

CYNGOR CYMUNED CWMLLYNFELL COMMUNITY COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING HELD AT
CWMLLYNFELL HALL ON MONDAY 12th MAY 2014 AT 6.15 P.M.**

PRESENT: Councillor R Evans (Chairman) presided
COUNCILLORS: R M Davies, M Evans, D C Phillips, J C Rees, D B Thomas and S Williams.

ATTENDING: **Representatives of Quarter Bach Community Council:**
COUNCILLORS: J E Davies, V Morgan, N Phillips, C Trotman, L Wrangles and Mr A Pedrick (Clerk of the Council)

175. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for their absence were received from Councillors D Lloyd, R P Morgan, N L A Price and C E Richards (Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council).

176. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made at this juncture.

177. "MEDDYGFA'R CWM" – GENERAL MEDICAL PRACTICE

The Chairman extended a welcome to the representatives of Quarter Bach Community Council who had been invited to the meeting in view of the fact that residents of that community were also served by the practice.

The meeting had been convened in order to receive representatives of the Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board to answer queries on the notification that had been received that the two General Practitioners at Meddygfa'r Cwm had given notice of their resignation from their contract and were dissolving the practice which had surgeries in Cwmllynfell and Ystalyfera.

The Chairman welcomed Hilary Dover Locality Director and Lindsay Davies Head of Primary Care and Planning, Neath Port Talbot Locality of the Abertawe Bro Morgannwg University Health Board and invited them to address the Councils' representatives.

The representatives of the Health Board indicated that they were seeking a solution to the situation that had arisen as a result of the notice that had been received and informed the meeting that they were liaising with the Hywel Dda and Powys Health Boards over the matter. An advertisement had been placed inviting expressions of interest from General Practitioners who may be interested in forming a practice in the area. Bids had been invited by the 18th June with a view to ensuring that the contract for general medical services could be transferred by the end of August 2014 and one or two viable expressions of interest had already emerged. Although the Health Board held a lease for a further three years on the premises where the existing practice was located in Cwmllynfell and Ystalyfera it was hoped that alternative premises would be found by the new practice in due course.

The representatives of Quarter Bach Community Council indicated that it had been suggested to the Health Board that the schools at Cefn Bryn Brain and Ystradowen that had closed would be suitable premises for a health centre but no

response had been received. Similarly Cwmllynfell Community Council had suggested previously to the present General Practitioners that they may wish to consider relocating to the former Rhiwfawr School but no response had been received.

The representatives of the Health Board informed the meeting that funding for General Practitioners was based on a complex formula calculated according to the number of patients within a practice together with additional duties and clinics that the practitioners offered. The funding included the costs of providing and maintaining premises. The number of patients served presently by Meddygfa'r Cwm was not quite sufficient to maintain a two practitioner practice, particularly when provided across two locations with the staff and other overheads associated with that situation. They also confirmed that the Health Board was committed to maintaining the practice and as such were not seeking to reallocate patients to other practices. If necessary, transitional arrangements would be made if the matter had not been resolved before the contract with the present practitioners had ceased. The representatives of the Health Board intimated that there was a problem nationally in providing sufficient general practitioners as many practitioners were either retiring earlier because of changes to their pension arrangements and income base or seeking to limit their hours of working. Many of the younger General Practitioners now preferred to work as salaried doctors rather than to become partners in a practice. This was compounded by the fact that the Welsh Government was no longer allocating additional moneys to improve the primary health care and the Health Board had limited capital funds at its disposal. However, the Health Board would be influenced in its decision over Meddygfa'r Cwm by the quality of service that would be offered rather than on a competitive tender.

The representatives of the Councils emphasised that there was concern that general practitioner services should be maintained locally as there was no public transport available to enable patients to travel to neighbouring villages and towns.

The representatives of the Health Board undertook to keep the Community Councils informed of developments.

The Chairman thanked Hilary Dover and Lindsay Davies for attending the meeting and for imparting information to the Councils' representatives.

The meeting terminated at 7.25pm