

Minutes of a Meeting of the Newcastle Higher Community Council held in the Wesley Centre, Tondu, on Tuesday 12th March 2019 at 7.00 p.m.

Cllr Mal John: Presided

Present (10) Cllrs Derrick Baker, Heidi Bennett, Dave Fowler, Joyce Haines, Altaf Hussain, Ann John, Mal John, Byron Jones, Alex Marshall & Meryl Wilkins.

Clerk: John Richfield

BCBC Member James Radcliffe (Aberkenfig)

Police Officers

1. Welcome

Cllr Daryl Gordon would attend his first meeting of the Council next meeting.

2. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllr Gary Haines and Daryl Gordon (who would be welcomed to the Council for his first meeting next time).

3. Members Declaration of Interests on Agenda Items

There were no members declarations of interests in any agenda item.

4. Minutes of the Meeting held on 12th February 2019

It was agreed to record that Cllr Ann John had reported on the email about planning at White Hall, item 14. The minutes were then approved as a correct record.

5. Matters Arising on the Minutes

Item 6 – LDP - Cllr Derrick Baker reported that Pandy Park was given to the Council by the then owner of Pandy Farm on condition that it remain free for use by the community. He would go to the offices of the Bridgend County Borough to view the documentation and report back to the Council.

Item 6 – LDP - Cllr Meryl Wilkins would write to Carwyn Jones AM about the BCBC's registration of Pandy Park, she had been unwell so had not yet done this.

Item 6 – LDP - Cllr Heidi Bennett reported on a consultation on empty properties. Cllr Altaf Hussain reported that the BCBC would inform Community Councils about the empty properties in their area. Cllr James Radcliffe would send the link to the empty properties consultation.

Item 9 - Maintenance Report Cllr Derrick Baker asked about the suggestion of advising local residents about a skip on a Saturday for the woodlands car park. He suggested that facilities existed with the BCBC to remove household rubbish, and that the Community Council did not need to provide a skip for householders. Cllrs Mal John and Alex Marshall would look at the area and ask for a price from Matt Scott Landscapes, which would be a cost effective option to remove the rubbish on the woodlands area itself, without providing general facilities. It was agreed that if they obtained a best value option, then this was authorised.

Item 13.8. - Correspondence - Cllr Altaf Hussain would look into the drainage and road markings off the main road to Penyfai at the access to the common as the County Borough member.

6. Police Officers - PACT

The Council welcomed two Police officers working out of Maesteg to the meeting. PC Mark Hunter led the report.

Cllr Heidi Bennett had been the last Chair of PACT in Penyfai and the latest PACT meeting had been held before Christmas 2018. Many of the same issues arose time and time again, and some of the members looked at whether to look towards the Community Association in Penyfai or to the Community Council to take on its functions.

It was reported that the Sergeant was committed to continuing the PACT, and it needed to consider the way it was going. The Officer updated the Council on the current crime figures, and invited questions in discerning the way forward for PACT.

Cllr Derrick Baker asked how well PACT was supported in Maesteg – it was reported to have started well, but support fell away, and people only came when they had a problem. Officer Hunter reported that they were currently dealing with youth annoyance problems and had an attendance of 200 at a recent meeting because of this problem. Usually there would be 10 – 15 present.

Cllr Altaf Hussain noted that some problems like perception of parking were very difficult to solve.

Cllr Heidi Bennett asked if the number of crimes had risen, for example reports of people working from a white van entering gardens seeking scrap were a problem. The officer indicated that registrations of vehicles were needed – also in cases of obstructions to call the police. Cllr Derrick Baker observed that the best form of communication was for an approachable police officer on the beat, and additionally the police were enabling people to contact them in other ways through social media.

The Officers were thanked for their attendance.

7. Tondu and Aberkenfig Community Association Update

Representatives from the Tondu & Aberkenfig Community Association were not present at the meeting.

8. County Borough Councillors

Cllr Altaf Hussain (Penyfai) gave a report to the Council.

Traffic Lights

Cllr Altaf Hussain had looked into the traffic lights, a matter raised by Cllr Heidi Bennett, at the entrance to Penyfai Road. He had asked for an estimate of cost and a design statement which was awaited from highways to try to improve safety at the junction.

School Crossing

A complaint had been made about a 'near miss' at the school. Cllr Hussain took it up with the school, who indicated that the crossing patrol was on leave of absence at present, however a replacement was to be appointed soon.

Cllr Hussain had also raised problematic parking in front of the School with the Director of Education.

Hillside development

As a result of recent flooding incidents, some of the residents had paid to carry out an additional survey. They planned to take the results to a meeting with BCBC and the developer, which might be facilitated by Cllr Altaf Hussain.

Cllr Meryl Wilkins stated that the BCBC had a duty to take enforcement of planning conditions seriously.

The Community Council was disturbed that the developers had undertaken works to the trees during the nesting season, especially when the same thing had occurred last year. The Clerk would write to support the BCBC Ward member and again raise the matter of insufficient enforcement.

Candidate Site Register

Cllr Hussain had met the Chair of BCBC Planning for a briefing about the areas of land in Penyfai on the register. Concern was expressed by Cllr Heidi Bennett that all community Councillors were not invited to this meeting. Cllr Hussain explained that he had attended as the County Borough Member, although he had asked Cllr Alex Marshall to assist him, and he did not participate in the meeting. It was recognised that such future meetings would be notified to all if community councillors were to be present.

Parking

There had been complaints about parking at the junction of Penyfai Road and Court Colman Road. A solution was to alter the road layout so that residents could park legally in the filter road, and the Highways department had indicated the cost of the traffic orders meant that this may be prohibitive at present.

Cllr Hussain had wondered about the possibility of a request to the administrators of the Suncredit money to assist. He was advised that the process opened annually and it was open to community groups such as the Penyfai Community Association to request assistance. It was also noted that it may be possible to make the filter road 'one way'.

Fly Tipping

The Local Angling Association had tidied up under the M4 bridge. The clerk would send them a note of thanks.

Penyfai School

The School was in need of some £20,000 to update its IT provision. The Headteacher had been in touch with Welsh Government and BCBC may be able to assist.

Cllr Meryl Wilkins asked for clarification if the school would appoint a crossing patrol – Cllr Hussain stated that they would.

The Council noted Cllr Hussain's report.

Cllr James Radcliffe (Aberkenfig)

Cllr Radcliffe was present at the meeting and gave the following report.

Bus Consultation

There was a consultation at present on support for buses that would reduce routes and consequently access to the health centre and the credit union. Cllr Radcliffe reported that the Tondy and Aberkenfig Community Association had drafted a letter to object. He reported that the cost savings to BCBC would not be that significant due to the cost of demolition of bus shelters and the loss of revenue which may jeopardise the bus company. No impact assessment had been carried

out. The Clerk would write to make representations from the Community Council to Cllr Young of BCBC.

Community Woodland

Cllr Radcliffe had advised Cllr Alex Marshall to contact a contractor who potentially might help with an assessment of the trees at the Community Woodlands. That person would be invited to meet members of the maintenance committee and inspect the trees.

Empty Properties strategy

The BCBC was to look at an empty properties strategy to bring such properties back into beneficial use. Community Councillors were to be invited to identify empty properties.

The Council noted the report.

9. Pheasant Field Penyfai Possible Community Asset Transfer

The BCBC had indicated that the CAT Steering Group had previously deferred a decision as the BCBC was not in a position to determine the extent of the transfer as BCBC stated that part of the site may be subject to future development. Mr Guy Smith had indicated that he needed to know if the Community Council had any aspirations to improve the site or to maintain it as it was at present. He also asked if the Community Council would consider taking over the asset under a short-term management agreement while the extent of the transfer / future development was determined.

The Council agreed that it would wish to take on the land in the longer term, and to carry out improvements such as community planting on a long-term basis.

Cllr Altaf Hussain reported that at his meeting with the Planning Chair the BCBC seemed positive, but he was told some building probably would take place – however the Community Council felt that one or two houses would not leave much of the field left.

It was felt that it was necessary to know how long the lease would be and whether the improvements such as planting schemes could take place.

It was agreed that the way forward was to hold a community meeting to consult local residents on what they wanted to do. Cllr Heidi Bennett agreed to identify a suitable time, date and venue for such a meeting. At the meeting it might be possible to identify if there was suitable evidence to make an application for village green status.

10. Further Consideration of response to proposals from Boundaries Commission

The Community Council continued to consider its response to the proposal from the Boundaries Commission to amend representation in respect of the County Borough representatives for Aberkenfig and Penyfai, both villages being in its area as one Community Council comprising two wards. The proposal was to retain two members, but that they both would represent one geographical area, rather than specifically and individually for the two communities, communities that were considered by local people to be distinct.

The two elected County Borough Councillors were first invited to comment.

Cllr Altaf Hussain (Penyfai) reported that he had spoken to many people about the proposal, and he had found no one who wanted to amalgamate the two communities in terms of representation. Local people had told him that the communities were separate, clearly physically separated by the M4 motorway. People in Penyfai wanted to have their own dedicated member of the BCBC to represent them. Many residents also spoke of the fact that there were two separate wards in the community council electoral arrangement which had existed for a very long time, so the structure was tried and tested. Cllr Altaf

Hussain, as the current post holder, also considered that it would be unwise to amalgamate representation and would be contrary to the clear will of the electorate. Speaking as a Community Councillor, he took the same view.

Cllr James Radcliffe (Aberkenfig) felt that there were fundamental inconsistencies with the Commission's proposals, in that they were on the one hand looking for one large ward serving several communities, and on the other hand two smaller wards comprising one Community Council. The proposals did not consider the facts of geography, either physical or human, and were as a consequence not logical. This particular place is distinct because of the geography and the fact that Penyfai and Aberkenfig are different types of place, and it clearly does not fit well to apportion one identify to them. Although those concerned would not want to be merged either, it would be more understandable to merge Aberkenfig with Ynysawdre, although it would be very unpopular, and in practical terms this would also be unsatisfactory. Cllr Radcliffe was, in unanimity with Cllr Hussain, opposed to the proposals.

Members of the Community Council who wished also commented:

Cllr Derrick Baker also referred to the inconsistencies of there being a unified community council with separate wards, and a diverse County Borough representation that the proposals would see amalgamated. Uniformity was not the same as unity. He strongly felt that the arrangements worked well at present - if it works, don't try to fix it.

Cllr Alex Marshall could understand both sides of the argument.

Cllr Meryl Wilkins argued that there was no need to change if present arrangements worked well.

Cllr Heidi Bennett agreed with retaining two separate wards – for the reason that the communities say this clearly.

Cllr Byron Jones advised to keep with the status quo.

The Council voted and was unanimous (no votes against, no abstentions) that it wished to comment that the arrangements should remain as they were because of the different communities, and the lack of connectivity. There was no objection to taking Coytrahen out of the area, and placing it with Betws.

The Clerk was asked to respond to the Commission in these terms.

11. Update from Maintenance Committee

Community Woodland behind the Swan

Cllr Alex Marshall reported that the report he had intended to make had been covered under the report from Cllr Radcliffe.

Rubbish at Woodlands area

Already covered under matters arising.

12. Update on Speed Boards Project

Cllr Heidi Bennett reported that today word had been received from the BCBC that they would install the Westcotec boards. The Clerk would ensure, that the words under the 30 m.p.h. sign were Araf / Slow, to comply with the BCBC Welsh Language Act Scheme. The Clerk would order the two boards to be fitted by the Highways Department.

13. Adoption of One Voice Wales 2018 Recommended Standing Orders

A working group of members of the Council (Cllrs Gary Haines, Mal John, Heidi Bennett and Meryl Wilkins) had met and reviewed the model guidance on Standing Orders from One Voice Wales, to update the 2017 Standing Orders previously considered by the Council. The document showed the SOs

that were legally required for all Local Councils, together with guidance on model Standing Orders for larger Councils. A draft had been circulated and was now approved by the Community Council, subject to the start time of the meeting to be 19.00.

The document would be published on the website.

14. Correspondence

The notes circulated on the incoming correspondence were taken as read by the Council, the correspondence was as follows:

1. Western Power Distribution

Details of the temporary unmetered connection for Christmas lighting 2019/19, to be used to calculate the electric bill.

2. Mark Galvin, BCBC

Note on a report on Community Asset Transfer provision at BCBC.

3. Cllr Altaf Hussain

Correspondence about a resident's concerns about other residents parking at the junction of Penyrheol and Court Colman Road. See Cllrs Report.

4. Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales

Link to the Annual report of the Panel. Section 13 relates to Community Councils. Noted.

5. Parks Department

Further to the Clerk's complaint, the Park at the top of Coronation Street was assessed for DDA Accessibility in 2014, and it was found that there was adequate wheel chair access from East, New, Bristol and Oak Streets, and alterations were carried out to assist the visually impaired as well as wheelchair users at this time. Cllr James Radcliffe was concerned about this and would press for provision at the top of Coronation Street.

6. Police Sergeant Matthew Beynon

Sgt Beynon intended to attend the meeting on 12 March to discuss PACT arrangements.

7. Planning Aid Wales

In response to the Clerk's question - hiring a planning consultant to keep a watching brief on an application is not something they have come across before. They state that is worth bearing in mind that while third parties can keep records on planning conditions and submit these records to a local authority, in order for the local authority to take enforcement action it would need to gather its own evidence. This is not to say information gathered by third parties is of no value, if the Community Council feels that conditions are not being adhered to, it can submit the information. However, it is for the planning authority to decide about whether to investigate the development further. The question then is what benefit hiring a planning consultant would bring to the situation – and it may be that local people would be better placed to collect evidence as and when it occurs. Planning Aid Wales have a guidance note on enforcement. They would not especially advocate hiring a planning consultant in such a case.

8. Eisteddfod Genedlaethol Urdd Gobaith Cymru 2019

The Urdd is in Cardiff in 2019. Encouragement to support the festival, including financially.

9. Highways - BCBC

In response to a request from the Clerk following the matter raised by Cllr Meryl Wilkins, a new bus stop flag to be installed on Heol Tyn Yr Garn at the junction with Graham Avenue.

10. Andrew R Thomas BCBC

Details of the requirements for Active 4 Life schemes, to assist the Clerk's request to the School in Penyfai to permit the Scheme to take place on their premises this year. The Clerk would again ask Mr Street the Headteacher, for his answer to the request. It was agreed that Cllrs Ann John (a school governor) and Mal John meet with Mr Street to ask for his help.

11. Mr G Pope – Deputy Head Coleg Cymunedol Y Dderwen

Writing to ask for funds to enable the School to set up a uniform recycling scheme to enable parents, carers and learners the opportunity to recycle their old school uniform or to swap sizes, etc They are looking to raise £2,500. More information is available.

12. Cllr Alex Marshall

Information on Open Spaces Society on the requirements for registration of Village Greens.

13. Tondu & Aberkenfig Community Association

Forwarded email from Rory McLaggan of Merthyr Mawr estates, a reply to their email regarding the arrival of a digger to excavate a drainage ditch.

14. Cllr Altaf Hussain

Forwarded email from BCBC regarding the overgrown trees at Heol Eglwys, Penyfai, and an order has been issued from Highways to undertake their removal.

15. Andrew Mason, Public Rights of Way BCBC

The request of the NHCC to have the route that runs through the playing field (Pheasant Field) between Plas Ty Mawr and Heol Eglwys dedicated as a public footpath has been noted. Further investigations will need to be undertaken prior to the Council determining whether to dedicate the route as a right of way. They will process our request as soon as resources are available.

16. BCBC – Highways and Cllr Heidi Bennett

Correspondence regarding the ordering of the new speed boards for installation by Highways – ongoing action.

17. Guy Smith – BCBC Community Asset Transfers

The CAT Steering Group has previously deferred a decision as the BCBC was not in a position to determine the extent of the transfer as part of the site may be subject to future development. Mr Smith is happy to re-submit the expression of interest and asks the NHCC to let him know:

If the Community Council has any aspirations to improve the site or just maintain it as it is at present?

If the Community Council would consider taking over the asset under a short-term management agreement while the extent of the transfer/ future development is determined?

18. Tondu and Aberkenfig Community Association

Copies of two letters from the TACA on the subject of Proposed Boundary Changes – to the Boundary Commission, and on three proposed candidate sites for the LDP to Chris Elmore and Madalaine Moon MPs Dai Loyd, Huw Irranca-Davies, Bethan Sayed, Caroline Jones Suzy Davies and Carwyn Jones AMs

19. One Voice Wales

Advice of Membership Subscription for 2019-2020 in the sum of £589. The Council is invited to pay in the new Financial year.

20. Bridgend County Brough Council

Invoice for provision of Active 4 Life Scheme 2018 in the sum of £3,255.83

21. Tondu School

The Head teacher had been in liaison with the Clerk and Cllr Baker for a proposal for the Community council to meet with the School Council. A date of 2.00 p.m. had been suggested, and the council was asked if it wished to meet. This was agreed, and the Clerk would arrange it, the agenda being with Mrs Prelogauskas. The Head has also agreed in principle for the Council to use the school for its usual evening meetings when in Aberkenfig.

15. Planning Committee Report

The Council noted the following applications had been made.

P/19/70/FUL Westwinds Penyfai CF31 4LL

T/19/8/TPO St Johns Church Aberkenfig CF32 9AU

P/19/89/FUL 11 Heol Eglwys, Penyfai CF31 4LY

There were no objections, Cllr Baker reported that the parish was having work done for safety reasons on the protected trees at the Church Street end of the graveyard. He indicated that the parish might request some assistance from the Council as this was a matter of benefit to the wider community.

Cllr Radcliffe reported that planning had been won on appeal for 2 touring caravans and a utility block at the land at the Fountain.

16. Other Reports from Councillors

Cllr Heidi Bennett had attended the Town and Community Councils Forum at BCBC.

The future role of Town and Community Councils was reported on.

The LDP Candidate Site register was reported on with the next steps to consider rejected growth.

There were 3 or 4 options and it was noted that J36 was at capacity.

The LDP was to be published in October – the BCBC was willing to send out an officer to speak to Community Councils at that time about the Plan.

Cllr Bennett also reported that at the Traffic Lights opposite the garage it was witnessed that a driver by passed the lights using the filter lane and turning right.

Cllr Bennett also reported that the LED Lighting in Penyfai was nearly complete.

Cllr Derrick Baker reported that he had spoken with the Head teacher at Tondu School about Council meetings being held there. It was also agreed that this Council meet with the School Council on Tuesday 26 March at 3.30 p.m..

Cllr Mal John reported that the photograph with Girls and Boys Club was to be attended by Cllr Dave Fowler.

17. Forward planning of work

Start with Christmas lights and Panting of bulbs – to be on agenda

18. Finances

(a) Accounts for payment

The following accounts would be paid:

	£	
The Clerk (Quarterly salary)	1,365.84	(201654)
HMRC (tax)	341.40	(201655)
The Clerk (reimbursements)	366.66	(201656)
BCBC (2018 Active for Life Scheme)	3,255.80	(201657)
Smyrna Chapel (Meeting contribution)	75.00	(201658)
St John's Church Aberkenfig (Meeting contribution)	75.00	(201659)
St Robert's School (Christmas Card contribution)	75.00	(201660)
Tondu School (Christmas Card contribution)	75.00	(201661)
Penyfai School (Christmas Card contribution)	75.00	(201662)

(b) Policy for grants

Clerk circulated summary of policy – it was agreed to defer evaluation of a policy.

(c) Update on the budget for the year

The Council received a comprehensive paper which analysed all expenditure and income against the agreed budget headings, showing the amounts in the budgets and the out-turn. The Council received and noted the detailed figures, which would be the basis of the accounts for the year 2018-2019.

19. Any Other Business

1. Cllr Altaf Hussain asked about how the dog refuse bins were emptied – the Clerk reminded Councillors that it had been agreed to use Bridgend Town Council to do the emptying – the invoice for the previous quarter was awaited.
2. Cllr Heidi Bennett asked for Council polices to be kept in mind and formalised.

There being no more business, the meeting closed at 8.50p.m. The next meeting would be held in Tondu School, on 9 April 2019.