TONYREFAIL & DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL
CYNGOR CYMUNED TONYREFAIL A'R CYLCH

CLERK: JO VAN TONDER

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c/o TRANE CEMETERY
GILFACH ROAD
TONYREFAIL, PORTH,

Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held at the Council Meeting Room, Trane Cemetery, Tonyrefail at 6.30pm on Thursday, 20th April 2023

Present: Cllr Dan Owen-Jones (Vice-Chair)
Cllr Maria Balestrazzi
Cllr Glenn Evans
Cllr Danny Grehan (late arrival)
Cllr Debra James (late arrival)
Cllr Amanda Richards
Cllr Karen Webb (late arrival)

Absent: Cllr Greg Powell

Officers: Ms Jo van Tonder (Clerk & RFO)

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs Austin Davies, Mary Davies and Linda Michel. Cllr Danny Grehan had advised the Clerk he would be late.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made.

3. Public Questions

Members of the public present were invited to address the Council.

6:38pm – Cllrs D James and K Webb arrived.

1. Tonyrefail Action Group explained that the landowner of property alongside a piece of SSSI land was allegedly causing the destruction of hedgerow bordering this land. TAG was looking to create a buffer zone that would provide an accessible area for use by the community. The Council was asked to support them in this endeavour.

   Action: Clerk to put on the agenda for consideration at the earliest opportunity.

6:49pm – Cllr D Grehan arrived.

2. Objections were raised to the proposed construction of a block of 14 flats on the WR Bishop & Co. Wholesalers site on Penrhiwfer Road (see 14(d) - 23/0290/10, below).
3. The Clerk read from an e-mail received wherein the correspondent asked the Council to consider funding the purchase and installation of CCTV on Waunrhydd Road and advised previous discussions with RCTCBC had indicated the County Borough would be willing to host and maintain the data.

   Action: Clerk to put on the agenda for consideration at the earliest opportunity.

4. Minutes of the previous meeting: 16th March 2023

The Clerk advised that an amendment to the draft minutes was required. The date of the previous meeting stated in *Min 4: Minutes of the previous meeting* should have read ***16th February*** as opposed to 13th February.

It was proposed, seconded and

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

5. Matters arising from the minutes

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

6. Consultations

a) RCT Revised Local Development Plan 2022 – 2037

Members noted the previously circulated and agreed Council response to the RCT LDP 2022 – 2037 consultation.

b) Recommendations of the Independent Review of the Ethical Standards Framework

The Clerk reminded members that the Ethical Standards Framework was of particular pertinence to all councillors. Members agreed to consider the recommendations and circulate their comments.

7. Finance, Governance and Administration

a) Draft Accounts FYE 2023

The Clerk reiterated that the accounts presented were subject to year end adjustments yet to be finalised, however, they still represented a fair reflection on the Council's overall financial position at year end.

Members considered the anticipated level of general reserve available for 2023/24 and noted it was expected to represent in the region of 27% of general expenditure after taking into account the 2023/24 budget deficit; in line with the Council's Reserve Policy.

Following the Clerk's recommendation to set aside certain budget surpluses totalling £31,500 to earmarked reserves, it was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: To transfer

- i) £3,000 to earmarked reserves for Election Costs,
- ii) £16,000 to earmarked reserves for Cemetery Maintenance,
- iii) £1,000 to earmarked reserves for Audit Fees,
- iv) £7,600 to earmarked reserves for Christmas Lights, and
- v) £3,900 to earmarked reserves for Street Furniture.

b) Payments made – March 2023

Members noted the list of payments made for February 2023.

c) Accounts for payment – April 2023

The Clerk advised there was an additional payment to be added to the list previously circulate, that being Clerk's expenses in the amount of £2,421.23. Members reviewed the Clerk's receipts which were for the repairs to the van (£2,025.23) and autism awareness training for all staff (£396.00).

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 bank transfer.

Unity Bank EFT	Function 28 – IT support	£48.00
	~~RCTCBC – Trade waste collection~~	~~£1,916.20~~
	Zurich Municipal - insurance	£5,028.45
	Amazon Business	£29.90
	ICCM – annual membership	£95.00
	One Voice Wales – annual subscription	£1,438.00
	Viking Direct – stationery	£203.24
	One Voice Wales – training fees	£140.00
DD	Certras Energy – vehicle & machinery fuel	£71.05
EFT	Ms J van Tonder – Clerk's expenses (see above)	£2,421.23
	Total Payments	**£9,474.87***

** Total restated to exclude RCTCBC invoice presented in error (awaiting part credit note) and to include Clerk's expenses (see above)*

8. Strategic Plan 2023 – 2027

The Clerk presented a summary of the results of the councillor questionnaire that had been circulated. Respondents felt the Council contributed adequately to the Welsh Government's Wellbeing objectives of creating a more equal Wales, of cohesive communities and a Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh language. However, respondents felt the Council only somewhat or not at all met the objectives of promoting a more prosperous, resilient, healthy and globally responsible Wales.

From the results of the questionnaire, three areas of Council business had been highlighted as priorities for inclusion in the Strategic Plan; these being Governance, Community Engagement and the Environment.

The next step would be to consider what actions the Council could take over the short-, medium- and long-term to meet the Council's Wellbeing Duty obligations as well as target the areas of council business deemed to be of greatest importance at this present time.

9. Matters pertaining to Cemetery

a) Building Survey of Trane Cemetery

Members were presented with the previously circulated building survey that had been completed in March on all buildings on the Trane Cemetery site.

It was agreed maintenance had been neglected over the years and that this must now be a priority.

It was noted the building survey had highlighted issues of significance at the operations block with a recommendation that remedial works be carried out within one year.

Following discussion, it was

Resolved: To prioritise the Operations Block for remedial works.

b) Remedial works to Operations block

<u>Remedial works</u>

The Clerk advised she had approached a number of building contractors to obtain quotations for the required remedial works but had only had a response from one. She advised the majority of those she had contacted were not taking on additional work or were running on several months' lead time.

The Clerk was given the contact names of other local contractors and asked to try to secure further quotations for consideration at the next meeting.

Bees

The Clerk advised members it had come to her attention that there was a significant colony of honey bees in residence within the fabric of the Operations Block. A specialist bee removal contractor had been contacted and would be conducting a site survey the following day.

When asked if Tonyrefail Apiary had been contacted, the Clerk confirmed they had and that they were not in a position to assist with the removal of the hive.

c) SPF Funding bid for refurbishment of upper toilet block

The Clerk advised members the deadline for submitting a bid to the second round of the Shared Prosperity Fund was 12th May and that it was becoming increasingly unlikely the Council would be in a position to bid for the refurbishment of the upper toilet block on account of the difficulty the Clerk was experiencing securing the required quotations.

In order not to miss out on this funding opportunity, the Clerk was given plenary powers to submit a bid for another project should it not be possible to complete the application for the toilet refurbishment in time.

10. NRW Management Agreement in relation to Council-owned SSSI land

The Clerk reported she and the Grounds Maintenance Supervisor, had met with the NRW Officer the previous day to inspect the site. NRW proposed to engage contractors to remove selected trees and substantial dead wood, as well as to brush cut the entire site in readiness for the Council to take over ongoing maintenance. The Council would receive £200 per annum to cover the cost of this.

Cllr G Evans pointed out that on page one of the Agreed Management Policy, the site was erroneously stated as being located on the *eastern* outskirts of Tonyrefail. The Clerk was asked to advise NRW that the site was in fact to the west of Tonyrefail.

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: To accept the Management Policy and authorise the Clerk to sign the Management Agreement on behalf of the Council.

11. Members' Motions

a) Maintenance and safeguarding of footpath network – Cllr G Evans

Cllr G Evans presented his motion regarding the maintenance and safeguarding of country footpaths and public access routes within the district. He expressed deep concern at the attitude of landowners toward those making use of these routes as well as their responsibilities to maintain and keep open PRoWs.

It was agreed that while RCTCBC was either not willing or unable to take enforcement action, the situation would continue. Members discussed the challenges facing RCTCBC in terms of needing to put up barriers and gates on footpaths in response to complaints of motorbikes and other anti-social activity on the network. However, it was felt the Borough Council needed constant pressure applied.

It was

Resolved: To approve the submission of Cllr G Evans' draft letter to Mick Antoniw MS.

Resolved: To copy and send the same letter to all local Senedd members, Leader of RCTCBC and Cllr Gareth Caple (RCTCBC).

b) Enforcement of unlawfully blocked PRoWs – Cllr D James

Cllr D James reiterated what had been discussed on the previous agenda item and proffered a list of rights of way most affecting the community in terms of obstructing lawful use.

Action: Clerk to agenda for further discussion at the earliest opportunity.

c) Adoption of gate supplied by the British Horse Society – Cllr D James

Cllr D James referred to a section of unregistered land along a Public Right of Way ANT/109 in the vicinity of Tylcha Fach. She advised a locked gate was unlawfully obstructing the PRoW and being used as stock control by the local farmer. RCTCBC had advised Cllr James that they would remove the gate but would not replace it with an appropriate gate suitable for a PRoW.

Cllr James advised the British Horse Society (BHS) would provide the gate if the Council agreed to adopt it and agree to the ongoing maintenance thereof.

Following discussion, it was

Resolved: To write to the Head of Highways, RCTCBC requesting the Borough Council takes on the maintenance of the gate to be provided by BHS on the grounds that ANT/109 represents a critical link in the local network of byways.

8:31pm – Council resolved to suspend standing order 3(w) to allow the meeting to exceed 2 hours.

d) Fundraising for the Eisteddfod – Cllr D Grehan

Cllr D Grehan advised members that the 2024 Eisteddfod would be hosted by Rhonnda Cynon Taf. As such, RCTCBC was asking all Councils and community groups to assist with fundraising to contribute towards the cost of hosting the event.

It was agreed the Council would support the Eisteddfod.

Resolved: To request the Events Committee to look at hosting a fundraising event.

12. Leasing of BT Telephone box to Yr Efail Community Group

Members were advised of a request by Yr Efail Community Group to make use of the Council-owned BT Telephone box located on Mill Street for the purposes of creating a community book repository.

The purpose for which the box was purchased by the Council in 2020 was debated and it was suggested it had been the Council's intention to house a defibrillator therein. Cllr Owen-Jones advised he had a unit he wished to gift to the Council. The Clerk advised members that Council would need to resolve to accept the gift as there would be ongoing commitments associated with a defibrillator.

Following further discussion, it was

Resolved: To refuse the request from the Community Group to lease the telephone box until such time as the Council has explored its own use of the box.

Action: Clerk to agenda for further discussion at the earliest opportunity.

Action: Clerk to revert to past minutes to establish when it was agreed that the telephone box would be used for a defibrillator.

Action: Clerk to determine if the power supply to the box was still live.

8:55pm – Cllr A Richards left the meeting.

13. Update on repairs to Council van

It was noted the van had been repaired at a cost of £2,025.23 and was back in use.

14. Planning & Development Control

a) 23/0136/10 – Single storey rear extension, new railed platform to side and rear at 26 Parc Dan Y Bryn, Tonyrefail, CF39 8JS

Members had no objections to the proposed works.

b) **23/0227/10 – Two storey front/side extension, rear retaining wall at 49 Celyn Isaf, Tonyrefail, CF39 8AN**

Members had no objections to the proposed works.

c) **23/0287/10 – Ground floor extension at 28 Heol Islwyn, Tonyrefail, CF39 8NR**

Members had no objections to the proposed works.

d) **23/0290/10 – Demolition of existing warehouse, construction of a block of 14 affordable apartments, parking and amenity areas at WR Bishop & Co. Fruit & Veg Wholesale, Penrhiwfer Road, Tonyrefail, CF39 8EY**

It was agreed the Council would respond to this application in support of residents who objected to the development, highlighting concerns around access and the flats overlooking neighbouring properties.

e) **23/0292/10 – Two storey extension to the rear at 10 Hazel Court, Tonyrefail, CF39 8NA**

Members had no objections to the proposed works.

f) **23/0353/09 – Single storey rear extension, extension to outbuilding at 34 Beechwood Drive, Tonyrefail, CF39 8JE**

Members had no objections to the proposed works.

15. Date of the next meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Council will be on 18th May 2023 at 6:00pm.

The Ordinary Meeting of the Council will follow the Annual Meeting on 18th May 2023.

Meeting concluded at 9:05pm.