

LLANSTEFFAN AND LLANYBRI COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD IN LLANSTEFFAN MEMORIAL HALL

21st JULY 2014

Chairman Councillor DB Davies

Present Councillors G Howells, C Jones (Vice Chair), Dr D Hunter, B Charles, A Perrett, M James, EI Davies, A Cooper and B Ryder

Apologies None

Observing Mrs M Davies, Mrs C Morris, Mr B Harrison and Mr & Mrs Reynolds

Clerk L Dutch

1. DISCLOSURES OF INTEREST

County Councillor Davies as Carmarthenshire County Council Chairman and County Planning Committee Vice Chairman; Councillor Hunter as Llansteffan Memorial Hall Chairman; and Councillor Howells as Church Warden, Member of the Parochial Church Council and Llansteffan School Governor Chairman and Council Rep.

Min
No

2. RESOLUTION OF NO CONFIDENCE: CHAIRMAN'S RESPONSE

The Chairman stated that he would not step down from the chair unless he was required to do so following an external formal investigation into code of conduct complaints.

122

3. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 16th JUNE 2014

The minutes of the meeting held on 16th June were confirmed and signed as a true record.

123

4. MATTERS ARISING FOR INFORMATION FROM MINUTES OF 16th JUNE 2014

Electric fence crossing 23/30 in Plâs Field

Cllr. Cooper declared an interest, being friends with Plâs Farm tenants and storing his caravan on their property.

124

The Countryside Access team had confirmed by e-mail in mid-May that the electric fence complaint had been logged as an issue with a job sheet having been forwarded to the ranger. Cllr. Dr. Hunter remained discontented with the resulting period of inaction. The Chairman noted that a gap was required in law to enable public access; in response Cllr. Dr. Hunter stated that the 32 cm gap was minimal.

125

Hen Gapel and Cadw

The Cadw Regional Inspector had been on leave and not yet advised on whether additional gates and dog signs would be acceptable without requiring Scheduled Monument Consent.

126

Llanybri housing planning application

A Llanybri resident had asked the Local Member to request a Planning Committee site meeting for W/29907 following the officer's recommendation to approve the planning application. Date to be confirmed.

127

5. MINUTES OF EXTRAORDINARY MEETING HELD ON 24th JUNE 2014

The minutes of the meeting held on 24th June were confirmed and signed as a true record.

128

6. SUSPECTED CODE OF CONDUCT AND COUNTY COUNCIL MALADMINISTRATION ISSUES IN RELATION TO W/29387 WIND TURBINE PLANNING APPLICATION

Cllr. DB Davies declared a personal and prejudicial interest in planning application W/29387, decided not withdraw from the meeting and consequently remained in the chair. Cllr. EI Davies declared a personal interest in planning application W/29387, being a neighbour of the applicant.

129

The Vice Chair proposed that due to the sensitivity of the item, the public and press should be excluded by resolution. Seconded by Cllr. James. 130

Resolved

That the public and press be excluded from the meeting for Item 6 only on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted. 131

The Council's draft reports on Code of Conduct complaints relating to Cllr. DB Davies' involvement with W/29387 wind turbine application and Maladministration complaints relating to Carmarthenshire County Council as prepared for the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales, were taken as read. Cllr. Cooper raised the following matters for discussion: (i) the over-use of strong adjectives within the Code of Conduct evidence-based report; (ii) had Cllr. DB Davies been delegated to speak on behalf of the Community Council when the latter had resolved to object to W/23987 at its meeting on 20th January 2014, and (iii) had the Community Council ever sent a representative to speak at a Planning Committee meeting, to which Cllr. Howells reminded members that he had been authorised to do so in the case of the application for a confectionary shop next to the Beach Tea Rooms several years ago. 132

Cllr. Perrett proposed that, subject to appropriate editing of adjectives, the two reports should be forwarded to the Ombudsman with immediate effect. Seconded by Cllr. Dr. Hunter. The Vice Chair then emphasised the gravity of the matters in hand and the considerable workload that had been imposed on the sub-committee to prepare the reports. The process had been undertaken in an ethical and objective manner to ensure that the Council could move forward with professional integrity. 133

Resolved

That, subject to appropriate editing of adjectives, the Council's reports on Code of Conduct and Maladministration complaints relating to W/29387 Wind Turbine planning application be forwarded to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales with immediate effect. 134

The resolution was carried by the nine councillors out of the nine who could vote. 135

7. COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT

Cllr. DB Davies reiterated that £38 million cuts in the County Council budget had to be made within three years. County Highways had done an excellent job of resurfacing Pendeggy Hill and Down Farm roads. To the contrary Cllr. James strongly maintained that the resurfacing of Llanybri village roads should have been prioritised due to heavier vehicular usage. Cllr. DB Davies closed his report by noting that the Carmarthen Road would be trashed once this year and the Pil Glâs to Lon y Deri route would be cut last due to the protected natural verges. 136

Resolved

That written thanks be sent to County Highways for the resurfacing of Pendeggy Hill and Down Farm roads. 137

8. HEALTH & SAFETY REPORTS

Morfa Playground

No issues were reported. 138

Carrier's Lane

The field had been cut by the County Council prior to Fiesta Week, a welcomed job apart from the fact that mown grass had littered Carrier's Lane. Cllr. Howells had remedied the situation. 139

Croft
It was reported that a dense growth of tall weeds – groundsel, chickweed, nettles, ferns - along the footpath needed to be trashed as they had not been controlled by herbicide. The bench had had a coat of primer/undercoat, the flower pots looked attractive, minor litter, some dog faeces. 140

Resolved
That the Countryside Access team be notified in writing that the application of herbicide along both the Croft and Carrier’s Lane had proven to be ineffective and impractical. 141

Morfa
No issues were reported. 142

Sticks/Headland Path to Scott’s Bay
The missing and damaged mesh panels at First Steps had still not been replaced by the County Council and increasing overgrowth covering both First and Second Steps needed removal; overhanging branches beyond Second Steps needed cutting back; the warning sign at Second Steps needed cleaning and bushes cut back to be fully legible; footpath 23/35 needed clearing particularly prior to being way-marked. The stile access to Plâs field footpath 23/30 needed clearing and the stile made easier to negotiate; finally the small gap of 32 cm still had to be negotiated next to the post of the electric fence crossing Plâs field on 23/30. 143

The Clerk read out an e-mail received from the local Countryside Ranger which highlighted the severe financial and staffing cutbacks across the Leisure Department. The knock-on effect was that the team was unable to address footpath issues raised by local councils as efficiently as in the past. Work schedules had to be prioritised in accordance with those registered paths which experienced the most usage. 144

Resolved
i) **That the local Countryside Ranger be thanked for his explanatory e-mail;** 145
ii) **That the footpath issues of concern be relayed again to the Countryside Access team, in a way that acknowledged the constraints facing the team.** 146

Hen Gapel
The report noted that the local builder had given assurances that the remedial repairs to the slate roof would be undertaken in the near future. Whilst the soft fleshy plant growth on the stone walls had been controlled by weed killer, a problem still persisted with ivy, bramble and buddleia protruding from the higher reaches of the chapel remains. 147

9. PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS

Resolved
That the following accounts be approved for payment:-

SE Dutch	Clerk’s salary/expenses	506.17	148
Pro Print	Copies	18.14	149
E I Davies	Nant Jack footpath cut	45.00	150
I Dyer	RDP Bell House Project – Renovation	785.00	151
A Williams	RDP Bell House Project – way marking discs	655.00	152
S Gates	RDP Bell House Project – Finger Post	116.83	153
One Voice Wales	FOI & Data Protection training – Clerk	15.00	154
E I Davies	The Green memorial seats & plinths contract	980.00	155
J Davies	Hen Gapel maintenance – weed killer	20.00	156

External auditor BDO had instructed the Council that there were no issues arising from the Annual Return 2013-14 and they intended to issue an unqualified certificate and report. The Return should therefore be presented to Council for approval. 157

Resolved
That the Annual Return 2013-14 be approved by the Council and the Chairman and Clerk 158

be authorised to certify the document on the basis that no issues had been identified by the external auditor BDO.

10. CORRESPONDENCE

Resolved

That the following items of correspondence be noted: 159

Welsh Government	Reforming Local Government – Devolution, Democracy & Delivery
Welsh Government	Call for Honours Nominations (Queen’s Birthday 2015)
Botanic Garden	“Yr Ardd” magazine Summer 2014
Public Services	
Ombudsman for Wales	Annual Report ‘Making a Difference’ 2013/14
One Voice Wales	Carms Area Committee meeting 9 th July
Carms County Council	Consultation on Charging for Sports Facilities

WLGA - Governance Review of Carmarthenshire County Council

An e-mail was received inviting responses to the review which had been commissioned by the County Council with the remit of helping Carmarthenshire become the most open and the most transparent County Council in Wales. 160

Resolved

That a task group comprising of Cllr’s Howells and Jones and the Clerk be authorised to prepare and submit the Council’s response to the WLGA Governance Review of Carmarthenshire County Council, on the grounds that the WLGA final report was scheduled to be written in August 2014. 161

Cllr. Dr. Hunter left the meeting at 20:25. 162

Carms County Council – New Parking Contravention Codes

An e-mail was received highlighting Contravention Code 26 – to penalize vehicles parked more than 50 cm from the kerb and/or overlapping a marked-out parking space; and Contravention Code 27 – to penalize vehicles parked next to lowered footways such as less abled access, cycle tracks or crossovers into private property. A written assurance had been supplied to the Council that *“No Civil Enforcement Officers will be deployed to Llansteffan until the Church Road double yellow lines are resolved as per the proposed traffic order.”* 163

Llangain Community Council - Planning & Large Farm Developments

A copy of a letter written by the Head of Planning was received advising that agricultural activity was mostly exempt from planning control, planning conditions cannot control the right of traffic to use a public highway and there was no evidence to-date of damage to the highway which had resulted in extraordinary expense. Regarding highway safety, drivers of vehicles were responsible for considering the safety of other road users and a letter to this effect would be written to the owner of Cwrt Malle farm. 164

Carms County Council - Annual inspection of playgrounds

An e-mail was received advising that the cost of the annual inspection was £80 plus VAT. The Council had installed a new computerised inspection program in 2014. 165

Resolved

That Eamonn Davies of Parks and Play be contracted to undertake the annual Morfa playground inspection for a similar fee, on the basis of the invaluable knowledge, skills and support that he had imparted to the Council in recent years. 166

Carms County Council - Town & Community Council Liaison Forum

A letter was received advising that the next Liaison Forum would take place on 30th September 20124 in County Hall. 167

<u>E Harris Solicitor – Pheasantry CLEUD application and enforcement action</u>	
A covering e-mail and a copy of a letter written to the Head of Planning were received. The comprehensive letter constituted formal representations based on case law of direct relevance to the CLEUD application and concluded that there was no good reason for the failure of the County Council to act on a clear breach of planning control. The e-mail advocated that the Council write a further letter to the local planning authority asking why it has failed to undertake any form of enforcement action.	168
<u>Resolved</u>	
That a letter be written to the Head of Planning regarding The Pheasantry CLEUD application and the related failure of the authority to carry out enforcement action.	169
<u>Festival Committee - Permission to use Morfa in Fiesta Week</u>	
A letter was received highlighting that public liability insurance cover would be increased to £5 million for Llansteffan Carnival 2014.	170
<u>Resolved</u>	
That a letter be written to Llansteffan Festival Committee granting permission to use the Morfa for Fiesta Week 2014.	171
<u>Festival Committee - Volksfest Rally at Llansteffan Carnival 2nd August</u>	
An e-mail was received stating that the rally would feature once again in Llansteffan Carnival as it had proved to be a popular attraction in 2013.	172
<u>Resolved</u>	
That the Council raised no objections to the Volksfest Rally parking on the Morfa football field on Llansteffan Carnival day, on the grounds that sufficient traffic marshalls were organized on the bridge to direct the carnival procession, traffic and pedestrians during the arrival of the VW vehicles.	173
<u>Requests for financial assistance</u>	
No requests were received.	174
<u>11. PLANNING MATTERS</u>	
<u>Resolved</u>	
To note the following planning decisions:	175
W/30009 GRANTED The installation of one discrete history panel and one oak finger post on the marsh side of Bell House remains at Black Scar, Llansteffan	
W/30203 GRANTED Variation of Condition No1 on W/21170 (to extend time period for commencement of works at Pilroath Lodge, Llangain	
<u>12. LLANYBRI PLAYGROUND</u>	
The solicitor acting for the owner of the parcel of land in Heol Faen had confirmed in writing that the land would be gifted to the Council for use as a play park and informal recreation only. A number of observations were outlined. Cllr Charles informed members that the landowner had agreed to dedicate a strip of land inside the hedge boundary for the creation of a footpath to ensure safe access for children and parents.	176
<u>Resolved</u>	
i) That a task group comprising of Cllrs Charles, James and Davies and the Clerk be authorised to undertake a village consultation on the proposed play park in Heol Faen and submit a planning application for the change of use of the land on offer from pasture to community park and playground;	177
ii) That the proposed conditions attached to the parcel of land in Heol Faen be considered by the Council in the event that planning permission be granted.	178

13. MATTERS FOR INFORMATION ONLY

- Fencing around Maesolbri Green was still in need of repair. 179
- Dogs were still being exercised on the restricted section of Llansteffan beach. 180
- A 'dogs on lead' sign attached to a tall post was lying on its side along the sea wall. 181
- The Wales Coast Path sign pointing to Lan Farm green lane was not visible. 182
- Complaints had been raised concerning a lady who had been camping on Llansteffan dunes for 4-5 weeks and the County Council should be involved. 183
- Overgrown buddleia at the crossroads by Brynderi needed to be cut back to improve highway visibility. 184
- Illegal camping and motorhomes at the northern end of The Green was a problem. 185
- Complaints had been raised about the water pump and barricades on The Green. 186

The meeting closed at 21:15

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

Monday 20th October 2014 in Llanybri Community Hall at 7 pm

Monday 17th November 2014 in Llanybri Community Hall at 7 pm

Signed..... Chairman/Vice Chairman Date

