



Minutes of the Meeting of the Council
held at the Council Meeting Room, Trane Cemetery, Tonyrefail
at 6:30pm on Thursday, 16th November 2023

Present: Cllr Linda Michel (Chair)
Cllr Austin Davies
Cllr Mary Davies
Cllr Glenn Evans (Vice Chair)
Cllr Danny Grehan
Cllr Debra James
Cllr Dan Owen-Jones
Cllr Greg Powell
Cllr Amanda Richards
Cllr Ceirion Skym

Officers: Ms Jo van Tonder (Clerk & RFO)

1. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr Karen Webb.

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made.

3. Public Questions

There were no members of the public present or online.

4. Minutes of the previous meeting: 19th October 2023

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: To agree the minutes of the Meeting held on 19th October 2023 as a true and accurate record.

5. Co-option to fill Casual Vacancy: Coedely ward

It was noted that, following a public invitation for expressions of interest in the vacancy, one application had been received.

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: To co-opt Mr Ceirion Skym to the Council representing the ward of Coedely.

Mr Skym signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office as witnessed by and in the presence of the Clerk.

6. Finance, Governance and Administration

a) Social Media Policy

Members considered the draft Social Media Policy as presented.

It was agreed to include clauses reflecting the Council's commitment to the Welsh language. Clerk to amend and recirculate for adoption at the earliest opportunity.

b) Payments made – October 2023

The following payments were made since the last meeting:

	Cheque No.	Amount
Grants awarded:		
Friends of St. Johns	300002	350.00
Cymuned Penrhiwfer & Williamstown	300003	360.00
Richard Williams Singers	300004	400.00
Tonyrefail Welfare Football Club	300005	400.00
Tonyrefail Welfare Ladies Football Club	300006	400.00
Tylcha Wen Allotments	300007	400.00
Taff Ely Ladies Choir	300008	500.00
Gentlemen Songsters	300010	312.00
Tonyrefail Mini Junior Rugby Club	300011	500.00
Coedely Community Centre	300012	500.00
Tonyrefail Environment Association	300013	335.00
Coedely Sweeney Football Club (To replace Cheque 300009)	EFT	400.00
Fireworks Displays:		
Capel Farm Resource Centre	300014	250.00
ACE Edmondstown	300015	250.00
Total Payments		£5,357.00

c) Accounts for payment – November 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 bank transfer.

		Cheque No.	Amount
Unity Bank EFT	The Royal British Legion	300016	20.00
	U Design	EFT	361.92
	Teleshore UK	EFT	282.48
	Gilfach Goch Fire and Rescue Service	EFT	2,645.33
	Rycon Power Tools (2 invoices)	EFT	1,606.08
	Forest Park & Garden	EFT	519.00
	CleanMate Ltd.	EFT	223.04
	RCTCBC – Superannuation October 2023	EFT	2,959.48
	HMRC – Tax and N.I. October 2023	EFT	2,610.32
	Lewis Merthyr Band	EFT	400.00
	DPS Construction & Maintenance	EFT	8,909.80
Direct Debits	Barclays Bank – Bank charges	DD	6.09
	Biffa Waste Services	DD	170.83
	Certras Energy	DD	174.50
	Function 28 – website hosting	DD	48.00
	ICE Communications – telephone & broadband	DD	13.97
	RCTCBC – Rates	DD	83.00
	Screwfix/B & Q	DD	159.83
	Thesaurus Software – payroll	DD	5.60
	Xero – accounting software	DD	39.00
	DVLA	DD	28.00
	Welsh Water	DD	26.00
Total Payments			£21,292.27

7. Footpath Maintenance

a) Maintenance of selected footpaths currently under RCTCBC duty to maintain

Members discussed the overall state of the District's footpath network and it was noted that RCTCBC were experiencing significant difficulty meeting their statutory obligations under the weight of unprecedented financial cuts.

It was agreed the Council had originally looked to take on some degree of responsibility for the maintenance of four to five key routes that fell within RCTCBC's remit.

The Clerk advised members that, should the Council incur expenditure in the pursuit of activities for which another government body has a statutory duty to provide, the principle of Double Taxation would apply. A Council resolution to take on that activity, albeit informally, would be required.

It was noted the Council had budgeted £500 in 2023/24 for footpaths.

Following discussion, it was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: 1. To ringfence the £500 footpath budget for the purposes of covering the cost of select footpath maintenance, and
2. To commit funds from the Council's budget to cover a service for which RCTCBC has a statutory duty to perform but is unable to fulfil.

It was agreed to write to RCTCBC advising them of the state of the footpath network.

b) Delegated authority to OAR Committee to select footpaths

It was agreed the matter of the maintenance of footpaths would be progressed further by the OAR Committee.

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: To delegate authority to select the footpaths to be maintained with the £500 budget to the OAR Committee.

8. Payment of annual First Aider allowance

The Clerk explained that all staff holding a valid First Aider qualification had, for as long as memory served, received an annual allowance. She advised that this allowance was not included in staff contracts. Members noted the allowance amounted to £105 per person for the previous few years.

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: To uphold the longstanding arrangement and pay a First Aider allowance of £105 to all staff holding valid qualifications.

Resolved: To include a clause to this effect in all future contracts of employment.

9. Committee Updates

a) Events Committee

The Clerk was asked to extend the Council's thanks to all staff for the outstanding effort in making the Remembrance Day Service a success.

Members noted the timings for the service had gone awry. It was suggested that all participants with speaking parts should be made aware of the tight timings in future.

Members noted various other minor suggestions to improve the event in the following year as well as the need for repair works to be carried out on the memorial itself.

Cllr D Owen-Jones advised members of the arrangements for the Christmas lights switch-on on 30th November that would involve local celebrity, Terry Walton. It was noted the eleven new Christmas lights the Council had ordered would not have arrived in time for the switch-on.

Cllr A Davies advised that the Christmas event would be at the school on 3rd December from 12pm to 5pm. A band and the Taff Ely Ladies Choir would be in attendance.

b) Cemetery Committee

Cllr G Evans reported the committee had recently undertaken an inspection of the Cemetery and had been pleased with what they found.

It was noted, however, that the public toilets were in urgent and dire need of repair. Members discussed possible funding avenues for the works.

Members were advised the sewers and drainage system at the upper Cemetery had not been inspected for some time and was in need of surveying.

10. Planning & Development Control

a) 23/1204/10 – First floor rear extension above single storey extension at 7 Pritchard Street, Tonyrefail

No objection.

b) 23/1184/38 – Discharge of condition 3 (highways design and engineering details) of planning permission 22/1004/16 at Rhondda Bowl Skittle Alley, Waunrhydd Road, Tonyrefail

Noted.

It was commented that the security at the now-empty premises was a problem but that the police were aware.

c) 23/1205/39 – Non material amendment to planning permission 22/0828/10 to change facing brick work from Kassanddra Multi red to Hinton Russett at Land off Gilfach Road, West of Trane Cemetery, Tonyrefail

Noted.

d) 23/1240/10 – Proposed external plant upgrade to existing class 1 retail unit at The Cooperative Food, Penrhiwfer Road, Tonyrefail

Noted.

11. Members' Reports – for information only

Cllr D Grehan:

a) reported back from the previous night's PACT meeting where there had been concerns raised over the rubbish and rats at the Rhondda Bowl site.

b) concerns of an increase in the amount of water coming off the bypass. It was thought this may improve when works come to an end.

c) advised skatepark drainage scheme has been approved by RCTCBC and the project will go ahead in the new year.

d) reported the St John's Road flats development had been granted planning permission despite County Councillors speaking out against the proposal.

Cllr D James:

a) reported she and Cllr D Grehan had visited the Crofft-yr-haidd lane that used to be unusable but had benefited from having been cleared by volunteers. Landowners wanting to keep off-road vehicles away had been in contact with RCTCBC to get the gates locked.

Cllr G Evans:

a) reminded members that severe austerity and hardship was on its way for the following year and that the Council should be doing something. Cllr A Davies suggested the CAB could be invited to hold a drop-in service in Tonyrefail.

Members went on to discuss the growing drug trade in the area. It was noted drug pushing was taking place out in the open and was aimed at school aged children who were going on to use the drugs in public places.

Action: Clerk to write to the Chair of the Tonyrefail Community School Governing Body expressing the Council's concern at the level of drug dealing and consumption impacting both on the community and the school's pupils.

Action: Clerk to include the provision of CCTV on the next agenda.
Members to arrange meeting with Chamber of Trade.

Introduction of Standing Order 3(d) – exclusion of members of the press and public

12. Update on Cemetery expansion land purchase

The Clerk advised members that the previously agreed contract amendments had been communicated to the Council's conveyancer to pass on to the seller.

A response had not yet been received.

13. Date of the next meeting

The next meeting will be held on 18th January 2024.