion Ladies' Choir	100.00
Pontyclun with Talygarn Parish	350.00
Llantrisant First Responders	200.00
Llantrisant & District Local History Society	100.00
Pontyclun Women's Institute	100.00
Pontyclun & District Allotments Association	100.00
Pontyclun Senior Citizens	200.00
Pontyclun Institute & Athletic Ladies Bowling Club	100.00
Bobath Children's Therapy Centre, Wales	100.00
St Paul's Church Nursery *	250.00
Hope –Penuel Presbyterian Church, Pontyclun	150.00
1 <sup>st</sup> Pontyclun Boys' Brigade	100.00
The Minnesingers	100.00
Pontyclun Football Club	500.00
Shelter Cymru	100.00
Miskin & Mwyndy W. I.	100.00
Miskin Manor Cricket Club (Seniors)	200.00
Miskin Manor Cricket Club (Juniors)	200.00
St Paul's Sunday School	100.00
Pontyclun Phoenix Club	100.00
St David's Church, Groesfaen	200.00
St David's Church, Miskin	200.00
Pontyclun Athletic Bowling Club	200.00
The Badgers' Under 16 Junior Team	200.00
Babell C M Church, Groesfaen	200.00

\* The Clerk declared an interest in this application and vacated the Council Chamber during consideration of the application

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

None were reported.

7. **Matters reported for information**

(a) **Engagement of a solicitor**

The Clerk reported that, following the Council's request to engage another solicitor to advise on issues connected with the purchase of land in Brynsadler, he had approached the firm of Gaskell & Walker in Cowbridge.

The Clerk had briefed one of the solicitors and provided him with a number of key documents and asked for written advice on the Council's position.

**RESOLVED:** That the Clerk's report be noted.

(b) **Cardiff and District National Eisteddfod**

The Clerk reported receipt of an invitation to send a representative of the Community Council and partner to the local authorities' day of the Cardiff and District National Eisteddfod on 2 August, 2008. The invitation was received on 3 July. Replies were required by 4 July.

After discussions with the Chairperson and Vice Chairperson it had been agreed to nominate the Vice Chairperson and his wife to nominate the Community Council.

The report was noted.

(c) **Proposals for major developments west of Cardiff**

The Clerk reported on his attendance at the joint meeting of neighbouring community councils convened to hear a presentation by an officer of the Transportation Division of the Welsh Assembly Government.

The officer reported that there were a number of major developments, including an improved access to Cardiff International Airport, at the planning stage. The Welsh Assembly Government wanted to consult as widely as possible to plan for accompanying improvements in the highways infrastructure.

The officer accepted that community councils throughout south east Wales may find the proposals for highways improvement unwelcome but stressed that in his role as an engineer it was his duty to provide technical advice and suggestions to his employer. Final decisions would be taken by the Welsh Assembly Government after considering feedback from the public.

The Community Council discussed the three main proposals for highways improvements together with the options under each proposal.

**RESOLVED:** That the Council advise the Welsh Assembly Government that it is in favour of a link off the A4232 to join the A48 with subsequent improvements to the A48 and to the Five Mile Lane to access Cardiff International Airport.

(d) **Public Services Ombudsman for Wales**

All Members of the Council received a copy of a recently circulated booklet on how to complain that a local authority Member had broken the Code of Conduct.

The information was noted.

(e) **Parking bays in Llantrisant Road, Pontyclun**

The Council again discussed the traffic congestion which regularly occurred in Llantrisant Road, as a result of the relatively new creation of car parking bays almost opposite the junction with Clun Avenue, Pontyclun.

While the Community Council had always supported more parking facilities in Pontyclun, the creation of these parking bays had considerably impeded the flow of traffic through the village. In the view of the Council the parking bays were also dangerous.

**RESOLVED:** That the Council write to the Borough Council asking for the removal of the parking bays.

(f) **Access to public car park to the rear of the public conveniences in Llantrisant Road, Pontyclun**

The Council discussed the access road to the Borough Council owned car park at the rear of the public conveniences in Llantrisant Road, Pontyclun.

The Council believed that the access road was dangerous and that there was a need to separate pedestrians from traffic accessing and exiting the car park. The Council was of the view that an improvement could easily be achieved by the construction of a pavement parallel to the access road.

**RESOLVED:** That the Community Council write to the Borough Council asking for the construction of a pavement alongside the car park access road.

(g) **Annual leave**

The Clerk advised the Council that he would be taking a fortnight's annual leave from Saturday, 26 July to Friday, 8 August. He had ensured that all Council employees had sufficient work during his absence and had provided the Handyman with a telephone number where the Clerk could be contacted in the event of an emergency.

The matter was noted.

8. The meeting ended at 8.45 p.m.