



Minutes of the Meeting of the Council
held at the Council Meeting Room, Trane Cemetery, Tonyrefail
at 6.30pm on Thursday, 16th March 2023

Present: Cllr Linda Michel (Chair)
Cllr Maria Balestrazzi
Cllr Austin Davies
Cllr Mary Davies
Cllr Glenn Evans
Cllr Debra James
Cllr Dan Owen-Jones
Cllr Greg Powell
Cllr Amanda Richards

Absent: Cllr Karen Webb

Officers: Ms Jo van Tonder (Clerk & RFO)

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Danny Grehan.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made.

3. Public Questions

No members of the public were present.

4. Minutes of the previous meeting: ~~13th~~ 16th ¹ February 2023

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: To agree the minutes of the Meeting held on ~~13th~~ 16th February 2023 as a true and accurate record.

5. Matters arising from the minutes

There were no matters arising from the previous meeting's minutes that were discussed.

6. Guest speaker: Chris Goldring (Coalfield Flower Farm)

The Chair welcomed Chris Goldring of Coalfield Flower Farm and invited him to address the meeting.

Chris began by talking of his and Katie's backgrounds in mental health, and explaining that the farm, operating as a CIC, would be growing cut flowers with the aim of offering space to improve mental health through being outdoors and in nature.

¹ Amendment to minutes agreed F/C Meeting 20th April 2023

It was envisaged the centre would offer volunteering opportunities and training as well as hosting wellbeing and flower growing workshops.

Chris went on to reiterate the site would be operated on an environmentally friendly basis, promoting local biodiversity.

Councillors were given the opportunity to ask questions and these were covered as follows:

- Sustainable funding – being a CIC gives the organisation longevity beyond grant funding; additional income will be generated through flower sales.
- Immediate needs – the access road to the site is in a poor state of disrepair. Cllr Owen-Jones suggested a local contractor working in the area might be in a position to have that road included in their schedule of works.
- Visiting the farm – Open days will be held once up and running.
- Progress to date – thirty beds are in place as is a compost toilet with the installation of a polytunnel, imminent.
- Supply of summer flowers to Council – this is certainly possible going forward.

Following questions, Chris was thanked for his presentation and left the meeting.

7. Consultations

a) RCT Revised Local Development Plan 2022 – 2037

Members were reminded that the deadline for comment on this initial phase of the LDP was the following week, 21st March.

Members spent some time discussing issues affecting the area including the strain that development had placed on local health providers, schools and general infrastructure.

It was noted that, because of Tonyrefail's good access routes and abundance of green space available for development, relative to other parts of Rhondda Cynon Taf, Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) rates were lower for this Council than some others within the County Borough.

Cllr Evans advised that Welsh Government were looking to upgrade and review planning policy guidance in terms of environmental impact (see 7(b), below).

It was agreed the Council's comments needed to include:

- Prioritisation of derelict and brownfield sites,
- Protection of environments and green space deemed of value,
- Robust enforcement of Planning Policy, and
- Inclusion of health service providers as consultees to planning applications for development over a certain size.

Action: Councillors to circulate comments by no later than 20th March

Action: Clerk and Chair to draft a comment for agreement via e-mail; forward to RCTCBC no later than 21st March

b) Planning Policy Wales: net benefit for biodiversity and ecosystems' resilience

Cllr Evans advised that the deadline for comment on the consultation on potentially promising targeted policy changes to *Planning Policy Wales on Net benefit for Biodiversity and Ecosystems Resilience* was 31st May 2023.

He suggested the importance of both making the public aware of the vulnerability of local green spaces and scoping public opinion on matters concerning the local environment. It was agreed there appeared to be a growing awareness and ill-feeling within the community of how planning decisions were impacting on the environment.

Members discussed holding a public consultation at each of the four community halls during this consultation period with a view to gauging the communities' views to help inform the Council's comments.

8. Finance, Governance and Administration

a) Switch to Unity Bank

Members noted the application had been completed and signatories were in the process of signing off the paperwork.

b) Representative on One Voice Wales Area Committee

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: To appoint Cllr Linda Michel as the Council's representative on OVW Area Committee.

c) Purchase of Brightpay subscription 2023/24

The Clerk outlined the benefits of Brightpay payroll software and advised that members of staff would be able to access their own information such as payslips and leave through the online portal.

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: To subscribe to Brightpay for the year 2023/24 at a cost of £189.00 (excl. VAT).

d) Payments made – February 2023

Members noted the list of payments made for February 2023.

e) Accounts for payment – March 2023

The following payments due were presented to members where it was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: To approve the payment of invoices due by cheque or direct debit.

707151	Nico – translation costs	£ 66.00
707152	Amazon – various consumables, stationery	£ 51.23
707153	Forest Park & Garden – two-stroke engine oil	£ 50.40
707154	Audit Wales – 2020/21 audit fee	£ 354.00
707155	Pauline Williams – reimbursement of expenses	£38.00
707156	The Windmill Restaurant – seniors' dinner	£ 2,300.00
707157	Shutter Door Services – electrification of garage door	£ 624.00
707159	Cllr L Michel – reimbursement of expenses	£ 13.12
707162	The Nearly Wild Show – replacement of cancelled cheque	£ 1,000.00
707163	Allcott Commercial – building survey (grant funded)	£ 2,034.00
	HMRC – PAYE and NI	£ 2,453.74
	RCTCBC – pensions	£ 2,416.50
DD	BT – telephone & broadband	£ 488.24
DD	Peac Finance – quarterly rental of photocopier	£ 222.00
DD	Screwfix – drill, consumables	£ 232.20
DD	Certas – fuel	£ 146.66
DD	Brightpay – annual payroll subscription 2023/24	£ 226.80
DD	Barclays – BACS charges	£ 22.14
	Total Payments	£ 12,739.03

9. Refurbishment of Cemetery toilets

The Clerk advised the Council had been successful in its bid for a Shared Prosperity Fund grant in the amount of £1,945 and that the building survey would take place on 21st March 2023.

10. Events Committee update

Cllr Owen-Jones reminded members of the upcoming Covid Memorial Service where members of the public would be able to plant pots of daffodils, and asked for help with setting up from 9:30am. Rev Ernie Banwell had agreed to give the service.

Cllr Michel advised she had purchased cakes for the event. The Clerk confirmed the plaque, donated by Gareth Evans & Son Memorial Masons, would be installed in time for the event.

Cllr Owen-Jones updated members on plans for the Coronation event to take place at the leisure centre on Sunday, 7th May 2023 between 12:00 and 3:00pm.

Tickets, free of charge, would soon be available to Tonyrefail and district residents who could expect food boxes, refreshments and the provision of family entertainment.

Cllr A Davies advised that the committee had authorised the purchase of green logo'd polo shirts that all councillors and members of staff helping out on the day would be wearing. A suitably high-resolution image of the Council's logo was required.

11. Cemetery Committee update

Cllr Evans advised members he had been elected Committee Chair at the meeting of the committee on 28th February.

Members were updated on various matters concerning the Cemetery; these being the refurbishment of the public toilets and associated bid for funding, the payment of a goodwill gesture for a damaged plinth and the outcome of the cemetery inspection conducted the week prior to the committee meeting.

In addition, Cllr Evans advised that the committee would be looking to purchase second-hand heavy machinery with monies included in the budget for machinery hire. A short discussion took place around this.

Cllr Evans advised that addressing the water ingress at the office block remained a priority. Members discussed having a porch in front of the doorway and agreed this would prevent rain water from pooling in front of, and seeping under the entrance doors.

Cllr Owen-Jones agreed to draw up some preliminary plans.

It was agreed to consider the recommendations of the building survey scheduled for later in the month, and discuss further at the next meeting.

12. Cemetery Extension land purchase

The Clerk advised that further correspondence had been received from the Council's solicitors requesting further information in order to finalise the transfer documents. She advised that it was taking time to locate the information required.

13. Update on repairs to Council van

The Clerk advised members that the vehicle had been taken to a commercial garage for investigations where it was confirmed there was a fault with the third gear. She had been informed that this was a common problem with this particular model of vehicle.

The local Mitsubishi dealership, Nathaniel Motors, had confirmed there was a third gear repair kit available and so the vehicle has been taken there for repairs.

14. Correspondence received: Diolch am 20 / Thanks for 20

Members considered the previously circulated email correspondence from the *20s Plenty* group wherein Councils were asked to support the *20s Plenty* campaign. An offer of assistance with promoting the introduction of the 20mph default speed limit in September 2023 was extended to all Councils.

Some members were in favour of the lower speed limit whilst others were not and it was agreed to take the matter to a vote.

Following discussion, it was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: To abstain from promotion of the introduction of the revised speed limit.

15. Planning & Development Control

a) 22/1399/10 – Shed (retrospective) at 128 Highfields, Tonyrefail, CF39 8GA

Members noted the additional information provided and had no objections to the proposed works.

b) 23/0148/10 – Timber frame car shelter at Rosedene, Gilfach Road, Tonyrefail, CF39 8HL

Members had no objections to the proposed works.

c) 23/0168/09 – Rear flat roof dormer and velux rooflights at 110 Worcester Court, Tonyrefail, CF39 8JT

Members had no objections to the proposed permitted development works.

16. Matters pertaining to Staffing

Members resolved to introduce Standing Order 3(d) - by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted; members of the press and public shall be excluded.

a) Review of Clerk's hours

In light of the significant additional hours currently worked by the Clerk, it was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: To a) increase the Clerk's contracted hours from 32 to 35 per week, and
 b) pay the Clerk for additional hours worked to date.

To be reviewed in June 2023.

Conclusion of Standing Order 3(d)

17. Date of the next meeting

The next ordinary meeting of the Council will be on 20th April 2023 at 6.30pm.

Meeting concluded at 8:23pm.