
ABER VALLEY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

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MINUTES OF THE ABOVE COUNCIL HELD AT SENGHENYDD COMMUNITY CENTRE AND ON MICROSOFT TEAMS ON THURSDAY 11TH JANUARY 2024

PRESENT:

Chairperson: C. Bishop

Councillors: D. Berry, D. Daniels, R. Gater, E.P. Prendergast, and
J. Taylor.

Clerk: J. Lloyd

01/2024 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D. Bishop, C. Page, J. Roberts, and M. Stretch.

02/2024 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillors and Officers were reminded of their personal responsibility to declare any personal and/or prejudicial interests(s) in respect of any item of business on this Agenda in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution, and the Code of Conduct for both Councillors, Officers, and Clerk.

03/2024 **PUBLIC MATTERS**

There were no public matters.

04/2024 **POLICE MATTERS**

Gwent Police attended the meeting and reported on the following matters:

- i. ASB – with 'off road' bikes in the area.
- ii. Youth knocking doors in Bryn Aber.
- iii. Pigs and goats have been loose in the area. They had been contained in a local garden by the Police, until they were collected by the owner.
- iv. Dogs roaming the area without an owner.
- v. Abandoned vehicles have been reported in the area.
- vi. All victims from the recent burglaries over the Christmas period are being supported by the Police.

- vii. Stolen vehicles had been reported to the Police, and parked vehicles had been damaged in Senghenydd.
- viii. The Police requested the Community Council inform them of any intel of drugs, or firearms in the area.

Members reported the following Police matters:

1. Recent incident on 6th/7th January, involving Police cars and helicopter at 1.15 am. Police would investigate and provide info/feedback to the Community Council.
2. Queried whether there had been a reduction in Police Officers in the area. Police confirmed that no more PCSOs' were being recruited at this time.
3. Dogs roaming (whippets cross bullies) with teenagers, attacking cats. Missing cats had been reported to the Councillors.
4. ASB on William Street (10th January). Glass bottles were thrown at residents' door and windows.

05/2024 **COMMUNITY SAFETY WARDEN – CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

The Community Safety Wardens were in attendance and reported on the following matters:

1. No Anti-Social behaviour in the area reported to them.
2. Fly tipping in the area, including a sofa, had been reported and removed.

06/2024 **TO CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 14TH DECEMBER 2023.**

The minutes of the Community Council Meeting held on 14th December 2023, were approved as a true record.

07/2024 **CLERKS REPORT**

(1) Current Financial Situation

- (a) Members received the monthly statement of accounts and an update on the current financial situation. Members discussed and approved the Community Council's accounts.

(2) INCOME

- (a) (i) £500.00 received from Bute Energy.

(3) EXPENDITURE

(a) Members noted the following expenditure:

- (i) Payroll – Month 09.
- (ii) EE Telephone Bill (monthly direct debit) - £25.01

(b) Members approved the following expenditure:

- (i) Post Office Ltd – 8 x 1st Class stamps - £10.00 (reimbursement to the Clerk)
- (ii) Town and Community Council Liaison Committee (TCCLC) - £100 (subscription/administration charges)
- (i) Caerphilly County Borough Council – £260.00. Room rental at Abertridwr Library.

(4) APPLICATIONS FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

(a) Members considered the following application for financial assistance and resolved as follows:

- i. Tatws Sion Cent - £310.00.

(5). A.O.B

(a) Toilets in Abertridwr Park

The quote had not yet been provided from Caerphilly County Borough Council for the opening, closing, and cleaning of the toilets in Abertridwr Park for 2024/25. Members agreed for the Clerk to chase this up and defer the item to the next meeting.

(b) Christmas Lighting – Electricity Contribution

Members agreed to defer this item to the next meeting and for the Clerk to contact Cavanna's to confirm a sufficient amount to cover the Community Councils Christmas lighting that is attached to their premises and connected to their electricity supply.

(c) Internal Auditor 2023/24

Members considered and agreed the appointment of Mr Terry Williams to undertake the internal audit for the financial year ending 31st March 2024. It was agreed for the Clerk to make the necessary arrangements.

(d) Precept 2024/25

Members received and considered a report on the precept estimates for 2024/25 including:

- Budget 2023/24
- Expenditure up to 11th January 2024
- Estimated Expenditure from 11th January 2024 to 31st March 2024
- Financial Statement 2023/24
- Bank Reconciliation – January 2024
- Proposed Budget for 2024/25
- Precept Recommendations for 2024/25

Members were informed that Caerphilly County Borough Council has given notice that the council tax base for the Aber Valley is 2,004.04 Band D equivalent dwellings. It was highlighted that the Community Council is required to submit the Precept figure for 2024/25 by 31st January 2024, in order to expedite the setting of next year's Council Tax.

Members were advised that the Grants budget had increased to allow for additional financial assistance in the Community.

Members were advised that the Expenses budget has increased to cover the increase to £156 in Members Expenses, and that the Salary budget had increased to cover the pay increase for Clerks payroll.

Members were advised that the Insurance budget had increased due to expected increase following end of 'fixed rate' for 3-year period.

Members were advised that the Christmas Lighting budget included costs for new or additional Christmas lighting.

It was noted that the Special Projects budget was set at £10,000. Members may wish to consider carrying over any unspent monies from the 2023/24 Special Projects budget at the end of the financial year.

Members approved the annual estimates for 2023/24 and confirmed the Precept amount of £40,000, giving a Band D equivalent property paying £19.96.

6. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Councillor J. Taylor took no part in the discussions.

- a. Case ref: 23/0798/FULL
Location: Communal Area Adjacent To Flats 115 -123 Cefn Ilan Road Abertridwr GRID REFERENCE - 312014(E) 189064(N)
Proposal: Construct disabled ramp leading from Cefn Ilan Road down to path adjacent to 115-123 Cefn Ilan Road.

08/2024

CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

The Chair noted that there was nothing to report.

09/2024 **THE GREEN PLAN**

Members noted nothing to report.

10/2024 **RESIGNATION OF COMMUNITY COUNCILLOR P. COLE
- NOTICE OF VACANCY**

Members noted the resignation of Community Councillor P. Cole and agreed for the Clerk to send a 'thankyou' letter to Mr Cole.

Members were advised that a 'Notice of Vacancy' was being advertised for the relevant time period until 22nd January 2024, and Members would be kept informed, following this deadline.

11/2024 **BONFIRE NIGHT 2024**

Members further discussed the possibility of holding an event in 2024 and Community Councillor R. Gater confirmed he would organise the event. Members agreed that contact details would be provided to R. Gater to contact the Fire Service. R. Gater, D. Berry and C. Bishop would discuss the event following the meeting and bring information back to the next meeting.

12/2024 **CHRISTMAS LIGHTING 2024**

Members discussed the Christmas lights for 2024 and agreed that the original lights that were placed on the trees in Abertridwr Square would be put back on those trees as normal, during the Christmas period 2024. Members agreed for the Clerk to confirm this with Elsbury, and to also confirm the proposed 'swap' between Abertridwr Community Centre and Senghenydd Community Centre lights as agreed with Elsbury in December 2023, as the lights purchased for Senghenydd Community Centre were not suitable for the building.

13/2024 **D-DAY 80 LAMP LIGHT OF PEACE**

Members discussed the information/email that had been circulated in relation to the 80th anniversary of D-Day and the purchase of a lamp to take part in the commemorative event in June 2024. Members agreed to defer this item to the next meeting to consider all the information received.

14/2024 **STAGECOACH BUSES**

Stagecoach representatives, Mr. P. Morgan and Mr. R. Gardiner attended the meeting to provide an update to the Community Council and to address any ongoing concerns. They were made aware of an incident on 6th December on the 2pm bus from Blackwood, when the driver would not stop to let a passenger off at the library in Caerphilly. Members were advised that people should be encouraged to make relevant complaints to Stagecoach, as these issues can then

be dealt with. Members were informed of the main contact centre in Perth, Scotland and the contact number would be provided to the Community Council.

Members were advised of the training academy for customer service in Stagecoach and the procedure followed when complaints are received, including cctv and drivers formally dealt with.

Members discussed further complaints and ongoing issues and were informed that from 1st February there would be a duty manager for Stagecoach based in Caerphilly bus station, 6am to 6pm, 6 days a week, and issues can be reported to him directly.

Members were informed that previous driver shortages had now been resolved, with staff now at full capacity plus 3 extra drivers, and a further 10 in training.

Members discussed their concerns regarding students who relied on the bus service who were due to sit exams and were informed that with the driver shortage now resolved, the ongoing issues were due to vehicle maintenance, with investment into new vehicles now required.

Members discussed changes to bus timetables and were informed that this was the remit of the Commercial dept. The representatives at the meeting noted the request and would feedback the requested information to the Community Council. It was also noted that a new timetable would run from 1st April 2024, and would be updated in the bus stops.

Discussion followed in relation to a complaint regarding the bus service to the four terraces area. The buses were not able to access the area due to residents parked cars. Members agreed to put information on social media to advise residents of the issue.

Members agreed for the representatives to be invited to the April meeting of the Community Council, following the introduction of the new bus timetable on 1st April.

15/2024 MEMBERS MATTERS

Members reported on the following matter:

1. Thanks to the Chair, Councillor C. Bishop, and family for all their work in the community over the Christmas period.

16/2024 DATE OF THE NEXT COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING

The next meeting will be held on **Thursday 8th February 2024.**

The meeting closed at 8.20 pm.

Signed: _____
Chairperson
Aber Valley Community Council