

## CYNGOR CYMUNED TAWE UCHAF COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Meeting of the Council held on Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> January, 2024

**The meeting was held over ZOOM due to the heating failure at Coelbren Welfare Hall**

**Present;** Councillors Stephen Davies (Chairman) Arlene Jones, Sandra Howard, Susan Pyart, Huw Williams, Sandra Clayton, Ann Watkins, Monique Craine, County Councillor David Thomas

**Observers** – Two observers in attendance.

The Chairman welcomed members and the two observers to the meeting. He apologised for the late change to hold the meeting over ZOOM due to the failure of the heating system at Coelbren Welfare Hall.

1. **Apologies for absence** were accepted from Councillors Auriol Graham, Alun Thomas and Gail Hopkins-Williams.
2. **Declarations of Interest** – None submitted
3. **Police Matters** – PCSO Sarah Nash joined the meeting and provided a brief update. There had been a decrease in anti-social behaviour in the area. The complaint on drinking in a bus shelter had been addressed. Cannabis plants had been tipped into a river, any information could be reported on the 111 number. Councillor Ann Watkins reminded PCSO Sarah that the vehicle keys, following the accident at Craig y Nos had not been collected. In response to a question on firework displays, it was noted private displays on private land were allowed, however, good practice would be to inform neighbours. County Councillor David Thomas asked if the Police were aware of a local petition to reduce speed on the road through the ape sanctuary at Cefn yr Erw. He advised the speed limit on the road had already been reduced to 30mph. PCSO Sarah noted the comment and would communicate to colleagues. In response to a further question on local road closures due to road traffic accidents or other events, PCSO Sarah stated Ystradgynlais Police published this information and much more on their Facebook page on Ystradgynlais, Ystradfellte, and Pontneddfechan Police. PCSO Sarah advised the Councillors to follow on Facebook.
4. **Finance**
  - a) **Income/Expenditure Report** – The report had been circulated. The Clerk summarised the report and highlighted the precept income of £9000.00 in December. The Council approved the report.
  - b) **Budget Report** – The report had been circulated. The Clerk summarised the report and explained the updated budget line changes to staffing costs and the contingency budget following the Clerk's salary review. The Council approved the report.
  - c) **January Payment Register** – The register had been circulated. The Council approved the January payment register.
5. **To confirm and approve the Council budget for 2024/2025** – The final draft of the budget had been circulated. The Clerk highlighted the changes to the staffing budget approved by the Council meeting at its last meeting. The Council approved and confirmed the Council budget for 2024/2025.
6. **To confirm and approve the precept request for 2024/2025** – The year-end financial forecast had been circulated. The Council considered the forecast together with the agreed budget for 2024/2025. The Council unanimously agreed to request a precept of £25,000.00 for the 2024/2025 financial year. The figure represented a reduction of 13.5% on the previous year.

7. **To consider requests for donations** –The list of written requests had been circulated. The Council considered the requests and agreed to make the following donations (See Appendix)
8. **Planning** – Ref 23/22437/FUL Tawe Car Sales Change of use to ground floor coffee shop (A3) first floor bed and breakfast (C1) and associated customer parking. The Council considered the application and agreed the following comment. The Council agreed in principle with the application, however, traffic visiting the classic vehicle displays at the site is monitored and controlled to avoid traffic congestion on the A4067 passing through the village.

## 9. **Footpath/Playgrounds**

### **Footpaths**

- a) **Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 – Section 53(2) Application to modify the Definitive Map and Statement by adding a footpath at Penwyllt in the Community of Tawe Uchaf, County of Powys** – The e mail and attachments had been circulated to the Council. The Council considered the application. The BBNP have confirmed the evidence submitted was based on usage and alleges use as a public footpath in excess of 20 yrs, documentary evidence has also been submitted. The Council supported the application
- b) **Paths to Prosperity** – The Clerk advised the contact point at the Rambler’s had left the organisation. He had notified the contact at Powys County Council and was awaiting a response.

**Playgrounds** – Playground inspections had been undertaken w/e 12<sup>th</sup> January.

- a) **RoSPA Inspection Report** – The key points arising from the RoSPA inspection report for 2023 had been circulated by e mail. The Council highlighted two items for attention, namely the problems with the entrance gates at Cefnbyrle and Caehopkin Playgrounds. The Clerk was asked to contact Matthew Thomas to obtain quotations for the work required.
- b) **Penycae Action Team Grass Cutting** – The Chairman provided a verbal report from the site meeting held with PAT in December. The meeting had discussed PAT’s responsibility for the strip of land and the request to the Council to assist by undertaking the mowing of the land. Councillors noted the maintenance of the land was PAT’s responsibility. During discussion Councillors advised that other local organisations were considering making similar requests for grass cutting. The Council would have to consider all requests submitted for grass cutting in a fair and consistent approach. The Council further considered the impact on the Council budget in trying to meet all local requests for grass cutting. The Council agreed the budget would not meet its obligations to undertake additional requests for grass cutting. Following discussion, the Council decided it could not support PAT’s request for grass cutting.

## 10. **Correspondence**

- a) **One Voice Wales Survey** – The Council considered information to include in the OVW cost of living survey.
  - b) **IRPW Draft Annual Report 2024/2025** – In response to the Council’s comments on the draft annual report, the IRPW advised the panel will be responding to all questions raised and will be issuing further guidance.
11. **Councillor Vacancy** – No expressions of interest had been received. The Council agreed to try and fill the vacancy by co-option. A notice of co-option will be published.
  12. **County Council Update** – County Councillor David Thomas provided an update on the draft budget discussions, for 2024/2025, at PCC. The WG settlement for Powys left a shortfall of £18m in funding. The Council had to decide how to address the gap in funding and try to maintain services. One option would be to increase Council Tax by 18.9%. Further discussion had determined to make savings of £11m by efficiency savings and to forecast a Council Tax increase to 7.5% for 2024/2025, the increase included precept contributions to the Mid &

West Wales Fire Service. All the proposals would be placed before the full County Council for discussion and approval.

**13. Minutes 16/11/23 and 14/12/23** – The minutes of the Council meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> November, 2023 and the Special Meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> December 2023 were signed as a correct record.

**14. Matters Arising**

**Bench at Cefnbyrle** – Councillor Arlene Jones and the Clerk had met with a member of Powys highways staff at the proposed site. Following the meeting, the Clerk had formally written to Powys Highways to confirm the Council would be responsible for the purchase, installation and on-going maintenance of the bench. Powys Highways will respond with a decision.

**15. Any Urgent Business**

**Defibrillator at Penwyllt** – Councillor Arlene Jones reported back to the Council, to confirm there was no defibrillator for public use at Penwyllt. The South Wales Caving Club did not have a defibrillator, however, the cave rescue team did have a defibrillator only available for call out.

**16. Date of Next Meeting – Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> February, 2024.**

**DONATIONS TO ORGANISATIONS 2023/2024**

**APPENDIX To Minutes**

<b>ORGANISATION</b>	<b>DONATION 2023/2024</b>	<b>SECTION 137</b>
Callwen Church Cemetery Fund	£400	
Abercrave Church Cemetery Fund	£400	
Coelbren Church Cemetery Fund	£400	
Nantylffin Chapel Graveyard Fund	£400	
Tynycoed Chapel Graveyard Fund	£400	
Ysgol y Cribarth	£400	
Coelbren Miners Memorial Hall		£2100
First Caehopkin Pine Scouts	£200	
Coelbren OAP	£300	
Abercrave RFC		£200
Penycae Action Team		£300
Ynyswen Action Group		£300
Ystradgynlais Community Car		£250
Wales Air Ambulance	£250	
Credu Young Carers Ystradgynlais	£200	