

BETWS COMMUNITY COUNCIL

The monthly meeting of Betws Community Council was held as a Hybrid Meeting at **Betws RFC** and virtually on **Microsoft Teams** on Wednesday 10th January 2024 at 7.00pm.

The meeting was held on a remote basis in accordance with the provisions of the Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Meetings) (Wales) Regulations 2020 and Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

Any member of the public who wishes to attend the meeting as a spectator or who has questions to put to the Councillors should contact the Clerk for this to be able to take place and the correct procedure to be followed.

The meeting started at 19:12

PRESENT: Cllr Dave Stacey (Chairperson), Cllrs Carwyn James, Emyr Morgan, James Derrick, Maureen Williams, Peter Comley, Jose Picouto and Karen McMinn-Davies with Paul Allchurch and Lynwen Phillips joining via Teams.

County Councillor: Not present

Clerk: Miss Angela Brown

PCSO: Not present

1. Public Questions/Representations

None

2. Apologies

Cllr Mike Jones and County Councillor Betsan Jones

3. Declaration by Members of Personal and Prejudicial Interests

Cllr James re point 7.b. on the agenda.

The Chair proposed that some items were moved forward on the agenda as Cllr Phillips may need to leave the meeting early. Point 13. a) and b) regarding Betws Park and the playgrounds.

13.a) Recreation Ground Committee – Betws Park i) update – Cllr Phillips

Various emails received from the Volunteer group, need clarity on 2 items

- i) The donation of £50 for Dogwood and £100 for the seeds as agreed in point 7 of the 13th December 2023 meeting. The amount has increased a little due to delivery costs with the total amount needed being £52.87 for the Dogwood and delivery, £79.99 for wildflower meadow seeds from Boston seeds and £20.98 for half seed trays and biodegradable plant pots for growing vegetable seeds costing £20.98 from B&Q Total amount requested £153.84. The volunteers do not have any reserves to pay for the items upfront and are asking if the council can transfer the money so that the items can be purchased, and invoice sent to the council to confirm purchase afterwards. This was proposed by Cllr Phillips and seconded by Cllr James and agreed by all present.

It was **RESOLVED** that the clerk transfer the £153.84 to the Volunteers bank account.

It was also **NOTED** that the Volunteer group had received a grant of £460 from the Heart of Wales Line for vegetable seeds, herbs, soft fruit bushes, compost for the Nature Garden. Also, extra shovels, wheelbarrow etc for the college and school children to use.

- ii) The second query was regarding the siting of 3 or 4 benches that the Volunteer Group had requested after receiving £2,450.00 grant funding from the Co-op for benches, seeds and shrubs, the quantity and placement was still to be agreed with the Council.

It was proposed by Cllr Phillips that 3 benches be placed near Park Street location to be agreed when Cllr Phillips meets with Caryn from the Volunteers.

Also, that the Council were not able to assist financially with the installation or transport costs for 3 benches.

This was seconded by Cllr Picouto and agreed by all present.

- iii) There was also a query regarding the re-vamp of the Memorial Garden area due to the requirement of preparing tender documents for the park and playgrounds this will be revisited once all completed.

This was **NOTED** by members.

13b) Maesquarre and Heol Y Felin Playgrounds – update – Cllr Phillips

- i) Due to the Windfarm Grant being unsuccessful as per point 4 in 13th December 2023 meeting, another grant application is being prepared for the Levelling Up/Prosperity Fund with the application needing to be in by 19 January 2024. Quotes to include removal, installation for the next phase of new equipment in Maesquarre Playground are being sought to replace the 'castle' in the middle of the park for £50,000. Plus, the inclusive roundabout which had been requested in the unsuccessful Windfarm Grant and power point for lighting the tree in the playground at Christmas. Already received £2,363 from the Lottery match funding for the inclusive roundabout.
- ii) Due to the above work Cllr Phillips had not had time to fully read the 2 Annual Reports for the playgrounds.

Cllr Phillips left the meeting at 19:33

4. County Councillor Report

Apologies had been received however the Chair read out a brief report from the County Councillor:

I cannot attend tonight's meeting as I have another meeting.

I can see that you have shared the news that the new information sign has been installed above the scotch pine.

The only other news that I was going to share was the proposed waiting restrictions at the junction between Caemawr and Betws rd which I support.

The above report was **NOTED** by members.

5. To confirm and Sign the Minutes of the Monthly Meeting held on 13th December 2023

Councillor Picouto proposed, and Councillor Williams seconded and resolved that the minutes of the Council’s monthly meeting held on 13th December 2023 be accepted as a true record and approved by all present.

Discussion regarding point 3c of the last meeting with Cllr Williams stating that the issues with the RFC are two pronged one being the Rugby and the escalating costs etc the other being the requirement of the building under the terms of the lease to be utilised as a Community Hall/Hub.

Cllr Comley informed members that he would be sending a letter to all residents regarding the RFC’s predicament. He also stated that the youth needed to be attracted to the RFC and he suggested that the club may re-introduce the blue light disco.

Cllr McMinn-Davies suggested that the Community and Events Committee meet with the RFC to discuss. Cllr Allchurch to arrange.

6. Dyfed Powys Police Monthly Crime Figures for Betws

A total of 2 crimes for November 2023 in Betws broken down as follows:

2 – Violence and Sexual Offences

The link for Betws ward below.

[Betws | Police.uk \(www.police.uk\)](http://www.police.uk)

7. Payments/Donation Requests –

a. Clerk Salary and Allowances and Invoices to be paid (see document below)

Payments Made in January 2024			
MEETING/BACS REFERENCE	PAYEE	DETAILS	AMOUNT
10/1/2024 point 7a	Angela Brown	Clerks Salary/Allowances and office expenses. Section 112 Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) LG(FP)A 1963 s5	(as per Clerk Salary and Payroll schedule)
10/1/2024 point 7a	HMRC	Payroll payments. Section 112 Local Government Act	(as per Clerk Salary and Payroll schedule)

		1972 (as amended)	
10/1/2024 point 7a	Nest Pension paid by Direct Debit	Payroll Pension payments. Section 112 Local Government Act 1972 (as amended)	(as per Clerk Salary and Payroll schedule)
10/1/2024 point 7a	Wales Audit	Audit Fees for 2021/2022 LGA 1972 s.111	£660.00
10/1/2024 point 7a	Cllr Dave Stacey	Purchase of Christmas Lights as per point 7 in 13 December 2023 meeting and requested at point 8 in the Finance Committee meeting of 22 November 2023. LGA 1972 s.137 (1) and (3)	£ 84.96 VAT £ 17.01 Total £101.97

The clerk informed members that the credit on the HMRC account has been used up.

It was proposed by Councillor Williams and seconded by Councillor Derrick and agreed by all present that the above payments are authorised, and it was **RESOLVED** that the above be paid.

b) Donation Requests –

- i) St Davids Church, Betws - Christmas Lights
- ii) Capel Newydd, Betws – Christmas Lights

A discussion ensued and it was agreed that £50 would be given to St David's Church and £25 to Capel Newydd. This was proposed by Cllr Picouto and was seconded by Cllr Derrick and agreed by all.

It was **RESOLVED** that the clerk contact the above to inform.

8. Planning Applications –

The following applications were received:

PL/06965 New dwelling house including integral garage – land adjacent to 38 Colonel Road, SA18 2HP.

Discussion ensued and there are no objections, council to request S106 funding for play equipment for Heol Y Felin playground and Green which is situated opposite the site.

It was **RESOLVED** that the clerk contact the planning department regarding the above application.

The following applications were granted/refused/withdrawn: None

9. Correspondence/Matters for Information/Action (emails sent out to members)

- a) **Cost Of Living Crisis Survey 2023 (email sent 18/12/2023) - instruction was for the clerk to complete which has been actioned.**
- b) **Countryside Code update December 2023 - to NAFW (national access forum) (email sent 18/12/2023)**
- c) **Cost-of-Living – Community and Town Council activity in Wales (email sent 18/12/2023)**
- d) **PCC Bulletin from the Police and Crime Commissioner (email sent 18/12/2023)**
- e) **Ammanford DEEP group for people with dementia (email sent 18/12/2023)**
- f) **2024 - TRAINING DATES BY MODULE - JANUARY, FEBRUARY & MARCH from OVW (email sent 18/12/2023)**
- g) **FREE WEBINAR: Interactive self-guided tours for villages, towns and communities 25/01/24 – OVW/AT Creative (email sent 18/12/2023)** Councillors discussed this which could become a project for the future. There are already historic information boards in Betws Park. Councillor McMinn-Davies informed members that she had taken her children to the Nature Garden area in Betws Park and the oldest was mesmerised by the coal dram discussion ensued regarding the youth being unaware of the local coal mining history of the area, that there is information in a locally published book, that there had been a local history group and that there are a number of local people who have the knowledge about local history and the links to local families. If a group was set up they could seek funding for this type of project by working on themes such as coalmining, second world war – mountain bunkers, unexploded bomb near Argoed and the history of the RFC etc.
- h) **Examples of Biodiversity actions needed – OVW (email sent 3/1/2024)**
- i) **Town & Community Councils Update – CCC (email sent 3/1/2024)**
- j) **Older People’s Commissioner for Wales December Newsletter (email sent 3/1/2024)**
- k) **Notification of Application for a Licence: coopers Arms, Betws, Rhydaman/Ammanford. (email sent 3/1/2024)** No objections received from Councillors regarding the application.
- l) **Guest blog: Working together for an Age-Friendly Wales – OVW (email sent 3/1/2024)**
- m) **New consultation: Future spending purposes for dormant assets funding in Wales – OVW (email sent 3/1/2024)**
- n) **Consultation: Fiscal Intergovernmental Relations – OVW (email sent 3/1/2024)**
- o) **Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service Consultation Draft Service 2040 plan (email sent 3/1/2024)**
- p) **Experimental Order - Carmarthenshire - Except Carmarthen/Llanelli and Ammanford - HTTR-1759 – CCC Waiting Restrictions (email sent 3/1/2024)** Councillors are concerned regarding the size and frequency of the lorries which park in that area making deliveries which affect traffic flow and visibility. Councillors will seek a site meeting with County Councillor B Jones and Mr Jacob from CCC. Councillor Morgan will attend on behalf of the Council. It was **RESOLVED** that the clerk contact the County Councillor and ask her to arrange the meeting as soon as possible between the parties to discuss the concerns and seek solutions.

- q) **URGENT & REALLY IMPORTANT PLEASE - LAMP LIGHT OF PEACE – OVW (email sent 3/1/2024)**
- r) **2024 - TRAINING DATES BY MODULE - JANUARY, FEBRUARY & MARCH – OVW (email sent 3/1/2024)**
- s) **Communication about digital training for distribution – OVW (email sent 3/1/2024)**
- t) **Betws Mountain sign installed – County Councillor B Jones (email sent 4/1/2024)**
- u) **REQUEST FOR PROHIBITION OF WAITING AT ANY TIME AT THE JUNCTION OF CAEMAWR/BETWS ROAD, AMMANFORD from CCC (email sent 9/1/2024)**
Councillor Morgan had received some complaints which he has transferred to the Traffic department at CCC.
- v) **Community Speed Watch presentation on 8 February 2024 from OVW (email sent 9/1/2024)**
- w) **17.01.24 Community & Town Councils Liaison Forum from OVW (email sent 9/1/2024)** The Chair informed members that he had attended last year and felt that unless another councillor wished to attend that County Councillor Jones keeps the Council informed as does One Voice Wales. He is unable to attend.
- x) **Online Event - Buglife Cymru January 31 2024 from OVW (email sent 9/1/2024)**
- y) **1pm to 3pm Tuesday 9th Jan: DWFN - Ammanford Dementia mutual support group** in the Meeting Room at Pobl's retirement Glanafon Retirement Flats in Park St, Betws, Ammanford, SA18 2EX. (email sent 9/1/2024)

The points above are all **NOTED** by members unless otherwise stated.

10. To approve the report from the Betws RFC annual lease check carried out by both Councillor McMinn-Davies who did the document check and visual checks carried out by Councillor Stacey.

Cllr McMinn-Davies proposed that the report be approved by Council for the 2022 - 2023 lease checks at Betws RFC this was seconded by Cllr Picouto.

Cllr McMinn-Davies will arrange with Peter Comley a day and time to conduct the lease checks for 2023 – 2024 year during January 2024.

11. To consider a motion to exclude the public and members of the press with regards to matters in point 12 due to the confidential nature under Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) 1960, s.1 (2) and Local Government Act 1972, s. 100 (2)

12. Exempt Matters –

a) Betws RFC and Land issue at Heol Y Felin (if any correspondence received) None received

b) Peter Comley Dispensation application – Update – CCC Standards Committee are having a special meeting on 16 January for another request and this application will hopefully be added to the agenda for discussion.

13. Feedback from Committees/Working Group/Outside Bodies (all minutes of the Committee Meetings can be viewed on the Community Council Website where the Full Council Meeting minutes are also available as per 26ZA (1) (2) of Schedule 12 of the Local Government Act 1972 and section 55 (c) of Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013):

- a) Recreation Ground Committee –**
Betws Park –

- i) Update – Cllr Phillips
This point was covered earlier in the meeting.
- b) **Maesquarre and Heol Y Felin Playground** – update – Cllr Phillips
 - i) Annual Playground Inspection Reports – not covered in December meeting – Cllr Phillips

It was proposed by Cllr Williams that this be referred to the Recreation Ground Committee to review the Annual Playground Reports and report back to Full Council regarding the maintenance required as per the recommendations in each report as to the action required. Some of the repairs could be carried out by Community Payback Team if agreed. Their next meeting is due in February 2024 date and time to be confirmed by Cllr Phillips and agenda to be forwarded to the clerk.
- c) **Finance and Staffing Committee** – Cllr James – next meeting 17 January
- d) **Community Engagement and Events Committee** – Evaluation of Community Engagement Surgeries - January 2024 – Cllr Allchurch – feedback was that 3 surgeries had taken place between 11 – 12 on the first Saturday of the month with only one resident attending. The Committee will reflect on this and discuss potential changes to the day and time of the surgeries at their next meeting is due in March 2024 date and time to be confirmed by Cllr Allchurch and agenda to be forwarded to the clerk. They do have a working group which meet too for specific events/projects – see point 5 above.
- e) **Toolkit working group** - Review Standing Orders (see 14 June 2023 minutes point 9d Revised Standing Orders This was NOTED by members and agreed that the working group would look at this along with the toolkit). plus 9a ref Good Councillor Guide to Employment 2023 to adopt? As only noted, in 14 June 2023 meeting. – To re-visit in January 2024 – propose to meet in mid-February, email any comments to Cllr Stacey on the Standing Orders and Good Councillor Guide to Employment and report back to full council in the March meeting – Cllrs Stacey, Jones, Allchurch and Morgan.
- f) **New Contracts for 1 April 2024 working group** – update – ref playground and grounds maintenance contracts - Cllr Phillips/Jones – update by the clerk as apologies from Cllr Jones who has been drafting the tender documents. Suggestion to extend current contract, due to the short timescale and potential effect on planting the formal areas, to 1 November 2024. Clerk to speak with the contractor. This was proposed by Cllr Picouto and seconded by Cllr Morgan.

Next meeting is Wednesday 14th February 2024.

The meeting Closed at 21:00.