

COEDFFRANC COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of a Meeting of the Council Meeting held on 21st September 2016 at Carnegie Hall.

Attendance: Cllrs APH Davies, DK Davies, HR Richards, B Richards, P Bebell, H Bebell, A Wingrave, J Thomas, K Whitehead Ross, P Fellows, HC Clarke.

618: Apologies: Cllrs R Didcote, M Harvey, P Davies, I Whitehead Ross, J Davies, JS Jones.

619: 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.

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

a) Council Meeting held on 7th September 2016.

Approved as a true and accurate record.

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

The Clerk reported that she had received a response from NPTCBC regarding the objections the Community Council had put forward to the removal of phone boxes in the area. NPTCBC enquired if the Community Council intended to contact BT to adopt the phone box in Llandarcy.

The Members discussed the issue and agreed that they would not adopt the phone box at this point. It was agreed that the Community Council would wait to consider the outcome of the Consultation being conducted by NPTCBC before considering adopting the phone box.

622: 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 £9,134.21. Account No's 321 and 352 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.

Resolved: That the payments are approved.

623: To receive an explanation from the Clerk concerning Account No's: 274 and 312.

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

624: Planning Applications:

P2016/0783 – Replacement car parking to facilitate conversion of garage to living accommodation. 92 Crymlyn Parc, Skewen SA10 6DG. (Applicant – Mr G Copp, 92 Crymlyn Parc, Skewen SA10 6DG).

No observations.

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

Cllr APH reported that he had attended the Executive Meeting of One Voice Wales. Cllr APH Davies reported that the re-organisation of Community Councils had been discussed. Cllr J Thomas reported that he and Cllr P Davies had attended the Civic Service for Briton Ferry and had enjoyed the event. Cllr J Thomas reported the Cllr P Davies had attended a seminar for Dementia Awareness Week and circulated some information for the Members.

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626: To receive notification from the Clerk that the Council's Insurance Company has paid out on an ongoing claim relating an incident in 2011.

The Clerk provided the Members with an update on the issue.

The information was noted by the Members.

627: To discuss/decide if the Council should appoint one or two Councillors to carry out the checks on the Internal Audit for the full term of office at the next AGM.

The Members discussed the issue.

Resolved: That the Clerk should put the nominations to appoint two Councillors to carry out the checks on the Internal Audit for the full term of office onto the Agenda at the next AGM.

628: To discuss/decide if the Council should install additional benches in the lower half of Skewen Park as requested by Cllr APH Davies.

The Members discussed the issue.

Resolved: That the Council should purchase and install a bench in the lower half of Skewen Park.

629: To receive the Auditor General for Wales' Audit Certificate and Report and approve and accept the Report.

The Members discussed the issue.

Resolved: That the Auditor General for Wales' Audit Certificate and Report is approved and accepted. The Members thanked the Clerk for the work involved in preparing all the information for the Auditors.

630: To receive a request from Skewen RFC to pay a contribution to the legal costs for changes to the Lease for Skewen RFC and Skewen RFC Social Club due to some complications that have arose.

The Clerk reported on the issue and informed the Members that the Community Council's solicitor had raised issues that were not part of the original remit which had delayed the process increasing the costs.

The Members discussed the issue.

Resolved: That the Council will pay £950 towards the costs with the Rugby Club paying the remaining balance.

631: To receive an update from Skewen RFC regarding earlier discussions with the Community Council to carry out a Feasibility Study into obtaining grant funding to create an artificial pitch facility in Skewen Park.

With permission of the Chair, Neil Ranft reported that the Rugby Club could not find enough funding to install and run a 3G pitch in Tennant Park. Neil suggested that grant funding could be sought to improve the drainage on the training pitch held under a Preferential User Agreement by the Rugby Club in Tennant Park.

The Members discussed the issue.

Resolved: That agreement is given in principal, pending receiving further information to be provided by the Rugby Club when they have drafted a Feasibility Study into the proposals.

632: To receive a report into the logistics and need for turning tennis courts into additional car parking spaces. Additionally, to receive letters from users of Skewen Park/Memorial Hall requesting additional parking spaces.

The Members discussed the issue. Cllr B Richards queried if the entrance by the Rock and Fountain could be developed to open a car park from Burrows Road. It was reported that the access lane that she had suggested is not owned by the Community Council. It was reported that Coombe Tennant Estate could be the owners. The Clerk queried if the access lane was wide enough for two cars to pass each other to satisfy the Highways Department criteria. Cllr K Whitehead Ross suggested that the Community Council should review their priorities before committing the council's funds to this project. Cllr HC Clarke stated that the Community Council are not encouraging people to walk if they provide additional parking. Cllr DK Davies reported that the complaints the Bowling Clubs had made are not valid because other Bowling Greens that they play at do not have parking available. The Clerk reported that it is possible that a Planning Application might need to be submitted for a Change of Use. The Clerk reported that she had discussed the issue with the Planning Department, and that they could not give a definitive answer as to whether permissions would be needed until they have seen the plans. Cllr APH Davies suggested that sketches could be done to submit to the Planning Department to get their input and find out exactly what would be needed.

Resolved: It was agreed that Cllr APH Davies could provide sketches for the Planning Department to review to get their comments. It was agreed that the Clerk should contact the Agent for Coombe Tennant Estate, to find out if they would be agreeable to allowing access over their land into Skewen Park for a car park at the entrance by the Rock and Fountain, and find out from the Planning Department whether the single lane access would be acceptable to the Highways Department.

Cllr HR Richards left the meeting at this point.

633: To discuss/agree a proposal to create a football golf course in Skewen Park as raised by Cllr A Wingrave.

Cllr Wingrave reported that NPTCBC have opened a football golf course and charge £5.00 per adult and £3.50 per child with a £20.00 deposit. Cllr Wingrave stated that the residents of Skewen would not be able to afford these type of prices, and suggested that the Community Council create a football golf course in Skewen Park. Cllr Wingrave reported that it would not be practical to have staff on site to supervise payment for the course, so she proposed to develop the course, but allow it to be used free of charge, with the public providing their own footballs. Cllr Wingrave reported that the cost of developing the course would not be substantial.

The Members discussed the issue.

Resolved: That the scheme to develop a football golf course in Skewen Park is approved. It was agreed that the football golf course should be free of charge to the public, with the public providing their own footballs

634: To receive a consultation document from the Auditor General for Wales regarding fee rates and fee scales for the 2017-18 External Audit.

The information was noted by the Members.

635: To receive information from Cllr H Ceri-Clarke on the Consultation Document from the Welsh Government regarding a draft strategy: a million Welsh speakers by 2050.

Cllr HC Clarke reported on the Consultation Document. Cllr Clarke stated that the majority of the document made sense, but she did not feel that they had been ambitious enough regarding their Education Strategy. Cllr Clarke stated that they had not detailed links with the Flying Start Schemes. Cllr Clarke reported that more effective mapping was needed and that Consultation Documents should be released in Welsh at the same time as the English Consultation Documents are released.

Resolved: That Cllr HC Clarke drafts a response and forwards it to the Clerk for her to put the response on Headed Paper from the Community Council.

636: To receive a copy of the Rural Development Programme Newsletter.

The information was noted by the Members.

637: To receive information from Swansea City Council regarding Protected Trees.

The information was noted by the Members.

638: To receive information from the Boundary commission for Wales regarding the 2018 Review of Parliamentary Constituencies in Wales Initial Proposals.

The Members all agreed that they are extremely concerned about the proposals made under the Review of the Parliamentary Constituencies. It was stated that the majority of the residents in Coedffranc affiliate themselves with Neath Port Talbot. It was reported that the proposals make no sense. It was queried if the new Coed Darcy Development had been considered in the proposals, because once the development was complete the number of residents in Coedffranc would rise considerably. It was suggested that Briton Ferry and Coedffranc should remain in the Neath or Aberavon ward, and that Pontardawe should be moved to Swansea East. It was reported that the proposals are ridiculous because these proposals would mean that our MP would be under Swansea, our Local Authority would be Neath Port Talbot and our AM would be under Aberavon.

Resolved: That the Clerk should submit the Community Council's objections to the proposals.

639: To receive a request to re-configure the playground equipment in Jersey Marine Playground as raised by Cllr HC Clarke.

Cllr HC Clarke reported that she had received four complaints from residents living alongside the playground complaining about the noise of footballs hitting the fence. The Members discussed the issue.

Resolved: That the issue is deferred to the Finance & General Purposes Committee for further discussion.

640: To receive a response from Aled Evans regarding the Community Council's request for NPTCBC to agree to pay for a full time member of staff along with some additional information, before discussions regarding the feasibility of Coedffranc Community Council becoming involved in the running of Skewen Library could continue.

Cllr APH Davies reported that the Local Authority Members have been invited to meet with Aled Evans and Union Representatives on Friday 23rd September 2016. Cllr APH Davies reported that Skewen Library is threatened with closure despite being in a Community First area. It was stated that it is important that the library service is maintained because Skewen Library's computers are used by residents that need to carry out important transactions, but don't own their own computers. It was stated that there was nothing in the correspondence from Aled Evans which evidenced that NPTCBC would close the library for the next financial year.

It was reported that NPTCBC have indicated that they would need a £15,000k donation per annum to keep the library service running in its current building.

It was stated that it is crucial that NPTCBC employs, pays for, and is responsible for managing trained staff. It was noted that recruiting and maintaining volunteers including creating volunteer rotas would create a lot of work, which the administration of the Community Council do not have the capacity to carry out. Cllr A Wingrave suggested that in the long term the Community Council could consider providing a room in Carnegie Hall at a nominal rent, and that NPTCBC could run the service in its entirety including paying for and managing the staff. NPTCBC would also need to carry out the necessary conversions at their own cost. It was noted that this option would allow NPTCBC to sell the building to gain revenue, and that they would not need to be concerned about any maintenance issues for the current building. It was reported that if this option were to be taken up, that there would be issues regarding relocating some of the service users who currently hire Carnegie Hall. It was suggested that the Community Council offer a cash donation as a one off payment to allow the Community Council time to look into the issue of possibly relocating some of Carnegie Hall's current users, and discuss if NPTCBC would consider running the service in its entirety from a room rented in Carnegie Hall as a viable option. The Members discussed the issue at length.

Resolved: That the Borough Members should meet with Aled Evans and offer a one off cash donation of up to £15,000, but this figure should not be divulged to NPTCBC Officers at this stage. Additionally, they should enquire if NPTCBC would consider running the service in its entirety including the payment and management of staff from Carnegie Hall, if the affected users could be accommodated elsewhere. It was agreed that it was not feasible for the Community Council to pay any contribution to employing the Library staff. The Members will report back to Full Council for further discussion.

641: Correspondence.

a) To receive a response from South Wales Police regarding an incident in Skewen Park.

The information was noted by the Members.

b) To receive a response from the Ministry of Justice regarding the Response to the proposal on mergers of Local Justice Areas in Wales.

The information was noted by the Members. Cllr DK Davies took the document to review.

c) To receive a letter from the Post Office regarding replacing Cefn Parc Post Office.

The information was noted by the Members.

**Cllr J Thomas
Chair**