

**PEN-Y-CAE COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**COVID-19**

Minutes of the of the Pen-y-Cae Community Council Meeting held by ZOOM on Monday 4th January 2021

**PRESENT**

**Chair – Cllr. A. Phillips**

Cllr. C. Davies  
Cllr. P. Matthews  
Cllr. J. Lowe  
Cllr. K. Gilpin  
Cllr. A Tynan  
Cllr. S. Jones

Cllr. Dr S. Evans  
Cllr. J. Jones  
Cllr K. Phillips  
Cllr. J.C. Phillips  
Cllr. H. Davies

Rachael Hughes, Community Agent for item number 6 on the agenda, Issues Relating to Older People

PC Mark Sayer from North Wales Police had tried to join the meeting for item number 5 on the agenda – Police Matters but due to technical difficulties could not access the meeting.

**(21)01 APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from:

Cllr. G. Edwards  
Cllr. P. Davies

Cllr. A. Phillips was having difficulty maintaining connection to the meeting therefore Cllr. Dr. S. Evans took the Chair.

**(21)02 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Cllr. J. Phillips declared interest in item number 8 on the agenda – Planning Applications.

**(21)03 MINUTES**

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> November copies having previously been circulated, were approved and adopted subject to the following correction

(23)123 to ask Rachel Penmann of WCBC if there was any grant funding available to install street lighting along the old railway line path.

**(21)04 MATTERS ARISING from the minutes**

**1. Interactive Speed Signs**

The faulty sign had been taken to TWM for repair and as yet no update had been received on the fault. The Clerk would chase this and ask for an update. Cllr. J. Phillips advised that the sign near the car park on Stryt Issa was only displaying the speed when the vehicle was passing the sign and not before making it difficult to view the display. Cllr, Phillips asked if the sign could be angled to face the road better to alleviate this problem.

Resolved: That the Clerk would chase for an update on the repair of the sign and check regarding the positioning of the one on Stryt Issa.

**2. Maes-y-Nant Path**

Cllr. Dr Evans advised that the path had still not been cleared and due to the moss, leaves and now ice underfoot it was becoming more dangerous.

Resolved: That the Clerk would contact Sion Roberts once again and ask for the path to be cleared.

**3. Land at old BMX Track**

The Clerk had sent off plans and initial details to the three firms to see who would be able to take the case and provide more information to further the enquiry. As yet there had been no progress. As local lockdowns and the Christmas period had affected working schedules it was hoped that there would be some further progress for the next meeting.

Resolved: to await further information.

**4. New Light at Tainant**

The Clerk had hand delivered letters to the residents adjacent to Cherry Tree Cottage in Tainant and as such had not received any objections to the installation of a Streetlight in the vicinity. The owner of Cherry Tree Cottage was also the owner of Silverdale and as such had provided the clerk with contact details and permission to pass them onto Scottish Power in order for them to arrange to visit the property with a view to begin works. These had been passed on to MEGA and the Clerk was awaiting an update from Scottish Power for an estimated date.

Resolved: To await further information.

**5. War Memorial Garden**

The Clerk had not had the capacity to be able to arrange the quotation for the war memorial garden and planted area quotes and as such would endeavour to have this information in time for the next meeting. The Clerk asked once again if members could pass on any contact details for local contractors.

Resolved: That the Clerk would arrange for 3 quotes for the works to be done.

**6. Community Food Growing Project**

An emergency Zoom meeting had been held with members on the 17<sup>th</sup> December to discuss an update on the transfer of the deed of dedication for the land. It had been explained that along with the paperwork there would be substantial legal costs incurred which would be approximately £900 + VAT. Members had decided to agree to pay the costs in order to free up the site and begin work on the Community Food Growing Project.

Resolved: That the Clerk would return the paperwork and begin the process of transferring the deed of dedication.

It was agreed to take matters out of sequence and suspend standing orders for item number 6 on the agenda – Issues Relating To Older People

## **(21)05 ISSUES RELATING TO OLDER PEOPLE**

Rachael's report had been circulated to members prior to the meeting.

Rachael wished members a happy new year and explained that there had been an increase in referrals in and likewise referrals out to other agencies. There had been a wide variety of referral sources from WCBC Housing, nurses, the Rainbow Centre in Penley and a number of self-referrals following the leaflet drop before Christmas. Rachael advised that she had been overwhelmed with the amount of phone calls she had received following the Christmas gifting and Christmas lunch schemes that had been done in Penycae and the recipients had been so very grateful and that this had made her feel very proud of what had been achieved.

### **Matters raised by members**

Members also wished Rachael a happy new year and thanked her for her hard work. Cllr, J. Jones advised that she was going to keep a note of people's names that needed to be removed from the Christmas gifting list in preparation for next Christmas. Cllr. J. Phillips thanked Rachael for her hard work and for going above and beyond in her duties.

Rachael thanked members for the opportunity and following this she left the meeting.

Resolved:               noted

## **(21)06 POLICE MATTERS**

Due to technical difficulties Sgt Mark Sayer had been unable to join the meeting and as a result had sent a text message to Cllr. K. Gilpin with a roundup of crime figures. From 6<sup>th</sup> October 2020 there had been a positive drugs warrant in Penycae, 8 antisocial behaviour incidents – all resolved and 4 criminal damages which had all been resolved out of court disposals. PC Sayer also advised that they had been busy with Covid patrols and numerous jobs had been called in. He advised that there were 3 PCSOs covering the area, overseen by himself and the Sergeant.

Cllr. J. Phillips thanked Cllr. Gilpin for trying to facilitate this and wished to add that it would be helpful if members could be given more contact details for PCSOs as it was not always possible to reach someone due to rest days and work rotas. Cllr. Phillips also wanted to see a fairer representation on social media regarding the local areas patrolled as this was a visible reassurance to the community that Penycae was being looked after by the Police. It was evident that it was done in other communities.

Cllr. J. Lowe advised that Nick Evans had taken over the Wrexham Area and that Cllr. Hugh Jones had scheduled a meeting to discuss the dissatisfaction with the lack of contact between the Police and local members and linking in with Community Councils.

Cllr. C. Davies advised that she felt that the Police were not providing the service that had been promised.

Cllr. P. Matthews asked members if they had a copy of the poster detailing the contact details for the local PCSOs. The Clerk had shared this some months previously and copies had been placed in the noticeboard and on the council's website.

Cllr. J Phillips advised that it was important to have open communication with the Police and that in many cases it was more beneficial to share information with the local PCSOs and not to have to always report through 101 as it could be dealt with quickly and more efficiently if the right contact details were provided initially.

Resolved: to await further communication from the Police

## **(21)07 STREETLIGHTING**

### **Replacement LEDS**

The Clerk reported that the remaining lamp on Awelfryn had been replaced with an LED however there had been some confusion with the location of the lamp at Trofryn. The engineers had not been able to find this despite being told that it was to the rear of the properties. The Clerk had explained this and MEGA were sending a team out to rectify this ASAP. The remaining lamp at Mill Lane was still presenting an issue as there had been no response from the property owner regarding clearing the base of foliage. It was suggested that Land Registry could be checked for proof of ownership of the land where the light was situated and perhaps another letter sent by recorded delivery to the property owners.

### **New Light at Trofryn**

The Clerk confirmed that the installation of a solar light at Trofryn would cost in the region of £250 for the installation of a new column and a further £480 for the solar light. The Clerk was waiting on confirmation from Allan Richardson that the community council could purchase a further light from them. Members agreed to accept this and arrange the works to be done if accepted by Snapfast.

### **Christmas Lights**

Cllr. J. Phillips asked members if they would consider funding some Christmas Lights in the village perhaps just on the arterial routes to the village, perhaps on Pant Hill, Stryt Issa and Copperas. Cllr. J. Lowe advised that some careful consideration would need to be given to costings as from experience in Ruabon that the yearly costs to install them were quite high. Cllr. J. Phillips advised that there would need to be some investigation done to see if this was viable initially and asked if members agreed to at least finding out the costs involved. All members agreed to finding out the costs in principle.

Resolved: That some further investigation be done regarding the ownership of the land where the lamp on Mill Lane is situated and a further letter sent to the owner.

That the light be installed in Trofryn provided Snapfast agreed.

That initial costings be sought for Christmas lighting.

### **Faults**

Cllr. J. Phillips advised that the light after the bridge in Coed-y-Nant was still out and asked the Clerk to report this once again to WCBC.

## **(21)08 PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

### **Application no - P/2020 /0787 – Outline application (all matters reserved) for up to 8 dwellings site of Wrights Garage and adjoining land, Hall Street, Penycae, Wrexham**

The Clerk had received correspondence from Alyn Thomas who had notified the Planning Department of his observations regarding this matter and he had expressed that they be shared with members. Mr Thomas had noted that -

- 1) The site was previously operated as a garage both for Cars and Buses previously and has an inspection well which could have residue materials which may or may not require removing
- 2) I struggle to consider how access and egress may be achieved from this site as one side borders a private road and the other comes on to the main highway and can be obscured by the houses

- 3) I am concerned due to the depth of the bank and should this be altered in any way there may be an environmental impact upon the river below along with placing any houses at risk of flooding
- 4) I do note an objection just merely offering observations.

Resolved: No observations

**Application no - P/2020 /0839 – Application for approval of reserved matters following outline permission P/2018/0139 for details of scale, layout, landscaping and appearance for the development of 9 residential units, Land south of Pinecroft, Afoneitha Road, Penycae Wrexham**

Resolved: To note objection based on over-intensification of the site, the land was not sympathetic to holding 9 dwellings and car parking. Members wished to raise concerns over access from the highway in an area of high traffic at peak times. Members also wished to note that the land had been used for landfill and there were concerns regarding dangerous chemicals being unearthed.

**(21)09 TO RECEIVE The external Auditor's Report.**

The Auditor General for Wales issued Pen-y-Cae Community Council a qualified audit report. Details of the matters which have led to the qualification are given below: Notice of Appointment of Date for the Exercise of Electors' Rights Regulations 16, 17 and 22 of the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 set out the procedures to be followed for the exercise of electors' rights under the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004. We note that the Notice of Appointment of Date for the Exercise of Electors' Rights commenced on the 1 September 2020, which is before the Council approved the Accounting statements and Annual Governance statement on 7 September 2020. Regulation stipulates that any rights of objection, inspection and questioning of the external auditor may only be exercised within a single period of 20 working days. However, due to the approval by Council occurring after the commencement date, the Council has not met the requirements of Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014. Therefore, the appropriate response to Assertion 4 should be 'No' per the Annual Governance Statement on the Annual Return. We also note that the Notice of Appointment of Date for the Exercise of Electors' Rights was not advertised before the start of the inspection period, as the Council used an announcement date of the 8 September 2020, while the inspection period commenced on 1 September 2020. The Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014 require that the notice be displayed for 14 consecutive days before the start of the inspection period. The inspection period must allow 20 working days for inspection. In future years, the Council must ensure that the Annual Return is approved by the Council before the Notice of Appointment of Date for the Exercise of Electors' Rights period commences in order to comply with the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014.

Resolved: That the Clerk seek clarification of the dates for next year's audit.

**Internal Auditor's report**

The Internal Auditor has identified that the Council has failed to comply with their Standing Orders and Financial Regulations when awarding a contract. In future, the Council should award any contracts in accordance with their Standing Orders and Financial Regulations to avoid unlawful expenditure.

The Internal Auditor also identified that the clerk did not have a contract of employment. The Council should note that current guidance concludes that the position of clerk is as an

officer of the Council and therefore all clerks are employees of the Council, and the Council should ensure that a contract of employment for the clerk is put in place. Additionally, during our review we identified another matter that we wish to draw to the Council's attention which does not affect our audit opinion but should be addressed by the Council.

Resolved: The Clerk had provided the external and the internal auditor with the contract documents they had requested in the previous year's audit paperwork and due to COVID the documents could not be viewed by the external auditors as they were working from home. The Clerk had re-sent the documentation to the external auditor for their inspection. The Chair asked if the Clerk could once again send the draft copy of the contract to her so that work may be progressed on this matter.

#### **(21)10 TO DISCUSS Tax Base and Precept Schedule for 2020/21**

Prior to the meeting the Finance subcommittee had met and discussed the Precept for the forthcoming year. The tax base for 2020/21 was confirmed as 1122.

The Finance committee discussed the outcomes of the precept as follows

Standstill budget – no raise - £70257

1% raise – 63p per household per annum £70960

1.5% raise – 94p per household per annum £71311

2% raise - £1.25 per household per annum £71662

3% raise - £1.88 per household per annum £72365

It was discussed that operating a standstill budget would not be prudent given the raise in expenses incurred yearly by the council but given the current economic climate it would not be fair on the community to raise the precept by a large figure given that WCBC were still yet to announce its council tax raise. It was recommended by the Finance Committee that a 1.5% raise in precept equalling 94p per household per annum would not be too steep an increase and would also allow the council to continue its budget without having to withdraw from reserves. All members were in favour of this.

Resolved: That the Clerk would inform WCBC of its decision to raise the precept by 1.5%

#### **(21)11 TO DISCUSS Stage 2 of the MUGA**

Cllr. J. Phillips advised that as council had agreed to allocate extra funding from reserves to be added to the amount raised towards the Skate Park, could we progress to looking at quotes once again. Cllr. Phillips advised that a rough idea of the design had been agreed and that looking for competitive quotes would be beneficial to moving the process forward. All members were in agreement.

Resolved: That the Clerk would begin arranging quotes for the Skate Park.

#### **(21)12 RECCOMENDATIONS from the Finance Committee**

Prior to the meeting the finance committee had met and discussed some items that they wished to put to members for their consideration. As yet no decision had been made regarding the food bank and members noted that it would be important to carry on this provision due to the impact of lockdown and shielding in the community. It was recommended that The Community Council along with donations from the community carry on providing emergency food parcels and that a budget of £1000 be allocated towards this. All members were in favour of this

The finance committee also discussed the possibility of budget allocation towards next Christmas and supporting the events that had taken place at Christmas 2020 such as the

Santa Float, the Christmas Lunches and the care packages. It was recommended that a sum of £250 be allocated towards the float for this financial year and that in future years it could be financed through donations collected. All members were in favour of this. It was recommended that the gifting scheme be allocated £350 and the Christmas Lunch be allocated £150. All members agreed.

Resolved: That the budget be altered to reflect these allocations.

### **(21)13 GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE**

Martin Bull - Discretionary Expenditure Limit 2021-22 – The letter received from Welsh Government dictated that the appropriate sum for the purposes of section 137(4) (a) of the Local Government Act 1972 (the 1972 Act) for Community and Town Councils in Wales for 2020-21 is £8.32.

OVW - JANUARY 2021 - Remote training sessions that are taking place in January

Wales Air Ambulance Charity Emergency Appeal – This would be placed on file and discussed at the February meeting under Grants and Donations

### **(21)14 MISCELLANEOUS**

Resolved: To note receipt of the following:

1. OVW - ADDITIONAL FREE PLACES AVAILABLE ON OUR CORE MODULES / LLEOEDD RHAD AC AM DDIM YCHWANEGOL AR GAEL AR EIN MODYLAU CRAIDD
2. AVOW Press Release - Children and Young People's Network with Children's Commissioner for Wales
3. Simon Baynes MP - My monthly e-newsletter
4. Richard Clarke – University of Southampton Covid-19 preventative behaviour and symptoms study
5. Wrexham Communities for Work Christmas 2020 newsletter
6. OVW - FW: New Domestic Abuse Policy for Commissioner for Future Generations Staff

### **(21)15 ANY OTHER URGENT BUSINESS**

Cllr. J. Phillips asked if the Clerk could request the CAB figures in time for the next meeting please.

Cllr. K. Gilpin asked if the Clerk could order some more dog waste bags.

### **(21)16 FINANCE**

#### **Payments**

The following payments were approved for December

102912 –accounting solutions - payroll	£121.09
102913- Wybone – dog bags	£193.99
102914 – Broxap – bench	£511.20

102915 – trees & lights	£162.70
102916 – MEGA electrical – maintenance	£136.33
102917 – OVW – Membership	£378.00
102918 – Christmas lights	£29.99
102919 – Christmas float items	£41.27
102920 – John Roberts – donation to vehicle hire for float	£50.00
102921 – WCBC – Playground repair	£148.15
102922 – WCBC – litter bins	£660.00
102923 – Clarity copiers – C.A. Flyers	£60.00
102924 – EDF Energy – unmetered supply	£1602.29
Bank Transfer – Salary, postage	£1311.62
Bank Transfer – Salary	£601.40
Bank Transfer – Salary	£693.44