

MINUTES OF THE CYFFYLLIOG COMMUNITY COUNCIL ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY 11TH MAY 2023 IN THE CHAPEL VESTRY, BONTUCHEL AT 7.30 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillors Aled Rees (Chairman), Kate Edge, Kelly McGregor, Emrys Williams, Eifion Jones, Elwyn Jones together with the Youth Representative Molly McGregor and the Clerk.

1: WELCOME.

The Chairman welcomed the newly appointed Youth Council Member – Molly McGregor to her first Council Meeting.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE.

Denbighshire County Councillor Elfed Williams.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST ON ANY AGENDA ITEM LISTED BELOW.

None received.

4. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN FOR THE 2023/24 TERM OF OFFICE.

Members elected Councillor Aled Rees as Chair of the Council for the 2023/24 Term of Office.

5. ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN FOR THE 2023/24 TERM OF OFFICE.

Members elected Councillor Kate Edge as Vice-Chair of the Council for the 2023/24 Term of Office.

6. CONFIRM THE MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS COUNCIL MEETING.

Members confirmed 13th March 2023 minutes as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

7. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT APPEARING ON THE AGENDA.

Already covered elsewhere within the minutes.

8. FORMER CYFFYLLIOG SCHOOL UPDATED REPORT.

The Chair and Clerk met Mrs Amanda Brewer on 21st April 2023 who subsequently agreed to be the Project Manager of the former Cyffylliog School site project and Mrs Brewer reported as per appendix 1 below.

9. DISCUSSION WITH THE YOUTH COUNCIL MEMBER IN ATTENDANCE.

As this was the first Council attendance for Miss Molly McGregor, no report was prepared for the meeting and will report to the Members at the next Council meeting.

10. COUNCIL'S STREET FURNITURE WORKS UPDATE.

A: White Oak Property Services have now completed the works required in Bontuhel, viz:-

1: Works required on the public bench £190.00.

2. Works required on the bus shelter £114.00.

B. the Council's public notice board in Cyffylliog has gone missing.

C. Council still need to decide on the usage of the former BT telephone kiosk in Cyffylliog.

D. the Council's defibrillator based at the Cyffylliog Chapel location needs to be re-located.

11. DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL DIGITAL BROADBAND OFFICER'S UPDATE.

Mr Philip Burrows provided Council with the following updated report (appendix 2 below) since his attendance at the previous Council meeting:-

12. FINANCE UPDATE.

A: Bank balances £18,580.56.

B. First 2023/24 Precept Receipt £4,090.00.

C. Authorised bill payments:-

1. White Oak Property Services £474.00 (£304.00 for 10A 1 & 2 above & £170.00 for the monthly Cyffylliog Cemeteries grass cutting).

2. BHIB Annual Insurance Premium £732.49.

3. Two monthly HSBC fees £10.00.

13. TO REVIEW THE CLERK'S SALARY FROM 1ST APRIL 2023.

Members resolved to hold a separate (part two) meeting to review the Clerk's Salary from 1st April 2023.

14. ONE VOICE WALES TRAINING COURSES.

The Clerk circulated Members with the list of One Voice Wales training courses for May and June 2023.

15. PLANNING APPLICATIONS.

14/2023/0305 - Erection of a two storey extension to side of dwelling and associated works at Arfryn, Cyffylliog – No objections.

16. CORRESPONDENCE.

Already covered elsewhere within the minutes.

17. DENBIGHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL ISSUES.

Members discussed the bad state of the roads with potholes on various highways within the Community Council area including the following highways:-

A: Ysgubor Newydd to Cyffylliog Village.

B. Henblas to Pentre Farm, Cyffylliog.

18. URGENT BUSINESS UNDER SECTION 100B(4) OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972.

There was no other business for discussion.

19. NEXT COUNCIL MEETING - THURSDAY 13TH JULY 2023 IN THE BONTUCHEL CHAPEL VESTRY AT 7.30 P.M.

APPENDIX 1.

“I’ve attached my standard contract for consultancy services for the Community Council to consider and if that’s acceptable, both parties can sign, and we can each keep a copy. I generally work on an hourly basis as this type of work tends to be very intermittent depending on how quickly the project progresses. I keep basic timesheets with a short description of the work done such as emails, research, meetings, reports etc. which I send in with my invoice monthly. This makes it easy for you to keep an eye on budget and how the project is progressing. Hope this is ok, but if you would like something different, just let me know.

I also wanted to ask how you would like us to work together. Do you or Aled want to attend meetings, be copied in to emails etc. or are you happy for me to go ahead and progress matters, reporting back to you both as necessary when I need information or a decision?

I visited the site a couple of weeks ago to refresh my memory and I’m struggling to see the merit in keeping part of the building rather than demolishing it entirely and constructing a new and far more cost effective and sustainable facility. However, I think the way forward will become much clearer when we have an architect on board and an initial structural assessment has been completed.

I note from the emails you sent me that Rebecca Williams intended to arrange an independent valuation of the school and was proposing to recommend the asset transfer to the Council’s Asset Management Group last December. Presumably, that never happened as there’s no correspondence to that effect. I intend to contact her next week for an update and a chat about the heads of terms and an estimate of legal and valuer’s fees as it looks like DCC will expect you to cover these as well as your own legal and other costs. I also intend to talk to Marc Roberts for a bit more detail on the project and his thoughts. I’ll then send you an outline project plan with target dates.”

Members resolved to award Mrs Brewer the contract and to proceed with the works required as the Council’s “Project Manager”.

APPENDIX 2.

“A summary of what I talked about is below, I do apologise, but I do not believe I mentioned the item in red.

1. Cyffylliog is not in any major Openreach upgrade programme. Their current plans span until December 2026. There may be unannounced upgrades.
2. I have mapped out clusters of properties that are eligible for funding and whom I recommend for Fibre Community Partnerships (FCP). Please bear in mind Openreach will add more premises to these FCPs, even one that are not eligible for funding.
3. The Welsh Government funded fibre programme will be finishing at the end of February. 37 Premises in your area were upgraded to fibre
4. Therefore, there should be approximately 178 premises in the Cyffylliog Community Council area that are left without fibre.
5. Openreach has expressed an interested in upgrading 105 premises, these are now classed as ‘Under Review’. They are therefore not eligible for the Gigabit

Funding, sadly there is no guarantee Openreach will upgrade these premises. I will forward you the list of these properties.

6. There for there are 78 funding eligible premises, that we should target.

7. The UK Government scheme called 'Project Gigabit' has put forward 75 properties in the Cyffylliog Community Council area for tender. The tender goes out to all telephony and internet provider/installers. It is hoped that Openreach will submit a quote for some of the 210 premises in your area that do not have fibre. We need to proceed as normal as there is no guarantee any will be installed via this scheme.

8. The North Wales Economic Ambition Board have a pot of money to install fibre into premises in North Wales. They do not yet know the scope of their project or which premises they will choose. They are having to wait until Project Gigabit announces which premises they will be installing.

9. Openreach are now open for Fibre Community Partnership applications, but they will not process them until Project Gigabit has announced which premises the scheme will upgrade.

10. The Gigabit Voucher funding is worth £4,500 per premise. The voucher scheme is not taking applications at the moment. It will reopen once Project Gigabit has announced where it will install. Probably a couple of months. It should be open by the time we need to apply.

11. The Openreach copper cable exchanges are being turned off by December 2025 and all telephony exchanges will be digital. Premises that have not been upgraded to fibre will continue to use their copper cables for telephony/internet, their signals will be converted to fibre based Internet traffic at the roadside box.

12. Premises with digital telephony, called Voice Over IP (VOIP) will lose their telephony service during a power cut. If their router does not have power, it cannot relay your phone calls. This is worrying for areas with no 4g coverage. Openreach can provide a battery backup for those classed as Vulnerable. Otherwise people can buy Uninterruptable Power Supplies (UPS) from most computer retailers

13. There is grant to cover the cost of purchasing and installing 4g antennas and a 4g router. The antennas are external and are mounted on a pole to enable them to receive a better signal. This has proved effective in many rural areas, giving speeds between 30-100mbps. The grant is 'apply before you buy'. I am happy to talk to any of your residents/businesses about this.

The kind of thing you need to say to the residents is:

Working with the Digital Officer from Denbighshire council, we are hoping to form a partnership with Openreach to bring fibre internet to those premises in the region.

We are limited to which premises we can assist by the eligibility criteria of the UK Government funding scheme (Gigabit Voucher Scheme). The UK Government are currently offering £4,500 to upgrade eligible premises to fibre. By clustering eligible premises and pooling the Gigabit Voucher money, it may be possible to upgrade some local properties.

The Digital Officer in Denbighshire Council has provided the list of properties that are eligible for the Gigabit Vouchers and are close enough to other eligible premises to be included in a group. If your property is on the list, and if you are interested in obtaining a fibre based internet connection, we would like you to participate with us in an Openreach Fibre Community Partnership.

To join, we need your Name, Email Address, Phone Number and for you to specify which address is yours. This information will be passed on to Denbighshire's Digital Officer, who will, in turn submit it with the Fibre Community Partnership application to Openreach. If the scheme proceeds your details will then be sent to the UK Government Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) to start the Gigabit Voucher process for your property. By sending your details you are agreeing that this information sharing is acceptable.

Openreach will provide us with a quote to install fibre to the cluster of premises and if the Government funding covers the whole amount, we will agree to proceed. You will be asked by the UK Government Department (DCMS) if you agree that Openreach can use the Voucher allocated to your property, by doing so you also agree to take out a fibre based internet contract with any provider of your choice once the system becomes live.

The whole process is lengthy, once the contract is signed with Openreach they may take up to 18 months to complete the work.

The Community Fibre Partnership Process

1. We gather the details of interested premise owners.
2. The Digital Officer submits the list to Openreach.
3. We will receive a rough quote with an amended list including some other premises that Openreach insists are also connected through the Fibre Community Partnership (FCP). These will be premises that are not eligible for funding and we have to hope we have enough vouchers to cover the extra cost.
4. If we think the group has enough voucher money to pay for the FCP, we agree that Openreach should proceed to the next stage.
5. Openreach then performs a proper survey to calculate the final bill.
6. If we can still cover the cost of the bill with the Government Vouchers, Openreach approaches the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) to confirm exactly how much voucher money we can claim. Premises may have been removed or added to the eligibility list. DCMS will contact the premises that have signed up for confirmation.
7. The community is then informed the true value of the vouchers, the bill for the installation and if there is a short fall.
8. If there is enough and the community agree to proceed, Openreach usually requests that a legal entity (a CIC) be created to act as intermediary for the community.
9. The CIC/Community Council signs a contract with Openreach
10. DCMS contact the residents once more to process the vouchers.
11. The installation can take up to 18 months from the signing of the contract."