**CYNGOR CYMUNED TAWE UCHAF COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Special Meeting held on 12th March 2020**

**Present:** Councillors Stephen Davies (Chairman), Arlene Jones, Selwyn Fyfield, Gail Hopkins-Williams, Alun Thomas, County Councillor David Thomas

**In attendance –** Damian Barry, John Smith, Arup, Will Watson Celtic Energy

1. **Apologies for absence were accepted** from Councillors Clare Parker, Ann Watkins, Susan Pyart, Huw Williams, Auriol Graham
2. **Declarations of Interest –** None submitted.
3. **Pre Application Consultation on Complementary Earthworks at Nant Helen –** The Chairman welcomed Damian Parry and John Smith of Arup together with Will Watson of Celtic Energy. Damian Parry explained the current process involved three planning applications. The first planning application already submitted to PCC involved the reclamation scheme for the current mining site. The current pre-application consultation involved the second planning application and was to provide an opportunity for the Council to make comments on behalf of their ratepayers on the proposals before a planning application is prepared and submitted to Powys County Council. Letters had also been sent out to householders with close proximity to the proposal. If the second planning application was approved a third planning application would be prepared for the Global Centre of Rail Excellence.

Damian Parry thenoutlined the proposals including the construction specification and the reasons behind the design of the proposed earthworks. The main design criteria is to accommodate a Global Centre of Rail Excellence. The Global Rail Centre will provide future sustainable employment for approximately 150 people and leave a local legacy following mining operations.

The Council was then invited to submit questions to Arup on the proposals. The Council expressed serious concerns to Arup on the proposals on the design of the earth embankments, the scale of the development and the adverse impact of the proposals on the residents and village of Cefnbyrle and Caehopkin. Further concerns were expressed on the location volume and size of the attenuation ponds, the safety of the ponds, the increase of excess water from the site and the water run-off from the site. The proposed use of suspended waterways was a further concern. Prior to leaving Arup proposed that a site meeting could be convened to provide the Council with a site walk through when the second planning application is submitted.

The Chairman thanked Arup and Celtic Energy for attending and they left the meeting.

The Council continued to discuss the responses from the Q&A session and agreed to submit the following comments in writing to Grasshopper Consulting;

Tawe Uchaf Community Council has serious concerns and reservations on the proposed complementary earthworks at Nant Helen as follows;

The feelings and concerns of the local communities must be observed and there is a need to mitigate the impacts and effects on the personal lives of residents at Cefnbyrle and Caehopkin;

The size and height of the proposed embankments above Caehopkin will have an adverse visual impact on the village of Caehopkin and the residents of the village and should be reviewed;

The stability of the embankments are also a major concern;

There is serious concerns that the proposals will increase excess water levels from the site;

The size and volume of the attenuation pond above Caehopkin is a serious concern and poses an unacceptable hazard to the village and public safety is also a major concern; the location and size of the attenuation pond is unacceptable;

Run off water from the embankment will also add to the excess water from the site;

The proposed re-opening of suspended watercourses will pose a further flood hazard to the village of Caehopkin and there is previous occurrence of gardens flooding at Caehopkin;

The absence of any on-going commitment to the maintenance of watercourses and ponds following completion is unacceptable and must be resolved;

The Council accepts the offer by Arup to convene a site walk through meeting of the project site and looks forward to hearing further on this proposal.

1. **To authorise payments –** The Council approved the following payments

Think Graphic £1500.00 Replacement graphic at two bridges

Information Commissioner £ 40.00 Annual registration fee.

**Any Other Business – Coronavirus -** The Clerk discussed the possibility of public gatherings being suspended which could affect future meetings. The Council agreed that the Chairman and Clerk should ensure that the administration of Council work continue including payment of invoices and salary.

The Council approved the delegation of administrative functions to the Chairman and Clerk.