



GARW VALLEY COMMUNITY COUNCIL
CYNGOR CYMUNEDOL CWM GARW

**MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD AT HALO LEISURE CENTRE
PONTYCYMER AND VIA ZOOM ON MONDAY 19th JUNE 2023 AT 6.30 PM**

Present: Councillor G Andrews (Chair)

Councillors:

J Coles
D Davies
W Davies
H Griffiths
Neal Harwood-Scorer
M Jones
R Jones
M Lewis
C Lloyd
M Thomas (up to minute 13)
G Walters

Apologies: Councillors M Trowbridge

Also Present: Mrs A C Harris, Clerk & RFO
Mr K Luxford, Warden (up to item
7)

15/23-24 Apologies (as above)

16/23-24- DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

| Councillor | Item | Interest |
|-------------|--|--|
| D Davies | Richard Price Centre Tynyrheol Primary School | Director Governor |
| M Lewis | All Bridgend County Borough Matters | Member |
| C Lloyd | Tynyrheol Primary School | Governor |
| H Griffiths | All Bridgend County Borough Matters Ysgol Cymunedol y Dderwen Ffaldau Primary School | Member Governor Chair of Governors |
| M Jones | All Bridgend County Borough Matters | Member |

17/23-24 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MAY 2023 ANNUAL AND ORDINARY MEETING

The May 2023 Annual and Ordinary Meeting minutes were presented for approval.

Resolved: The minutes were approved with an amendment to minute 12/23-24 Correspondence where it says ‘ It was agreed to sponsor Llangeinor Minis’ kit £4,400’ this was incorrect as although the total request was for £4,400, an amount had not been agreed, only that they would be offered sponsorship and the Llangeinor ward Members would decide on the amount at and feed back to the June meeting. With this amendment unanimously agreed, the Annual and Ordinary Meeting minutes were signed by the Chair of the Meeting.

18/23-24 TO CONSIDER MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MAY 2023 MEETINGS

Ordinary Meeting Minutes

Minute 4/23-24 Matters Arising from the March 2023 Meeting

Lighting Columns Pontycymer: It was noted that the lighting column is still out of order and that two other lighting columns in the same area are now out of order.

Minute 11/23-24 Clerk’s Report

T&CC Grant Application: The Clerk gave an update on the application process to date ie delays and what the cabinet papers published on BCBC’s website says about the council’s application that it has not been submitted to cabinet for approval as it didn’t meet the CAT or net zero criteria. This is not correct as PC Lan was a CAT transfer.

Resolved: The information and action of the Clerk was noted. The Clerk would report the out of order lighting columns to Centre Great. Councillor John Coles offered to revisit the Council's National Lottery Funding application to see if the council could appeal the decision not to donate towards the refurbishment of the footpaths in Parc Calon Lan and this was unanimously agreed.

19/23-25 WARDEN REF. VANDALISM AND FIRES IN PARC CALON LAN

The Warden, Karl Luxford, attended the meeting to discuss the on-going anti-social behaviour and vandalism, in particular to the bridges, at Parc Calon Lan and the spate of recent fires, one which had decimated a large area of the park, killing wildlife, plants and scaring off nesting birds in the area. This was discussed. The Warden had provided a copy of a Fire Report for the first of the larger fires. Councillor John Coles made a proposal to purchase more trail cameras. Councillor Martin Jones suggested working in partnership with BCBC's Communications Department to produce a press release. The Warden requested that the sides of the bridge be replaced with a metal barrier and mesh as over the weekend if there's damage then it is not known or repaired until the Warden's return to work. Councillor G Walters suggested the SW Police visit schools to discuss the damage and affect fires have on wildlife and plants, though it was not children who started the recent fire.

Resolved: The Warden's concerns were noted. There was no seconder for Councillor John Coles proposal. A vote was taken on Councillor Martin Jones' proposal, Councillor John Coles abstained and all others voted in favour. The Clerk was asked to obtain a quote for the sides of the bridge as suggested by the Warden. It was agreed that the SW Fire Service did a fantastic job. Councillor M Jones would contact BCBC regarding a press release.

20/23-24 TO RECEIVE THE CRIME FIGURES FOR MAY 2023

The crime figures for May 2023 had been included with the papers and these were discussed. PCSO Jenkins was in attendance at the meeting and answered some questions raised. A leaflet of a new free email messaging service that helps PCSOs keep in touch with communities was given to the Clerk to share with Members called South Wales Listens. The crimes were discussed including the vandalism and fires in the valley.⁶

Resolved: The information was noted. PCSO Jenkins suggested Karl requests a visit from the Crime Reduction Advisor.

Note: The Warden left the meeting

21/23-24 COMMUNITY AWARD

There had been no nominations for either award by the closing date of 2nd June, nor any late entries. This was discussed. Councillor Martin Jones suggested that extenuating circumstances of the fires in the valley given the council an opportunity to consider SW Fire Service for an award.

Resolved: It was agreed to discuss Councillor Jones' proposal at the July 2023 meeting.

22/23-24 SCHOOL COMMUNITY AWARDS 2022/23

The Clerk asked if the Council wished to offer these awards again this year and all agreed.

Resolved: All agreed to offer the awards again this year, the Clerk would organize.

23/23-24 REVISED MODEL STANDING ORDERS

New Standing Orders had been received, all items in bold were mandatory, non-bold text was changeable. The Clerk had updated the Standing Orders highlighting any changes in red. The changes made take provide for the additional requirements for councils ie to publish a draft summary of meetings within 7 days of a meeting, annual reporting, training plan, general power of competency etc. Councillor John Coles proposed that an item where Members of the Public could speak was added to each month's agenda and a vote was taken.

Resolved: A vote was taken in regards to Councillor Coles' proposal and 4 votes were in favour - Councillors M Jones, R Jones, D Davies and C Lloyd. All other Councillors voted against it. This item would not be added to each month's agenda. The draft was accepted and approved. The Clerk would publish the document on the council's website.

24/23-24 TREE MAINTENANCE

Councillor H Griffiths had been approached by a resident of Prospect Place, Pontycymer to ask if the trees at the bottom of their gardens, on the riverbank, could be cut back. This was discussed.

The cutting down of a healthy tree to the side of the car park at Parc Calon Lan and it being left lying across the car park was discussed.

Resolved: It was unanimously agreed that the Clerk would obtain a quote for the work to be discussed at the next meeting. The Clerk was asked to write to the person who cut the tree down to say that this behaviour is not acceptable and any further incidents will be reported to the police.

25/23-24 CHRISTMAS 2023

The Clerk asked the wards to confirm their Christmas requirements for 2023 and the following requests were made:

- Blaengarw - same as 2022
- Pontycymer - two column motifs to be added the other side of the bridge
- Llangeinor - same as 2022

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- Bettws - improved tree, improved column motifs at Y Wern.

Resolved: The Clerk was asked to discuss Bettws' requirements further.

26/23-24 FINANCE & ACCOUNTS

Payments:

The payments and budget monitoring sheet for June 2023 were included in the council's papers. The Clerk requested authorisation for the payments.

Income:

There had been no income in the month.

Audit 2022/23:

The Clerk gave an update on the requirements for the audit for the year ending 31st March 2023. She asked for authority to publish a notice for late certification and approval of accounts to be published 30th June 2023 due to a lack of time to engage a new internal auditor and the Clerk's annual leave. The Internal Auditor had now been engaged and the Internal Audit and Audit Statement would be presented to full council at its July 2023 meeting.

Financial Requests:

A request had been received from Llangeinor Football Club for assistance to make the clubhouse more disabled friendly and install ramps and toilets. The Clerk had sent the Chair a grant form to complete and return by tonight's meeting, but it had not been received.

Resolved: Authorisation was given for all payments on the sheets presented. Authority was given for the Clerk to publish a notice for late certification and approval of accounts. It is understood that Llangeinor Football Club is a business and so the Clerk was asked to clarify as the council cannot donate to a business. Councillors suggested the Club contact the Coalfields Regeneration for funding. It was agreed to include Sponsorship of Sports Teams Policy on the July agenda for discussion so that there will be parity between future donations given across all wards.

Note: Councillor M Thomas left the meeting.

27/23-24 BOROUGH COUNCIL UPDATES/WARD REPORTS

Councillor Heather Griffiths said that the dates for play area upgrades in the valley have not yet been released.

Councillor Maxine Lewis gave an update on improvements being planned for The Strand, Blaengarw.

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Councillor Martyn Jones expressed his and the Church's embarrassment at the condition of the cemetery at Bettws and anti-social behaviour at the closed Bettws Social Club. He updated Members on a litter pick held in Bettws the previous week and a Bettws fun day. He said he'd received a request for the council to cover the cost of the hire of the field and insurance as in pre-covid years and that Bettws now has an under 8 and under 9 girls football teams and they'd requested donations towards a kit. He also said that a V2C walk around Bettws is planned for 29th June pm.

Councillor Deb Davies said there'd been issues in Llangeinor with back flow of sewerage, which Dwr Cymru were looking into. She also gave an update on an interesting meeting she'd attended at the Richard Price Centre and said there's a mental health focus group meeting there on 25th July. In addition, Tynyrheol Primary School has been recognised by the Welsh Government for its work on the Richard Price Tricentenary and has been chosen as one of 6 schools to link in with American schools to discuss heritage. Two adults and two children from the school had attended the awards ceremony.

Councillor Billy Davies said the land on the square in Pontycymer is becoming an unofficial dumping site with rats seen there. It's unfair as a notice has been issued to the owners and it is not them dumping the litter.

Councillor Glyn Walters said there'd been an issue with sheep escaping and causing chaos.

Resolved: The updates were noted. The Clerk would arrange the donation towards the field hire and insurance for the fun day with the Bettws councillors. Congratulations were given to the children of Tynyrheol Primary School.

28/23-24 CHAIR'S REPORT

The Chair had visited Bettws and Blaengarw Primary Schools and said he'd enjoyed both visits and the children were all very well behaved.

He'd also attended the Bridgend Samaritans AGM which had been very interesting.

Resolved: The information was noted.

29/23-24 CLERK'S REPORT INCLUDING WARDEN'S REPORT

The Warden's report had been circulated to all Members.

Defibrillator Pantygog:

Dates had been pencilled in to meet with the local responder, but unfortunately those dates were cancelled; they will be rearranged.

Floral Display:

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Due to a take over of the company, the retirement of the sales representative and other matters the baskets though ordered have not been received and it is now too late to plant and put them up for 2023 even if they arrive now. However an additional 3 tier planters, some rail planters and sign planters are due to arrive any day and there is something new for each ward.

Benches:

4 new benches are due to arrive by 10th July and will be installed in Blaengarw and Lluest asap. In addition a new bin for Lluest is due at the same time.

Audio Equipment:

The council now has to provide remote access to audio of the meeting to anyone wishing to join the meeting remotely and the Clerk demonstrated a conference speaker to Members.

Allowances:

The Clerk reminded Members that if they take allowances it is up to each individual to declare their tax due to HMRC.

Annual Leave:

The Clerk reminded Members about her annual leave from 27th June.

Resolved: The information was noted. The Clerk was given authority to purchase a conference speaker at a cost of £118.

30/23-24 CORRESPONDENCE

The Clerk drew Members' attention to some of the correspondence received plus with the permission of the Chair some additional correspondence received since the papers were distributed. Of particular note were the following:

- 20mph Communications and Engagement Toolkit
- Bridgend Samaritans - invitation to the Chair to attend their AGM
- Resident - complaint regarding the upkeep of one particular area of PC Lan
- Aden Co - request to potentially film wildlife in Parc Calon Lan
- Richard Price Centre - thanks for the donation to the summer playscheme
- Resident - request to improve the BMX area
- Resident - urgent concerns regarding a claim of private land in Pontyrhyl
- Ysgol Gynradd Gymraeg Calon y Cymoedd - financial request
- Ogmore Valley Silver Band - offer of attendance at future events

Resolved: All correspondence was noted. The Chair had attended the Bridgend Samaritans AGM. The complaint regarding the upkeep of PC Lan was noted and no further action requested, permission in principle is granted to Aden Co to film in the

park subject to a meeting with the Warden to check he's happy and that the Clerk receives a copy of their risk assessment and public liability insurance. The resident's request to improve the BMX area was noted, though this had been discussed many times at previous meetings and was deemed too expensive to pursue following quotes of over £40,000. The Clerk would ask the Warden to tidy up the area. The concerns regarding a claim of private land in Pontyrhyl had already been taken up with planning by Councillor Maxine Lewis and the request from YGG Calon y Cymoedd would be dealt with by Councillor M Jones.

31/23-24 PLANNING MATTERS

In total 2 planning requests had been received and there were 2 decisions and 0 appeals. 2 Planning Aid email had been sent out in the month for information.

In addition a Pre-application Proposal for Additional Storage Buildings at Bridgend Paper Mills (retrospective) had been received and comments requested by 7th July as well as a Planning Enforcement letter regarding alleged unauthorised timber cabin in Blaengarw.

Resolved: All information received was noted. There were no observations.

32/23-24 ITEMS FOR THE JULY 2023 ORDINARY MEETING

- Sponsorship Policy - Sports Teams
- Community Award - SW Fire Service
- Blaengarw Primary School Allotments

Resolved: The agenda would be kept open for items to be added in the month.

The date for the next meeting is Monday 17th July 2023 at 6.30 pm and has been arranged at Halo Leisure Pontycymer, however given the lack of windows and internet at the Centre it was suggested the meeting is moved to the William Trigg Centre in Blaengarw and this was unanimously agreed. Councillor Maxine Lewis will arrange.

The meeting closed at 8.56 pm.