

CYNGOR CYMUNED LLANFAIR DYFFRYN CLWYD COMMUNITY COUNCIL
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Minutes of an Ordinary Meeting of the Council held using a Zoom video/telephone conferencing platform on Monday 9 November 2020 at 7 pm.

PRESENT – Councillors Jayne Mayers [Chair], Keith Mouldsdales [Vice-Chair], Bob Barton, Owen Evans, Ceri Ranson, Steve Whipp and Eirwen Godden, Clerk

IN ATTENDANCE 6 members of the public together with County Councillor Hugh Evans [OBE] [2 members of the public were unable to join]

APOLOGIES – Councillors David Baker [unable to connect], Wini Davies [unable to connect], Tim Faire [unable to attend], Osian Owen [work commitments]

PART 1

715 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST Councillors Keith Mouldsdales as a trustee of Neuadd Eleanor's Management Committee, and Owen Evans re his wife's planning application 20/2020/0767 – land adjoining Ty Famau, Llanfair DC. It was agreed that Councillor Evans could remain in attendance.

716 MINUTES – RESOLVED

The minutes of an Ordinary Meeting held on 12 October 2020 were approved and signed as a correct record.

Minute Reference 706.3 Charter between City, Town & Community Councils & DCC response required by 30/11/20. Councillor Steve Whipp's offer to draft a response was accepted for Members to approve. He stressed the importance of greater clarity between the roles of DCC and Town/Community Councils especially relating to planning matters. There is some concern that the Charter as currently drafted could result in duties for consultation and engagement being increased for Town/Community Councils and without statutory powers this would seem inappropriate.

Minute Reference 706.4 Town/Community Council Representative on the Conwy/Denbighshire Public Service Board. **RESOLVED** that Sarah Merlin's name [Llanelidan] be put forward as a preferred candidate.

717 COMMUNITY MATTERS Former School Site Llanfair DC

717.1 Reported - that the Clerk had written to DCC's Asset Manager with a request to take the application of the Community Council for the transfer to stage 2, expression of interest. Welsh Government's documents were used as a guide to draw up the application. A detailed business plan would be drawn up in due course. The application is to be considered by DCC's Asset Management Group on 19/11/20.

717.2 Submitted – Notes of a video meeting held on 22/10/20 between the Chair, Vice-Chair of the Community Council, and officers from the Clwyd Alyn Housing Association. The aim of the meeting was to find out what the housing association could offer. The Community Council is open to all suggestions and options for the site including the former school building and, if possible, tying in with the almshouses located in the centre of the village which are currently uninhabitable, except for one house. Although Clwyd Alyn's primary function is to build quality, affordable, energy efficient homes across North Wales it has expertise in community based schemes making reference in

particular to a community garden/allotments at Garden city Flintshire and a scheme at Llanrwst to develop a former school into a wellbeing hub comprising of four apartments and a welfare gym. It was important to understand what the true local housing need/demand is for Llanfair and current stock as this would then provide a baseline to work from to draw down housing and other grants to realise a future vision. Clwyd Alyn officers agreed to contact DCC's Housing Strategy Team and Rural Housing Enablers to see whether a survey could be carried out to establish need. The Community Council would be key to promoting the survey and ensuring the community engages with the survey. Chair Jayne Mayers had asked whether it would be possible for tenancies to be allocated to local people.

Contact has, in the meantime, been made again with Grwp Cynefin about bringing the almshouses back into use. Grwp Cynefin is having discussions with the Almshouses Association to identify revenue sources of funding. Landsker Business Solutions is undertaking an audit on behalf of the Almshouses Association.

717.3 Format for a Steering Group, Terms of Reference, Membership, Relationship and Reporting Arrangements on Activities to the Community Council

There was a general discussion about the whole site and concerns that it could take a long time before a solution could be found for the former school building. It was felt that the almshouses was becoming a separate issue. Reference was made to the availability of windfarm funding for developing the site. A suggestion was made that there may be a need for two separate steering groups and maybe an overarching umbrella group to oversee. DCC is aware that the former school is a separate issue to the former playing field.

Councillor Steve Whipp agreed to take the lead on forming a steering group to work on developing the former playing field area; the Clerk to provide the contact details for residents who had expressed an interest in joining a steering group provided they were happy for details to be shared [in accordance with data protection rules]. Toria Collins from the North Wales Wildlife Trust [Llanfair Fyw Group] had put together a matrix for the playing field section and developments in phases to meet several items in the Neighbourhood Plan.

718 CORRESPONDENCE

718.1 Submitted – Email dated 27/10/20 from OVW – Remote Meeting Survey

Results Based on the survey's results and the fact that two thirds of respondents (66 %) said they would like to retain the facility for remote working, the survey recommends that:

- permission to hold remote meetings in future should be enshrined in law
- the legislation should include flexibility to permit a hybrid situation where members and the public could attend meetings either physically or remotely. Meetings could be live streamed to provide full public access
- for the future remote meetings/working could be supported and facilitated by ensuring the availability of training for staff and councillors
- consideration be given to support Community and Town Councils to fund the technical equipment needed by Councillors eg by extending to Community and Town Councils the facility available to unitary authorities for claiming equipment cost refunds from Welsh Government

- it would be useful to assess whether or not unitary authorities could provide Community and Town Councils with a link to their technical facilities for remote meetings in order to facilitate public participation and an easier login process and if so, whether it would be beneficial to do so.

Members noted the results of the survey.

718.2 Starleaf Video Conferencing One Voice Wales has been successfully using Starleaf for some months now and their programme of training webinars is being delivered on this platform, including remote meetings of Area Committees [next meeting Conwy/Denbigh on 24/11/20 7pm], Larger Council Committees and meetings of the National Executive Committee. OVW is offering a full free licence until the end of the calendar year for those councils who wish to convert to paid licences from the New Year at a preferred rate of £10 per month per host. **RESOLVED** that the Community Council continues to use Zoom for the time being.

719 Feedback/Report[s] on Conferences/Training/Meetings -

719.1 Broadband Councillor Bob Barton reported that he was still in the process of finalising a leaflet, colour printing would be free of charge and a copy would be forwarded to the Clerk for posting on the Council website in due course. Councillor Barton was requested to send a draft for Members to approve before arrangements were made for general distribution.

720 PLANNING www.denbighshire.gov.uk/planning

720.1 Submitted – Planning Compliance Charter adopted by DCC in September 2020 [https://www.denbighshire.gov.uk/en/planning-and-building-](https://www.denbighshire.gov.uk/en/planning-and-building-regulations/planning/planning-enforcement.aspx)

[regulations/planning/planning-enforcement.aspx](https://www.denbighshire.gov.uk/en/planning-and-building-regulations/planning/planning-enforcement.aspx) The charter's primary purpose is to help complainants, alleged contraveners and other interested parties understand how the planning compliance function operates. Councillor Steve Whipp expressed concern that the charter is not making a difference in practice. There have, for example, been spectacular failures at Llanfair. County Councillor Hugh Evans responded by saying that there were pressures before Covid and acknowledged the need to increase the capacity of enforcement.

720.2 Submitted – Welsh Government Consultation Document – The Town and Country Planning [Strategic Development Plan] [Wales] Regulations 2021 –

Responses required by 04/01/21. This document sets out the proposed key stages and plan preparation requirements for the SDP regulations and asks relevant questions [9 in total]. Respondents are being asked to be clear on why they agree or disagree and the changes they propose. Concern was expressed that it was almost impossible to respond without gaining further insight and it was suggested that there should be a separate meeting with a local planning officer before the Council meeting on 14/12/20 to explain the consequences and/or impact of any proposals. County Councillor Hugh Evans confirmed that it would not be possible for the consultation deadline to be extended. It was agreed that a video meeting be arranged with a local planning officer as soon as possible.

720.3 The following application was considered at the meeting:

Application 20/2020/0767 submitted by Mrs Rebecca Evans – variation of condition no 2 of planning permission code no 20/2018/0518 to allow amended plans and elevations for two units – land adjoining Ty Famau, Llanfair D C. Reported that neighbours had raised queries about the application. **RESOLVED** that [a] the Clerk contacts Planning for an extension to the response deadline and [b] arrangements be made for the Chair, Vice-Chair and Councillor Steve Whipp to carry out a site visit as soon as possible.

720.4 Submitted – Response from Planning re Application 20/2020/0741

submitted by Mr & Mrs G Evans re Erection of a reception, shop and café building and associated works – Caravan Park Llanbenwch, Llanfair DC. DCC's Highways Footpaths Officer had made some recommendations for improvements to the linkages around this site. Unfortunately, it was unlikely that DCC could justify imposing the obligation to create or fund a circular walk linking all the villages on this application. It was hoped, however, that this could open further dialogue between the applicant/agent, the Community Council and the Footpaths Officer on any potential opportunities which may arise. The Footpaths Officer had suggested improvements to path 80 (including path furniture) which connects with path 7 bridleway over towards Graigfechan. By using path 80 heading to the A525, crossing over a quiet lane would enable access to Graigfechan. There are community miles routes at Llanfair DC and Graigfechan so in officer view, there was sufficient existing opportunity but with potential to link these together in the future. As the proposal may encourage increased wear on the furniture through the potential increase in use of the paths, developers may have to fund this themselves but the Footpaths Officer would be happy to help but unfortunately funds are limited.

Chair Jayne Mayers explained that it was not the Community Council's intention to place a condition or insist that a path was constructed, merely referring to ideas in the Neighbourhood Plan and a footpath network.

721 HIGHWAYS & ENVIRONMENT

721.1 Community Garden, Graigfechan; Play Area at Graigfechan; Shrubs at Bron y Clwyd, Llanfair D C A response was awaited from DCC about a proposal to develop a community garden at Graigfechan and the concern about the condition of the shrubs planted at Bron y Clwyd Llanfair D C. A resident has, in the meantime, expressed a wish for consideration given to establishing a play area in Graigfechan. It was agreed that the play area be added to the list of projects in the Neighbourhood Plan.

Chair Jayne Mayers expressed concern about schemes being developed but then are not maintained and that volunteers from within the community need to come forward to assist. Councillor Keith Mouldsdale stated that he would include an article appealing for volunteers in the Dyffryn Clwyd Chronicle.

721.2 Speeding DCC's Engineer – Road Safety & Sustainable Transport wrote on 28/10/20 in response to the Community Council's queries about speeding in Graigfechan. The following measure is being proposed to gather all the data needed to undertake further permanent measures if they prove to be statistically justified. A mobile speed indicating sign will be erected near the area of greatest concern as suggested by the Council, in agreement with DCC. This appears to be near the Smithy crossroads or other preferred location.

The sign will be on site for at least approximately 8 weeks. It will record speed data of all vehicles passing by while on site. During the last week or two of the signs being on site two weeklong traffic surveys will be setup to the north and south ends of the village. This will give a full picture of recorded vehicle speeds all throughout the village, as well as the effect that a speed indicating sign has on vehicle speeds in the short and medium term. All being well a sign should be up by the second half of November.

RESOLVED that a response be sent to Highways as follows –

The optimum position for the mobile speed indicating sign would be on the B5429 north of the village between the Three Pigeons public house and the speed de-restriction signs. This length of road has no footpath and is used by vehicles, pedestrians, cyclists, and horse riders. This length is where the speeding situation is worst.

There is a flashing speed warning sign by the roadside to which the mobile speed indicating sign could be attached, providing security and representative traffic data. The sign should be positioned facing in a northerly direction for four weeks and then in a southerly direction for four weeks.

There continue to be issues with speeding motorists on the A525 through Llanfair DC; motorists not responding to the relocation of the speed restriction signs by the entrance to the new housing estate to the north of the village. Equally speeds entering the village from the south remain a concern. It would be helpful if Highways could schedule the siting of the mobile speed indicating sign in the two positions on the A525 at some point in the future.

The outcome of introduction of speed restrictions on the Nant Y Garth Pass are also awaited which is another problem spot. It would be again extremely helpful to consider siting the mobile speed indicating sign near to the Llysfasi College site once these restrictions have been put in place to reinforce the change.

721.3 Impact of Heavy Machinery on Narrow Rural Roads Chair Jayne Mayers reported on a complaint received from a resident who wished to raise the issue of farm vehicles damaging property, roadside verges including water run-off from fields at times of torrential rain depositing mud and debris on highways.

County Councillor Hugh Evans agreed to meet with a Highways Engineer to conduct a site survey of affected areas and it was agreed that councillors input problems they were aware of to the Clerk to co-ordinate and develop a list of sites for him to visit. Almost all the minor roads in the area suffer from some degree of damage which is exacerbated by plant moving off the edge of the road surface to allow vehicles to pass. These are often large tractors with plant such as spreaders attached. The extremely wet

conditions have resulted in exceptionally soft verges so that if plant or vehicles travel off the side of the road, they cause more damage.

The situation, however, is not confined to the minor roads. On the A525 approaching Llanfair DC from the south there is structural failure of the carriageway in several positions. These have been reported through the DCC's highways system and they have been responsive in filling the potholes on a temporary basis, needing to come back frequently. The carriageway further south towards Llysfasi was extensively repaired where structural failure had occurred earlier this year prior to it receiving surface dressing. The result of the carriageway failure is that HGVs, especially cattle carriers, log wagons and dumper trucks emit high levels of noise as they traverse the section.

Councillor Steve Whipp asked that these positions be considered for urgent permanent structural repair before winter sets in and to ask Councillor Hugh Evans to include these in the considerations. In addition the number of utility works and excavations through the village necessitated by provision of services to the new housing site have resulted in multiple reinstatements through the village on the A525 extending from the Graigfechan Road to past the entrance to the new housing. These surface irregularities result in HGVs making undue noise as they pass through the village and it would be interesting to have a Highway Engineer's perspective on how this could be addressed.

The bridge at Eyarth on which weight restrictions have been placed is also a point of concern where heavy plant is regularly seen crossing. This bridge is being closely monitored by DCC's Engineers.

721.4 Public Footpaths and Signage Reported that Councillor Osian Owen had met up with the landowner at Eyarth bridge on 13/10/20, taking a walk along the old railway line and up the footpath. The Fleming family own the forest around that area and are concerned about people who do not stay on the public footpath. There are several other paths on the land, but they are not for public use. One of the problems is the lack of well placed, visible signs along the public footpath and waymarking of the community mile through their land. There are some signs, but they are poorly positioned. Photos and grid references SJ122 548, SJ121 546, SJ121 545, SJ122 545, SJ125 543 were forwarded to DCC's Rights of Way Service. Checks had been made with the volunteers who undertook the work, and it has been confirmed they will be able to resolve the problems pointed out. However, at present there is no stock of waymarks for them to place, although more are on order. In addition, wooden posts will be provided to place the waymarks where needed avoiding the need to use trees. This work however cannot be done until the new stock of waymarks has been delivered which was likely to be in about a month's time. Noted. It was agreed that contact be made with Mr Ian Fleming for feedback in due course.

721.5 A525 – Nant y Garth & Footpath Llanfair to Ruthin Reported that Councillor Tim Faire wished to reiterate his concerns about ongoing issues regarding road safety at Llysfasi, the urgent need for double white lines and the condition of the footpath between Llanfair and Ruthin. These matters have been referred to Highways on several occasions.

722 FINANCIAL MATTERS

722.1 Submitted – Email dated 22/10/20 from Audit Wales Media re Future Audit Arrangements for 2020-21 accounts onwards – The key change is that Audit Wales will be including a transaction-based approach in the audit arrangement with transaction testing being interspersed with more limited audit procedures on a three-year cyclical basis. The reasons for this change in approach include concerns about the relatively high number of public interests reports prepared in recent years as well as the identification of systematic weaknesses across the sector and that too many councils are failing to meet the minimum standards expected of them.

Members noted the key areas of concern highlighted in the report which include:
Lack of inaccurate accounting records and improperly prepared accounts
Poor internal control and financial management including failure to comply with financial regulations
Failure to account for PAYE
Poor budget setting and inadequate financial monitoring
Failure to comply with standing orders
Overpayments to Clerks
Poor governance and decision-making leading to unlawful expenditure.

722.2 Payment of Accounts/Invoices RESOLVED that payment be made as follows:
£15,960 R W Masonry Ltd [part payment for renovation work carried out to the War Memorial Llanfair DC]

722.3 Requests for Financial Aid RESOLVED that a decision regarding Bobath Cymru's application be deferred until February 2021.

722.4 Council Noticeboards The Clerk reported that a response was awaited from Highways about relocating a noticeboard next to the bus stop at Bron y Clwyd Llanfair D C.

PART 2 723 RESOLVED that the Press and Public be excluded from the meeting due to the confidential nature of the following item:

723.1 REPAIRS AND RENOVATIONS TO THE WAR MEMORIAL LLANFAIR D C

Reported that work on renovating the War Memorial was nearly complete and that a report had been forwarded to Members on 09/11/20. Members had previously received a copy of the final signed copy of the contract, variations, insurance, and any additional costs incurred. A copy of contract costs to date had also been sent to Members which showed a saving. Members approved in principle to replacing the coping stones on the wall behind the War Memorial provided the cost of £1492.00 can be contained within the original tender figure. Three quotations had also been sought for additional inscription work but only one supplier was able to undertake the work by Remembrance Day. The expenditure of £300 for the additional name was approved. It was reported that Zoe Henderson wished to thank the Community Council for arranging the addition of her relative's name on the cenotaph. Members gave the Clerk approval to pay the final instalment when the invoice is issued by RW Masonry and to move funds from the business account to the community account to meet the expenditure.

724 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS 14/12/20 [video meeting], 11/01/21 [video meeting], 08/02/21 [Ysgol Llanfair TBC], 08/03/21 [Ysgol Pentrecelyn TBC] It was noted that video meetings were likely to continue until April 2021.

The meeting ended at 8.52 pm _____ CHAIR _____ DATE