

COEDFFRANC COMMUNITY COUNCIL

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

Attendance: Cllrs APH Davies, J Davies, HR Richards, B Richards, P Bebell, H Bebell, M Harvey, P Davies, J Thomas, I Whitehead Ross, K Whitehead Ross, P Fellows, HC Clarke.

9190: Apologies: Cllrs DK Davies, A Wingrave, R Didcote.

9191: To receive Declarations of Interest.

Cllrs APH Davies and P Bebell and declared an interest in item 9196 as Members of the Planning Committee. They left the room during discussions.
Cllr HC Clarke declared an interest in item 9204 and left the room during discussion. 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.

9192: To approve and sign the Minutes of Previous meetings: -

a) Council Meeting held on 20th February 2013.

Approved as a true and accurate record.

9193: Matters arising from the minutes. (FOR INFORMATION ONLY)

The Clerk reported that she had not been able to get hold of the VAT Consultant that the Council had used for previous queries, and reported that she would contact a different Consultant to obtain the necessary advice.

9194: 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 £9, 273.87. Account No's 488 and 503 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.

9195: To receive an explanation from the Clerk concerning Account No's: 478 and 479.

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

9196: Planning Applications: -

P2013/0126 – Details to be agreed in association with condition 29 (Construction Method Statement) of application P2012/0370 granted on the 24.1.13. 48 Crymlyn Parc and land to rear, Skewen, Neath. (Applicant – Barrat Homes South Wales).

No observations.

Late Application: P2013/0145 – removal of condition 1 (occupancy restriction) of planning Permission 416/2/74 granted on 25/02/74. Wishing Well Farm, Drummau Road, Skewen. (Applicant – Mr Cooksey, Wishing Well Farm, Drummau Road, Skewen).

No observations.

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Late Application: P2013/0184 – Replacement internally-illuminated fascia, projecting and ATM signs plus other associated non illuminated signage. 209 New Road, Skewen. (Applicant: Lloyds Bank Group).

No observations.

9197: To receive a report from any Member concerning meetings at which he or she represented the Council.

The Clerk reported that she, Cllr H Bebell and Cllr HR Richards and the Park Superintendent had met with the Planning Department and NPTCBC Play Works to discuss how the consultation should proceed for the Section 106 money for Jersey Marine Playground. The Members present at the meeting reported on how positive the meeting had been, and what a good service was being provided.

9198: To receive contact details for South Wales Police.

The information was noted by the Members.

9199: To discuss a request to invite David Edwards the manager of the Community First Cluster Group to do a presentation to the Council as raised by Cllr Paula Bebell.

The Members discussed the issue.

Resolved: That David Edwards should be invited to the next meeting.

9200: To receive a response from the Engineer from NPTCBC regarding advice for the floor in Caewathan Community Centre.

The Clerk reported on the correspondence and reported that she had received a list of approved suppliers.

The Members discussed the issue. It was suggested that the flooring should be left in its current condition to run its life course as the issue did not constitute a Health and Safety issue. It was suggested that the offer for a refund for the cost of the flooring in the main hall should be accepted and that money should be used as and when further remedial works were needed.

Resolved: That the offer of a refund should be accepted, and that the floor should be left in its current condition to run its life course before any remedial works are carried out.

9201: To receive information/quotes for the replacement of the photocopier in the Council Office.

The Members discussed the issue.

Resolved: That the lowest quote for the purchase of a new photocopier is approved.

9202: To receive the rates for investments bonds and to consider investing the £30,000 that has matured from their existing bonds.

The Clerk reported that two Bonds that had been held with Nat West totalling £30,000 had now matured, and requested permission to reinvest the money. The Clerk provided the Members with the current rates from Santander, Lloyds, Barclays and Nat West Banks. The Clerk reported that all four banks were part of the Government backed initiative, and that all the banks were included as authorised investment providers in the Community Council's Annual Investment Strategy.

The Members discussed the issue.

Resolved: That the £30,000 should be invested with Nat West (who provided the best rate of interest) for a fixed term of 12 months.

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9203: To receive information regarding the funding available for Community Councils to develop a website.

The Clerk reported that she had contacted the Welsh Government, One Voice Wales and the Society of Local Council Clerks and asked the two following questions:

- 1) Is it compulsory for all Welsh Community/Town Councils who run a web site to have everything on the site translated into Welsh?
- 2) If it is likely to become compulsory that Community/Town Councils have a web site in the near future.

The Clerk reported that she had obtained conflicting views from all three parties.

One Voice Wales said yes to both questions.

The SLCC reported that the Welsh Language Scheme had now gone along with the Welsh Language Board and that the Welsh Language Commissioner had not really made her mind up what we are required to do.

The Head of Scrutiny, Democracy & Participation Team for the Welsh Government reported that there is a Bill currently before the Assembly but that the provisions would not come into force until the Minister so decides, which could well not be until 2014 or 2015. Additionally, he reported that in his view there would be not greater or lesser need to translate than there is now in relation to hard copies.

The Clerk also reported that she had been asked by One Voice Wales not to contact the principal authority on this issue until they had finished their discussion/consultation with the authorities on how best to distribute the money.

The Members discussed the issue.

Resolved: That the Council waits until One Voice Wales has finished its consultation process with the principal authorities before progressing the issue any further.

9204: To receive a request for Dog and Litter Bins in Llandarcy Park by Peter Black AM.

The Members discussed the issue.

Resolved: That the Clerk should inform Peter Black AM that there is an ongoing legal issue regarding Llandarcy Park, and that no actions would be taken until the issue has been resolved.

9205: To receive a request from Skewen Ladies Circle to allow them to use of the rooms in Carnegie Hall free of charge to raise funds for the Chemotherapy Unit at Singleton Hospital from 10am – 4pm on the 16th May 2013.

The Members discussed the issue.

Resolved: That permission is granted to allow the Skewen Ladies Circle to use the room free of charge for the event.

9206: To discuss/decide if it is still beneficial for the Community Council to subscribe as a member to the STRI, or if the Council should consider purchasing their own test equipment.

The Clerk reported in the costs associated.

The Members discussed the issue.

Resolved: That the Clerk should contact the Cricket and Bowls Club to obtain their views on the issue before the Council takes any decision on the issue.

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9207: To discuss the correct protocol for Community Councillors to follow when representing the Community Council.

The Chair reported that everyone had received a copy of the NPTCBC protocols again, and that he hoped that all the Members had read the document. The Clerk reminded the Members that the updated version of the Good Councillors Guide provided by the Welsh Government had been given out in October/November last year and that if any Members had queries they should refer to that book.

The Members discussed the issue. It was stated that if a decision had been taken democratically, that all Members should stand by the decision irrespective of whether they agreed with the majority view or not. It was also stated that it was not acceptable for Members to publicly criticise decisions taken by the Council either verbally or in writing in politically motivated newsletters, when the issue had been discussed openly during Council Meetings, with everyone having an opportunity to take part in the discussion, even if the individual or group did not agree with the final outcome of the decision.

The Clerk suggested that she be allowed to contact One Voice Wales for clarification on the protocol for disseminating information discussed during Council Meetings in line with the Code of Conduct.

Resolved: That that the Clerk contacts One Voice Wales to request a written procedure for the correct protocols for Members to follow.

9208: To receive information from the Clerk following the inspection of all our buildings for a management review asbestos survey.

The Clerk reported on the findings.

The Members discussed the issue.

Resolved: That the Clerk should go ahead and get quotes for the necessary remedial works.

9209: Correspondence.

a) The Clerk reported that the Tidal Lagoon Swansea Bay information/consultation presentation will go ahead on the 17th April prior to the Council Meeting.

The information was noted by the Members.

b) Letter of thanks from the Skewen & District Industrial Heritage Association

The information was noted by the Members.

9210: 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 excluded from the Meeting.

9211: To receive an update on legal issues from the Clerk.

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

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9212: To receive a request from Lonlas Youth Club regarding the lease for the football pitch in Tennant Park.

The Clerk reported on the issue and the current condition of the pitch.

The Members discussed the issue. It was agreed that the Council were prepared to take back ownership of the pitch in its current condition, and that the necessary legal transfer should proceed. The Clerk reported that there was an outstanding debt for ground rent and requested that the debt be written off at this time rather than carrying the debt forward.

Resolved: That the Clerk should proceed with the legal transfer of the pitch and that the debt should be written off.

Emergency Item:

The Clerk reported that she had received a letter from Mazars dated 28th February 2013, and that it had been too late to put the item on the Agenda for discussion.

The Clerk reported that Mazars had requested information about the Council's investment in a Credit Union and read the letter out in full. The Clerk also reported that Mazars have no obligation under the Freedom of Information Act to disclose the name of the complainant.

The Members discussed the issue and Cllr K Whitehead Ross requested that the Clerk should inform Mazars that Local Authorities, Charities and Community & Town Councils were being urged to invest in Credit Unions by the Welsh Government and that NPTCBC had already invested in NPT Credit Union and that the Community Council had not acted inappropriately.

Resolved: That the Clerk responds to the request for information appropriately.

Cllr HR Richards
Chair