

Cyngor Cymuned **Penybontfawr Community Council**

MINUTES OF COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING Held at Canolfan Pennant on Tuesday 28 October 2014.

Present:

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

1- Apologies for Absence

Cllr P Williams

2 - Declaration of Interests

None

3 - Minutes of Last Meeting

The Minutes of the last meeting (30 Sept 2014) were approved, and signed (Proposer: Cllr. DR Lloyd / Seconded: Cllr. MH Jones).

4 - Matters arising from Minutes

The Clerk advised that a letter had been sent to BDO about the much increased audit fee charged for last year. No reply has yet been received and therefore the signed payment cheque is still being held pending their response.

5 – Correspondence

- *Powys Citizens Advice Bureau*
- *Powys County Council – Proposals for Community Delivery via a North Montgomeryshire Local Council Forum.* County Councillor D Mayor provided background to this proposal which in essence would mean that responsibility for some non-statutory County Council services would be devolved to cluster groups of local Councils, operating under a lead Community Council (in our case, possibly Llanfyllin CC). The lead Council would receive the funding and aim to contract out the work on behalf of the cluster group. In all probability, apart from grass cutting, this proposal might not have much of an impact on Penybontfawr. A meeting has provisionally arranged for Wednesday 28 January 2015 to provide more information and obtain feedback from the proposed North Montgomery cluster group Community Councils
- *Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service – Launch of Public Consultation Survey*
- *Powys County Council – Advertisement for part-time canvassers to update electoral register*
- *One Voice Wales – Information about funding source for green groups*
- *Powys Regeneration Partnership – Notice of seminar on 18 November 2014*
- *Russell George AM – Seeking nominations for exceptional achievers in the community*
- *Montgomeryshire Community Health Council – Notice of Meeting on 24 November relating to Inquiry into cross-border healthcare*

- *PAVO – Notice of Annual Conference/ AGM on 10 November 2014*

6 - Finance

- Current Bank balances were advised as:
 - Current Account - £2998.24 (as at 4 Sept 2014).
 - Deposit Account - £2742.37 (as at 4 Sept 2014).

7 - Playground Issues

The Clerk disclosed that the request for Powys CC to repair the fence between the car-park and the playground has brought an unforeseen outcome.

PCC have now found that they granted a Lease dated 28 February 2008 for a term of 7 years at a rent of £1.00pa to the Community Council agreeing to the renting of the area of grass now used as the playground. The Lease was signed by two of the existing Community Councillors but was not known to the existing Clerk who took over the role more recently. This Lease imposes certain covenants on the Community Council, the most significant of which is responsibility for the fencing along the back of the car-park. However the Lease plan does not include the 'return' length of fencing including the kissing/swing gate which therefore probably remains the responsibility of Powys County Council. This new information has the following outcomes:

- a) The Community Council is responsible for repair of the fencing identified by RoSPA in addition to the various minor repairs suggested to the playground equipment.
- b) The existing Lease terminates in 1 Jan 2015. Powys CC is therefore now enquiring whether the Community Council wishes to renew the Lease for a further term, which obviously it does. This could therefore, at worst, bring an increase in annual rental which will have to be budgeted for as part of the next Precept request (December 2014)
- c) The grass is currently mown by Powys CC contractors without any ongoing charge to the Community Council. This arrangement could therefore cease at any time leaving the Community Council with this additional maintenance cost which it should budget for as part of the next Precept request in December.

8 - Drainage issue

Following the problems identified by Cllr Dr Lloyd in respect of the surface water drainage around the Dolafon estate area that has been raised at a recent meeting, the Clerk has at last been able to meet the appropriate Powys CC official on site to discuss these. Subsequently the officer has promptly come back to the Clerk to advise that his predecessor had in the past attempted to resolve this issue but without success. Apparently drain collapse was identified as the cause (as suspected) but rectifying this is rather more difficult and costly than first expected and therefore no action was taken. The Clerk has been pressing for action since the recent meeting and has been pleased to be have been copied into various inter-departmental Powys CC emails which, although suggesting that the officer is attempting to resolve the complaint, also point to the fact that the issue may continue to bounce around departments without a satisfactory conclusion. As flooding is not uncommon in extreme weather conditions, County Cllr D Mayor was therefore now asked to take this matter up on behalf of the Community Council.

9 - Improving Council profile in Community

The Clerk advised that he had received acknowledgement from British Heart Foundation about the initial approach for partial funding towards a defibrillator for the village. More application information would be required in due course. The Chairman confirmed that he had spoken to a contact at local gardening club who lived in the village about the possibility of 'prettify-ing' some parts of the village with trees/flower beds. The response was initially not very encouraging.

The Clerk suggested that a small financial provision be made in the forthcoming budgeting process for both of the above.

10- 2014/15 Budget and Precept

Following the discussion at an earlier meeting about the lack of surplus funding available to the Community Council and, as previously requested by Councillors, the Clerk presented a draft of a letter to be sent be published in the local media, explaining why the Community Council would need to substantially increase the local Precept for 2015/16. This was drafted in informative/consultative format intending to invite the views of local residents in advance of the submission of the December request to Powys CC for next year's Precept. This draft letter engendered much discussion and it was eventually decided not to take this approach. The change of direction was to conclude at the next meeting the level of the Precept request to Powys CC and then during February circulate a letter by hand to all residences in the Community Council explaining the reason /background for the forthcoming Precept increase. This should also demonstrate, as far as practical, the likely financial impacts on Council tax bills in this community. The Clerk will therefore seek to obtain further supporting figures/ information from Powys CC before the next meeting which will help.

The Clerk had also obtained confirmation from the County Council Finance officer that there was not currently any government constraint against a Community Council increasing a local Precept above current inflation level.

11 – Planning

No items for discussion

12 – Highways

- It was confirmed that the temporary interactive speed warning sign was now in place, but Members believed that it was not working possibly due to a solar panel malfunction. County Councillor D Mayor, who advised that it was actually set to activate at 33mph, agreed to follow this up with the County Highways officer.
- Some work has now been carried to arrest the collapse of the C2027 back road to Abertridwr, and it is understood that the level of further deterioration to the road will be monitored and should this prove to be progressive, the imposition of a vehicle weight restriction would then need to be re-considered.
- The Clerk advised that the County highway mapping provided by the County Council does not show the road between Rhiwsaeth and Cwm-Fedw as being a designated highway. Whilst it may still be an unmade public right of way, this suggests that the Highways authority may not have any formal responsibility for maintaining the surface. This needs to be investigated further.
- The Clerk mentioned that he was surprised to have seen a copy of an email which suggested that the Powys CC officer dealing with the possible change to car-parking arrangements in Penybontfawr village centre still awaited a response from the Community Council as to its views about the initial proposal put forward. As the Clerk recalled, it was confirmed by Cllr G Smout that a response had been sent some time but that he would therefore re-send the information.

13 - Any Other Business

None

14 - Date of Next Meeting

Agreed as 7.30pm, Tuesday 25 November 2014.

Meeting closed at 9.15 pm