

BETWS COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Title: 2012 01 January Minutes

BETWS COMMUNITY COUNCIL

The monthly meeting of Betws Community Council was held at Capel Newydd Vestry, Betws on Wednesday the 11th January 2012 at 7.00 pm.

PRESENT: Cllr. Carwyn James (Chairperson), Alderman Arnallt James, Cllrs. Loreen Lewis, June Gunter, Menna Roberts, Annette Price, Catherine Smith, Betsan Jones, Maldwyn John, Anne Sizmur, Horace Tout. County Councillor Audrey Jones, Mike Lewis (Guardian)

1. APOLOGIES Richard Howell

2. DECLARATION BY MEMBERS OF PECUNIARY AND NON PECUNIARY INTERESTS
None

3. TO CONFIRM AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 14th
DECEMBER 2011

Two amendments:-

Item 6.2 - Gerwyn Thomas suggested demolishing the Archway, not Councillor Annette Price.

Item 11.2 - meeting was "in-house", and not with other outside parties.

Councillor Anne Sizmur proposed and Councillor June Gunter seconded, that the minutes of the monthly meeting held on the 14th December 2011 be confirmed and signed by the Chairperson.

CAMBRIAN RENEWABLE ENERGY

Mr Rob Fellows and Mr Noel Gallagher were in attendance to give members an update on matters relating to the Mynydd y Betws Wind Farm.

Mr Gallagher explained that work on the access road off the A474 near Cwmgors is progressing, and that the first phase should be completed by the end of the month. He emphasised that all construction vehicles will be using this access road, and this is also the route for the 15 wind turbines.

With regards the large number of lorries travelling along Maesquarre Road, Mr Gallagher explained that on one occasion before Christmas, due to operational difficulties, there were more lorries than normal on the road, and he apologised for the inconvenience.

Councillor Cath Smith pointed out that on that particular day there were 8 lorries on the mountain near the Scotch Pines at 9.30 am, and she also complained about the speed at which they were travelling back down from the site.

Mr Fellows stated that this day was an exception, but Councillors Smith and Lewis argued that there were still a large number of lorries passing every day.

Councillors also mentioned damage to hedgerows, and the need for caution during foggy

conditions.

Mr Gallagher stated that over the next six months there will be approximately 250 deliveries to the site, and he will make a point of monitoring all movements including speed and signage.

Mr Fellows explained that they had been in talks with Neath-Port Talbot, and Carmarthenshire County Council, and that they were still exploring the best options for distributing the community benefits.

Councillor Annette Price asked what powered the turbines ie. Is there a diesel motor to kick start the turbines? Mr Fellows replied by saying the turbines are powered by wind alone.

Mr Fellows concluded by saying that all issues raised would be investigated and he will keep us informed.

4. DYFED POWYS POLICE

There were 5 thefts in Betws during December where inquiries are still ongoing. There were also 3 drug related offences, all of which have been detected.

5. COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT

County Councillor Audrey Jones informed members the steps in Betws Park were repaired before Christmas, and the gates were also reopened. However the new bin in the park had again been set on fire.

The County Councillor had also asked a few residents for their thoughts about the Archway in the park, and the general response was that it should not be demolished. Residents also suggested that maybe plaques to commemorate famous sons of Betws could be erected on the structure.

Councillor Annette Price asked when the roof would be repaired, to which County Councillor Jones replied at the end of the financial year, if funds were available.

Following a short discussion it was suggested that County Councillor Jones arranges a site meeting with Gerwyn Thomas to discuss the above.

Councillor Annette Price complained about the excess amount of surface water running near No's 47 and 49, Treforis. County Councillor Jones agreed to investigate the matter.

Alderman Arnallt James asked if the County Councillor could look in to speeding up the reinstatement of footpath 3/14a at the former Betws Mine site. The Clerk mentioned that Mr Gary Carlsen is trying to arrange a meeting with the developers. County Councillor Jones agreed to look in to the matter..

6. MATTERS ARISING

6.1 TREES AT MAESQUARRE ROAD

The Clerk had attained a map which showed all trees with Preservation Orders in the Betws area, and he also explained that any member of the public can ask for a tree to be protected.

The above was NOTED.

6.2 SECTION 106 FUNDS – MAESQUARRE PARK

County Councillor Audrey Jones states the delay in completing the handover of the park is because TRJones are unable to find suitable finger guards for the gates. Councillors agreed that this is probably not the only reason, and asked the clerk to write to the County to see if they could source the finger guards for TRJones.

RESOLVED the Clerk writes to the County Council.

6.3 ZEBRA CROSSING/QUAY STREET RAILWAY CROSSING

Councillor Betsan Jones suggested that at a later date, we continue to lobby all interested parties regarding the Outer relief road.

Councillor Annette Price was concerned about the dangers of crossing Foundry Road to the Railway Barrier and asked if a Zebra Crossing would help the situation.

RESOLVED the Clerk writes to Mr John McAvoy.

6.4 PARKING OUTSIDE MAESQUARRE PLAYGROUND

The Clerk informed members that the County were proceeding with road markings outside the above playground.

The above was NOTED.

6.5 SOLAR PANELS

Following a conversation with the Street Lighting Department, the Clerk was informed that solar panels are costly to install, with high maintenance costs and are prone to theft.

The above point was NOTED.

6.6 GRAFFITI AT TREFORIS

The offensive graffiti has been reported to the Cleansing Department, but as yet nothing has been done. Councillor Annette Price mentioned that PC Kevin Jones was looking in to the possibility of obtaining a grant to clean up the problem.

RESOLVED the Clerk reports the graffiti once again.

7. CORRESPONDENCE.

The following correspondence was acknowledged and the contents NOTED.

- 1 Remuneration Panel Annual Report
 - 2 Order for 20mph speed limit
 - 3 Mr J D Evans
 - 4 Dyfed Powys Police Authority – Annual Audit
 - 5 Countryside Council of Wales Newsletter – passed to Annette
 - 6 Mr Brian Davies – Ammanford AFC
- Agreed to invite Mr Davies to our February meeting.

8. PLANNING MATTERS.

NEW APPLICATIONS

E/25866 - Residential Dwelling at 1, Lon Llys Hafard, Betws

OBJECT – due to excess surface water that affects the site.

RESOLVED the Clerk informs the Planning Officer

9. ACCOUNTS

1 Chairmans Allowance (2nd) £100.00

2 Eglwys Dewi Sant £ 50.00

3 Capel Newydd £ 25.00

RESOLVED that the above be paid

BETWS IN BLOOM

Members were informed, that the finance sub-committee recommend we increase the prize money for the Betws in Bloom competition as follows:-

Overall Winner £50 (was £15)

4 Category Winners £25 (was £10)

Betws School £50 (as before)

Councillor Anne Sizmur also asked if a further category could be added to include Commercial and Business Premises, again with a £25 prize.

Following a short discussion it was RESOLVED that the above be adopted.

PRECEPT 2012-2013

A copy of the annual expenditure and the estimates for 2012-2013 was sent to all Councillors prior to the meeting. All the items listed were discussed in detail, and all the figures were agreed. Following a short discussion, with various figures being suggested, it was proposed by Councillor Betsan Jones and seconded by Councillor Annette Price, that a precept request of £16,700 be submitted to Carmarthenshire County Council.

RESOLVED that the Clerk requests a precept of £16,700.

10. REPORTS.

PACT

Councillor Cath Smith gave a brief report, which included problems with anti social behaviour in Betws Park, and the improved road signs in the Tesco car park. She also reported that another Multicultural evening is being planned for 4th March 2012 at the Amman Valley School.

TREFORIS PARK

Councillor Annette Price reported that the Projects sub-committee had met, and were agreed that a simple play area with a minimal amount of equipment was the preferred option. Other ideas were being mooted such as a bus shelter, graffiti wall, and equipment to cater for the disabled. The next step was to arrange a meeting with Gerwyn Thomas. All Councillors were happy with the plans and gave the group their full support.

COUNTY HALL

Councillor Anne Sizmur gave a brief report about a presentation given by Dyfed Powys Police concerning the cut backs in Police funding. The situation is bleak with savings needed, which might involve redundancies, early retirements, station closures and disposing of the helicopter. The County Council agreed to write to the UK Government to criticise the situation.

11. AMMAN VALLEY GROUP

The Amman Valley Group needed feedback from the Community Council on two issues.

- 1 Would we be interested in Joint Initiatives?
- 2 Would we support the Twrch Trwyth Trail project?

Following a short discussion, councillors agreed to support both issues, and asked Councillor Anne Sizmur to inform the group at their next meeting.

Councillor Sizmur also gave a brief explanation about an error in the group's proceedings with regard to inviting two other Councils to join the group. Councillors agreed with her thoughts on the matter.

12 NEWSLETTER

Councillor Cath Smith reported that she will shortly be starting to prepare the newsletter. However a question was raised regarding the timing of the newsletter, with some councillors preferring to leave distribution until after the May elections. Following a show of hands it was decided to continue with the newsletter before the May elections.

13 ANNUAL DINNER

It was agreed to hold the annual dinner at the Mountain Gate, Tycroes on 23rd February 2012.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

14.1 JOGGERS

Councillors Lewis and Price, asked Mr Mike Lewis if he would apologise through his newspaper to Ammanford Harriers. The item referred to all joggers and not any group in particular.

14.2 BROKEN RUBBISH BAGS

Councillor Annette Price expressed concern at the amount of rubbish left on the streets from broken bags, and asked if the refuse collectors should pick up all spillage?

RESOLVED the Clerk finds out the County's policy on the issue.

14.3 SECOND PHASE OF BETWS PARK PROJECT

Councillor Annette Price asked the Clerk to make enquiries regarding the above.

RESOLVED the Clerk writes to Eifion Bowen.

