

**NEATH TOWN COUNCIL – FULL COUNCIL MEETING**  
**Minutes of the hybrid meeting on Thursday, 4<sup>th</sup> January 2024 at 6pm**

**Present:** Cllr. J. Warman (Mayor), Cllr. P. James (Deputy Mayor), Cllr. T. Cooze, Cllr. K. Finn, Cllr. Ms L. Heard, Cllr. Ms. M. P. Lloyd, Cllr. Mrs J. L. Lockyer, Cllr. J. Miller, Cllr. G. Morgan, Cllr A. Musaied, Cllr. T. Pearson, Cllr. R. Price, Cllr. Mrs S. Price, Cllr. M. Protheroe, Cllr. P. Sambrook (Kathryn Charles - Town Clerk, Sara Wharmby - Admin Assistant, Lilly Kayes – Youth Representative, Carys Hope – Community Engagement Officer)

**Absent:** Cllr. Mrs L. Jones

The Mayor began the meeting by paying their respects to Cllr. Mrs Sheila Penry. A minute's silence was held. Members also praised her commitment to the Town Council, her knowledge and experience of the community she loved and expressed their shock and sadness of her passing. All Members wished to extend their condolences and deepest sympathy to her family.

**FC2024/1 To receive apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr. A. Sims and Cllr. D. Thomas

**FC2024/2 To receive any declarations of interest from Councillors in accordance with the Members Code of Conduct**

Declarations of interest were received from Cllr. M. Protheroe in respect of an item of Correspondence.

**FC2024/3 To provide an opportunity for any members of the public in attendance to address Council or ask questions on any matters of concern in relation to agenda items (*other than those proposed to be considered in private – see additional Public Participation guidance notes on website*)**

There were no members of the public present.

**FC2024/4 To welcome Will John of NPT Police for an update**

There were no Police in attendance. Members asked that they be contacted to indicate the importance of their attendance.

**FC2024/5 To receive an update from NTCs Youth Representative**

The Chair welcomed Lilly Kayes to the Meeting. Lilly updated Members on her meeting with a group that uses one of the NTC community centres.

Lilly stated she was sad to hear of the passing of Cllr. Mrs Sheila Penry and wished to send her condolences to her family.

**FC2024/6 To receive an update from NTCs Community Engagement Officer**

The Chair welcome Carys Hope to the Meeting. Carys updated the Meeting on the development of her collaborative work with Neath Foodbank. It was explained that the community groups had been approached and this was moving forward with donations.

Councillors were updated on the community questionnaire. Members submitted suggestions for questions to be added.

Carys asked Members if they were in any community groups that would like to get involved in the food collection to let her know.

*Carys Hope left the Meeting.*

**FC2024/7 To discuss and agree the final draft budget**

Members had been provided with a copy of the draft budget prior to the Meeting.

The Town Clerk explained that work had been completed since the papers were distributed before Christmas and explained the updated versions of the budget based on confirmed quotes. The Town Clerk explained the different projects which mainly covered Major Repairs/Repairs & Renewals requested in previous council meetings and their associated costs which needed to be included. The Town Clerk explained that these major works needed to be budgeted for and explained the impact on the 8% increase which Members had already agreed on expenditure. The Town Clerk stated that consideration needed to be given to the budget as due to the projects agreed, there was an overspend based on the current precept.

*J. Warman*  
01/02/2024

**RESOLVED:** Members discussed the budget and it was agreed. Members put forward their suggestions which linked to consideration of the Precept.

*Cllr. Ms L. Heard disconnected from the Meeting.*

**FC2024/8 To discuss and agree the Precept for 2024/25**

Members discussed the precept in depth and its impact on the agreed budget. Members were given several options of % uplifts on the precept and reviewed each % uplift impact on the residents on a weekly basis. Members were reluctant to increase the budget but it was noted that the sharp rise in utility bills and running costs in particular were the main concern for 2024/25. **RESOLVED:** After discussion it was proposed, seconded and agreed to increase the Precept by 5% to £421,380.75. One Member on Zoom did not vote due to connection issues. Members asked that the reason for the increase and the costs people will pay be explained. The rise in the Council's community tax would be approximately £1.23 per week.

**FC2024/9 To approve as a true and correct record the minutes and resolutions contained therein of the following Council Meetings:-**

**i. Full Council Meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> December 2023**

It was proposed, seconded and agreed unanimously to accept the minutes of the Full Council Meeting.

**FC2024/10 To receive the General Clerk's Report**

Members had received the report prior to the Meeting.

The Meeting discussed the Charities Accounts. A Member stated that they had received a letter from the Charities Commission stated that they would move the money if it was not used. The Town Clerk stated that the Charities Commission agreed to an extension of time for consideration of the projects the funds could cover. Charities Committee Meeting would be called to discuss donating the money. **RESOLVED:** It was proposed, seconded and agreed to give £10,000 to the Neath Town Council Mayoress Appeal, £10,000 to the Foodbank and £10,000 to Everyone Deserves a Christmas for NTC wards. One Member on Zoom did not vote due to connection issues.

Members were updated on the water issue at Melin Community Centre.

**FC2024/11 To review and agree Income & Expenditure movement for the month**

- a) Bills Awaiting Payment Agreed.
- b) BACS Payment Schedule Agreed.
- c) Barclays General Account Agreed.
- d) Inter Bank Transfers (Over 10k) None.
- e) New Supplier BACS Authorisation None.
- f) Payroll None.
- g) Bank Statement Reconciliation Agreed.

**FC2024/12 To review and consider Planning Applications**

There were no objections to the following planning application(s):-

- P2023/0897 – N. Pearce – Neath Welsh Primary School, Woodland Road, Neath, SA11 3AL
- P2023/0914 – T. Knoyle – Unit 9 Gym, Quay Road, Neath, SA11 1SL
- P2023/0951 – M. Warlow – 10 Woodside Avenue, Neath, SA11 3TG
- P2023/0956 – Mr Seller – 20 The Avenue, Neath, SA11 2FD

**FC2024/13 To discuss any Member Issues and receive Reports from Members:-**

**a) on meetings they have attended on behalf of Neath Town Council**

The Chair updated the Meeting on the visits to the schools of the winners of the Mayor's Christmas Card Competition that had taken place before Christmas. Members were also updated on the Christmas Shop Window Competition.

**b) on updates recommended for website, digital and social media platforms**

There were no updates received from Members.

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**FC2024/14 To receive an overview of Health & Safety matters**  
The Town Clerk updated the Meeting on the current health and safety providers and their proposal to find a solution to the service they had provided in 2023. **RESOLVED:** The proposal put forward was agreed by Members.

**FC2024/15 To receive items for the next Agenda from Members**  
There were no items received for the next Agenda.

*Lilly Kayes left the Meeting.*

**FC2024/16 Confidential Matters – To consider passing a resolution under the provisions of Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public are excluded from the remainder of the meeting**  
The resolution was duly passed.

*Cllr. Ms M. P. Lloyd left the Meeting.*

**FC2024/17 To receive and review any Correspondence received**

Correspondence received for action		Resolutions
An email from Melin Primary School regarding their recent trip to the Gwyn Hall Cinema and asking for reimbursement for the transport costs.	For consideration.	Cllr. M. Protheroe declared an interest. <b>RESOLVED:</b> It was proposed, seconded and agreed to pay the transport costs. A Member suggested considering this cost in future if transport is needed.
An email from One Voice Wales attaching the Cost of Living Crisis Survey 2023.	Do Council wish to participate?	Town Clerk to complete
An email from One Voice Wales regarding the Cost of Living Crisis Project.	For consideration.	Councillors to respond if they wish to.
An email from One Voice Wales regarding the Local Government Finance (Wales) Bill consultation.	Do Council wish to respond?	Councillors to respond if they wish to.
An email from One Voice Wales regarding the consultation Fiscal Intergovernmental Relations.	Do Members wish to respond?	Councillors to respond if they wish to.
An email from One Voice Wales regarding the consultation Future Spending Purposes for Dormant Assets Funding in Wales.	Do Members wish to respond?	Councillors to respond if they wish to.
Correspondence received for noting		
An email from NPTCBC regarding the Precept 2024/25.	For information and to assist in confirming the Precept.	
An email from NPTCVS regarding the Local Authority Budget Briefing for the Third Sector in NPT.	Update on previous one sent through - not on Zoom.	
Correspondence received for information		
An email from MAWW Fire & Rescue Service attaching the Calon Tan Magazine: 2023 Highlights.		
An email from MAWW Fire & Rescue Service regarding the Authority Community Risk Management Plan 2040 Your Fire Service, Your Say!		
An email from Urdd Gobaith Cymru regarding the Fund for All appeal.		
An email from the West Glamorgan Bench regarding a donation for the Mayoress Appeal and a letter thanking the Mayor & Mayoress for attending the Magistrates Christmas Carol Service and enclosing a cheque.		
An email from Welsh Government regarding the Mynydd Forch Dwm Wind Energy 2021 ltd application.		
An email from Pelenna Valley Male Voice Choir thanking NTC for the grant aid donation.		
An email from South Wales Police regarding the SWP and Crime Commissioner Annual Community Survey.		
An email from NPTCBC attaching the County Borough Council/Community Councils Liaison Forum Agenda report pack.		
An email from NPTCBC regarding payphone removal proposals (Roman Way, Milland Road Industrial Estate).		

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An email from the British Heart Foundation thanking defibrillator Guardians for looking after defibrillators and sending seasons greetings.
An email from One Voice Wales attaching the Christmas card from HM Lord-Lieutenant.
An email from One Voice Wales attaching the Audit Wales November Newsletter.
An email from One Voice Wales regarding the free webinar Interactive self-guided tours for villages, towns and communities.
An email from One Voice Wales regarding the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Draft Annual Report - February 2024 - Extended closing date.
An email from One Voice Wales attaching the Older People's Commissioner for Wales December Newsletter.
An email from One Voice Wales attaching the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales press release – Equality and Human Rights Casebook.
An email from One Voice Wales regarding the Deputy Minister for Social Services blog Working Together for an Age-Friendly Wales.

<b><i>Additional Correspondence received for information</i></b>
An email from Neath Mother's Union thanking NTC for the grant aid donation and the facilities provided for their meetings.
An email from NPTCVS regarding the upcoming Funding Surgery with The National Lottery Heritage Fund taking place on 12 <sup>th</sup> January.
An email from One Voice Wales regarding a Zoom presentation on Community Speed Watch.
An email from One Voice Wales Non-Executive Director Board Opportunities with Welsh Government.

**2024/18**

**To receive the confidential Clerk's Report on**

**a) Investment Properties**

Members received the report prior to the Meeting. The Town Clerk gave an update on the water meter installation at New Street and informed Members that quotes were still being chased and obtained for the replacement windows at the Burton Block.

**b) Commercial Contracts**

None.

**c) Staffing matters**

The Town Clerk stated that they had attended two meetings with NPTCBC regarding NTCs complaint regarding NPTCBCs requirements relating to the Christmas Light Switch On event.

A Member wished to discuss the email that had been received from the Trustees of South Wales Area Quaker Meeting regarding gifting part of the Neath Castle wall to NTC. **RESOLVED:** It was proposed seconded and agreed not to accept the 'gifting of the wall' and to instruct NTCs Solicitor to dispute the hand drawn drawings on page 205 of the letter. A Member suggested a site visit to Neath Castle grounds for Councillors.

**FC2024/19**

**To fix a date for the next Meeting**

The Chair wished everyone a Happy New Year and advised that the next meeting would be held on Thursday, 1<sup>st</sup> February 2024. An agenda would be circulated in due course.

There being no further business, the meeting was closed.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_

Dated: \_\_\_\_\_

01/02/2024