

CYNGOR CYMUNED GORS-LAS COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the November Ordinary Monthly meeting of the Gors-las Community Council
held at Hebron Vestry, Drefach on 13th November, 2023, at 19:00hrs.

95.0 Agenda Item 1: Record of those Present/Apologies

- Cllrs: Nick Beckett (Vice Chair) Nia Lewis, Kevin Jones, Clive Douch, Chris Wilkins, Andrew King, Melody Gronow, Elinor Goldsmith, Clive Green, and Tina Bulter
- Others: County Cllr: Aled Vaughan Owen, Phil Snaith (Carmarthenshire Cycling Forum), Hefin Jones (Translator) and Llew Thomas, Clerk to the Council.
- Apologies for absence: Cllrs Simon Martin and Linda Williams.
- **Resolved:** To accept and approve the apologies and reasons for absence.

95.1 General.

- In the absence of Cllr Simon Martin the meeting was chaired by Cllr Nick Beckett who declared the meeting open at 19:00hrs.
- **Resolved:** To proceed with the order of business.

96.0 Agenda Item 2: Declaration of Interest

- Declarations of interest were made by Cllrs K Jones and N Lewis as owners of residential properties potentially affected by the scheme outlined in item 102.5.
- **Resolved to:** Note and record the position.

97.0 Agenda Item 3: Minutes of Previous Meeting.

- The minutes of the October meeting of the Council were considered by members in detail.
- **Resolved:** To approve the minutes as being an accurate record of discussions and decisions.

98.0 Agenda Item 4: Address by Phil Snaith Carmarthenshire Cycling Forum.

- Mr. Snaith thanked the Council for the opportunity to address members and provided background information on the background and aims of the organisation.
- The group were active in the area and were aware of the dangers from speeding and heavy goods vehicles which cyclist faced in the Drefach area.
- In seeking to make cycling a safe and practical day to day option for people it was felt that the existing trunk road infrastructure would lend itself to a staged and cost-effective means of expanding the network. Taking advantage of the current layout the phasing could be as follows:
Stage 1: B4310 Heol Blaenhirwaun Drefach to the lay bye near Llwyn Onn.
Stage 2: B4310 Llwyn Onn Layby to Layby near Mynydd Mawr Entrance.
Stage 3: B4310 From Mynydd Mawr entrance to Cross Hands. Possible separate spur linking from Carmarthen Rd, rear Cefneithin Rugby Club to join with Heol Treventy.
- The Cycling Forum would be meeting with Carmarthenshire County Council Officers to discuss schemes which could be submitted to Welsh Government for Active Travel support.
- It was felt that it would be advantageous should the Community Council seek to become involve and progress any or all the proposed schemes. The Forum would seek to assist in anyway it could.
- There then followed a buried question and answer session following which the Chair thanked Mr. Snaith for his input and most informative presentation.
- Mr. Snaith thanked members for their time and consideration and left the meeting at this point.
- **Resolved:** To receive and note the information received and to consider together with item

99.0 Agenda Item 5: County Council Update: County Councillor Aled Vaughan Owen.

- An update was provided for members which included the following issues: -
 - a. Transport; Bwcabus funding of 3 700k withdrawn by Welsh Government.
 - b. Libraries: Would be used as warm space providers.
 - c. Transport: Future purchases would presume a preference for electric vehicles.
 - d. Promoting Local Suppliers: The Council were providing support for some 900 local companies to tender for work with the Council.
 - e. Waste: Some 73% of waste was currently recycled. Change in collection arrangements with need for greater kerb side separation of waste by residents. To commence 2025/26.
 - f. Finance: Projections indicated a £13m shortfall for 2024/25 financial year.
 - g. Housing: Continuing high demand for homes. Nant Y Dderwen - action was being taken against a Local Authority tenant.
 - h. Speeding: Cllr Vaughan -Owen was in regular contact with Go Safe. A speed watch group could be set up locally. Volunteers to contact Cllr Owen.
 - i. Planning: Enforcement action being taken against a black bag fly tipping incident in Drefach.
 - j. Safe Routes Grant Bid Drefach: Draft plans had been prepared. A meeting was to be convened to plan a consultation event. Representatives from the Community Council could attend.
- **Resolved:**
 - (i) Cllrs Kevin Jones and Nia Lewis be appointed as representatives of the Community Council
 - (ii) To accept Cllr Owen’s kind offer to contact Officers to progress the meeting.
 - (iii) To thank Cllr Aled Vaughan Owen for his attendance and the information provided.

100.0 Procedural

- Cllr Aled Vaughan Owen left the meeting at this point

101.0 Agenda Item 6: Opportunity for Public to Address the Council.

- There were no members of the public present.
- **Resolved to:** Record and note

102.0 Agenda Item 7: Corporate Matters.

102.1 Member Vacancies Cefneithin and Drefach Wards

- No expressions of interest had been received. Members would continue in their efforts.
- **Resolved to:** Receive and note.

102.2 Annual Plan 2024/25.

- Discussion took place in relation to items which could be included in an Annual Plan.
- **Resolved that:** A draft plan be drawn up to include items discussed

102.3 Review Financial Regulations and New Model Standing Orders.

- No further progress had been made on the matter.
- **Resolved that:** A meeting of the Working Group be convened during the month.

102.4 Civic Regalia: Chair.

- Discussion took place in relation to the preferred choice of civic regalia as detailed on the document circulated to members prior to the meeting.
- **Resolved that:** That the Council proceed to purchase a Chamberlain County at a cost of £ 672 (ex VAT) from Crest Regalia Ltd.

102.5 Drefach Safe Routes in Communities Bid.

- Cllrs Kevin Jones and Nia Lewis declared a personal interest in the matter as owners of properties potentially affected by the proposed scheme.
- Cllr Clive Green advised that the issue had been briefly discussed at the recent Macmillan Coffee morning at Drefach with many of those present having stated their opposition to any proposal to widen the existing paths to cater for pedestrians and cyclists as any such action would be considered a danger to older people using the footpaths.
- An update on the current position had been provided by County Cllr Aled Vaughan Owen under item reference no 99.00 with a consultation event to gather views from the public planned.
- Consideration was also given to the benefits and advantages of the schemes proposed by the Carmarthenshire Cycling Forum in the address by Mr. Phil Snaith earlier in the meeting (Ref No 98)
- **Resolved:**
 - (i) To receive and note the information provided.
 - (ii) That priority be given to the Drefach Safe Routes Bid in the light of the benefits and the practicalities of developing, and consulting on, a new scheme by the application submission date.
 - (iii) Consideration be given to the principle of adopting and applying for funding for the schemes as proposed and outlined by Mr. Snaith from the Carmarthenshire Cycling Forum.

102.6 Gorslas Community Council Office.

- It was reported that the PAT testing process had been completed and that issues were being experienced in seeking to register the new address with the Royal Mail.
- **Resolved:** To receive and note the information provided.

102.7 Annual Inspections.

- The results and recommendations arising from the Annual Tree Safety Inspection were considered.
- **Resolved:** To seek tenders for the work required as detailed in the assessment report.

102.8 Gorslas CP School Management Agreement.

- Feedback was provided by the Clerk in relation to a most useful and productive meeting with the new Headteacher on 18.10.23 regarding the above and other options of joint community provision.
- **Resolved that:**
 - (i) The Working Group comprising of Sub Committee members meet to discuss on Monday 20/11/23 to clarify the basis for taking a Management Agreement forward.
 - (ii) The Headteacher be requested to place the matter for consideration by the Governing Body at its next meeting together with a request for representatives to be nominated to meet with Community Council to progress the matter.

102.9 I.R.P.W. Payment of £156 Per Annum and Refund of Expenses Payment.

- A communication had been received from the Panel advising that:
 - (i) Annual Payment to Members of £156 would be exempt from income tax provided that:
 - a) There must be a formal agreement between the Community Council and individual Cllr stating that there is a requirement for the member to work from home.
 - b) Each Cllr claiming the allowance must make a formal declaration that they regularly work from home.
 - (ii) Consumables Allowance.

a) Where the Council has resolved to make an annual payment of £52 per year to Cllrs the payment is to be considered exempted from income tax as from 01.04.23.

• **Resolved:**

- (i) That the information provided be received and noted.
- (ii) No further action be taken pending confirmation and clarification from HMRC.
- (iii) Provision be made in the 2024/25 financial year estimates for the payment of the Annual Payment of £156 and the £52 consumables allowance.

102.10 I.R.P.W. Draft Report 2024/25

- The Panel is seeking views on its draft proposals of expenses/ allowances payable to elected members for the financial year 2024/25.

- Details of the proposals had been forwarded to members prior to the meeting.

• **Resolved:**

- (i) To receive and note the information provided.
- (ii) That should any member have any additional comments to those discussed at the meeting they be forwarded to the Clerk by the end of the week.

102.11 Request to Place Advertisement.

- Two requests had recently been received from the following organisations to be allowed to place advertisements on Council property.

(i) Rubba-Bubba.

- a. To place an advertisement on Cefneithin Park railings advertising their baby massage and yoga treatments which they intend holding at Cefneithin Hall.
- b. The design would be similar in size to the existing sliming world advertisement.

(iii) Last Wishes. Mobile Vet

- a. A request has been received from the above company which is based in Ammanford but covers South Wales providing at home euthanasia services for pets.
- b. The company have requested permission to forward a leaflet advertising their services to the Council and for them to be placed in Council noticeboards.

- In considering the request members felt that there would be a benefit in having a standard approach to such request and guidance on procedural issues associated with such matters.

• **Resolved:**

- 1. Rubba- Bubba: That the request be approved.
- 2. Last Wishes Mobile Veterinarian: The request not be approved
- 3. That each request be considered on an individual basis by the Council and in so doing regard will be taken of the following guidance:
 - a. The Community Council does not bind itself to accept any or all requests for the placing of advertisements on its property.
 - b. Each request will be considered on an individual basis. Priority will normally be given to applications which support events and organisations which, in the view of the Council, provide the most benefit to the residents of the Gorslas Community Council ward in which the advertisement is to be placed.
 - c. The signage to be bilingual.

- d. The applicant to be responsible for ensuring the signage meets with the appropriate planning and highway regulation for the placement of such advertisements and not impede the view of pedestrians or those driving vehicle or operating plant and machinery.
- e. The applicant to be responsible for ensuring the advertisement fixings are appropriate and secured safely, to avoid the possibility of entrapment or injury from protuberances or from the item becoming dislodged and causing injury to individuals' property, or vehicles.
- f. The Council reserves the right to require the removal of an advertisement following written notification to the applicant at the last address or e mail address notified to the Council and to do so without any re-imbursement of costs or compensation. The Council would reserve the right to remove the signage 14 days, or prior if there is a danger to individuals or property, and to recover the costs of so doing form the applicant.
- g. Subject to (f) the above the permission to place the advertisement on the Council's property would be valid for 12 months or, if sooner, the date when the event advertised took place or the organisation ceased trading or providing the advertised service with the relevant ward

102.12 Community Council Minutes.

- It was reported that a constituent had reported that the whilst the minutes for other years were available on the website the minutes for the current year were not.
- The Clerk indicated that the minutes for meetings during the current year had been uploaded and displayed on the website regularly and in accordance with the required timescales.
- **Resolved:** That the Clerk examine the position as a matter as soon as possible.

102.13 General Update

- Consideration was given to the schedule of matters relating to progress in implementing previous decisions of the Council.
- **Resolved:** To receive and note the information provided.

103.0 Agenda Item 8: Park Matters

103.1 Cefneithin Park: Request CCTV Coverage.

- A request was received from a member of the public for CCTV coverage to be viewed in relation to a possible theft of a tow hitch cover. The member of the public was advised of the legalities relating to providing images of individuals and to report the matter to the Police to whom coverage could be made available to view.
- **Resolved:** To receive and note the information provided and actions taken.

103.2 Gorslas and Drefach Park: Replacement Chains GL Jones Swings.

- The Park inspector notified the Clerk that the chains on the Gorslas swing was worn and it was advisable to change them.
- An identical unit operated at Drefach Park and it would seem prudent to change both items at the same time. Members were consulted and agreed that CCC be instructed to undertake the repairs asap.
- **Resolved:** To confirm and approve the actions taken.

103.3 Gorslas Park Public Convenience: Operational Closure 27.10.23.

- The facility was closed on 27.10.23 due to the water supply being cut off to facilitate Welsh Water works in the area. The supply had been restored 28.10.23 and facility operational.
- **Resolved:** To receive and note the information provided.

103.4 Gorslas Park Public Convenience: Blockage

- A waste pipe had become blocked on 09 10 23 causing the unit not to be operational.
- The cleaning contractor had resolved the issue without charge and returned the unit to service.
- **Resolved:** To receive and note the information provided and the actions of the company.

103.5 Gorslas Park: School Fence: Loose Sound Deadening Panels

- Following a report 18.10.23 a site visit by the Clerk found that 13 sound deadening panels had become dislodged and were found in the park or affected the park footpath.
- The matter reported to Messrs. Lloyd and Gravell and the Headteacher and resolved on 24.10.23.
- **Resolved to:** Receive, note, and approve the actions taken.

104.0 Agenda Item 9: Local Issues.

104.1 Drefach: Neuadd y Gwendraeth Signage.

- Concerns that a letter on the apex of the building had become dislodged had been received and relayed to the County Council.
- **Resolved to:** Receive, note, and approve the actions taken

104.2 Drefach: Speeding Vehicles.

- Cllr K Jones advised that there continued to be concern expressed by residents regarding the speed of H.G.V. travelling through the village.
- It was also reported that it was likely that Go Safe would be in the very near future undertaking speed check enforcement within the new 20 m.p.h. zones.
- **Resolved:** To receive and note the information provided.

104.3 Foelgastell: Health Concerns re Emission of Acrid Smoke

- The assistance of the Community Council had been sought by residents in relation to concerns stemming from the frequent burning of waste at a property in the locality.
- The frequency of the events and the acrid smoke arising from the burning dwelled over the locality and caused concerns, and a public nuisance, to other residents.
- Attempts to resolve the matter directly with the relevant householder had proved unsuccessful.
- **Resolved:** That the concerns of residents be relayed to the County Council.

104.4 Foelgastell: Fire at the Smiths Arms.

- Members were advised that a serious fire had taken place at the establishment during the early hours of Monday 23.10.23. The family escaped unharmed however the building had suffered considerable damage and the establishment was now closed.
- **Resolved:** To record the Council's gratitude to the emergency services and that the family had escaped unharmed. Given the importance of the facility to the community it was hoped that the establishment would re-open as soon as possible.

105.0 Agenda Item 10: Members Reports:

105.1 Meeting Trustees Cross Hands Hall and Cinema 25.10.23: Cllr Clive Green.

- Cllr Green provided a summary of the main points of discussion for members which included: -.
 - (i) Attendance figures had returned to pre -pandemic levels and produced a profit for the period.
 - (ii) A leaflet drop would be arranged locally to raise awareness of the cinema amongst residents.

- **Resolved:** To receive and note the information provided.

105.2 Torcoed Quarry Liaison Meetings. Cllr K Jones

- Cllr Jones had been appointed as the Council's representative on the Liaison Group however apart from one invitation to attend meetings back in the summer no further invitations had been received.
- **Resolved:** That the Clerk enquire of the Group Secretary as to the current position.

106.0 Agenda Item 11 Consultation and Correspondence.

- Consideration was given to the schedule of items of consultation and correspondence received.
- **Resolved:**
 - (i) To receive and note the information provided.
 - (ii) A link to a survey on democracy in Community Councils be forwarded to Cllr Clive Green.
 - (iii) Any member wishing to attend the event organised by the Dyfed Powys Police and Crime Commissioner on either 14.11.23 or 15.11.23 advise the Clerk asap

107.0 Agenda Item 12 One Voice Wales.

- Details of the training courses available to members had been circulated to members.
- Cllr Nick Beckett indicated that although being the Council's representative on the association he had not received a copy of the minutes of the previous meeting of the association.
- **Resolved:**
 - (i) Training: Any member wishing to undertake a training course to contact the Chair and Clerk.
 - (ii) Minutes: Clerk to request a copy of the relevant minutes and forward to Cllr Nick Beckett.

108.0 Agenda Item 13: Planning Matters.

- A schedule of planning applications forwarded by the County Council was considered by members.
- **Resolved:** To receive and note the information provided.

109.0 Agenda Item 14 Finance:

109.1 Quarter 2 Review by Independent Financial Examiner.

- Cllr Chris Wilkins provided feedback on the 2nd Quarter review of payments made and received.
- Clarification had been sought in relation to minor issues. There were no material areas of concern.
- **Resolved:** To receive and note the information provided and thank Cllr Wilkins for his work.

109.2 October Receipts/Payments Through Bank

- A schedule of income received and payments made for the month of October was considered.
- **Resolved:** To note, receive and approve the payments made and income received.

109.3 Payments Due for November

- Members considered the details of a schedule of payments to be made in November.
- **Resolve:** To approve the payments subject to the provision of satisfactory service or goods.

110.0 Agenda Item 15 Next Meeting:

- There being no further items of business the Chair declared the meeting closed at 21:10hrs.
- Next meeting 11.12.23 Hebron Vestry 19:00hrs.