

Minutes of a Meeting of the Newcastle Higher Community Council held in the Wesley Centre, Tondu, on Tuesday 8th January 2019 at 7.00 p.m.

Cllr Mal John: Presided

Present (7) Cllrs Heidi Bennett, Derrick Baker, Dave Fowler, Mal John, Altaf Hussain, Byron Jones & Meryl Wilkins.

Clerk: John Richfield

Aberkenfig and Tondu Community Association: Claudette Evans and Lin Masters, Members of the public.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Cllrs Gary Haines, Joyce Haines, Ann John and Alex Marshall.

2. Members Declaration of Interests on Agenda Items

Cllr Meryl Wilkins declared an interest in planning application P/18/775/FUL - 4 Rock Cottages, Court Colman Road. This was noted.

3. Minutes of the Meeting held on 11th December 2018

The Clerk clarified a number of points on the draft minutes of 11th December 2018 which were approved in the form published on the website.

4. Matters Arising on the Minutes

Item 7 - It was reported by Cllr Heidi Bennett that application P/18/797/FUL Hillcrest, Penyfa (reported on in Cllr Hussain's report) had been refused.

Item 10 - In reply to a question from Cllr Derrick Baker, it was reported that the school children's cards had been taken back to the schools by Councillors after the judging.

Item 12 - Cllr Heidi Bennett had seen Mr Bowen (Defibrillators) who indicated that he had a new job, and would be in touch with the Clerk to rearrange his attending a council meeting when he could conveniently attend.

5. Report from Tondu and Aberkenfig Community Association

The Council welcomed Claudette Evans and Lyn Masters to the meeting representing the Community Association.

Claudette Evans made an oral report on the following subjects:

Planning Application P16/366/OUT

Claudette Evans reported that the details of Planning Application P/16/366/OUT were now on the BCBC website. Mrs Evans listed the arguments and the objections as to why it ought not to have been approved and the problems with the road junction and the retail development. She had forwarded the pack from BCBC to be circulated to the Community Council with all the many documents which related to the outline permission, moving to the detailed development. It was noted that this needed an element of expertise to ensure that everything promised happened as it should and that nothing was left out in monitoring compliance with the planning conditions. Given the reduction in planning officers and staff, it was not clear who would monitor the many environmental surveys required. It was noted that the development was going to happen as the permission was granted but it was felt that there was an

opportunity to press BCBC for it to be done as well as possible. Given the very tight timetable around the date when the permission was granted, Mrs Evans felt it was also possible that the decision might be called in to the Welsh Government for review. It was felt to be possible that a person of expertise, for example a planning consultant might be asked to monitor this application's progress. Despite the expectations engendered by the Merthyr Mawr Estate, there appeared to be no sign of benefits to the community following the approval of the outline application as yet.

The Clerk would make an enquiry about the estimated approximate cost of a planning consultant keeping a watching brief on the application.

It was possible that other Community Councils, who would similarly benefit, might be willing to meet some potential cost of monitoring. For example Ynysawdre Community Council would meet the following week and might consider their position.

Cllr Heidi Bennett suggested asking Planning Aid Wales to see if they had any way to help with this. It was noted that developers were still planning to develop the Maesteg Washery which would add to the development pressures in the area.

It was noted that there may still be an opportunity to influence the outcome of the detail of the application, to ensure that the conditions were all adhered to.

Traffic Issues

The General Manager of Kier was very supportive of the T& A Community Association concerning traffic issues. He was surprised to hear that 38 car parking spaces were to be allocated to Kier given that they had 66 employees on site at any one time, and 150 employees in total.

Grant

The Tondu and Aberkenfig Community Association had asked for some help for half of the costs for their new website. The Newcastle Higher Community Council agreed to give £75.00.

6. Police Sergeant Vivien Evans - PACT

Police Sergeant Vivien Evans hoped to address the Council on police plans for PACT in this area, unfortunately she could not make this particular meeting nor the one in February. The Clerk would liaise with her to identify a suitable date.

7. County Borough Councillors

Cllr Altaf Hussain (Penyfai)

Cllr Altaf Hussain made a report on the following matters:

School Crossing Patrol

Cllr Hussain had previously reported that he had asked the Cabinet Member for Communities if the School Crossing Service was being removed. The response was that there were no plans to entirely remove the School Crossing Patrol Service, only discontinuing the service of quieter sites with lower risk levels. Cllr Hussain also asked the Cabinet member (R Young) how it was intended to make the school crossing safer for parents and children to cross. A survey was to be carried out by the BCBC to review the crossing. The Head Teacher of Penyfai School thanked Cllr Hussain for looking at this.

Fence under the Motorway Bridge

Cllr Hussain had received a report from Mr Owen of BCBC which stated that the fence under the bridge was likely to have been installed to stop animals and responsibility for its maintenance was that of the adjoining landowner, and therefore the BCBC would not be replacing it. To take this further contact would need to be made with the landowner.

Request for Skip provision

Mrs Llewellyn of Clos y Talcen, Penyfai had contacted Cllr Hussain and asked if a skip could be provided at her location. The BCBC informed her that it did not provide community skips. The Community Council also felt that this was not something to provide in residential streets in accordance with its previous policy.

It was noted however, that the issue was for someone to take responsibility for the skip while on site, and some Councillors were willing to attend a skip placed in the Swan car park between 9 and 12 on a Saturday morning, which would be considered at a suitable time.

Hillcrest Planning Application

Cllr Hussain reported that the BCBC had refused to permit the proposed development by Beechurst Homes of two 4 bedroom houses at land to the rear of 2 Hillcrest, Penyfai.

Installation of pole cones at Heol Eglwys, Penyfai

This work had been carried out, and the local residents were satisfied with the work.

Rubbish bags and recycling collections

A complaint had been received from a resident at Court Colman, the response from BCBC was awaited.

Black bags in front to Plas ty Mawr

A complaint had been received about a number of black bags placed in Plas Ty Mawr, not placed by the residents. Mr Zak Shell of BCBC had assured Cllr Hussain it would not recur, as he had contacted the people who had placed the bags, and informed them of the correct location to place them.

Complaints about vans

Some residents of Plas ty Mawr had complained about commercial vehicles that had been regularly parked in their street.

Christmas Tree Lights – Penyfai Church

Cllr Hussain had referred an issue of the Christmas lights being erratic, which had tripped the electrics at the church. It was understood that Mr Cottrell of BCBC had sent out an electrician to solve the problem at the time.

Planning Matters

Cllr Hussain had received copies of amended plans submitted to discharge conditions 9 and 10 of P/17/1073/FUL. The conditions related to the details for the access into the playing fields and to remove the 12 steps on the Public Right of Way. Time had been granted by the Planning Officer to consult the residents and a surveyor was checking on their behalf. Cllr Hussain was consulting the residents for what they wanted from the Hillside development.

Cllr Derrick Baker asked a question on when the BCBC would come to trim the trees growing toward the road by the hospital on the right hand side of the road after the garage.

Concerning the left turn slip road to Penyfai by the lights opposite the garage Cllr Heidi Bennett referred to some impatient drivers who would go round the small traffic island rather than wait at the lights. If the traffic island was enlarged, this problem would be removed.

Cllr Mal John mentioned that there was significant run off from the road that was causing problems with the drainage near the garage in Penyfai. He would email full details to Cllr Hussain.

Cllr Hussain would look into these points.

The Council noted the report.

Cllr James Radcliffe (Aberkenfig)

Cllr Radcliffe was not present at the meeting.

On his behalf, Cllr Altaf Hussain reported that Cllr James Radcliffe had taken on some of the Tondu Planning Application work – he had held a meeting with the Tondu & Aberkenfig Community Association and Cllr Tim Thomas on this subject.

The Council noted the report.

8. Update from Maintenance Committee

Bins

Cllr Mal John reported on the situation with the emptying of the new bins. He considered that this was working well.

Two bins needed to be emptied every week, the rest every two weeks.

Land behind the Swan

Rob Jones of BCBC had been contacted for advice about the condition of the trees. Cllr Alex Marshall would advise what action was needed with this when the advice had been received. The water situation was now well under control, and the question now was a policy of whether to simply carry out best practice in maintaining the land for the community, or whether to reconsider the nature living classroom idea, which unfortunately had not been supported in the past by the schools. The Maintenance committee would review the situation and advise the Council before a decision could be made.

9. Update on Speed Boards Project

By way of background Cllr Heidi Bennett had previously met with Colin Hill the BCBC Street lighting manager who had looked at the way to achieve what the Community Council intended to achieve in providing speed boards,

Cllr Altaf Hussain had also met with the BCBC officers and now the Community Council needed to make its decision on the outcome of the advice of the BCBC officers.

The BCBC officers, Keith Power and Colin Hill (Street Lighting Manager) advised that any works for making the columns safe or replacing them would be undertaken by the BCBC at no charge. They advised that the signs ought to have Slow / Araf in both languages.

Mr Hill confirmed that BCBC could fit a signpost near the telephone box at the north end of Penyfai and also bring a mains electricity supply into the column ready for the sign. He also confirmed that his officers would look at the lighting column 5 on the south side of Penyfai to ensure that it was capable of having the speed sign fitted to it.

The Clerk had contacted Mr Hill to determine what the Council needed to do before proceeding to order the two signs.

The situation was now that the Council was awaiting clarification as to which signs were being installed on the recommendation of the BCBC Highways Manager and clarifying where they would be placed. The Clerk would again contract BCBC to move to progress.

10. Update on Casual Vacancy – Aberkenfig Ward

The Council had been informed that a valid request had been received for an election by a member of the public. The Electoral Officer of the BCBC would keep the Council informed of progress depending on nominations made. The Clerk would liaise with BCBC to monitor progress. Cllr Heidi Bennet had placed the requisite notices on the NHCC website.

11. Adoption of One Voice Wales 2018 Recommended Standing Orders

It was agreed to ask a working group of a representative number of members of the Council to meet and review the model guidance on Standing Orders from One Voice Wales, to update the 2017 Standing Orders previously considered by the Council. It was noted that the OVW document showed the SOs that were legally required for all Local Councils, together with guidance on model Standing Orders for larger Councils. It was therefore necessary to take the statutory framework as a basis, and then it was possible to make the case for choosing additional material from the document. The group would meet and make their recommendations to the full Council for decision and adoption.

The members of the Standing Orders Working Group would be Cllrs Gary Haines, Mal John, Heidi Bennett and Meryl Wilkins.

12. Community Engagement

This subject would be left until Cllr Gary Haines, who had asked to discuss it, was ready.

13. Correspondence

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

1. Welsh Government

Update on Community and Town Councils dated December 2018.

Statement setting out the Welsh Government policy approach for the Community and Town Council Sector, which is informed by the cross-party Independent Review Panel's work findings and the majority of their recommendations were being taken forward in some way. The Welsh Government would not be issuing a detailed response to the Review, as the former Cabinet Secretary was clear that this was the start of a conversation about how an expanded role for Community Councils could be achieved. Work had stated with One Voice Wales on actions to be taken. The Clerk would copy the table of recommendations for all members of the Council.

2. BCBC Monitoring Officer

Reply from the Monitoring Officer to the further enquiry from the clerk on the details of the BCBC's ownership of the land comprising the Pheasant Field. This had been circulated to all members for information.

3. Planning Department BCBC

Letter advising that P/18/797 FUL on land to the rear of 2 Hillcrest, Penyfai has been refused. The Council and Cllr Hussain had objected, along with residents.

4. Tondu and Aberkenfig Community Association

Request to pay for 50% of their estimated cost of providing a website, given that Ynysawdre CC had agreed to fund the other 50%. On Agenda.

5. Cllr Mal John

Cllr John had been in touch with Sgt Vivien Evans inviting the Sergeant to speak to the Council about PACT.

6. Teenage Cancer Trust

Letter of thanks for the Council's donation to the Teenage Cancer Trust in 2018, and looking to further support from all those who can help.

7. Cancer Information and Support Services

Request for support in 2019, to be considered at next meeting to discuss grants.

8. Floodlighting and Electrical Services Ltd

Invoice for Christmas Lights 2018 in sum of £3,064.56

9. Ynysawdre Community Council

Asking if this Council is willing to change its usual meeting day to help Tondu & Aberkenfig CA. It was agreed to stick with a Tuesday, normally the second Tuesday.

10. Steve Cottrell BCBC

Confirming that the electricians had attended the lighting by Penyfai Church and rectified.

11. Cllr Altaf Hussain

Information from the Countryside Maintenance Officer of BCBC regarding the concern raised about the fence by the public footpath under the M4. The fence was not the responsibility of the BCBC, and it was suggested as being that of the landowner.

12. The Pensions Regulator

For relevant employers (NHCC is not) the minimum amounts for staff and employer to pay into the automatic enrolment pension scheme would change in April 2019 from 5% to 8%. Noted.

13. BCBC Electoral Services

A request had been received in relation to the current vacancy in Aberkenfig. If enough nominations were received, the election would take place on 21 February. Notice and papers would be available on 17 January.

14. Cllr Mal John

Invoice for £22.50 to be reimbursed for mulled wine and mince pies for carols.

15. BCBC

Invoice for £59.63 for bus shelter cleaning

14. Planning Committee Report

The Council noted the following applications made.

P/18/823/FUL 79 & 81 Bridgend Road Aberkenfig

P/18/775/FUL 4 Rock Cottages Court Colman Road Penyfai

IT was agreed to object to P/18/775 as it affected the Common, and the Council endorsed the concerns of the commoners.

15. Other Reports from Councillors

Cllr Derrick Baker reported his concern that Coed Wernllys did not appear to be well maintained, after the Forestry Commission had taken the old larch trees out and cut the hedge. The Clerk would ask the Forestry Commission if they could carry out some tidying.

Cllr Dave Fowler reported that the BCBC had previously declined to install a disabled access at the park at the of Coronation Street. There were three gates at the park, the Clerk would ask BCBC again if a suitable gate could be installed in at least one entrance.

Cllr Heidi Bennett reported that BCBC had started to upgrade street lights to LED (Light emitting diode) and the replacement of the lighting at the top of Penyfai had now been completed.

Cllr Meryl Wilkins reiterated her concerns about the reply from the Monitoring Officer to the Clerk's latest question on the status of the land at the Pheasant Field.

It was agreed that the Clerk would enquire of Guy Smith of BCBC if there was any update on the Community Council's request for a Community Asset transfer of the land.

16. Finances

(a) Accounts for payment

The following accounts would be paid:

	£	
Floodlighting and Electrical Services Ltd	3,064.56	(201646)
BCBC (bus shelter cleaning)	59.63	(201647)
M G John (reimbursement for mince pies)	23.00	(201648)
Tondu & Aberkenfig Community Association (grant)	75.00	(201649)

17. Any Other Business

1. After the Standing Orders were reviewed, Cllr Heidi Bennett said that the Council ought, as a good employer, to update its contract and terms of service for staff.
2. Cllr Dave Fowler commented that Tondu Infants and junior School was one school – it was agreed to clearly define age categories in the Card Competition with the Schools.
3. Concerning disability access at Council meetings, Cllr Derrick Baker stated that it would be very difficult to provide full accessibility at St John's Church. In Smyrna there was no parking, and sometimes no access. It was agreed to enquire of Tondu School if a meeting venue could be hired – The Clerk would ask.
4. At the suggestion of the Deputy Chair, and at the request of the Football Club, it was agreed that Cllr Dave Fowler would be available to be photographed with the Aberkenfig Junior Football team following the Community Council's grant to enable them to purchase more kit.
5. Regarding Village Greens, Alex Marshall might meet with the Open Spaces Society of which he was a member, to investigate options for the Pheasant field.

There being no more business, the meeting closed at 8.50 The next meeting would be held in the Wesley Centre, Tondu, on 12 February 2019.