

Cyngor Cymuned **Penybontfawr Community Council**

MINUTES OF COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING Held at Canolfan Pennant on Tuesday 25 November 2014.

Present:

Councillors: JE Jones (Chair), MH Jones, DR Lloyd, G Roberts, DG Smout, P Williams, RP Williams, Clerk GD Bradley,

1- Apologies for Absence

County Cllr. D Mayor

2 - Declaration of Interests

None

3 - Minutes of Last Meeting

The Minutes of the last meeting (28 October 2014) were approved, and signed (Proposer: Cllr. DG Smout/ Seconded: Cllr. MH Jones).

4 - Matters arising from Minutes

No items raised

5 – Correspondence

- *North Montgomeryshire Local Council Forum re: Council Clustering* – The communication confirms the information provided by our County Councillor at the last meeting regarding the possible grouping of Community Councils under a lead Council (in our case likely to be Llanfyllin) to manage a local budget in respect of identified specific services. The objective is to reduce the workload and financial pressures on Powys County Council to help achieve the necessary budget savings. The Clerk préciséd the information provided, observing that Penybontfawr Community Council benefited from very few of the list of services that would be delegated to the cluster groups. A meeting for all local Councillors/ Clerks is provisionally arranged for Wednesday 28 January 2015 at Llanfyllin – confirmation to follow.
- *Powys County Council - Confirming the list of services identified that could be transferred to the Cluster groups starting from financial year 2016/17.* Car parks, grounds maintenance within the village boundary, rights of way, and street scene cleaning/bins et appear to be the most pertinent to Penybontfawr Community Council
- *One Voice Wales – Welsh Government Consultations on Gipsy/Traveller accommodation guidance*
- *Powys County Council – Update on the restructuring/ roll-out of kerbside recycling across the County*
- *Harlequin Group – Information regarding the government funded initiative to extend mobile phone coverage in areas where there is none at present (known as 'not-spots').* The Clerk advised that, following receipt of the letter in late October, he had a

lengthy telephone conversation with the Project Manager about their plans for this area. Two possible mast sites have now been identified above Penybontfawr but as line-of-sight between masts is critical to the onward transmission of the signal, Hirnant and the adjacent valley was unlikely to receive much signal enhancement from these. One of the criteria for adding a new mast is that it must benefit 30 plus residences, there being fewer than this in these valleys. Adaptation of emergency services masts, such as exists above Hirnant, is not apparently practical.

- *One Voice Wales – Badger found dead survey in connection with transmission of bovine TB infections.* This survey which will run for whole of 2015 requests the local population to ring in dead badger information to the Animal and Plant Health Agency, who will then collect the carcass.
- *PAVO update*
- *One Voice Wales – seeking applications for appointment of lay & legal members to the Welsh language Tribunal*
- *Powys County Council – Revision of branch Library Opening Hours. Advising that ‘Option A’ most likely to be adopted and providing possible revised opening hours (reduction from 27.5 to 22 hours per week) for Llanfyllin.* Cllr RP Williams advised that subsequently agreement had been reached to slightly amend the opening times
- *Montgomery Community Health Council – Consultation about possible changes to structure of Community Health Councils (Consultation period 10 Nov 14 to 9 Jan 15).*
- *One Voice Wales – Details of agreed 2 year deal (a.2% increase backdated for 14/15 and for 15/16) for local government pay grades.* This also applies to Community Council Clerk honorariums, but the Clerk stated that he had no interest in receiving the nominal extra amount for these two financial periods.
- *One Voice Wales – Applications sought for appointment of Members to the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales*
- *Russell George AM - Newsletter*
- *Llangollen 2015 - Reminder about need for financial support from Community Councils*
- *Montgomery and the Marches National Eisteddfod Committee fund raiser – reminder about need for financial support from Community Councils*
- *Urdd National Eisteddfod 2015 to be held next May at Caerphilly- request for financial support*

6 - Finance

- Current Bank balances were advised as:
 - Current Account - £2958.24 (as at 4 Nov 2014).
 - Deposit Account - £2742.37 (as at 4 Nov 2014).
- The Clerk submitted details of expenses incurred between March 2014 and the date of this meeting date for stationery, printer ink, and stamps totalling £134.22. Payment was approved a cheque issued (Proposer: RP Williams/ Seconded: DR Lloyd)

7 - 2014/15 Budget and Precept

Following on from discussions at recent previous meetings, the Clerk presented a draft Budget proforma (version 4) showing the estimate of the final figures for the current financial and a detailing a proposed budget for 2015/16.

The latter provided best estimates of costs under a series of expenditure headings which totalled £8460. This is a significant increase over the current year final estimated expenditure for the following reasons

- i) The playground Lease falls due for renewal in early 2015 and a new lease could possibly result in some significantly increased costs. There is uncertainty at this point in time about the extent of these but it was thought sensible to make provision on a 'best guesstimate' basis
- ii) The Community Council website will shortly be up and running and therefore the annual maintenance costs for this (estimated as up to £400) are included for the first time without there being any offsetting set-up grant income
- iii) A sum of £900 has been included to contribute towards possible future maintenance of the various items included on the Council Asset Register. This was prompted the ongoing threat that a significant outlay will shortly be required for repairs at Hirnant Cemetery which could fully consume the current Deposit Account Reserve
- iv) A figure of £2250 has been included to enable the Community Council to maintain the previous level of grants to support our two village halls and two churches. This has been increased by £350 from 2013/14 to (a) allow for some small contributions to several other charities which was not financially possible last year, and (b) to maintain the support level to the halls/churches having previously warned their committees that this contribution might need to be significantly reduced for 2014/15
- v) It is felt that there has not been enough visual evidence of Community Council activity for the benefit of the village community and a £500 provision has been made for some possibilities in this respect
- vi) A £250 provision has been included to replenish the Deposit Account Reserve account - see (iii) above
- vii) Other regular annual costs are increasing at level ahead of official national inflation figures

Councillors debated the 'version 4' proforma figures at some length. Some minor anomalies were identified which the Clerk undertook to correct in version 5 of the proforma (to be attached to these Minutes). This sets out the agreed final outcome that, in order to fund the proposed expenditure for 2014/15, the Precept will need to be increased by 58.8% from the current year (i.e. from £4896 to £7772). Whilst Councillors were most concerned about extent of the increase, they were reminded that in recent years the previous Precept increases had been approximately in line with official inflation figures whereas, over the same period, both costs and Community Council responsibilities had increased ahead of this figure. The Clerk provided comparative figures for Precepts claimed in the current year by other local Community Councils and also the projected impact over a range of Council Tax bands for properties in this Council area and this reassured Councillors that, whilst the percentage increase appeared very high, the actual impact on individual property owners across the Council Tax bands was within reasonable limits and were not out of line with other local Community Council areas.

Proposer: DR Lloyd/ Seconded: DG Smout and carried unanimously.

8 – Improving Council Profile in Community

See 7 (v) above.

9 – Planning

No items for discussion

10 – Highways

- (i) There appears to have been a misunderstanding by Powys County Council (Chris Lloyd – Area Traffic Engineer) about the Community Council's earlier response to their suggested amendments to car-parking arrangements in Penybontfawr village centre. Informal consultation had been carried out by the Community Council during the summer period which elicited three letters disagreeing with proposals. Copies of these were then forwarded to Powys CC along with the in-principle support of the Community Council.

After a later follow up by the Community Council to enquire what was happening to the progress of this matter, Chris Lloyd requested that the Community Council's approval decision be specifically Minute'd before the formal County Council consultation/implementation process commences.

The Clerk therefore re-tabled the proposals and whilst it was agreed that there would be some residents that would be more inconvenienced than at present, for the benefit of the village as a whole Councillors then unanimously voted agreement to Powys County Council taking the matter forward. It was also recognised that the formal Consultation process could still result in a subsequent change of direction by either Council.

- (i) The 30 mph electronic speed warning sign was again discussed, it being strongly believed that this is malfunctioning.

11 – Any Other Business

No items raised

12 - Date of Next Meeting

Agreed as 7.30pm, Tuesday 27 January 2015.

Meeting closed at 9.04 pm