



**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 18<sup>th</sup> MARCH 2024 AT 6.30 pm**

Present: Councillor G Andrews (Chair)

Councillors:

J Coles  
W Davies  
H Griffiths  
N Harwood-Scorer  
R Jones (from 7.30 pm via zoom)  
C Lloyd  
M Thomas  
G Walters

Apologies: Councillors D Davies, M Jones, M  
Lewis and M Trowbridge

Also Present: Mrs A C Harris, Clerk & RF

144/23-24 Apologies (as above)

**145/23-24- DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor	Item	Interest
H Griffiths	All Bridgend County Borough Matters Ffaldau Primary School	Member Chair of Governors
N Harwood-Scorer	Bettws Club Planning Applications	Resident
C Lloyd	Tynyrheol Primary School	Governor

**146/23-24 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FEBRUARY 2024 ORDINARY MEETING**

The February 2024 Ordinary Meeting minutes were presented for approval.

**Resolved:** The Minutes of the February 2024 Ordinary Council Meeting were approved and signed by the Chair.

**147/23-24 TO CONSIDER MATTERS ARISING FROM THE FEBRUARY 2024 MEETING**

**Minute 129/23-24 To Consider Matters Arising from the December 2023 Meeting**

**To Receive Yiota Haramblos of REACH ref. Capital Funding:** Since Yiota Haramblos had attended the council meeting, Yiota had requested a further meeting to give an update. The meeting will take place with the Clerk on 20<sup>th</sup> March.

**Clerk's Report incl. Warden Report:** The Clerk had contacted BCBC to ask why the lakes had been surveyed but had not received a reply by the meeting date.

**The Strand:** The 3 borough councillors had met the CAT Officer to look at the Strand and the Pocket Park. The Clerk asked the members for an update, but there was nothing to update other than senior management at BCBC were looking into the transfer. The Clerk confirmed that she'd asked the gardener to include the two stone planters at the Strand on his future planting schedule.

**Minute 131/23-24 T&CC Grant Funding Application**

The Clerk confirmed that the application had been submitted by the BCBC deadline and had received acknowledgement of its receipt.

**Minute 133/23-24 Tree & Scrub Clearance Parc Calon Lan**

The work had been completed by the final day before nesting season on 1<sup>st</sup> March. Many compliments and appreciation of the work had been received and the Clerk had received two complaints about the birds nesting, waste of money and how awful the rest of the valley is looking from lack of maintenance.

**Minute 140/23-24 Clerk's Report incl. Warden Report**

**Additional Bettws Floral Baskets:** The Clerk had asked the gardener to look at suitable lighting columns to add baskets near the 3 tier planter in Bettws.

**Noticeboards Llangeinor Ward:** The Clerk confirmed that all 4 old Communities First noticeboards have been removed in Llangeinor. Advert consent has been completed and submitted for the two new ones to be installed in Pontyrhyl and Lluest.

**Community Award 2022 Presentation:** Despite leaving a message the Clerk has not received a call from Pontycymer Fire Station. She explained that this is now awkward as the time has come to advertise the award for 2023.

**Railings Pontyrhyl:** Despite a referral to BCBC the railings have not been fixed. Residents also continue to contact the Clerk in regard to bags of litter being thrown over the banking through the gap into the brambles. The Clerk had contacted Clean Up the County and that say it's private land, in addition they say they are unable to carry out the removal of the rubbish as staff would need harness and ropes to abseil down the banking and H&S would not allow operations to retrieve the waste.

**Funding Request:** The Clerk has requested further information by the next meeting.

**Resolved:** The information was noted and the response of the Clerk to the complaints regarding the tree and scrub clearance were approved. It was agreed that unfortunately it is now too late to present the shields to Pontycymer Fire Station and the next award should be advertised in April 2024. Councillor H Griffiths will chase up the railings repair and the Clerk will advise the residents to contact the Garw Valley Railway in regard to the litter.

**148/23-24 TO RECEIVE THE CRIME FIGURES FOR FEBRUARY 2024**

PC C Harper and PCSO M Rees attended the meeting.

The crime figures were discussed. Parking issues continue in Pontycymer and in particular on the bend near Cuckoo Street and a black car parking on the pavement near Llanharan Villas. The violence against a person figures, the helicopter call out, off road bikes and thefts at the Co-op were discussed.

**Resolved: The information was noted.**

**149/23-24 BODY CAMERA POLICY**

Unfortunately the draft body camera policy has not yet been received.

**Resolved: The item will be deferred until it is available.**

**150/23-24 SILENT WALK FEEDBACK**

Councillor H Griffiths gave feedback on the walk. A small number of people had attended and a short walk had taken place.

**Resolved: It was agreed that it had been right to hold the event for those who wished to mark the anniversary.**

**151/23-24 LITTER COLLECTION UPDATE**

Following the February meeting the Clerk had phoned to book a locked skip only to be told that it won't meet the Welsh Government changes coming into effect in April 2024. Since then the Clerk has been trying to ascertain if the new rules apply to a minor authority or if it's exempt, but has been going around in circles being given different information from different sources including BCBC. The Clerk is now in contact with a representative of Plan B who is doing their best to find the answer and give correct advice. In the meantime, the Clerk has employed a local licensed waste collector to collect the bags.

**Resolved: The information was noted and authority given to the Clerk to continue with a local licensed waste collector until further information is received.**

**152/23-24 DEFERRED FINANCIAL REQUESTS 2023/24**

A list of deferred financial requests for 2023/24 had been circulated with the meeting papers and all were discussed.

**Resolved:** It was unanimously agreed to donate £25 to each applicant - Urdd Gobaith Cymru, Hope Rescue, Eisteddford yr Urdd Maldwyn, Marie Curie, Cancer Information & Support Services, Wales Air Ambulance, Eisteddfod Rhondda Cynon Taf National Eisteddford and Bridgend Carers Centre and the Kids Cancer Charity who would be given £50 from the Pontycymer ward funds.

#### **153/23-24 FINANCE & ACCOUNTS**

**Payments:** The payments and budget monitoring sheet for March 2024 were included in the council's papers. The Clerk requested authorisation for the payments totalling £12,688.30

**Income:** A VAT reclaim for 2022/23 had been received for £24,124.49.

**Audit 2022/23:** No conclusion has been received.

**Resolved:** Authorisation was given for all payments on the sheets presented. All other information was noted including the VAT reclaim for 22/23.

#### **154/23-24 BOROUGH COUNCIL UPDATES/WARD REPORTS**

Councillor H Griffiths - gave some information regarding the council tax increase and the budget setting process. In the month complaints had risen about inconsiderate parking in the valley, which means the refuse lorries are unable to reach some recycling and bins and therefore causes an increase in complaints about refuse not being collected.

Councillor W Davies - said complaints continue about black bags of litter being thrown on the land of the old Ffaldau site and bags of dog waste being thrown in the back lanes.

Councillor J Coles - said he'd attended the T&CC Forum online and said there'd been a lot of long winded discussions though not much had been new. He highlighted information on the Armed Forces Covenant and asked if the council wanted him to give a presentation at the next meeting.

Councillor C Lloyd - raised concerns via Councillor D Davies about a large pothole on the road near Moelgilau, a broken bench in Pontyrhyl along the community route and the need for additional litter bins and dog waste bins in Llangeinor. Councillor Lloyd asked

Bettws councillor R Jones if he had any updates on the Welsh nursery being staffed and occupied.

Councillor G Walters - reported concerns about a dip in the road opposite the Vicarage in Pontycymer.

Councillor N Harwood-Scorer - said he'd had a Care & Repair dispute reported to him and asked advice about referring it. He also said that work to the old Bettws Club site had started (he declared an interest as a local resident).

**Resolved:** The information was noted. It was unanimously agreed to ask Councillor M Jones to give an update at the April meeting on the Armed Forces Covenant. The pothole near Moelgilau has been marked which indicates it is due for repair, the bench at Pontyrhyl is not the community council's responsibility as it is on Garw Valley Railway land and locations for additional bins need to be given to the Clerk to look into what can be provided on the current collection schedule. Councillor R Jones did not have any updates on the Welsh nursery to give Councillor C Lloyd and Councillor H Griffiths would put in a referral on the dip in the road opposite the Vicarage in Pontycymer. Councillor N Harwood-Scorer was advised to escalate the Care & Repair dispute to one of the borough councillors.

#### **155/23-24 CHAIR'S REPORT**

The Chair had not represented the Council this month at any event.

**Resolved:** There was no Chair's report this month.

#### **156/23-24 CLERK'S REPORT incl. WARDEN'S REPORT**

**BCBC Referral:** The Clerk had asked the borough councillors to make a referral to BCBC as she'd been informed that BCBC has a policy to change the borough's lighting columns to aluminium and that flower baskets and Christmas lighting motifs cannot be installed onto them. Given the council's commitment to increasing its Christmas provision and that it's recently bought 40 baskets this would have an effect on the council's forward planning for such items.

A response to the referral was made via another council and it has been confirmed that any columns which need replacing will be aluminium and the reasons were given. It was also said that as the community council have to seek permission annually to attach

items to the lighting columns if columns are being replaced the Clerk will be informed so that plans for any attachments being fitted will be stopped. However that still affects the council's plans.

Councillor H Griffiths said that despite that response, albeit to another council, she has been informed by a senior member of staff at BCBC that flower baskets will be allowed, but would seek clarification.

**Retaining Wall and Steps the Strand:** Despite meeting two contractors on site to obtain quotes for the wall and steps neither have provided quotes, so the Clerk will need to start the quotation process again.

**Flower Planters:** The Clerk has asked the gardener to supply red, white and blue flowers in the planters for the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of D-Day this year. Baskets will remain multi-colour.

**Annual Leave:** The Clerk informed Members of the leave she'll be taking in July and that the Warden is on leave for a week 25<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

**Resolved:** The information was noted. Councillor H Griffiths would clarify matters in regard to the lighting columns, the Clerk's action regarding the flower planters was authorised and the leave was noted.

#### **157/23-24 CORRESPONDENCE**

All correspondence had been sent out to Members since the last meeting and with the Chair's consent an additional sheet had been distributed for items received after the papers were distributed.

The Clerk highlighted the following:

- Wales Audit Office - invoice for 2021/22 was for £703 much more than the £225 earmarked in the budget as it was a full audit.
- Tenovus Cancer Care - request to attend a future meeting to inform council on their work
- Marie Curie - financial request
- Eisteddfod Rhondda Cynon Taff - financial request
- Councillor D Unwin - correspondence ref. increasing the agency agreement and the Quiet Lanes Scheme (Councillor J Coles had submitted a response to Councillor Unwin's correspondence which the Clerk would forward on).

- Notice of adoption of BCBC LDP Plan 2018 - 2033
- Armed Forces Covenant - information

**Resolved:** All information was noted. It was unanimously agreed to invite Tenovus Cancer Care to a future meeting, the Marie Curie and Eisteddfod Rhondda Cynon Taff financial requests had been dealt with in item 9 on the agenda and the Armed Forces Covenant had been dealt with in item 11 on the agenda.

#### **158/23-24 PLANNING MATTERS**

In total 3 planning requests had been received and there were 2 decisions and 0 appeals. Planning Aid Wales email had been sent out.

**Resolved:** All information received was noted. Concerns were raised regarding work associated with P/23/714/FUL and the Clerk was asked to ask BCBC's Planning Department to investigate the site.

#### **159/23-24 ITEMS FOR THE APRIL 2024 MEETING**

- Body Camera Policy (if available)
- Armed Forces Covenant (MJ)

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

The date for the next meeting is Monday 15<sup>th</sup> April 2024 and will take place at 6.30 pm at Halo Leisure, Pontycymer and via zoom.

The meeting closed at 7.56 pm