

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 13th November 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 19:07

PRESENT: Cllr Carwyn James (Chairperson), Cllrs Emyr Morgan, James Derrick, Mike Jones, Peter Comley, Jose Picouto, Maureen Williams.

County Councillor: Betsan Jones

Clerk: Miss Angela Brown

PCSO: not present

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting informing those present that the Remembrance Service that was held on Monday in Betws Park went well. He thanked the clerk for organising the service. Betws Primary School children were very good reading the poem that they had compiled called Animals of War and they also placed a purple wreath which they had painted to commemorate the animals who lost their lives during the wars at the memorial. Councillors James, Picouto and Williams attended the service.

The Chair thanked Councillor Picouto for attending the Ammanford Remembrance Service on the Council's behalf and this went well. Councillor Derrick attended the service too.

The Chair asked the clerk to send thank you emails to those who attended MP Ann Davies, Royal British Legion, Bugler, Deputy Lord Lieutenant Jayne Picouto, Curate Nick Barroccu, Headmaster, staff and children of Betws Primary School, County Councillor Betsan Jones, Ammanford Neighbourhood Policing Team, Ambulance Service, the contractor and the park volunteers for keeping the area neat and tidy.

1. Public Questions/Representations

None

2. Apologies/Approval of Absence

Cllrs Paul Allchurch, Dave Stacey, Lynwen Phillips, Dene Macbeth and Karen McMinn-Davies

a) To approve the absence request made by Cllr Picouto.

Councillor Picouto requested that his absence for 3 months be considered by Council after a short discussion it was Proposed by Cllr Williams and seconded by Cllr M Jones that Cllr Picouto's request for an approval of absence for December, January and February was approved and he informed members that he hoped to return for the March meeting.

3. Declaration by Members of Personal and Prejudicial Interests

None

4. County Councillor Report

1. Update given regarding the fly tipping of the Hot Tub near Maesquarre Hall that was reported by Cllr Williams in April. A notice is being put up stating that the item needs to be removed in 7 days. She will phone and check how things are tomorrow and report back at the next meeting.
2. Update regarding the double yellow lines on Pentwyn Road the County Councillor has been in contact with the highways department again regarding the Draft Traffic Regulation Order and objections have been given. The Highways Officer had not been able to persuade the objector, and a report has been put in front of the cabinet member for highways on 8/11/2024 – now waiting for a decision to be made.
3. Regarding the complaints which were received regarding overgrown trees on Pentwyn Road which affected the streetlights all the trees have now been cut back.
4. An update was given regarding the 3 houses in Treforis which have been being built since around 2017 and are yet to be completed to date. CCC are in contact with the owner who does not wish to sell the properties to the council, and they have left their contact details with the owner and will get in touch periodically with them. The properties do not fall into the 'Empty Property' criteria.
5. An update was given with regards to the Story Board notice boards in Betws Park which need renewing. Her contact is investigating whether the trails that are on the map/story board still exist and is in contact with a different CCC department regarding this, as if the trails that are depicted are not in use there would be no point in renewing. The boards were put up many years ago via a Regional Project with Ammanford and Loughor walking groups being involved. A suggestion was made that this would be put on the Recreation Ground Committee agenda to discuss at their next meeting and to liaise with members of the local walking group to discuss the trails that are on the story board and if they are still in use.
6. County Councillor Betsan Jones informed members of a motion she proposed today in her County Council full meeting regarding the profits made from assets from the Crown Estates in Wales are devolved to the Local Governments of Wales to invest into the Welsh economy and communities rather than the Treasury and the Crown this was seconded by County Councillor Meinir James from Llangyndeirne and was voted for unanimously. See the motion below in Italics:

We ask Carmarthenshire County Council to support the proposal for Crown Estate assets to be devolved to the people of Wales, so that the profits can be used to invest in the economy and communities of Wales.

A poll in 2023 showed that 75% of the population of Wales were in favour of taking control of the assets of the Crown Estate rather than the profits going to the Treasury and the Crown.

Local authorities are under huge financial pressure and placing the Crown Estate in the hands of Wales would be a significant step to address the years of lack of investment in our Local Government.

We are calling on the Welsh Government to ask the Westminster Government to devolve the assets and revenue of the Crown Estate, as a matter of urgency, as was done in Scotland in 2017. We demand that Wales is treated fairly and accepts management of Crown Estate lands for the benefit of the people of Wales.

7. County Councillor Betsan Jones thanked Council for the invitation to read the poem 'Rhyfel' at Monday's Remembrance Service in Betws Park.
8. County Councillor asked to bring point 13 c iv forward regarding MYB grant for Maesquarre Playground and Sustainable Communities Fund Round 4 for Phase 2 of the improvements to the area 3 quotes have been received and the contractor needs to be decided upon. After discussion regarding the quotes received, the costs and equipment it was proposed by Cllr Derrick that Sutcliffe Play be given the contract this was seconded by Cllr Jones and agreed by all present. A decision on the seats for the swing was also made as there was a choice of 3 types in the quotation and Council will go with the recommendation of the current contractor on this. She would let Cllr Phillips know the decision as they are working together on this project.

County Councillor Betsan Jones left the meeting at 19:32

5. To confirm and Sign the Minutes of the Monthly Meeting held on 9th October 2024

Councillor Williams proposed, and Councillor Jones seconded and resolved that the minutes of the Council's monthly meeting held on 9th October 2024 be accepted as a true record and approved by all present.

6. Dyfed Powys Police Monthly Crime Figures for Betws

A total of 14 crimes for September 2024 in Betws

Violence and Sexual Offences = 10, Criminal Damage and Arson = 1, Drugs = 1, All other crimes = 2

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 November 2024 | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------|---|--|
| MEETING/BACS REFERENCE | PAYEE | DETAILS | AMOUNT |
| 13/11/2024 point 7a | Angela Brown | Clerks Salary/Allowances and office expenses. | (as per Clerk Salary and Payroll schedule) |

| | | | |
|---------------------|------------------------|---|--|
| | | Section 112 Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) LG(FP)A 1963 s5 | |
| 13/11/2024 point 7a | HMRC | Payroll payments. Section 112 Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) | (as per Clerk Salary and Payroll schedule) |
| 13/11/2024 point 7a | Pension | Payroll Pension payments. Section 112 Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) | (as per Clerk Salary and Payroll schedule) |
| 13/11/2024 point 7a | JJ's Handyman Services | Removal and fitting of replacement parts to Tema unit at Maesquarre Playground. Also readjustment of existing frame. Public Health Act 1875, s.164 – Power to provide and manage recreation grounds. | £517.50 |
| 13/11/2024 point 7a | Wrenvale | Plant 2,000 bulbs as specified at Maesquarre Playground Public Health Act 1875, s.164 – Power to provide and manage recreation grounds. | £600 VAT £120 Total £720 |

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

b) Precept Calculations to agree the Precept for 2025 – 2026

Discussion regarding the calculations and that it had also been discussed in the Finance Committee meeting on 30 October 2024. It was proposed by Cllr Jones that the precept be raised by £5k for 2025 – 2026 to £62k this was seconded by Cllr Derrick. No amendments were made, and it was agreed by all present.

c) Bank Balances and Reserves to 30 September 2024 Qtr 2 – Finance update (email sent 23/10/2024)

Discussion on the documents received which had also been discussed in the Finance Committee meeting on 30 October 2024 with all members present being happy with them.

d) Audit completion (email sent 23/10/2024)

Discussion on the documents received which had also been discussed in the Finance Committee meeting on 30 October 2024 with all members present being happy with them. Cllr Stacey had placed the documents on the noticeboard in Betws Park and they were also on the website.

e) LGPS Policy to agree

Councillors agreed to adopting the LGPS policy this was proposed by Cllr Williams and seconded by Cllr Picouto and agreed by all present. The document is to be placed on the Betws Park noticeboard (Cllr Stacey will do this) for 1 month and 1 day and the website.

f) To agree the Local Government Services National Pay Agreement for 2024/2025

Discussion regarding the pay agreement which had also been discussed in the Finance Committee meeting on 30 October 2024. The chair stated that the clerk would move up the scale as agreed, and that payment would be backdated to 1 April 2024. It was proposed by Cllr Williams that the clerk would move up the scale to SCP 10 as per the national pay agreement for 2024/2025 and that this would be backdated to 1 April 2024. This was seconded by Cllr Derrick and agreed by all present.

g) Donation Requests –

i) Bugler for the Remembrance Service

It was proposed by Cllr Williams and seconded by Cllr Picouto that £75 be paid to the Bugler who attended the Betws Park Remembrance Service on Monday 11th November 2024 and agreed by all present.

ii) RBL for the Wreaths for the Remembrance Service

It was proposed by Cllr Williams and seconded by Cllr Jones that £100 be paid to the Royal British Legion who supplied the wreaths for the Services on Sunday 10th November at Ammanford and Monday 11th November at Betws Park and agreed by all present.

iii) BP Volunteer group request for donation for their Public Liability Insurance (email sent 4/11/2024 + 5/11/2024)

It was proposed by Cllr Williams and seconded by Cllr Jones that the £89.60 for the Volunteer Groups Public Liability Insurance be paid and agreed by all present.

iv) Wales Air Ambulance (email sent 4/11/2024)

It was proposed by Cllr Comley and seconded by Cllr Picouto that £100 be donated to the Wales Air Ambulance and agreed by all present.

v) Radio Glangwili

It was proposed by Cllr Jones and seconded by Cllr Williams that £50 be paid to Radio Glangwili and agreed by all present.

vi) Toy Box Appeal (CCC) (email sent 11/11/2024)

It was proposed by Cllr Picouto and seconded by Cllr Williams that £25 be paid to the Carmarthenshire County Council Toy Box appeal and agreed by all present.

It was **RESOLVED** that the clerk inform the requestors of the above.

8. Planning Applications –

The following applications were received:

PL/08415 - Single storey rear extension to comprise annex bedroom/en suite and kitchen - 112 Ffordd Y Glowyr, Betws, Ammanford, SA18 2FG - Consultation date 28/10/2024 – 18/11/2024 (email sent to Cllrs 1/11/2024)

PL/08409 - Single Storey Side Extension - Llwhchisawl Farm, Betws, Ammanford, SA18 2PF
Consultation date 31/10/2024 – 21/11/2024 (email sent to Cllrs 1/11/2024)

The Council had no objections to these applications. Clerk to inform CCC.

The following applications were granted/refused/withdrawn:

PL/06612 - Proposed residential development (2 No. detached dwellings) - Land off Pentwyn Road, Ammanford, SA18 2EY - Outline Granted - 26/09/2024

PL/07621 - Plas Maes Gwyn, Maerdy Road, Betws, Ammanford, SA18 2RD - Portable cabin for use as a less-abled 'Granny' annex for ancillary use to the main dwelling – Householder granted – 6/11/2024

PL/08290 - Variation of Condition 6 on P6/10/19992/92 (agricultural occupancy condition) - Mwstwr Y Coed, Maerdy Road, Betws, Ammanford, SA18 2RD - Removal / Variation of Condition Granted - 07/11/2024

The Council **NOTED** the above applications.

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

- a) **Senedd Inquiry into the role, governance and accountability of the Community and Town Council sector (OVW) (email sent 18/10/2024)**
- b) **Grant Opportunity - COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES FOR BIODIVERSITY (CCC) (email sent 18/10/2024)**
- c) **Calon Tân - Hydref 2024 (OVW) (email sent 18/10/2024)**
- d) **NEW Local Places for Nature Logo (OVW) (email sent 18/10/2024)**
- e) **Date Amendment Funding, Grants and Precept Setting Councils Connect (OVW) (email sent 18/10/2024)**

- f) Pension Credit Subgroup (Income Maximisation in Wales) (OVW) (email sent 18/10/2024)
- g) IMPACT - Llais monthly newsletter – Health and Social care (email sent 18/10/2024)
- h) Practice Development Note (9) Terms of Reference for Council Meetings (OVW) (email sent 18/10/2024)
- i) Communities for Work + (CCC) (email sent 18/10/2024)
- j) Drop-in event for information about Llanelli's Minor Injury Uni (Hywel Dda) (email sent 18/10/2024)
- k) Llandeilo Mayors Fundraising Afternoon Tea (email sent 18/10/2024)
- l) MODEL FINANCIAL REGULATIONS 2024 – new (OVW) (email sent 22/10/2024)
- m) One Voice Wales response to the Senedd Inquiry for Community and Town Councils (OVW) (email sent 22/10/2024)
- n) Digital Health Checks and Community of Practice (OVW) (email sent 22/10/2024)

Members answered the questions on the health check.

- o) Funding News from the Cost-of-Living Crisis Support Team (OVW) (email sent 22/10/2024)
- p) Carmarthen Area Committee Meeting 7/10/2024 (OVW) (email sent 22/10/2024)
- q) Nominate your local sporting hero! - 2 weeks to go! (CCC) (email sent 22/10/2024)
- r) Upcoming Network Event with Planning Aid Wales (OVW) (email sent 23/10/2024)
- s) Annual Financial Timetable of Actions (OVW) (email sent 23/10/2024)
- t) Town & Community Councils Update (CCC) (email sent 1/11/2024)
- u) CAVS - Carmarthenshire Food Network (email sent 1/11/2024)
- v) Pethau Bychain Nature Network (OVW) (email sent 5/11/2024)
- w) Carers Rights Day 2024 with Carers Trust Crossroads West Wales (CCC) (email sent 5/11/2024)
- x) Department of Work and Pension Scam (OVW) (email sent 5/11/2024)
- y) £1.5 Million Funding for Safe and Warm Hubs Across Wales (OVW) (email sent 5/11/2024)
- z) RE: Consultation on Extending of the Carmarthenshire County Council (Dog Control) Public Spaces Protection Order 2016 (CCC) (email sent 5/11/2024)
- aa) New consultation: Legislation (Procedure, Publication and Repeals) (Wales) Bill (OVW) (email sent 5/11/2024)
- bb) Tenancy Engagement Officer (CCC) (email sent 7/11/2024)
- cc) CARMARTHENSHIRE LIVING WELL CENTRE (email sent 7/11/2024)
- dd) Consultation of Draft Supplementary Planning Guidance (CCC forward planning) (email sent 11/11/2024)
- ee) Call for Evidence on Dog Fouling Issues Affecting Sports Fields in Carmarthenshire (CCC) (email sent 11/11/2024)

Members requested that the clerk ask if they can have a toolkit.

- ff) Keep Wales Tidy form – Betws Park/Volunteer Group (email sent 11/11/2024)

Members suggested that the volunteer group would have the answers/information required, the Chair would speak with one of the volunteers when he checks Betws Park next.

- gg) FOR INFO / ONWARD CASCADE: Digital Inclusion - Free Pension Credit Webinars (OVW) (email sent 13/11/2024)

- hh) **One Voice Wales - Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales - Consultation on draft Annual Report 2025 (OVW) (email sent 13/11/2024)**
- ii) **Wales Climate Week 11- 15 November Public Engagement on Climate Change in Wales (OVW) (email sent 13/11/2024)**
- jj) **Consultation - role, governance and accountability of the community and town council sector - Response to the Senedd – (OVW) (email sent 13/11/2024)**

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

10. To discuss and update the Councillor Training Plan to be uploaded onto the website as per Section 67 of the 2021 Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act to meet the Council's statutory obligation – Cllr Stacey to email documents to members for their comments (see point 10 of meeting 11/9/2024)

This item was deferred again, and moved to the December meeting as Cllr Stacey had sent his apologies.

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) – no documents received from Land Registry to date. –** No correspondence received to date.
- b) **Betws RFC – report to be given by Cllr Emyr Morgan –** informed members that a meeting is to be held on 14th November 2024, also, that they are happy for payment for room rent to be made at end of financial year. The pitch rental has been sorted. There is a new treasurer and secretary. There will be an AGM on 21st November where the RFC committee members will resign and be re-elected. Cllr Comley informed members that their constitution was not correct and that he has changed it.

The clerk mentioned that the annual lease check was due for 2024/2025 and that copies of the lease check would be sent to Cllr Morgan so that he may prepare, date TBC in the December meeting.

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 – minutes to be received by the clerk for the meeting which was held on 16 July 2024 – Cllr Stacey –** as apologies had been sent and no minutes have been received to date this will be deferred to the next meeting.
- i) **Update on the audit of the signage for the 3 Recreation Areas –** this had been discussed in the April and was on the Agenda for the July meeting.

b) Betws Park –

- i) Update – Cllr Phillips/Stacey – apologies sent by both Cllrs. However, the chair has been checking the park weekly.

Correspondence received

a) Emails regarding damage to Pentwyn Steps (emails sent 19/9/2024)

Wrenvale had emailed the clerk to inform that they could carry out the repair to the steps.

Discussion regarding the concrete commemorative bench which is situated on the large Pentwyn steps which needs to be repaired as there is a chunk missing which looks like there are metal bars inside the concrete structure which may have corroded.

The clerk was asked to contact the local stone mason so that he can advise on the repairs and the costs involved.

b) Various emails regarding Anti-social behaviour and cannabis smoking in Betws Park (emails sent 10,11,12, 14 October 2024)

c) Strategy meeting for the Local Places for Nature Showcase Event at Y Senedd. (OVW) (email sent 23/9/2024,13/11/2024)

d) Emails regarding trees in Betws Park (email sent 17/10/2024) the contractor has felled some of the trees as required by the tree inspection.

e) Bins for Betws Park and other recreation grounds within Betws (email sent 22/10/2024) see g) below

f) Email regarding memorial garden area (email sent 21/10/2024)

Discussion ensued Cllr Jones and the contractor have met and going to put in amongst the plants that are already in situ various shrubs to maintain interest throughout the year. It was proposed that Cllr Jones would obtain the costs/number of new shrubs required/planting from the contractor and bring the costings back to the next meeting. Planting by March 2025.

g) Various emails regarding Bins in Betws Park

Cllr Derrick would fix the bin once it has been spray painted the red bins black.

Cllr Jones reminded members that it costs £50 to empty each bin that are in the recreation areas.

h) Email regarding the logs in Betws Park

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

ii) Betws Park railings – Cllr Comley if any changes –

The Probation Service are yet to continue with the rubbing down and painting of the railings in Betws Park Cllr Comley informed members that the Supervisor covers Pembrokeshire and Carmarthenshire now but the job is on the to do list and weather permitting they hope to begin soon.

Cllr Comley informed members that there are a lot of railings which are rotting on the bottom as they have been covered in soil and he is going to ask the probation service to dig away so that the extent of the rotting can be established.

c) Maesquarre and Heol Y Felin Playground – update –

- i) Annual Playground Inspection Reports – Cllrs Comely and Derrick to update- details in Rec Meeting minutes of 16 July 2024.** Cllrs Comely and Derrick will begin their fortnightly inspections of the playgrounds next year from 1 April 2025 when the current contractors contract ends.
- ii) New cradle swings at Heol Y Felin -** have been installed by the contractor on 4/11/2024, the new chains have also been installed.
- iii) Feedback from Cllrs Derrick regarding the Castle/Tema unit repairs –** repairs completed.
- iv) MYB grant for Maesquarre Phase 2 and Sustainable Communities Fund Round 4 – Update regarding grant funding on phase 2 of the Maesquarre project – Cllr Phillips** this was covered at point 4 number 8.
- v) Rynat Certificates update ref training for 2 Councillors in April 2024 (email sent 22/10/2024)** the clerk gave the 2 councillors copies of their certificates.

Correspondence received

- a) Grass Play Field - Heol Y Felin (Adjacent to Betws Rugby Club) – goal nets (email sent 25/9/2024) – Cllr James** Discussion ensued and the quotes for the moveable goal posts were discussed. They would like removeable goal posts that can be fixed into the ground not moveable ones and no nets. Clerk to get quotes.
- d) Finance and Staffing Committee –** Cllr James informed members that there are new financial regulations that will need to be agreed and adopted in the December meeting.
- e) Community Engagement and Events Committee –** Cllr James (see comments above point 1 at beginning of the meeting – Remembrance Service and Christmas Lighting event
- f) i) Toolkit working group -** Good Councillor Guide to Employment 2023 to adopt? As only noted in 14 June 2023 meeting at point 9a. – work in progress - to be re-visited once the new contracts and recreation ground management plan has been completed as per F and G below.
- g) New Contracts for 1 April 2024 working group –** update – ref playground and grounds maintenance contracts - Cllr Phillips/Jones/Stacey – waiting for documents to be shared by Cllr Stacey with members for their comments prior to approval.
- h) Draft documents** for the new contracts to be approved by council to enable to the clerk to send out the documents to the 3 companies who have given their expressions of interest regarding F and G – Cllr Jones/Stacey – as Cllr Stacey had sent his apologies the draft documents are still to be shared with members.

Next meeting is Wednesday 11th December 2024.

The meeting Closed at 21:40.