

CLYRO COMMUNITY COUNCIL
Meeting held at
7pm on Tuesday 13th March 2018
In the Village Hall at Clyro

MINUTES

PRESENT: Cllr V Price (Chairman), Cllr E Brown (Vice Chairman), Cllr P Bate, Cllr J Fforde, Cllr D Hood, Cllr G Franks, Cllr R Wells and Cllr J Carter.

IN ATTENDANCE: County Councillor J Gibson-Watt and members of the public, Margaret and Ivor Wadley, Lisa Doman, Brian Morgan, Aaron Wells, Thomas Lloyd, Andrew Lloyd, Trish Barrell, Bryan Barrell, Ron Francis, Patrick Keylock, Gerard Green

APOLOGIES: Cllr A Hood

MINUTES: The Minutes for the February meeting were accepted as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST: None

RESPONSIBLE PERSON for duration of this meeting for fire regulations: Chairman Price who pointed out all fire exits and advised that the meeting point was by the church gate.

PLANNING MATTERS: Agenda error, both agenda items had been discussed at Februarys meeting, so no discussion was entered.

MATTERS ARISING: Trish Barrell asked if the Community Council could help to push forward the problem of slow broadband. Wide discussion took place that included County Cllr J Gibson-Watt explaining that as the new primary schools in other areas have been opening residents have found that the broadband has improved as Clyro is due to open he would expect to see the same happening in Clyro. Cllr J Carter proposed sending a letter to AM Kirsty Williams expressing Clyro Community Council's concern regarding its resident's lack of broadband speed, Cllr R Wells seconded this. Clerk to initiate contact with Kirsty Williams.

REPORTS ON DOCUMENTS READ, MEETINGS ATTENDED AND ACTIVITIES ETC:

SCHOOL GOVERNORS REPORT: No Governors report this month, Cllr E Brown requested that the Clerk contact Cllr A Hood to get an update on the progress of the DBS application.

POLICE REPORT: No report received

REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR GIBSON-WATT:

County Cllr Gibson-Watt gave his report to the Community Council, appendix A contains the report in full.

CORRESPONDENCE (incl)

1. Bronllys Well Being Park Newsletter – *No action required.*
2. Review of Community and Town Councils in Wales – *County Cllr Gibson-Watt gave an explanation Of the review and his opinion is that at this point nothing major will happen in the short term. No action required.*
3. Guidance for Principal Councils on the review of communities – *Poster to be put in noticeboard.*
4. Planning aid Wales – *Cllr Wells and Cllr Hood have attended training on this subject. No action required.*
5. Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Annual Report - February 2018 – *No action required.*
6. One Voice Wales – Membership - £57.50 for membership, *Cllr Brown proposed, Cllr Fforde seconded. Clerk will action.*
7. Play equipment inspection 2018 – *Cllr Brown will contact Steve Butcher (PCC) to arrange The Pirate playground inspection. The other playground is PCC's so not action required.*
8. Community health council meeting – *No action required.*
9. Grit bin, Buttercup Meadow – *No action required.*
10. Affordable housing needs in Clyro – PCC – *Consultation regarding housing needs in Clyro to be arranged for the 17th April 2018, posters from PCC to follow.*
11. Cluster group invitation from Talgarth Town Council – *Discussion ensued, and it was decided to accept the invitation and when a date is known for a meeting volunteers would be found to attend.*

FINANCIAL:

Reserve a/c £2,833.18 (as at 5th Jan 2018) Current a/c £4,125.87 (as at 5th February 2018)

Payments to made: BT Direct, Clerks salary, Microsoft Office and One Voice Wales

Cheques made out for £170.81 and £57.50. Cllr D Hood proposed and seconded by Cllr Fforde.

AOB:

Cllr D Hood asked on behalf of Cllr A Hood to discuss a grant that is available to upgrade/refurbish War memorials in the churchyard. County Cllr Gibson-Watt has information on these grants so will pass this on to Cllr Brown for the Church PCC to investigate.

Cllr Brown updated the meeting on the work that Wilmott-Dixon has done within the community primarily in the Church, pews have been removed and work has been done to an internal wall all free of charge.

Cllr Franks and Cllr Fforde requested that co-opted members of the Community Council should be treated equally as the voted Community Councillors. Cllr Brown, Cllr D Hood and Cllr Price agreed with this.

Cllr Wells asked for Councillors and members of public to subscribe to Clyro.org as it gives a wealth of local information, Cllr Wells also asked for photos that could be used on the website to be given to him.

Cllr Bate expressed his thanks to the local farming community who cleared the snow, County Cllr Gibson-Watt explained that some farmers are signed up to clear snow and receive payment. He also added that some are not paid but still clear the snow.

The meeting was closed at 7.52pm.

Members of the public are invited to attend council meetings and to contribute at the end of business. Minutes and agenda available on request. Also displayed on website www.clyro.org

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Cllr V Price, Chairman)

Appendix

Appendix A

REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR GIBSON-WATT

Gwernyfed High School & Community Sports Centre

A report went to Powys County Council's Cabinet on Tuesday 20th Feb outlining options for capital investment in the school. The paper can be found at:-

<https://powysintranet.moderngov.co.uk/documents/s24557/Final%20Version%20Cabinet%20Report%20-%20Gwernyfed%20HS%20Capital%20Programme%2020th%20Feb%202018.pdf?LLL=0>

The Cabinet agreed to pursue Option B, which will provide a replacement sports hall and teaching block, among other things, but will for the first time ever remove teaching activity from the Mansion House. As yet it is not clear what will happen to the Mansion House, although suggestions have been made that the Council will seek a partner organisation to take over the building for other uses to complement the school provision.

Clyro C in W School and the Gwernyfed Catchment

All seems to continue to be proceeding to plan with all the new Gwernyfed catchment primary schools. The new Llyswen School opened its doors a few weeks ago, followed by Llangors and Ysgol Mynydd Ddu (the amalgamated Talgarth and Bronllys schools) and Hay. Clyro will open shortly, with the official opening by Kirsty Williams AM of all the schools to come later.

Highways

Snow!

Major snowfall and strong winds during the night of Thursday 1st March caused much disruption. Early on Friday 2nd March and later that day I drove my 4x4 truck from home to Brecon and Talgarth to pick up domiciliary care workers to take them to a series of visits around this area. Not since 1982 have I seen such snow cover on the main and side roads. Given that it was a good effort to get the main roads in this area open to all traffic by the end of that day. The A44 remained closed at Radnor Forest for three more days after that, due to the huge drifts there and the number of tourists who came to see it!

There may still be a few minor roads or lanes blocked with snow, but it is now three days since I have received any requests for help to get any unblocked. If members know of any still blocked, please let me know. A combination of highways staff and private contractors engaged by the county council worked very hard and well to clear hundreds of roads. Some residents did have to wait several days to be freed, but the council had to operate a priority system and, as far as I know, all those requiring medical treatment or other urgent attention were freed from their homes in good time. More widely, the damage to road surfaces and the appearance of potholes across the county is evidence of the damage done and reductions in the highways maintenance budget may now have to be re-considered in future years. It is now at an all-time low in Powys. I would be grateful if members could alert me to any urgent repairs that are needed in the community council area and I will draw them to the attention of the Boughrood Depot.

Salt bins and tumps are being replenished, but if any are missed, again please alert me.

It seems we got the salt bin to Buttercup Meadow just in time!

Clearly, Powys CC is going to have some work to do during the spring to restore matters,

Planning

Cwrt Edwards – I am trying to establish what the current situation is in relation to the affordable homes there. A verbal report will be given if I have fresh information by the time of the meeting.

County Council – 2018/19 Budget

The general council budget for 2018/19 was debated a couple of weeks ago. The Independent/Conservative Cabinet proposed an increase of about £10.5 million to the current social care budget of approx. £70 million, largely to be met by drawing on reserves in 2018/19, but assuming the services themselves make substantial in-year efficiency savings as well.

It also proposed a 5% increase in Council Tax for 2018/19. The budget is predicated on a further £8.5m of efficiency savings being found in 2018/19 and up to £17m in 2019/20. It remains to be seen whether this is achievable and serious questions remain about whether what is being proposed is sound and sustainable.

I, on behalf of my Welsh Lib Dem group, proposed a lower Council Tax increase of 3.5% and the allocation of about £2m of the extra social care funding to the council's Youth Service and delegated schools budgets, to both assist with the preventative services aspect of social care provision and start the process of repairing the looming hole in schools funding. Many schools are running in to such serious deficit positions that it is difficult to see how they will get out of deficit without causing provision to collapse. My view is that the Cabinet is in denial about this problem.

My group also proposed an increase to the Living Wage paid to the council's lowest-paid employees in line with the Living Wage Foundation recommendations. Cabinet proposed to freeze this at current levels.

Our amendment was defeated in the vote.

The issue of dealing with the fact that 9 of Powys's 12 secondary schools have unlicensed deficit budgets (Gwernyfed High School is not one of them!), and the net deficit position for the county's schools in general is worsening each year, is still not being addressed and is a source of serious concern within the council.

My own view is that Council Tax increases of this scale are unsustainable and unfair. During the recent formal debate on setting the Council Tax rate the cabinet member for finance indicated that an increase of up to 10% may be proposed in 2019/20 (his comments can be seen on the Powys CC webcast of Thursday 8th March).