

COEDFFRANC COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Council Meeting held on 6th November 2013 at the Carnegie Hall.

Attendance: Cllrs J Davies, DK Davies, R Didcote, H Bebell, A Wingrave, JS Jones, P Davies, J Thomas, I Whitehead Ross, K Whitehead Ross, P Fellows.

The Members were reminded that it is Remembrance Sunday on the 10th November 2013.

9513: Apologies: Cllrs APH Davies, M Harvey, P Bebell, HC Clarke, HR Richards, B Richards.

9514: To receive Declarations of Interest.

None.

Additionally, it was noted that no Member that had declared an interest in the last meeting took any part in the approval of the minutes for that meeting.

9515: To approve and sign the Minutes of Previous meetings: -

a) Council Meeting held on 16th October 2013.

Approved as a true and accurate record.

b) Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held on 23rd October 2013.

Approved as a true and accurate record.

9516: Matters arising from the minutes. (FOR INFORMATION ONLY)

Cllr I Whitehead Ross asked Cllr H Bebell for an update on item 9495, following the Meeting at Swansea Tidal Lagoon regarding compulsory purchase schemes.

9517: To receive and approve the accounts schedule for payments and to select two account numbers for a full explanation at the next meeting.

Accounts were received in the sum of £6,879.67 Account No's 378 and 392 were selected at random for an explanation by the clerk at the next meeting. Copies of the accounts were circulated and the Clerk responded to member's queries.

9518: To receive an explanation from the Clerk concerning Account No's: 359 and 363.

The Clerk provided explanations, which were accepted by the Council.

9519: Planning Applications: -

To receive additional information regarding Planning Application P2013/0897.

The information was noted.

P2013/0941 – Details pursuant to condition 20 (landscaping) of Planning Application P2013/0171 approved on 04/10/13. Land rear of 102 Crymlyn Road, Skewen. (Applicant – Hale Homes).

No observations.

P2013/0818 – Variation of condition 3 of Planning Application P2009/0447 granted 08/02/2010 to allow for an extension of time for the submission of a replacement tree planting scheme. Cefn Lodge Nursing Home, 16 Cefn Parc, Skewen. (Applicant – Cefn Lodge Care Home).

No observations.

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P2013/0794 – Retention and completion of works comprising the installation of French doors and windows on ground floor front and side elevations, canopy to front entrance plus new boundary walls with railings. (The Travellers Well, 8 Dynevor Place, Skewen. (Applicant Mr I Gorvett, The Travellers Well).

No observations.

Late Application: P2013/1002 – Details to be agreed in association with condition 10 (Highways construction details) of Application P2012/0171 granted on 4th October 2013. Land rear of 102 Crymlyn Road, Skewen. (Applicant – Hale Homes).

No observations.

Late Application: P2013/0855 – Variation of Condition 26 (details of footpath improvement and lighting scheme) of Planning Permission P2012/0370 granted on the 24/01/13 to agree an alternative scheme for a 1.5m wide hard surfaced and lit footpath link, and to allow the completion of the path on site prior to the occupation of the 10th dwelling. 48 Crymlyn Parc and land to rear, Skewen. (Applicant – Barratt Homes).

No observations.

Late Application: P2013/1010 One detached dwelling house. Land adjacent to Glas y Dorlan, 65 Cardonnel Road, Skewen. (Applicant – Mr Arthur, 65 Cardonnel Road, Skewen).

No observations.

9520: To receive a report from any Member concerning meetings at which he or she represented the Council.

None.

9521: To receive a report from the Finance & General Purposes Committee.

Cllr I Whitehead Ross reported on the Meeting.

Resolved:

- 2) That Qtr 2's Accounts are approved.
- 3) The Aged Debtors are noted.
- 4) The details of vandalism in the Qtr 2 are noted.

9522: To receive an application for funding from New Swansea Bay.

The Members discussed the issue.

Resolved: That no money is given at this stage but the application is held back in case there is money left in the budget at the end of the financial year.

9523: To receive a letter of thanks from the Skewen & District Industrial Heritage Association and a request to house some pictures obtained from Llandarcy Refinery Site in Carnegie Hall.

The Members discussed the issue.

Resolved: That the donation is accepted.

9524: To receive information from the National Assembly for Wales regarding the Housing (Wales) Bill.

The information was noted by the Members.

9525: To receive quotes for the design and development of a web site for the Council.

The Members discussed the issue.

Resolved: That the second lowest quote is accepted as it provided a better service than the lowest quote.

9526: To discuss painting the fences owned by the Community Council as raised by Cllr K Whitehead Ross.

Cllr K Whitehead Ross introduced the issue and asked the Clerk to brief the Members on the considerations she had raised with him.

The Clerk reported firstly there's the sheer volume of fencing. The Park alone is 32 acres, and the majority of the perimeter of the Park has railings, plus the Cemetery is another few acres and fully enclosed by railings so we are talking hundreds of meters of railings (at an estimate by the staff approximately 1,400 meters).

The Clerk reported that there is a significant amount of deterioration already in place, especially on the bottom joining plate where in many places the bar has disintegrated altogether, but bearing in mind that they are almost 90 years old that's not surprising. The clerk reported that she was in the County Archives a couple of years ago and found minutes from the early 70's saying that the fencing was deteriorating, and we are 40 years on now so we haven't done too bad. The Clerk reported that there had been talk of cutting off the bottom plate and re-welding a new plate 6 – 8" off the ground, but having one of our staff doing this for all the railings would take years. The Clerk reported that we did have a quote a few years back to do that type of work by an external contractor, and it did not work out much cheaper than actually replacing the railings because it's a fiddly job. The Clerk reported that for any painting to be truly effective the railings would need to be rubbed down and primed before painting and to carry out this work on hundreds of meters of fence would be incredibly time consuming, and that the specialist metal paint is very costly. The Clerk reported that our grounds staff are flat out over the summer months just keeping up with cutting the grass in the various sites, maintaining the bowling greens and cricket square, and the general up keep of the Park, Cemetery, playgrounds and playing fields in Jersey Marine, Crymlyn Burrows, Tennant Park, Caewathan and Llandarcy.

The Clerk reported that is not recommended to use the metal paint in wet weather or frost, so that severely limits the time frame that our staff could work on this task over the winter period. We have one Handy Man who now works full time whose work schedule is very large.

There is also the problem that significant lengths of the railings are now overgrown by various types of hedging (this is particularly the case in the cemetery with the exception of the front fence). There are also several areas in the park where the same issue occurs, mainly on the boundary running along the houses adjoining the park along Burrows Road and the boundary running along Pen-yr Alley. The area along the boundary with Pen-yr-Alley has deliberately not been cut that regularly, partly due to the difficulty of the area, as there are trees and shrubs growing along the perimeter so it is difficult to get the tractors into the area, and partly to encourage ecology and wild life.

The Clerk suggested that if the Members want our own staff to do this work, that we target the more visible areas of railings, and do them as and when time/weather/costs permits.

The Clerk reported that she had been told that back in the 70's - 80's a community team (maybe through the Probationary Unit) had undertaken this type of work on behalf of the Council with the Council covering the cost of the paint and brushes.

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Cllr K Whitehead Ross reported that he felt that the Council should prioritise certain areas of the railings in the more visible sections. He reported that the railings should be made more attractive because our Estates play a significant part in the decision making process of prospective and current residents, and that it encourages businesses into the area, and pointed out that it could have a huge effect on house prices.

Cllr K Whitehead Ross suggested that a basic rub down and paint work would be better than not doing anything. He suggested that a 5 – 10 year programme could be rolled out to tackle the work a bit at a time. Cllr K Whitehead Ross also suggested that another Member of staff could be taken on a Fixed Term Contract to carry out the work.

Cllr K Whitehead Ross stated that it would be beneficial to find out what the costs would be to repair or replace the railings, what the paint would cost, and what the staffing hours would cost.

The Members discussed the issue.

Resolved: That the issue should be passed to the Estates Committee to review the fences and report back to the Council with their recommendations.

9527: To receive a copy of First Cymru's Service Revisions from the 3rd November 2013.

The Members noted the information.

9528: To receive the menus for the Christmas Dinner to be held on 18th December 2013 at the Smiths in Neath Abbey. (Please give your menu choices to Cllr John Thomas at the meeting on the 6th November 2013).

The Members noted the information.

9529: Correspondence.

a) To receive information regarding the launch of a campaign by Peter Hain to sign an online petition to save Neath Magistrates' Court.

The information was noted by the Members.

b) Letter of thanks from Ti a Fi Sgiwen.

The information was noted by the Members.

9530: To resolve to exclude the public for the following item pursuant to Regulation 4 (3) and (5) of Statutory Instrument 2001 No. 2290 and Paragraph 15 of Part 4 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

Resolved: That the press and public are removed from the meeting.

9531: To receive an update regarding the drainage issue in the Cemetery.

The Clerk provided an update which was noted by the Members.

**Cllr A Wingrave
Chair**