

CYNGOR CYMUNED CWMLLYNFELL COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT RHIWFAWR HALL ON THURSDAY 17th SEPTEMBER 2015 AT 6.30 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillor J C Rees (Chairman) presiding
COUNCILLORS: R M Davies, M Evans, R Evans, T H J Kendrick, D Lloyd, D C Phillips,
and D B Thomas.

ATTENDING Councillor K Lloyd - Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council

56. APOLOGIES

Apologies for their absence were received from Councillors R P Morgan and S Williams.

57. COMMUNITY POLICE

The Chairman welcomed Sergeant Jayne James and PC Steffan Jenkins. PC Jenkins had been reinstated as the dedicated police officer for the community.

A discussion ensued on the perception of members that there had been a lack of police presence which seemed to have coincided with somewhat of an increase in crime statistics and evidence of drinking and drug use together with recurring offences particularly the one categorised as a "violent and sexual offence". Sgt James explained that the cause of this offence had now been established. PC Jenkins indicated that he intended to convene police surgeries in the area in the future. Members were of the view that this would be a useful measure and suggested that there was also merit in rearranging the "Blue Light Discos" that were held at Cwmllynfell Hall some time ago.

Councillor R P Morgan, who had tendered his apologies for not being able to attend the meeting, had however submitted questions in relation to the categorisation of the crime statistics, the increase in crime during the last year, drug abuse and actual reports of incidents that were not recorded due to policy.

A communication dated 18th August was received from Chief Superintendent J Ruddy, Western Divisional Commander in which information was provided on changes to the station enquiry desk service. The service for the Western Area would operate at Swansea Central from 8.00a.m. to 2.00a.m. and at Neath from 8.00a.m. to 6.00p.m.

A communication was also received from Chief Inspector Joanna Williams who had been invited to attend the meeting in which she confirmed that she was able to attend the next meeting of the Council.

The Chairman thanked Sergeant J James and PC S Jenkins for their attendance.

58. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made at this juncture

59. MINUTES

Resolved that the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on the 16th July 2015 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

60. MATTERS ARISING

(a) Minutes 39(a) – East Pit East Revised Opencast Coal Site and Welsh Government Opencast Restoration Best Practice

A letter dated 21st July 2015 had been received from the Decisions Manager of the Welsh Government's Planning Directorate in response to the Council's query as to whether adequate measures had been undertaken to ensure that no work was carried out on common land at East Pit without the necessary Commons Consent being in place. The reply stated that it was for the applicant to ensure that the necessary consents were in place before works commenced and if such works were undertaken without the requisite common land consent the applicants risked enforcement action being taken against them. The query had been pursued further with the Decisions Manager who had reiterated that the duty to obtain the necessary consents rested with the developer and that the Welsh Ministers could not compel anyone to apply for consent. She also indicated that anybody could take action through the courts in respect of works on common land that did not have the necessary consent.

The Open Spaces Society had also expressed concern about the matter and had issued a press statement on the 27th July entitled "Common Land at East Pit, Neath Port Talbot should be treasured not trashed"

The Clerk reported that he had had been invited to a Restoration of Opencast Sites Best Practice Workshop convened by the Welsh Government on the 11th September. The session, which had been convened to receive the perspective of community representatives on best practice, was part of a programme of such workshops that had been arranged

A letter dated 17th July 2015 was also received from the Complaints Officer for the Department of Environment, Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council in response to the Council's complaint about the manner in which its observations on the recent East Pit application had been prevented from being submitted to the Planning Committee on the 28th April. The Complaints Officer had responded in detail and concluded that he did not consider that the failure to include the Council's correspondence within the amendment sheet that had been presented to the Planning Committee on the 28th April 2015 had been contrary to any of the County Borough Council's adopted procedures and protocols nor was it contrary to the recommendations of the Nolan Report or the statutory requirements associated with the determination of planning applications. As such he did not accept the Council's claim that the actions of the Planning Department in the handling of the Council's letter of objection had been tantamount to maladministration and as such the complaint had not been upheld. The letter also indicated that the Council was at liberty to refer the complaint to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales

Resolved that the report on the representations that had been made to the Welsh Government about unauthorised working on common land and the report of the Restoration Best Practice Workshop be noted.

Proposed and Seconded that the Council's complaint about the manner in which its letter of objection had been handled be pursued further by referring the complaint to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales. **On being put the vote** the motion was defeated and it was **Resolved accordingly**.

(b) Minute 39(b) Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service - Five Year Strategic Plan 2015 – 2020 & Annual Improvement Plan 2015-16

A further communication was received from the Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service in response to the Council's request for a mail shot to be carried out to explain the procedure relating to home fire safety checks to householders. It was considered to be impractical and very costly for such a mail shot to be undertaken in respect of the households within Mid and West Wales which totalled more than 420,000. The service considered that as they prioritised their home safety checks at the most vulnerable they had found that one of the most effective means of identifying and engaging with those homes was through working with partner agencies that had links in the community.

Resolved that the further response from the Fire and Rescue Service be noted.

(c) Minute 44 - Birthday 2016 Honours List Nominations

The Chairman reported that he and the colleagues to whom the preparation of a nomination had been delegated by the Council had decided that there was insufficient time to prepare the nomination properly for the 2016 nomination so it had been agreed that the matter be deferred until the following year's nominations were due to be submitted.

Resolved that the matter be noted.

(d) Minute 45 - One Voice Wales – Annual Conference 3rd October 2015

Resolved that the list of motions to be debated at the conference be noted.

(e) Minute 47 - Youth Participation in Town and Community Councils

Councillor R M Davies reported that he had met recently with a representative of the Neath Port Talbot Children's Rights Unit together with a young person representative who attended meetings of Pontardawe Town Council. It was reported that the Unity had prepared guidance to assist Councils in deciding whether to have youth representatives sitting on the Council which also provided a suggested criteria for their appointment and the role that they would undertake.

Resolved that the principle of Youth Participation in meetings of the Council be approved and that the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Councillor R M Davies be authorised to make the necessary arrangements to bring the matter to fruition.

(f) Minute 52(a) – Christmas Lighting Provision 2015

It was reported that an application had been made to the East Pit East Community Benefit Fund for a grant towards the cost of the lights. A letter dated 26th August 2015 had been received in response from Celtic Energy together with a cheque for £1,000

Resolved the Council's appreciation for the grant be conveyed to Celtic Energy.

(g) Minute 54 - Delegation Arrangements – August Recess

It was reported that the Chairman and Vice Chairman had authorised the following action in accordance with the authority granted to them to discharge the functions of the Council during the recess:

- i. No objection raised to the following application subject to neither sign being oscillating and that the signs should not be illuminated when the shop is closed in the interests of highway safety and so as not to cause a nuisance to neighbouring residential properties:

App No:

P2015/0674 1 Internally Illuminated fascia sign and 1 internally illuminated projecting sign at 56 Gwilym road, Cwmllynfell

- ii. No objection raised to the application by Awel Aman Tawe under Section 38 of the Commons Act 2006 to carry out restricted works (temporary working area) on Cefn Gwrhyd Common approximately 2.5km east of Cwmgors and 1.6km south of Tai'rgwaith.

61. BBC NATIONAL TRUST FOR WALES – CHARTER REVIEW

Resolved that the details of the programme of evidence gathering in connection with the Charter Review be noted.

62. WELSH GOVERNMENT'S DRAFT DIRECTIONS TO THE LOCAL DEMOCRACY AND BOUNDARY COMMISSION

A letter dated 17th August 2015 was received from the Welsh Government in consultation on the above draft guidance which proposed, inter alia, removing the restriction on the minimum and maximum number of councillors per authority but instead specifying that the number of councillors should be no smaller than the number produced by a councillor to elector ratio of one councillor to every 4,000 electors. Comments were invited by the 9th November 2015.

Resolved that the matter be considered at the next meeting of the Council.

63. "SHARED PURPOSE: SHARED FUTURE" – DRAFT STATUTORY GUIDANCE FOR THE WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS (WALES) ACT 2015

A letter dated 7th September 2015 was received from the Welsh Government in consultation on the above draft statutory guidance. Comments were invited by the 16th November 2015.

Resolved that consideration of the matter be deferred until the next meeting of the Council.

64. SWANSEA NEATH PORT TALBOT CITIZENS' ADVICE BUREAU

Resolved that the invitation received for the Council to be represented at the Annual General Meeting of the above organisation on the 23rd September 2015 be noted.

65. WRITTEN STATEMENT – RESPONSES TO THE CONSULTATION ON THE LANDFILL DISPOSAL TAX

The above-mentioned written statement by the Minister for Finance and Government Business was received. Included in the statement was a undertaking by the Minister to allocate a proportion of the Landfill Tax Revenue to support community wellbeing initiatives that have an environmental focus and will include biodiversity and waste minimisation projects.

Resolved that the statement be noted.

66. FINANCIAL MATTERS

(a) Annual Return of Accounts 2014/15

A letter dated 26th August 2015 was received from Mazars LLP, the Council's auditors indicating that they had completed the audit of the Annual Return for the year ended 31st March 2015 and in their opinion the information contained in the Annual Return was in accordance with proper practices and no matters had come to their attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements had not been met.

The Clerk of the Council reported that the completion of the audit had been publicised in accordance with the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2005 (as amended).

Resolved that:

1. the auditors' report be noted;
2. copies of the Annual Return be provided to any local government elector who may request a copy upon payment of a fee of £2.00 for each copy.

(b) Application for Grant – Cwmllynfell Short Mat Bowls Club

An application for a grant was received from the above organisation

Note: Councillors R M Davies and J C Rees declared their personal interest in the application and withdrew from the meeting whilst it was being considered.

Resolved that Councillor D B Thomas be appointed to preside during consideration of this matter

Councillor D B Thomas presiding

Resolved that a grant of £260 be made to assist the Club towards the cost of purchasing score boards.

Councillor J C Rees (Chairman) presiding

(c) Payment of Accounts

Resolved that the following accounts be paid:

No			£
1751	Mazars LLP	Audit Fee	354.00
1752	Lloyd Roberts	Graffiti Art Workshop	450.00
1753	Playsafety Ltd (RoSPA)	Play area inspection	156.00
1754	Payroll	Net salary July & August	437.90
1755	HMRC	Income Tax	109.48

67. PLANNING MATTERS

(a) Planning Appeal

Resolved that the notification of the appeal against the refusal of the following application be noted:

App No: P20150212 – APP/Y6930/A/15/3129244

Conversion of chapel to residential dwelling, plus creation of off street car parking, installation of velux windows, 2 new windows and door, demolition of chimney and outbuildings plus outline planning application for a detached two storey dwelling with details of access (all other matters reserved).

(b) Planning Policy Wales Chapter 10 and Technical Advice Note 4: Retail Development

Resolved that it be noted that the Welsh Government is consulting on changes to the above national retail planning policy and guidance.

(c) 89 Bryn Road, Cwmllynfell

A letter dated 16th September 2015 was received from Miss Lisa Kucyk and Mr Paul Harries of Cwm Dog Retreat which was located at the above premises in which it was indicated that they would be submitting a planning application to Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council to increase the service that was currently provided at the premises.

Resolved that the letter be noted and that Miss Kucyk and Mr Harries be informed that the Council will receive notification of the application from Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council when it has been submitted and will be afforded the opportunity to comment on the application at that time.

68. REPORTS

The following matters were reported:

South Wales Police Statistics (1 mile radius of Cwmllynfell)	All Crime (categories below)	June	12	July	10
	Anti Social behaviour		6		2
	Burglary				2
	Criminal Damage and Arson				1
	Drugs		2		
	Other Theft		1		
	Violent and sexual offences		3		5

- Rhiwfawr Park – damage to gate, fencing and stone wall;
- Cycle path maintenance required;
- Footpath near Cwmllynfell School – broken glass, weeds and broken fence.

Councillor Mrs K Lloyd also reported on the following:

- Solar speed restriction signs to be installed;
- Bryn Road – traffic priority signs to be installed in narrow sections;
- Celtic Energy – attention to blocked culvert;
- Rhiwfawr Hall – discussions taking place with a view to promoting increased usage;
- East Pit Community Fund of £50,000 per community as stipulated in the planning permission to be administered.

69. CEMETERY

It was reported that Mrs Cynthia Phillips had pursued enquiries as to whether Gwrhyd Quarry could supply suitable kerb stones that could be utilised by families wishing to place commemorative kerbs at Cwmllynfell Cemetery.

It was also reported that enquiries had been received as to whether spaces in the ashes graves section could be reserved upon payment of the appropriate fee.

Resolved that:

1. Members be requested to visit the cemetery to assess the suitability of the proposal to allow commemorative edging stones to be installed prior to the next meeting of the Council;
2. the reservation of grave spaces in the ashes section be not permitted as this could cause a number of spaces to be out of commission for some time thereby necessitating the construction of additional spaces sooner than would otherwise be necessary

The meeting terminated at 8.58pm.