

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF PONTYPOOL COMMUNITY COUNCIL**  
**HELD REMOTELY USING MICROSOFT TEAMS**  
**ON WEDNESDAY 29 SEPTEMBER 2021 AT 6.30 PM**

**In attendance:**

Councillor: Giles Davies (in the Chair)

and Councillors: Nick Byrne, Elaine Chilcott JP, Lynda Clark, Gaynor James, Keith James, Rosemary Matthews, John Killick, Norma Parrish, Ben Rapier, Nick Simons, Jackie Taylor, Barry Taylor JP

Officers: Richard Gwinnell (Acting Clerk) and Jane Wright (Assistant Clerk)

*The meeting was recorded for minute taking purposes as agreed by Members.*

168. **Questions from the Public**

No questions had been received from the public.

169. **Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Lizzie Hunt, Janet Jones, Nick Jones and Adrian Lang.

The Acting Clerk read out a letter sent in by Councillor Janet Jones on the 9 September explaining the reasons why she has been unable to attend Council meetings since November 2019 and thanking the Council for the letter sent in April wishing her well. She explained that she was still not well enough to attend meetings and will continue to submit her apologies for the next six months subject to the Council agreeing. Council unanimously agreed to give special dispensation for Councillor Janet Jones apologies for the next six months.

Councillor Keith James explained the reason Councillor Nick Jones was absent at this meeting and Council asked Councillor James to pass on their condolences.

**RESOLVED:**

(i) that Council award special dispensation to Councillor Janet Jones for her continued absence in not being able to attend Council/Committee meetings for the reasons outlined in her letter.

(ii) that Councillor Keith James pass on the Council's condolences to Councillor Nick Jones.

170. **Declarations of Interest**

Councillors Lynda Clarkson, Giles Davies, Gaynor James, Keith James, John Killick, and Norma Parrish declared personal and non-prejudicial interests in any agenda items relating to Torfaen County Borough Council (TCBC) as they were members of TCBC, as well as being members of Pontypool Community Council.

**RESOLVED:** that the Declarations of Interest be recorded.

**JW**

171. **Minutes of the Council meeting – 23 June 2021**

Members received the minutes of the Council meeting held on the 28 July 2021. These were agreed as a true record.

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 28 July 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

172. **Minutes of the Establishment Committee – 1 September 2021**

Members received minutes 123 - 125 of the Establishment Committee held on the 1 September 2021. These were confirmed as a true record subject to Councillor Norma Parrish name being included in apologies.

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the Establishment meeting held on 1 September be confirmed as a correct record subject to the appropriate amendment being made and signed by the Chair, and that the recommendations of the committee be adopted.

**JW**

173. **Minutes of the Policy & Finance Committee – 1 September 2021**

Members received the minutes of the Policy & Finance Committee held on 1 September 2021. Councillor Norma Parrish thanked Councillor John Killick for chairing the meeting while she was away on holiday.

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes of the Policy & Finance Committee held on 1 September 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair, and that the

**JW**

recommendations of the committee be adopted.

174. **Minutes of the Planning and Environment Committee  
8 September 2021**

Members received the minutes of the Planning Environment Committee held on 8 September 2021. These were confirmed as a true record subject to Councillor Elaine Chilcott JP being included in the list of members in attendance.

The Chair of Policy & Finance referred to minute 149 Accessible roundabout in Pontypool Park, she did not wish to comment on that but enquired if the Council are going to go through their usual procedure for ordering play equipment for their wards this year as she was aware that this has not been done for some time and that there must be money in the budget now. The Acting Clerk stated that he could not answer at this present time as he was unaware of the background but would make enquiries, establish the position and report back to Council.

The Chair of Planning referred to minute 153 plant a tree for the Jubilee where it states that costings be brought back to the next meeting in relation to either a tree(s) being planted in the park or siting a bench in celebration of the Jubilee. However, she stated that a bench in the park is going against what the Jubilee celebrations are about about as they are about planting a tree for the environment so she asked members if they would be willing to dismiss the bench and just obtain costings for a tree(s) along with an engraved plaque stating that the tree(s) had been provided by the Council. This was unanimously agreed.

**RESOLVED:** (i) that the minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee held on 14 July 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair subject to Councillor Elaine Chilcott JP being added to list of members in attendance, and that the recommendations of the committee be adopted.

**JW**

(ii) the Acting Clerk would establish the position in relation to play equipment and report back to the next meeting.

**RG**

(iii) that the siting of a bench be dismissed, and costings be brought back to the next Planning & Environment meeting for a tree(s) and an engraved plaque to be sited in Pontypool Park to celebrate the Queen's

**CP**

Jubilee celebrations.

175. **Minutes of the Events Committee – 15 September 2021**

Members received the minutes of the Events Committee held on 15 September 2021. These were confirmed as a true record subject to Councillor John Killick being removed from declaring an interest as he was not in attendance at that meeting.

The Chair of Events referred to minute 168 – Christmas lights/trees. She explained that the Council through Mr Phil Grimes purchase eleven Christmas trees every year, ten of these trees are paid for by Pontypool Community Council and Torfaen pay for the tree opposite the civic centre and then Torfaen reimburse PCC the cost. She referred to page 58 of the Pontypool Regeneration Partnership Group minutes where it states that PCC should pay the cost of the Pontypool tree sited opposite the Civic Centre as Torfaen are not paying for this tree this year, therefore she proposed that this be placed as an agenda item on next week's Policy and Finance committee to discuss whether the Council are going to cover the cost of the tree. This was seconded by the Chair of Policy and Finance.

It was unanimously agreed that an item be placed on the Policy & Finance Committee in order that that this can be discussed further at that Committee. The Acting Clerk stated that the Finance Officer would attend that meeting so would be able to report the relevant information in relation to Christmas tree costs in order that a decision can be made.

**RESOLVED:**

(i) that the minutes of the Events Committee held on 15 September 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair subject to Councillor John Killick being removed from declaring an interest, and that the recommendations of the committee be adopted.

**JW**

(ii) that an item be placed on the October Policy & Finance Committee to decide whether PCC will cover the cost of providing a Christmas tree opposite the Civic Centre this year.

**RG/  
JW**

176. **Minutes of the Youth Project Management Group – 16 August 2021**

Members received the minutes of the Youth Project Management Group held on 16 August 2021.

The Chair of Policy and Finance proposed that the Council sends a letter of congratulations and appreciation to Miss OW on the activities that the Youth Project have achieved to date as she was extremely impressed with that they achieved.

The Chair of Establishment informed the meeting that firstly he wanted to refer to the work and the number of different activities that took place during the 4 weeks of the summer holidays which are listed at the end of the report, and secondly the number of hours that were put in by Torfaen Youth Service. He stated that prior to the Council engaging with the Youth Project, Torfaen Youth Service were putting in very little time in the Pontypool area and during these 4 weeks Torfaen Youth Service put in 30.5 of work per week additional to the hours of Miss OW.

Secondly, he stated that the Youth Project has lost two of its staff, the one on the 12 hour a week post has obtained full time employment and the one on 6 hours a week has gone to university to study for a Youth and Community work degree. He stated it was fair to say that the young man who got the full-time job would have not gotten the job without the experience he had with Miss OW and the Youth Project, therefore they are presently advertising for those two posts, so are in a little bit of hiatus at present until those two posts are filled.

The Vice-Chair of Council informed the meeting just to give a little bit of background on Miss O.W had started the Youth service at Cold Barn Farm several years ago and he always remembered her first day, since then she has grown as a youth worker within the Youth Service and has grown even more through the Community council and is an absolutely credit to the Council for the work she is undertaking and the way she is delivering the project and the Council should be extremely proud of this. This was echoed by the Chair of Council and members.

**RESOLVED:** (i) that the minutes of the Youth Project Management group held on the 16 August be received and the information outlined by the Chair of Establishment be noted.

**RG**

(ii) that a letter of thanks and appreciation be sent to Miss O.W as outlined.

**RG**

(iii) that the Council note that the two Youth Project posts are presently being advertised.

**RG**

177. **Planning Applications**

Members received and considered Torfaen County Borough Council Planning Applications.

**RESOLVED:** that the observations (or absence of observations, as the case may be) outlined in the appendix attached to these minutes be submitted to Torfaen County Borough Council.

**AA/CP**

178. **Social Media Policy 2021**

Members received the Social Media Policy 2021 produced by the Acting Clerk in liaison with the Governance working party which had been presented to the Policy and Finance Committee in September. Council moved that they be adopted with them being reviewed every six months.

**RESOLVED:** that the Social Media Policy 2021 be adopted by Council with them being reviewed on a six-monthly basis.

**RG**

179. **Policy on relations with the Press and Media 2021**

Members received the Policy on relations with the Press and Media 2021 produced by the Acting Clerk in liaison with the Governance working party which had been presented to the Policy and Finance Committee in September. Council moved that they be adopted

**RESOLVED:** that the policy on relations with the Press and Media 2021 be adopted and reviewed on a yearly basis.

**RG**

180. **Pontypool Toilets**

The Council received information from Jo Lewis, Lead Finance Officer at Torfaen relating to the additional costs involved in the provision of the Pontypool toilets outside normal working hours. The Chair of Policy & Finance stated that if her memory was correct, she thought that the Council agreed to financially contribute £5,000 towards the toilets, the cost being reduced from the £12,500 it previously gave around three years ago. The Acting Clerk stated that he was unaware of this until now.

The Chair of Events referred to the last page of the minutes of the Regeneration Partnership Group under (c) where it states that Pontypool Community Council would contribute £2000 towards the Pontypool toilets. The Chair of Policy & Finance stated as a point of information that Pontypool Regeneration Group cannot make decisions on behalf of Pontypool Community Council.

Councillor Lynda Clarkson stated that these minutes needed to be reviewed as there may be some inaccuracies in relation to the figure so proposed that the Acting Clerk in liaison with the Finance Officer investigates the situation of what the Council has been paying and a report be brought back to Council/Committee for some clarity ensuring it corresponds with the correct information (when the regeneration minutes are reviewed) that had been agreed at the Pontypool Regeneration Partner group. This was unanimously agreed.

**RESOLVED:** that the Acting Clerk consults with the Finance Officer to establish the background and costs in relation to Pontypool Toilets and a report be brought back to Council or an appropriate committee.

**RG/CC**

181. **“Shaping Wales” Future: Using national milestones and indicators to measure our nation’s progress**

The Council received information on the above consultation which runs until the 26 October 2021.

The Chair of Council made the point that it states in the last paragraph that the Council Should have received a meeting request by the 17<sup>th</sup> September to attend a fora meeting on the 24<sup>th</sup> September, obviously it is too late now but asked that in future as soon as any official invitations are sent to the Council inviting members to attend any meetings etc that they be sent out with immediate effect. The Acting Clerk informed the meeting that he had sent an invite out to all members within 3 minutes of receiving information from the Remuneration Panel of Wales that day.

Councillor Lynda Clarkson the Council’s Environment & Biodiversity Champion stated that she has not had much time to look at it and would have attended the meeting if she had received prior notice, which now means reading a lengthy document without all the background

information. She felt it was important that the Council replies so as the consultation ends on the 26 October 2021 and if she had the time she would respond on behalf of the Council.

**RESOLVED:**

- (i) that the information be noted and acted upon in future regarding any invitations to meetings that come into Council from outside bodies/organisations
- (ii) that Councillor Lynda Clarkson as the Council's Environment and Biodiversity Champion would officially reply on behalf of the Council if she had time.

**RG**

182. **Garndiffaith & Varteg and New Inn Upper Vacancies**

The Acting Clerk informed the meeting that he had advertised the Council co-ption vacancies for Garndiffaith & Varteg and New Inn Upper on the Council website. The closing date had been the 15 September, to date no applications had been received.

He suggested that the Council advertise again on the Council website if it so wished but made the point that come November the Council would not have to fill the vacancies with elections being six months away from that date. It was proposed by Councillor Lynda Clarkson and seconded by Councillor Norma Parrish that the vacancies be advertised only on the Council website as recommended by the Acting Clerk. This was unanimously agreed.

**RESOLVED:** that the vacancies for Garndiffiath & Varteg and New Inn Upper be advertised on the Council website until November.

183. **Reports/Minutes of other relevant/external partnership bodies**

Council received the minutes of the Pontypool Regeneration Partnership Group held on 21 July 2021. It was pointed out that there were several inaccuracies within the minutes, therefore it was agreed that the Acting Clerk would check whether this meeting was recorded to establish the correct information that was agreed in relation to the Christmas Tree and Pontypool toilets as already previously mentioned in the minutes.

**RESOLVED:** that the Acting Clerk establish the correct information in relation to what was agreed in relation to

**RG**



the Christmas Tree and Pontypool toilets at the Pontypool  
Regeneration Partnership Group.

Chair of Council

Signed by the Chair .....