



**Newcastle Higher Community Council  
Cyngor Cymuned Castellnewydd Uwch**

**DRAFT**

**MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING  
Held at Tondy Primary School & Via Zoom on the  
14<sup>th</sup> of November 2023 at 6.30PM**

Presiding: Cllr M Flannagan  
Present: Cllr H Bennett, Cllr G Hewitt, Cllr B Morgan, Cllr J Kemble, Cllr M Griffiths, Cllr R Hughes, Cllr J Gebbie, Cllr D Hopkins  
Apologies: Cllr S Barker, Cllr S Botterill

In attendance: 1 Member from the public

**135/24 To receive apologies for absence.**

Cllr Barker and Cllr Botterill send their apologies.

**136/24 Questions and observations from the public (10mins)**

A member of the public asked to confirm that agenda item 9 was referring to Heol yr Eglwys in Pen-y-Fai, the chair confirmed it was.

- Q. Is there a notice board for Pen-y-Fai? It was confirmed that there was a notice board in Pen-y-Fai, located in the Pheasant Field.
- It was noted that one of the telcom poles was slopping but workers had attended to the issue.
- It has been highlighted that little PCSO presence is being noticed in the community. The SWP crime figures were made reference to and concerns raised that with the ongoing cost of living and moving into the festive period, crime figures could likely rise again, supporting that a stronger PCSO presence is needed.

**137/24 Declarations of interest in accordance with section 51 of the local government act 2000.**

- Members of the PVCA: Cllr Bennett, Cllr Kemble, Cllr Griffiths
- Governor for Pen-y-Fai School: Cllr Flanagan
- Governor for Tondy School: Cllr Morgan
- Trustee of the Talbot Community Centre: Cllr Hewitt

- Free Christmas Dinner request (Agenda item 15): Cllr Gebbie
- Member representative for Wales for the NALC (Ref Agenda item 22a): Cllr Gebbie

**138/24 To approve as a correct record thereof minutes of the full council meeting on the 10<sup>th</sup> October 2023.**

Correction highlighted by Cllr Hopkins: Minute 121/24 to be amended that the process for tendering and purchasing hanging baskets has not yet been instigated by the council.

It was RESOLVED that the minutes reflected a true and accurate record of the meeting.

**Proposed:** Cllr Bennett

**Seconded:** Cllr Gebbie

**139/24 To consider matters arising from the Full Council meeting held October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2023.**

None noted.

**14024 To receive reports and approve recommendations from committees, where held:**

**Maintenance Committee**

- Cllr Hopkins shared with the council that a meeting was held on the 30<sup>th</sup> October with the Wellbeing committee with the view that the two committees would merge.
- It was recommended to the council that the maintenance and wellbeing committee merge to form a new '**Community, Environment and Projects Committee**' which will help ensure projects are carried forward by it's members and cover all aspects of project work and engagement within Newcastle Higher wards.
- Christmas lighting update: Christmas lights and the Christmas tree in Pen-y-Fai will be installed from the 21<sup>st</sup> November.
- Cllr Morgan and Cllr Hopkins are meeting with Rowan Hobbs to discuss potential new sites for hanging baskets next year, meeting is taking place on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> and Cllr's will report back.
- It was agreed in the committee meeting that tenders would be drafted by Cllr Kemble and Cllr Griffiths and the Clerk ready to present and distribute in January, the committee agreed that a 2 year tender would be required for the hanging baskets.
- The contract for the Pheasant Field will also go to tender and the new contract will stipulate the need for regular cuts in the summer months.
- A tender to be drafted for the Aberkenfig Square and Woodland maintenance to be presented to council and distributed in January.

- It was noted that any discussions, advice or work on the Pheasant Field would need to go through the 'Parks' Department in BCBC.
- Cllr Bennett had highlighted that the Aberkenfig square has the potential for a mural or artwork behind the memorial area, however discussion will need to be started with BCBC as the corporate landlord of the building. – A project to look at in the near future.
- A question was raised by councilors about the tree in Aberkenfig square and the lights connected to it, it was confirmed by Mr Baker that the lights are working, however the question raised was who is paying for these lights? It was also noted that the gate surrounding the tree needs to be more accessible so maintenance work/ cleaning can take place more easily. The Clerk will make enquiries and report back.
- Cllr Flanagan confirmed that the lights leading up to Pen-y-Fai Church would need to be funded and it was proposed that a budget of up to £600 be allocated to renew and run the lighting for this.

All recommendations put forward from the Maintenance committee are **RESOLVED**.

**Propose:** Cllr Bennett

**Seconded:** Cllr Griffiths

## **Finance and Audit Committee**

**Cllr Bennett discussed the reasons for the committee meeting and outlined the agenda.**

- IT was confirmed that the audit process was reviewed, and the Audit for Financial year 2021/22 has been returned as a qualified statement, this reflects that poor systems and controls are in place. However, the committee found that the report submitted hadn't been completed and the internal auditor hadn't populated all sections correctly.  
The Clerk is in the process of liaising with Audit Wales on the matter and raised the concern that the Audit for 2022/23 is incorrect based on the previous year's submission. The Clerk will report back when Audit Wales has responded.
- The audit report will be published for 14 days as per requirements.
- The committee discussed the tender process for future contracts and highlighted a new policy be drafted and the use of Sell2Wales for future tendering. Cllr Botterill and the Clerk are currently working on this.
- The committee also looked at the grants process for the next financial year and has allocated funds within the budget to allow for a application based grant scheme. A policy to be drafted and reviewed by the committee in January.
- The committee reviewed the Budget for 2024/25 and estimated the projected figures for the rest of this financial year. The budget for 2023/24

was set at current budget was £94,950 but highlighted that there has been significant underspend this year due to not having a Clerk in post and not being able to move projects forward.

- It was highlighted that now a Clerk is in place, projects can be moved forward more confidently.
- The committee recommends to council a new budget, taking into account the projects planned via the maintenance committee. The Precept request from BCBC will remain the same as the council has reserves to help fund the budget and spending next year.
- Cllr Gebbie questioned if the council have enough the funds to carry out these projects, to which Cllr Bennett confirmed we have allocated more money toward the maintenance, projects and environmental initiatives and confirmed the funds we have available for work on the Pheasant field which is match funded.

It was recommended that council review and approve the budget for 2024/25 for the sum of £101,366.00 and request the same precept as 2023/24.

**Proposed:** Cllr Hewitt

**Seconded:** Cllr Gebbie

HR Committee – No Meeting

#### **Wellbeing Committee**

- Cllr Kemble confirmed that now the two committees have merged, more projects could be moved forward and Cllr's can work more cohesively as part of a joint committee.
- It was recommended that the council introduce a Who's who of councilors for the new website.

**141/24**

#### **To discuss and feedback from remembrance Day, things to improve on etc.**

The council agreed that the Remembrance service this year went very well and after speaking to members of the community on the day, it was the general consensus that the option to attend a service on a Saturday was beneficial.

- A discussion was had as to what day to hold the service on next year, and it was highlighted that Armistice Day falls on a Monday next year. The council agrees that a plan needs to be put in place early in the new year to mitigate any potential issues on availability.
- Cllr Flanagan has offered to speak to RBL and ask for advice and guidance on service dates and look at securing some cadets and veterans for attendance.
- It was noted that more education around Armistice Day and Remembrance Day is needed and highlighting those different services in different areas is important.

- It was recommended that a mobile portable PA system is considered for next years' service and utilised for other events. The Clerk will source some quotes and report back in the new year.
- The use of a traffic management company should be considered next year along with an application to partly close the road. The Clerk will follow up with potential vendors.
- The Council thanks all those involved in the service, Rev Waggett, The Bugler, The Porthcawl Sea Cadets, SWP and the PCSO's in attendance.
- The Clerk will draft a letter from the council for those involved thanking them for their services on the day.

**142/24 Freethought Web domain and .gov email addresses. To confirm the following prices:**

- **£120.00 per domain for the website: newcastlehigher-cc.gov.uk & castellnewydduchaf.llyw.cymru. Total = £240 (inc VAT).**
- **Bronze hosting account £35.00 per year for 13 email addresses to be managed by the clerk and changeable when new councillors are elected.**

It was proposed and agreed that the website domain have both English and Welsh addresses and the email package be processed for councillors.

**Approved:** Cllr Griffiths

**Seconded:** Cllr Bennett:

**143/24 Pen-Y-Fai School request for assistance in petitioning the council for improved road safety for the crossing on Church Road (Reference Cllr Flanagan's correspondence with Pen-y-Fai Headteacher).**

- Ref letter and email from Headteacher of Pen-Y-Fai. Cllr Flanagan offered to ask the council to help petition BCBC for a crossing point. It was highlighted that this request would go via the county councilor for the area. Cllr Bennett has done some work on this previously and has been in touch with the Director of education and will be following up with all involved to consider an access only road or some other safety measures for Heol yr Eglwys.
- The council are happy to petition in favor of safer school road areas and will aid in this request where possible.
- Cllr Bennett will liaise with school and BCBC on this matter.

**Proposed:** Cllr Hopkins

**Seconded:** Cllr Morgan

**144/24 To consider councilor remuneration in line with the independent review panel for Wales (IRPW) publications. Reference letter attached in correspondence.**

It was highlighted that this agenda item is to note for all councilors.

Cllr Gebbie would like to thank all councilors for their efforts and highlight that Community councilors are volunteers and their remuneration is their entitlement if they wish to receive it.

Cllr Bennet confirmed that if any councilor **DOES NOT** want their allowance to email the clerk, otherwise payment will automatically be made.

The Clerk will send a deadline to send opt Out request for councilor.

**145/24**

**Council to discuss reallocating the underspend for Christmas lights and allocate to Environment spend this year, approx £4800 could be spent on the purchase of benches OR if not being purchased this year, the funds could be allocated toward the purchase of the grit bins.**

- It was suggested that we look at the virement of funds from the underspend for Christmas lights to ensure we have sufficient money to see these projects through this year.

**Proposed:** Cllr Griffiths

**Seconder:** Cllr Kemble

**146/24**

**a. Town and Country Planning Act 1990:**

**Planning Application No.:** T/23/19/TPO

**Applicant:** Mr E P Hatton

**Location:** 42 Parkfields Penyfai CF31 4NQ

**Proposal:** Works to multi stemmed Sycamore - Crown raise to 8m, reduce remaining crown by up to 1.5m all around and balance crown, remove major deadwood and snapped bran

**b. Town and Country Planning Act 1990:**

**Planning Application No.:** P/22/827/FUL

**Applicant:** S & M Shahbazian

**Location:** West Lodge Court Colman Bridgend CF31 4NG

**Proposal:** Extension and alterations to dwelling including demolition of conservatory, garage and outbuilding [further info received 2-11-23]

**c. Town and Country Planning Act 1990:**

**Planning Application No.:** P/23/593/FUL

**Applicant:** Mr & Mrs W Sinclair Location: Sherwood House 51 Angelton Green Penyfai CF31 4LQ

**Proposal:** Redesign and reconstruction of conservatory to incorporate a first-floor balcony area

\*Note the agenda was missing item C. however this was listed in the correspondence

No objections or observations were put forward by the council.

- 147/24          Keep Wales Tidy are offering free garden packs (starter pack, development pack or orchard pack) – application process to be completed.**
- Cllr Bennett had recommended the council look at this scheme and submit an application. Potential for a community garden and orchard packs available through the scheme.  
It was approved that council will consider this scheme.  
**Proposed:** Cllr Morgan                                 **Seconded:** Cllr Kemble

- 148/24          Donation Request Ref Email from Cllr Gebbie (Attached in Correspondence)**
- Cllr Gebbie highlighted that she had previously coordinated a free Christmas Meal for residents of the community that have been referred to her. This has now grown into a county wide initiative for Christmas 2023. Cllr Gebbie asks the council that any referrals are sent to her directly and any volunteers are welcome to make deliveries on Christmas Eve.
  - A letter to all community councils has been sent asking for any donations to this cause.
- \*\* Note Cllr Gebbie left the meeting briefly while this decision was discussed\*\***

A Proposal that the council donate £250.00 to the cause, with scope that a further donation to a maximum of £500 could be awarded if no other local requests were made by the next meeting.

**Proposal:** Cllr Griffiths                                 **Seconded:** Cllr Morgan

- 149/24          Approval of accounts payable and financial update**  
a. To approve a list of payments made and to be made

Items confirmed as paid

Payee	Item/Service	Amount	Confirmed Transaction Date
Festive Lighting	Christmas Motifs	£1608.00	31.10.23
Clerk	Equipment	£67.98	23.10.23
Clerk	DBS Reimbursement	£18.00	23.10.23
Cllr Morgan	Paint for Benches	£22.99	23.10.23
Clerk	Salary	****	28.10.23
Crown Garden Services	Pheasant Field	£108.80	23.10.23
Bridgend Town Council	Dog Bins Quarter 2	£1040.00	23.10.23
HMRC & Pension Provider	Clerk's NI & Pension Contribution	****	28.10.23
Cllr Flanagan Reimbursement	Union Jack Flag	£82.26	13.09.23
Remembrance Day Bugler	Remembrance Day Service	£100.00	13.11.23 Authorized by Clerk and Chair

Items to authorize and Pay:

Payee	Item/Service	Amount	Date to be paid
Rowan Hobbs	Hanging Basket Watering (29/08/23 – 16/09/23)	£480.00	When approved by Council
Crown Garden Services	Grounds Maintenance	£108.80	When approved by council
Clerk Reimbursement	Order of Service Printing for Remembrance Day Reimbursement	£56.25	When approved by council
Cllr Bennett	Flagpole lock Reimbursement	£102.00	When approved by council
Clerk Reimbursement	Purchase of Poppy Wreaths (including postage)	£43.97	When approved by council
Crown Garden Services	Outstanding payments	£430.13	When approved by council

b. To approve list of income/ receipts: None Received

- A query was raised that due to the tenders and contracts we set out and award, is it required that we display all of our payments and competitive contracts for everyone to view. It was highlighted that we are unable to tell losing tenders who won a contract but we later publish the winning contract's charges in a public forum. Cllr Gebbie clarified that although tenders are confidential, the contract for a public body like the community council is public information.
- The clerk will seek advice on how we publish our finances and contracts and will report back to the council in December.

**All payments made and due are reviewed and RESOLVED by the council.**



**Proposed:** Cllr Hewitt

**Seconded:** Cllr Morgan

**150/24 To note and consider correspondence**

- Note the email from Mari Major about the upcoming events in the County Note different events being held.
- Cllr Bennett & Gebbie confirmed that the Christmas Supper at Bridgend College is in aid of the Dialysis Unit in Bridgend which is due to open in May 2024
- Reference to the email regarding the 4G network installations – No concerns were raised.

**151/24 To receive Member's reports**

- **Cllr Kemble:** PVCA continuing the litter picking which continues to be successful.
- The Babies Bach group is very well attended and once a month the group are holding a stay and play and the group are looking to continue into next year.
- **Cllr Gebbie:** Highlighting the continued issues with drainage on Bridgend road in Aberkenfig. Residents urged to use **ReprotIT** on BCBC and report any concerns with the river to **Natural Resources Wales** who is responsible for the river areas.
- Cllr Gebbie also highlighted that Social media posts should be posted through council accounts to help protect members from any bad or negative behavior. Members and the community should report bad or harassing behavior via Facebook and to the police if necessary.
- Engagement: Any conversation that's needed reference engagement, the council can invite the officer in charge of that area from BCBC to get more information and scope on the strategy with county council, community councils are urged to engage as much as possible with members of the community and to note the way we engage is equally important.
- BCBC Budget: The county council budget needs to improve, and the county is looking at a potential overspend of 20Million this year, largely in areas like social care and services.
- There is a Current freeze on recruitment in BCBC except for essential needs.
- **Cllr Bennett:** Issued in Pen-y-Fai: Pot holes and dropped curbs have been raised again, but have been told the funds are not available yet to tackle these problems.
- Town and Country Forum: We have a fund available if we work on our rights of way with BCBC, however if this money is unclaimed the funds are spent elsewhere.

- The reliability of contractors is an issue county wide, however we should be pro-active in securing a contracts to improve our rights of way so we can secure and utilize the funds available.
- Engagement and consultation strategy sent out from BCBC, All councilors are invited to share their feedback.
- Grit bins: The estimated turnaround time is 4-6 weeks. Cllr Gebbie and Cllr Bennett will conduct more community engagement where the locations are being proposed determining any observations or concerns from residents. Grit bins near hills and inclines is a priority.

**Cllr Morgan:** Double parking on Bridgend Road is a major issue at the moment. Mornings and afternoons are worse and restricting the pavements for pedestrians. The Bollards would be better served if they were extended further along the road.

- Cllr Bennett confirmed she had met with PCSO's and confirmed that any issues with cars parking on yellow lines is a BCBC issue as they are the authority enforcing that restriction, any issued with cars parked on pavements or obstruction is a police matter. The best course of action is taking photos and sending them to the relevant authority.

**Cllr Hewitt:** Noted Since the 20mph enforcement, there seem to be more cars driving faster, highlighting the need for more enforcement, such as the electrical speed signs? And continuing issues with parked cars on pavements and the and the lack of dropped curbs resulting in disrupted accessibility.

**Cllr Flanagan:** Highlighted some criticism on Facebook about the Welsh flag flying in Aberkenfig. The union flag was up for the Remembrance Service but the Welsh flag is now back up. Cllr Bennett recommended looking at a potential 2<sup>nd</sup> flagpole for Aberkenfig Square. Cllr Flanagan to look at a price for a new flagpole.

**Cllr Gebbie:** Raised an agenda item for next year's Remembrance Service and the protocol for the flags being lowered and raised in line with 'The Last Reville'. Clerk will ensure this is noted for next year.

**152/24 Any urgent items of business as determined by the chair.**

- None to add

**153/24 Dates of forward committee meetings**

- Committee chairs will forward to The Clerk.

**154/24 To confirm the date of the next meeting**

December 12<sup>th</sup> 2023 at Pen-y-Fai School.

**155/24 Public Interest Test**

***The following resolution applies:*** By virtue of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public are excluded from the meeting on the basis that with regards to the following agenda items, disclosure thereof would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the personal and confidential nature disclosed in the business to be transacted.

- a. 2023 Pay award for local government services (Green Book) Employees.
- b. NHCC to discuss the cooption process and the application for the vacancy of community Councillor.

**A. Cllr Gebbie: Declares a prejudicial interest in this matter:**

- It was noted that the NALC have concluded negotiations for Green Book Employees. It was noted that the Clerks salary be increased in line with the agreed rates set by NALC and calculated on a pro-Rata basis in line with Part time hours and for pay increases to be back dated form commencement of employment.

**Approve:** Cllr Hewitt

**Seconded:** Cllr Griffiths

B. The application deadline has been extended to the 14<sup>th</sup> January and any applications to be considered in the February meeting. The clerk is to Re-advertise via Facebook, website and posters for this vacancy.

**Proposed:** Cllr Gebbie

**Seconded:** Cllr Bennett

**The Chair thanked all council members and members of the public for attending.**