

**CYNGOR CYMUNED CWMLLYNFELL COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT CWMLLYNFELL HALL ON  
THURSDAY 10<sup>th</sup> OCTOBER 2013 AT 6.30 P.M.**

**PRESENT:**

**COUNCILLORS:** M Evans, D Lloyd, R P Morgan, D C Phillips, N L A Price, J C Rees and D B Thomas

**ATTENDING:** Councillor C E Richards - Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council

**72. CHAIRMAN**

**Resolved** that in the absence of the Chairman and Vice Chairman that Councillor D C Phillips be appointed to preside.

**73. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for their absence were received from Councillors R M Davies, R Evans, T H J Kendrick and S Williams.

**74. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were made at this juncture.

**75. MINUTES**

**Resolved** that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on the 18<sup>th</sup> September 2013 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

**76. MATTERS ARISING**

**(a) Minutes No 65(a) - Cwmllynfell Cemetery Improvements**

A letter dated 9<sup>th</sup> October 2013 was received from the Director of Finance and Corporate Services to Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council in which it was indicated that the Policy and Resources Cabinet Board had granted an extension of time until the 31<sup>st</sup> March 2013 to complete the work under the Minor Projects Scheme. The Community Council's request for the scheme to be deemed to be two phases and a further grant approved in respect of the additional costs had however not been approved as it did not comply with the grant conditions.

It was reported that a pre-contract meeting had been held with the successful tenderer T Richard Jones (Betws) Ltd on the 9<sup>th</sup> October when Mr Brian Crawford and Mr Steve Rees of Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council had also been present. Discussions had taken place at the pre-contract meeting with a view to making savings on the quoted tender figure to offset the additional work that had been identified as not having been included by Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council's Officers. These included the realignment of a footpath, the use of more effective machinery by the contractor to clear the site. It had also been revealed during the discussions that the clearance and reseeding of the lower area which was unaffected by the work had not been included in the tender documents. Accordingly the contractor had been requested to quote for that work with a view to creating a wildflower meadow which was being explored with the County Borough Council's Countryside and Wildlife Team. The contractor had indicated that work would commence on site on or about the 4<sup>th</sup> November 2013.

**Resolved** that the report be noted and the action taken in seeking changes to the scheme to save money and additional work to improve the effectiveness of the scheme be approved.

**(b) Minute 69(a) - Annual Return of Accounts 2012/13**

The Council's Annual Return containing the External Auditor's Certificate and Report dated 4<sup>th</sup> October 2013 was received. It was confirmed that the information contained in the annual return prepared by the Council was in accordance with the Auditor General for Wales' requirements. No matters had come to their attention which had given cause for concern and as such it was confirmed that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements had been met.

**Resolved** that:

1. the matter be noted;
2. a Notice of Conclusion of Audit and Right to Inspect the Annual Return be published.
3. in the event of a request being received for a copy of the Annual Return a charge of £2 be made.

**(c) Minute 71 – Gwrhyd Quarry Site Liaison Committee**

It was reported that notices had been displayed inviting persons who were interested in serving as residents' representatives to submit applications. One expression of interest had been received to date from Mr Edward Page of Rhiw Road, Rhiwfawr.

**Resolved** that:

1. Mr Edward Page of 130 Rhiw Road, Rhiwfawr be appointed to serve on the Gwrhyd Quarry Site Liaison Committee;
2. further consideration be given to the appointment of the remaining two representatives to represent Cwmllynfell and Rhiwfawr at the next meeting of the Council.

**77. MID AND WEST WALES FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE**

A letter dated 26<sup>th</sup> September 2013 was received from Mr C Margetts Group Manager for the Neath Port Talbot County Command of the Service in which he requested the opportunity to address the Council on the Draft Annual Improvement Plan 2014-15.

**Resolved** that Mr Margetts be invited to attend the next meeting of the Council.

**78. NEATH PORT TALBOT SINGLE INTEGRATED PLAN**

**Resolved** that the details of the consultation feedback on the above plan be noted.

## **79. INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WALES – DRAFT ANNUAL REPORT 2014/15**

A letter dated 1<sup>st</sup> October 2013 together with the above draft report was received from the Independent Remuneration Panel. The report included details of payments to members of community and town councils.

**Resolved** that the report be noted and members be provided with copies of the details relating to community and town councils.

## **80. COUNTY BOROUGH OF NEATH PORT TALBOT – LIBRARY SERVICE REVIEW**

A communication dated 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2013 was received from the County Librarian together with a copy of a report that had been submitted to the County Borough Council's Cabinet on the 18<sup>th</sup> September on the review of the library service against a background of significant financial cuts. The proposals involved the closure of nine libraries including the Cwmllynfell Library.

Councillor C E Richards indicated that he intended to convene a meeting of interested parties to discuss the matter.

A communication was also received from Unison outlining their campaign to save libraries from closure and urging everyone to sign their petition.

**Resolved** that the situation be noted and further developments awaited.

Note: Unison's Petition was signed by everyone present.

## **81. SOUTH WALES POLICE – CHIEF INSPECTOR KINGDOM**

**Resolved** that the letter dated 4<sup>th</sup> October 2013 from Chief Inspector Andrew Kingdom containing his biannual report about forthcoming issues and containing an update on performances be noted.

## **82. MANAGING AND DEVELOPING PLAY SPACES - WORKSHOP**

**Resolved** that the invitation received from Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council for the Council to be represented at a workshop on the above matter on the 5<sup>th</sup> November 2013 be noted.

## **83. ONE VOICE WALES TRAINING PROGRAMME**

**Resolved** that the programme be noted.

## **84. FINANCIAL MATTERS**

### **(a) Applications for Financial Assistance**

Consideration was given to applications for financial assistance and guidance was sought as to whether organisations that had submitted written applications should be invited to submit application forms in accordance with the Council's policy in respect of grants.

**Resolved** that:

1. the application received from the following organisation be not entertained:

Western Beacons Mountain Search and Rescue Team

2. the following organisations shall not be invited to submit forms in support of their applications and as such the applications shall not be entertained:

Shelter Cymru  
Bobath Children's Therapy Centre Wales  
Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod  
New Swansea Bay Awards

**(b) Payment of Accounts**

**Resolved** that:

1. the following account be paid:

1661	Payroll	Gross salary September	£267.80
------	---------	------------------------	---------

2. payment of the following account be deferred pending the receipt an explanation of the increase in fee:

Mazars – Audit Fee	£690.00
--------------------	---------

**85. PLANNING - DEPOSIT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN**

Further to Minute 70(a) of the last meeting, communications were received from the Head of Planning and the Team Leader - Planning Policy to Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council in response to the Council's invitation for them to attend this meeting in order to discuss issues in the Deposit LDP that concerned the Council and in particular that no settlement limit had been set for Rhiwfawr. The Council's invitation had however been declined but the officers had indicated that they were prepared to meet representatives of the Council at their offices in Baglan. Councillors Paul Morgan and Neil Price indicated that were prepared to represent the Council at such a meeting.

**Resolved** that:

1. the Council's concerns about the lack of a defined settlement limit for Rhiwfawr be reaffirmed and that an objection to the Deposit Local Plan in its present form be therefore submitted to Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council drawing attention to the perceived failings in respect of the Community and particularly as far as the defining of a settlement limit is concerned;

(Note: Details of the objection that was submitted is shown in the appendix hereto)

2. Councillors R P Morgan and N L A Price together with the Chairman Councillor R Evans, if available, be authorised to represent the Council at a meeting with officers of the Planning Section to discuss the matter.

## 86. REPORTS

The following matters were reported:

South Wales Police Statistics (within 1 mile of centre of Cwmllynfell)	All Crime (see categories below)	August	7
	Anti Social Behaviour		2
	Criminal Damage and Arson		1
	Drugs		1
	Other theft		1
	Vehicle Crime		2

Police Neighbourhood News September 2013

- Resurfacing Coedffaldau – highway obstruction;
- Defective Footbridge – Path 14 near Lewis Avenue/Railway Terrace
- Potholes
- Indiscriminate Parking – new bridge Lower Cwmtwrch

Councillor C E Richards also reported on the following matters:

- Cwmllynfell RFC – Welsh Rugby Union Grant application support;
- Christmas trees – donation – Celtic Energy and Gwrhyd Quarry
- Celtic Energy tree felling;
- Mynydd Bach, Rhiwfawr – new street lights;
- Pot holes Gynol Road.

The meeting terminated at 7.55pm.

**NEATH PORT TALBOT - DEPOSIT LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN –  
OBJECTION**

Council's objection to the Deposit Local Plan – Reasons:

1. The fact that that the plan has classified the Penrhiwfawr Ward of the Community as a 'Dormitory Settlement' is potentially damaging to the area and is in direct contravention to the vision and many of the strategies outlined in the plan. The condemnation that is made in the plan that settlements such as Rhiwfawr provide minimal or no services and facilities is a reflection of the County Borough Council's lack of empathy with such areas rather than an accurate assessment of such communities. In fact the County Borough Council's own actions such as the closure of Rhiwfawr School against the wishes of local residents is testament to its condemnation and a major contributory factor to any degeneration that has occurred. The statement that such locations are considered 'unsustainable' and providing no development potential shows a lack of affinity with such areas and is contrary to the vision defined in the plan.
2. The Deposit Local Plan fails to deliver in many respects as far as the Cwmllynfell Electoral Division (comprising the villages of Cwmllynfell and Rhiwfawr) is concerned. In 2.1.1 it is claimed that the LDP has a vision that "the County Borough's rural areas and valley communities will be supported and revitalised through encouragement of new and expanded economic activity through provision for sustainable small scale employment, including tourism initiatives capitalising on existing successes such as the Strategic Tourism Destinations at Margam Park and the Afan Valley" The vision ignores the fact that another Strategic Tourism Destination namely the Brecon Beacons National Park is immediately adjoining Cwmllynfell. The failure to declare a settlement limit for Rhiwfawr would discourage new economic activity through small scale employment or tourism initiatives. The fact that Rhiwfawr is declared to be a "Dormitory Settlement" does not show a commitment to support and revitalise the area. It is also inaccurate as Rhiwfawr has three of the four facilities which define "Small Local Centres" in the Settlement Review/Urban Capacity Study, namely a community hall, church (chapel) and park/public open space. Until Rhiwfawr School was closed it had all four of the examples given in the study for small local centres. It is obvious that the definition of "Dormitory Settlement" is incorrect and therefore Policy SC1 is defective.
3. The Deposit LDP refers to the Welsh Governments recently published new regeneration framework which has a vision that everybody in Wales should live in well-connected vibrant, viable and sustainable communities with a strong local economy and good quality of life. The Plan fails to support this vision in its treatment of Cwmllynfell and particularly Rhiwfawr despite the aspirations that are portrayed in many of the policies and the statements made in the plan. The County Borough Council is therefore invited to explain its lack of commitment towards Cwmllynfell (mentioned only twice in the deposit LDP- once in the context of cycling and once in the context of the Welsh Language) and Rhiwfawr (Penrhiwfawr mentioned only once in the Settlement Hierarchy). It is obvious that as far as the Cwmllynfell Electoral Division is concerned the policies and statements in the Deposit LDP do not correlate with the Welsh Government's regeneration framework or the vision outlined in paragraph 2.1.1 of the plan. The following claim made by Councillor Anthony Taylor in his foreword also seems a hollow promise as far as Cwmllynfell and Rhiwfawr are concerned: "The LDP sets out the Councils planning policy for the next 15 years and has been designed to make sure that the development of our County Borough over that period genuinely makes Neath Port Talbot a better place as well as complying with national and regional policy guidance". The plan has also failed to recognise that the greatest proportion of the inhabitants of Cwmllynfell and Rhiwfawr

are Welsh speaking and as such development should be encouraged according to the County Borough Councils Welsh Language Supplementary Planning Guidance.

4. The County Borough Council is invited to consider how the following policies and statements will apply to Cwmllynfell and particularly Rhiwfawr (in the absence of a declared settlement limit). Wording in the plan that is obviously contradictory to the way Cwmllynfell and particularly Rhiwfawr have been dealt with in the Deposit LDP is underlined below to emphasise this fact:

“OB 7: Provide an adequate supply, mix, type and tenure of housing within sustainable settlements to meet the needs of the projected population.

OB 8: Provide additional affordable housing units throughout the County Borough and ensure new housing developments make a fair and justified contribution towards the provision of affordable housing.

### 2.3.2 – Development Strategy

The LDP uses this strategy to provide a land use structure which focuses on providing sustainable, prosperous communities

### 2.3.6

.....All communities within Neath Port Talbot can help to achieve the aims of the Plan and therefore the strategy recognises all communities and their function within the County Borough.

### 2.5.3 – Spacial Strategy

A more flexible approach to development in the valleys compared to the coastal corridor will also help to reinvigorate communities through small scale retail and employment opportunities

### 3.0.9

The development of sustainable communities, either newly-built settlements such as Coed Darcy or through the enhancement and improvement of existing settlements is a fundamental element of the LDP's strategic approach. Policy SP3 has been underpinned by a comprehensive review of settlements establishing the current role and function of each individual settlement, identifying the functional relationships between settlements, and establishing the potential future roles of each settlement.

*(Note: The Comprehensive Review is obviously flawed – see comment in paragraph 2 above.)*

5.5.29 In addition, there are a number of other communities where a high proportion of the population speak Welsh and the language in these communities is also considered an intrinsic part of daily life. The strategy therefore seeks to protect the integrity of the Welsh language within the areas identified in the policy, where 25% or more of the population speak the language.

County Borough Council's Welsh Language Supplementary Planning Guidance:

In line with Welsh Assembly Government's policy requirements in respect of the Welsh language, it is the Authority's aim to encourage development likely to help sustain and enhance the position of the language and resist proposals likely to harm it.