

Cyngor Cymuned Llannon Community Council



Minutes of the Extraordinary General Meeting of Llannon Community Council

on

Wednesday 22nd February 2023 at 6.30pm

Held remotely via Zoom

Meeting commenced at 6:30pm

The Vice-Chair, Cllr. Julie Owen presided over the meeting.

Minute No. 182 – Members Present.

Cllr. J. Owen (JO)
Cllr. Ll. Davies (LD)
Cllr. R. Lloyd-Davies (RD)
Cllr. P. Owen (PO)
Cllr. M. Jones (MJ)
Cllr. D. Jones (DJ)
Cllr. R. Jones (RJ)
Cllr. N. Thomas (NT)
Cllr. C. Davies (CD)
Cllr. E. G. Evans (EGE)
Cllr. S. Stewart (SS)

Also Present:

Mrs. C. Hope – Clerk (CH)
Mrs. Ff. Lewis – Deputy Clerk (FL)
Mrs. W. Freeman (WF)

Minute No. 183 - Apologies and reasons for absence.

There were no apologies for absence.

Minute No. 184 - Declarations of interest.

Cllr. D. Jones declared in interest as the Chair for the Ten Towns initiative. There were no other new declarations of interest.

Minute No. 185 – Verification and confirmation of the minutes.

DJ requested that an amendment be made to minute No. 172 (County Councillor's reports). The amendment to read that Cllr. D. Jones attended the County Council's week-long Budgeting and Personnel sessions in January and a lot of her casework had been housing and personal issues.

Resolved that the minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 15th February (previously circulated to members) be taken as read, and the same are hereby verified, received, and confirmed by all respectively with the above amendment:

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 15th February 2023.

Minute No. 186 – Financial Matters.

Review of projected year end position and reserves.

SS gave an in-depth report to the Council of the findings and recommendations of the Finance Committee held on 20th February 2023. The recommended Budget had previously been circulated via email to all members present by the Clerk. SS explained to the Council that the Finance Committee had looked at many budget recommendations and had worked very closely with the Clerk and Deputy Clerk to ensure the best possible budget was achieved. SS asked the Clerk to explain all aspects of the budget to the members present.

The Clerk thanked SS and continued to explain all aspects of the income section in detail. The Clerk asked the members present if there were any questions at this point. No questions/queries were raised.

The Clerk proceeded to explain the expenditure section in detail, which included the following:

- There were many Health and Safety issues that needed addressing in this financial year. The Council had received forty-eight

recommendations from the Hall's Risk assessment which should have been acted upon in previous years. Amongst these were the fire escape, boiler emergency lighting, fire doors. This came at an unexpected cost to the Council.

- A water report revealed a large number of works required.
- The Council had to replace and fix some of their outdoor grounds machinery to comply with safety and operational standards.
- Waste management had not been managed correctly in previous years hence the rise cost this financial year.
- Staffing budget was discussed at a Personnel Committee meeting and recommendations made to Full Council meeting prior to this meeting.
- Y Cwtsh – A grant sourced by the Clerk is paying for the volunteer's salaries. Looking at further grants to enable this to continue.
- Professional Fees - £10,000 is expected to come back to the Council after the launch of the Discover Cross Hands App is completed.
- Elections – extra estimated cost of £13,146.74 due to the local by-election held in March. This will have to be paid to Carmarthenshire County Council.

The Chair asked if there were any questions:

DJ: In 2022 the staffing budget was £190,000 it has jumped to £280,000, this is a significant increase?

The Clerk stated that during the 2022-23 year there was a virement to £208,000 following a review of the staffing structure. The Council is now working at post-covid levels which has required an increase in staffing similar to the pre-covid budgets of around £270,000. There has also been a significant increase in the National Pay Award this year which has cost the council an additional £20k (est). This is the figure discussed at length and recommended by the Personnel Committee.

DJ: Is surprised that paperwork was received just before the meeting.

The Chair stated that the Clerk has gone through each element of the budget in great detail.

DJ: Adverts – who has given permission for the adverts and cost?

The Clerk stated that this total amount includes banners, radio advertising and recruitment, which she has authority to advertise. The cinema was arranged during purdah.

DJ: Travel Costs, I thought we were having a new van?

The Clerk advised that the new van has been delivered. The Council will have 4 operatives. One will continue to use his own van, the other 3 will share 2 vans between them. This has been discussed and agreed previously by the Council.

DJ: £7500 has been spent on tables and chairs for the hall and now you are suggesting getting rid of the hanging baskets. Not all residents use the hall so this is the only public spending that some residents can enjoy, although they are "Marmite."

SS: The Finance Committee discussed the hanging baskets at length. Due to the current Cost of Living crisis, difficult decisions have had to be made. The hanging baskets are obviously something we would wish to keep, however the Council will still continue to maintain our green spaces, such as our large open spaces, cemeteries and memorials to a high standard, for all residents to enjoy.

DJ: Has there been any consultation regarding the hanging baskets?

SS: The Councillors are there to represent the range of views and have discussed this point at length.

LD: Hanging baskets have been removed this year but hopefully they will be reinstated next year. Do you want to increase the precept to have them this year? There was no reply to this question.

RLD: Most of the hanging baskets are on main roads throughout the ward (her house included) so the hanging baskets do not necessarily benefit all of the residents in the ward.

There were no further questions.

The Clerk informed the Council they should hold between three- and twelve-months' worth of their precept in the General Reserves. The Clerk informed the Council that currently they have £75,000 in the General Reserves. The Clerk recommended that the Council consider allocating the £10,000 from the

Hall reserves and £10,000 budgeted General Reserves Consideration into the General Reserves. This will give a total of £95,000 (three month's worth) in the General Reserves for the financial year 2023/24. The Clerk also advised the Council that they should look at ways to increase the General Reserves in the future.

Minute No. 187 - To agree the budget for 2023 – 2024.

PO proposed that the Council accept the budget recommended by the Finance Committee and the Clerk as presented in the meeting. NT seconded the proposal. DJ and RJ against the proposal. All other members present in favour.

Resolved to accept the budget presented to the Council as recommended by the Finance Committee and the Clerk.

7.45pm Cllr. M. Jones joined the meeting and apologised for his lateness.

Minute No. 188 - To agree the precept for 2023 – 2024.

PO proposed that the Council request a precept of £392,434.13 from Carmarthenshire County Council to allow an increase of £29049.13 in Llannon Community Council's Budget for 2023/24. This will be an increase of £9.87 a year (82p per month/19p per week) in the local element for Band D Council Taxpayers. NT seconded the proposal. DJ and RJ were against the proposal. MJ abstained due to his late arrival. All other members present in favour.

Resolved that the Clerk is to request a precept of £392,434.13 from Carmarthenshire County Council.

Minute No.189 - To agree appropriate reserve levels for 2023 – 2024.

PO proposed to accept the allocation of reserves as recommended by the Finance Committee and the Clerk. EGE seconded the proposal. All in favour.

Resolved to accept the allocation of reserves as recommended by the Finance Committee and the Clerk.

The Chair closed the meeting at 7.48pm

Signed

Date

(Chair)