

Minutes of the Meeting of Cwmbran Community Council held on Wednesday 9 September 2020 at 6.00pm.

Venue: The meeting was held remotely in accordance with the Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Meetings) (Wales) Regulations 2020

Present Councillor AL Bird, (Chairman). Councillors SWJ Ashley, RM Bennett, SJ Brooks, PJ Cathcart, JS Davenne, M Day, J Rees, WJ Walker and DH Williams.

Also, David Collins (Clerk to the Council)

Absent Councillors LG Johnston, M Johnston, F Jones, KK Manneh, L Ryan, M Villars and LE Williams

(Councillor RD Kemp attended but left before the commencement of the meeting)

(No Public Participation Session was held at this meeting)

CL20/031 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were accepted from Councillors M Johnston (sickness), F Jones (personal), KK Manneh (personal), L Ryan (personal), M Villars (personal) and LE Williams (personal)

CL20/032 Declarations of Interest

Members were asked to declare any personal and/or prejudicial interests they had and give details of the nature of their interest.

CL20/033 Voting

It was **Resolved** that the manner of any voting at this meeting would be by calling each name alphabetically with a response of "for or against":

CL20/034 Chairman's Announcements & Vice Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman announced that he had attended the following events

Flag Raising to commemorate VJ Day at the Council House	14 August 2020
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Flag Raising to commemorate Pride Cymru at the Council House	25 August 2020
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Institute of Welsh Affairs Consultation re Towns' & Cities' response to Covid-19	1 September 2020
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Flag Raising to commemorate Merchant Navy Day at the Council House	3 September 2020
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It was **Resolved** that:

(1) the information is noted.

(2) the Chairman's attendance at the above events is approved.

CL20/035 Public Question Time

In accordance with the Council's Standing Orders approved on 25 June 2014, the opportunity for public questions was included as an item on the agenda for the meeting.

No questions had been submitted.

CL20/036 Council Meeting: 29 July 2020

The Chairman introduced the minutes of the above meeting. In relation to Minute CL20/020 (Cwmbran Policing Update), the Clerk referred to concerns about racial abuse in the St Dials ward from a Ward Member. The concerns would be referred to the Police.

In relation to Minute CL20/021 (Greenmeadow Ward Vacancy) the Clerk updated Members on arrangements to co-opt a Member to fill the vacancy.

Members noted that no significant decisions had been taken by the Clerk under delegated powers approved on 6 May 2020, apart from the action described in Minute CL20/044 (Staffing Matters/NJC Pay Agreement) below.

In relation to Minute CL19/089(a) (6 May 2020) (Membership) Members noted that Councillor M Johnston had been present at the remote meeting held on 29 July 2020 and that the extension of the six-month period for attending a meeting would not be required.

It was **Resolved** that

(1) subject to the addition of Councillor RD Kemp to the list of Members appointed to interview candidates in relation to the Greenmeadow Ward Vacancy, the minutes of the above meeting are confirmed.

(The Chairman authenticated the minutes of the above meeting)

(2) the extension of the six-month period for attending a meeting in relation to Councillor M Johnston is not required.

(3) Delegated Powers granted to the Clerk remain in place until the next Council meeting. Under this delegation any reference to a specific statute includes any statutory extension or modification or re-enactment of such statute and any regulations, orders or bylaws made thereunder.

CL20/037 Planning Consultations

Members noted that details of recent applications had been circulated in the usual way.

The Chairman referred to observations made by Members in relation to the proposed redevelopment of the Bus Depot for Lidl Foodstore and Replacement Bus Depot at Cwmbran Bus Depot, St David's Road & 1 Somerset Road, Cwmbran, at the Pre-Application Consultation stage (APP19/P/0118/FUL). He advised that these observations would be reported to the Planning Committee of Torfaen County Borough Council when the application was considered on 10 September 2020.

It was **Resolved** that Members provide any observations to the Clerk in respect of Planning Lists 1332, 1333 and 1334

CL20/038 Flying of Flags at the Council House

The Clerk reported that the Owain Glyndŵr *banner* would be flown at the Council House on Owain Glyndŵr's Day (16 September 2020). Due to restrictions associated with Coronavirus it was not proposed to invite the public to attend. No costs would arise.

It was **Resolved** that the information is noted.

CL20/039 Programme of Events 2020/21

Members noted current restrictions associated with Coronavirus had put the Council's current programme of events at risk. Members considered forthcoming events.

An act of remembrance was expected to take place in Pontnewydd on Remembrance Sunday 2020. A wreath would be laid at the clock tower (Council House) on 11 November 2020 by the Chairman of the Council. Additional large-scale Event Poppies could be purchased to help commemorate Remembrance via a donation of £3.50 per poppy to the Royal British Legion. The Council was required to approve the use of Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 for such purposes. Discussions were continuing with the Royal British Legion and 100 Field Squadron (Militia) about the format of any act of remembrance at Cwmbran Park. It was not anticipated that a parade would take place.

It was **Resolved** that:

- (1) the Senior Schools Festival due to take place on 10 October 2020 is cancelled.
- (2) arrangements relating to Remembrance Sunday are kept under review.
- (3) Christmas Trees are installed and illuminated as usual but the format of the tree lighting events on 29 November 2020 and 4 December 2020 is kept under review, including the potential to highlight the events across social media rather than encourage attendance by the public.
- (4) events currently planned for 2021 are kept under review (Schools Eco Quiz 4 February 2021, Community Celebration Dinner 5 March 2021 and Grants & Community Awards Evening 21 April 2021)
- (5) in pursuance of the power conferred by Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) and being of the opinion that the expenditure satisfies the requirements of that section, expenditure up to £2,000 is approved in relation of the commemoration of Remembrance Sunday (Code L10 Remembrance), to include the costs of hiring a PA system (if required), Event Poppies and any other associated expenditure.

CL20/040 City Trees

The Clerk referred to discussions with Torfaen County Borough Council and "Trees for Cities" about potential sites for tree planting. Sites previously identified by Members for tree planting had featured in these discussions.

Informal, initial feedback from Torfaen County Borough Council had indicated that it might be difficult to find enough land to create a woodland of the scale that Trees for Cities were looking to fund in the Cwmbran area. Other funding sources were available that might be better suited for the sites that had been suggested so far, such as “Wilding Torfaen” or Heritage Lottery Funding.

Further discussions were taking place. In the meantime, Members were invited to suggest suitable sites for planting groups of trees or individual trees.

If the Council were to contribute towards costs, the expenditure would support its duty Section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act 2016. The relevant legal power that could be relied upon would be s111 of the Local Government Act 1972 which provides the power to do anything that will facilitate, be conducive to or incidental to the discharge of its powers and functions.

It was **Resolved** that:

- (1) further discussions are held with Torfaen County Borough Council about potential sources of funding to assist with tree planting.
- (2) Members are encouraged to suggest potential sites where trees could be planted.
- (3) expenditure is authorised under s111 of the Local Government Act 1972.

CL20/041 Defibrillator

Members noted that the Council had been invited to fund the installation of a defibrillator at Cwmbran Boating Lake. The anticipated cost would be in the region of £1500, including an unlocked cabinet and connection to an electricity supply. Croesyceiliog & Llanyrafon Community Council had expressed an interest in collaborating with the Council in relation to costs. There would be minimal electricity costs and the consent of the landowner would be required.

The cost of installation and power could be met from within funds for Regeneration Projects using powers available to support Well-being (Local Government Act 2000 s2 (Power of Well-being))

It was **Resolved** that

- (1) the proposal is supported in principle, using powers available to support Well-being (Local Government Act 2000 s2 (Power of Well-being)).
- (2) the Clerk is instructed to continue discussions with Croesyceiliog & Llanyrafon Community Council, including the installation of the defibrillator by a suitable contractor.

CL20/042 Date of next meeting

It was **Resolved** that the next meeting is held remotely on 28 September 2020 at 6.00 pm:

CL20/043 Exclusion of the Press and Public

In view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, it was **Resolved** that the following matters be considered in private and that the power of exclusion of the public under Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act, 1960 be exercised.

CL20/044 Staffing Matters/ NJC Pay Agreement 2020/21

Members considered a report on arrangements to replace the Council's Clerical Officer who had handed in her notice. Members noted that the Clerk had accepted 4 weeks' notice rather than 1 month, in order to accommodate the officer's circumstances. Modest historical expenditure on training would also not be recovered.

Given the current restrictions imposed by Covid-19, Members agreed that there was no immediate pressure to fill the post, given that many events and meetings were not currently being held. In the short term, Members agreed that two existing part time Members of staff could work up to an additional day per week each to accommodate the absence. The situation would be kept under review.

The Chairman of the Council paid tribute to the contribution made to the work of the Council by the officer who was leaving.

Members also noted that the Task Force had resumed the gardening service, selecting jobs carefully to ensure the safety of all concerned. It was unlikely that decorating would resume soon due to current restrictions. This would be kept under review. The Caretaker/Cleaner had continued to keep the building clean and safe during lockdown.

Members also noted that agreement had been reached between the National Employers and the NJC Trade Union side on rates of pay applicable from 1 April 2020 and other matters. The rates of pay would apply to all staff

It was **Resolved** that

- (1) the above arrangements are confirmed.
- (2) the Council notes that agreement has been reached at NJC level for 2.75% pay increase for staff.
- (3) the Council confirms that this 2.75% increase applies to all staff.

Signed (*Chairman, Cwmbran Community Council*)