CYNGOR CYMUNED YSTALYFERA COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held online via MS Teams on

17th December 2020

Present

Cllr. Geraint Williams (Vice-chair) Cllrs. Rhian Llewelyn, Alun Llewelyn, Cathy James, Rosalyn Davies, Julie Jones, Emyr Wyn Williams, Brian Hastie, Tristian Lewis, Ann Jenkins, Ann Lewis (late arrival)

Apologies

Name	**Reason**	**Other Absence:**
Cllr. Terry Flynn	Sickness	Cllr. Bryan Lewis Leave of Absence Cllr. Arwel Hughes Leave of Absence Cllr. Simon Prothero Leave of Absence

		ACTION
4440.	**Welcome and late Apologies** Vice-Chair welcomed all to the meeting. No late apologies. Resolved. Request from Cllr S. Prothero for 3 months leave of absence due to work commitments. All agreed – Resolved.	Clerk to inform Cllr S. Prothero of decision.
4441.	**Minutes of previous meeting: All agreed- Resolved.** Following on from minute 4429, Forest Schools, Clerk reported that she contacted Portakabin for a quote on a Portaloo for Godre'r Graig Park as this need to be costed before the project can be considered fully. Clerk is awaiting quote. Cllr R. Llewelyn asked how these would be maintained if the project was to go ahead. Cllr J. Jones stated that in Finland there were no toilets but there were public toilets close-by. Cllr R. Davies stated that Tai Tarian may be able to assist with funding for the project – Holli Yeoman will be able to apply for their funding. Cllr R. Davies stated that there is currently an unused wooden classroom building within Godre'r Graig School grounds. She suggested that this could be moved down to the park if the project should go ahead. Planning consent would need to be obtained for some of these proposed works. Cllr E.W. Williams stated that he had spoken to his neighbour and he had confirmed that he is already a trained Forest Schools tutor/leader. Resolved that this proposed project be discussed further during the next Project Group meeting. Following on from minute 4433, Project Group, Clerk reported that she had visited the Ffynnon and it looks much better. Overgrowth has been cleared by Mark Bentley. Resolved noted. Following on from minute 4433, Project Group, Clerk reported that the Facilities Officer picked up the signs for the Outdoor Gym from Signs Express. Glantawe Landscapes will install ASAP. Once installed photos can be taken for publicity. Resolved noted.	Clerk to liaise with Holli Yeoman. Clerk to liaise with Andrew.

4442.	**Covid-19 Situation & Foodbank Update** Cllr A. Llewelyn reported the following: • All-Wales Covid-19 figures as at 17.12.2020: Cases 114,560, Deaths 2, 973 including 52 in past 24 hours. These are significant increases on last month's report, including delayed reports. • The situation is approaching critical in Neath Port Talbot and the Swansea Bay Health Authority area. As at 17.12.2020 NPT had 836.6 cases/100k population compared with the Wales average 530.2 /100k population. • All areas of NPT have seen increases, and Public Health Wales produce an interactive map of Covid incidents on a weekly basis which can be searched on a national, county, health board or locality basis. • Ystalyfera and Godre'rgraig are in a locality reaching up to Gwaun Cae Gurwen, a population of about 7,000, with Pontardawe etc in a separate locality. • Welsh Government initially announced a joint approach with UK Government for Christmas, but in view of the worsening situation in Wales only two households will be able to meet indoors over the Christmas period. There will be additional restrictions on hospitality and non-essential shopping from 24/12/2020 and a fuller lockdown will be announced from 28.12.2020 for an open-ended period subject to reviews. • Members will be aware of local people who have been affected, and outbreaks in schools, care homes, workplaces and hospitals. • With winter approaching the county council and health board are revising plans for Safe and Well schemes. In our area, Ystalyfera Food Bank, community groups and support mechanisms such as LACs and Age Connect will help identify support needed. • County council services may be affected due to staff self-isolation and illness. Some staff may need to be re-allocated to other departments. • Further information can be circulated to Community Council members by email in between meetings. • **Foodbank:** Cllr C. James reported that the Ystalyfera Foodbank had helped 166 people in November alone which equates to 47 parcels. In December (up until 11th) they had already helped 117 people which equates to 33 parcels. This represents a large increase on the number of people needing help from the foodbank. Members were concerned at this increase. Cllr C. James went on to explain that Ystalyfera Development Trust had provided funding for Christmas dinner hampers which funded 55 turkey crowns and vegetables. The hampers will be delivered Tuesday and Wednesday next week. Cllrs C. James and B. Hastie gave thanks to Ystalyfera Development Trust, Elaine and Beverley for their assistance and for kind donations. Cllr R. Davies stated that she was glad that YDT could be of help at this time. Cllr G. Williams asked whether or not the foodbank requires any further funding from the Community Council. Cllr B. Hastie stated that they are OK at the moment due to	Cllrs to keep everyone updated as and when more information becomes available.

	the various funding they have recently received. He went on to state that the Community and Community Council should be proud of all it has done to assist the foodbank. Resolved noted.	
4443.	**Planters** • Clerk reported that she has queried the invoice from Quids In for the small potted trees as she noticed that they are selling the items at a lower price to the public than what has been charged to the council. She is awaiting a response from Quids In. Resolved noted. • Cllr E.W. Williams suggested that as Gurnos Road has lost a lot of its trees, that new trees be planted, or planters be placed there instead. All agreed – Resolved noted. • Members gave thanks to Cllrs E.W. Williams and G. Williams for all of their hard work with placing the lights and flags around the villages. Councillors stated that there has been positive feedback on this project, and it means a lot to the community. Resolved noted. • Cllr B. Hastie stated that the Foodbank was delighted with the Christmas tree that had been donated by the Community Council to Gurnos Chapel. Some of the lights did not work so he bought a cheap set from Tesco to add to the tree. There has been positive feedback from the community with regards to the tree. Resolved noted. • All agreed that a donation of £50 each be given to the Foodbank and Ystalyfera RFC towards the electric used for the tree lights. Resolved noted.	Clerk to liaise with Lee. Clerk to make BACS payments.
4444.	**Project Group** **Christmas** • Cllr R. Davies reported that there had been disparaging comments about the Christmas lights provision arranged by the Community Council by some Facebook users. Members were saddened at this news and stated that the Community Council do a lot more than some other Community Councils in the area. The Community Council tries to include all 4 villages in the Christmas light plan (Ystalyfera, Godre'r Graig, Cilmaengwyn and Lower Cwmtwrch) whereas some Community Councils only provide Christmas lighting on their main 'high' street (near shops etc.). It was stated that the Community Council cannot please everyone, and someone will always complain, but the council tries to provide Christmas lights in as many areas as possible within the council boundaries. Cllr J. Jones stated that some local residents think the Ystalyfera Community Council only serves Ystalyfera, they are unaware that it also serves Godre'r Graig, Cilmaengwyn and part of Lower Cwmtwrch. Resolved noted. • Cllr A. Llewelyn stated that a note of thanks had been received by Mrs Laurel Davies, the head of Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera, for the selection boxes provided by the Community Council. Resolved noted. • Cllr A. Llewelyn stated that the Ysgol Gymraeg Ystalyfera Christmas Concert had been streamed online. Clerk to forward link to councillors so that they can view the concert. Resolved noted.	Clerk to forward link.

	Funding for Play • Cllr A. Llewelyn forwarded an application form to the Clerk for funding from Welsh Government and NPTCBC for play projects. Deadline is tomorrow, so Clerk completed it quickly to meet the deadline. She highlighted 3 potential projects (Alltygrug Playground improvements, a Tango swing for Gnoll Park and Forest Schools project for Godre'r Graig Park). All agreed that the projects were suitable. She will submit the form before tomorrow's deadline. Resolved noted. **Tree at Allygrug Park** • Clerk reported that she had spoken to Nick Thomas, NPTCBC about the tree. He had been to examine the tree and suggested that the planning application should state that council would like to remove 5m off the top of the tree. Resolved noted. **Project group Meeting** • It was suggested that the next meeting of the project group be set up for 14th January 2021. All agreed – Resolved. **Bollards – Godre'r Graig Park.** • It was suggested that this matter be discussed in the next project group meeting. Resolved noted.	Clerk to submit form. Clerk to liaise with NPTCBC planning. Clerk to set up online meeting.
4445.	**Proposed new Primary School in Pontardawe to replace Godre'r Graig Primary, Alltwen Primary and Llangiwg Primary Schools** Cllrs A. Llewelyn, R. Davies, B. Hastie, G. Williams and E.W. Williams declared an interest. Resolved. • Cllr G. Williams stated that Tegwch are yet to receive a response to the questions raised. Once they are received, he will send an update to councillors. Resolved noted. The following comments were made by Community Councillors in response to the consultation: • It was stated that Godre'r Graig School is the heartbeat of the village. Children felt a sense of belonging to the school and their village, this sense of belonging would not be the same if they were schooled in Pontardawe. • It was stated that if Godre'r Graig School was to permanently close due to a new school being built in Pontardawe, this would have a negative effect on community activities, such as Christmas and Summer Fairs, Community Council Meetings (meetings were held at the school bi-monthly), the polling booth would also be lost. This was a grave concern to members. • It was stated that there could be a negative impact on the Welsh language due to the proposed new school having better facilities than some local Welsh-medium Primary school such as Ysgol Gymraeg Pontardawe, Ysgol Gymraeg Gwaun Cae Gurwen and Ysgol Gymraeg Trebannws. • It was stated that Rhyd-y-Fro Primary School would be in more of a suitable position to join the proposed new super-primary school than Godre'r Graig, as Rhyd-y-Fro is part of Pontardawe whereas	Clerk to send comments to NPTCBC.

	Godre'r Graig School is not part of Pontardawe, but part of the Ystalyfera wider area. • It was stated that Godre'r Graig is too far from Pontardawe for parents to be able to walk their children to school. Children would have to get a bus or be dropped off by car. This would have health implications for the children as they would get less exercise than if they walked to school, as well as being bad for pollution and the environment. • It was stated that parents can sometimes feel isolated and that meeting other parents at the local school gates after walking their children to school can be good for mental health, social interaction and community involvement or engagement. Losing Godre'r Graig School would mean that parents would not be able to do this as the proposed new school is so large, parents will not have the opportunity to get to know each other, as most children will be dropped off by car. This also applies to PTA meetings – parents are less likely to attend if they cannot walk to the school, particularly parents with no use of a car. This could cause a social imbalance and limit the opportunity given to some parents to be involved in their children's school. • It was stated that after-school clubs and children's activities would be lost within the village if the school was to close as there is no other facility available to run any of the activities. This would negatively affect the community feel of the area and children's sense of belonging. • It was stated that the staff and governors of Godre'r Graig School are unanimous in opposing the plans for a new primary school in Pontardawe. • It was stated that Nursery aged children under 5 years old are not eligible for transportation by a school bus, therefore parents would have to drive or take a service bus to get their youngsters to school. This would not allow for equal opportunities, as disadvantaged families would not be able to afford to take their nursery aged children to school as it would be too far to walk from Godre'r Graig to Pontardawe. • It was stated that children currently living in Cilmaengwyn may not be eligible for school transport as some would live within the 3-mile limit. This would have a negative effect on an area that is already an area of depravation. • It was stated that historically there had always been 1 Welsh-medium primary school and 1 English-medium primary school in the Ystalyfera area. Permanently closing Godre'r Graig Primary would result in local residents having less choice as to which school to send their children. The number of families living in the area has increased	

	over the last few years and removing this choice could be seen as discriminatory. • It was suggested that the issue with the quarry tip in Godre'r Graig should be further investigated. If the tip can be removed, then the current issue at the school could be rectified and the school could be re-instated. • It was stated that catchment area for Godre'r Graig school is approx. 80% from within Godre'r Graig itself, therefore this shows the need for a school in the village. • It was stated that if the new school in Pontardawe was to go ahead that many parents could chose to send their children to schools out of county, such as Bro Tawe (Powys) or Golwg y Cwm (Powys). • The traffic at Pontardawe was a concern for members. It was stated that traffic jams are a daily occurrence at Pontardawe (Tesco) roundabout on the A4067 due to the schools in Pontardawe. It was stated that many residents in Godre'r Graig, Cilmaengwyn, Ystalyfera and Lower Cwmtwrch travel to work in Llansamlet or Swansea every day – some even commute to Cardiff. It was stated that the prospect of more traffic heading down the bypass every morning due to a new 600+ pupil primary school could have a negative effect on people wanting to live North of Pontardawe, as the morning traffic jams could put them off. This in turn could have a negative effect on local property valuations. • The cost of the proposed new school was raised. Members stated that it would be much cheaper to renovate the 3 current primary schools rather than build a new school. Members hoped that these other options could be considered by NPTCBC rather than building an entirely new school in Pontardawe. • Members were concerned as to what would happen to the current Godre'r Graig school building, as well as the 2 other current primary school buildings if the proposed project went ahead. It is feared that they may be left to become unoccupied ruins. Resolved that Clerk collate comments and send to NPTCBC.	
4446.	**Finance** • Clerk reported that the notice of conclusion of audit from BDO has been received. Annual Return presented to council. Annual Return approved. Resolved. • Clerk presented 2020-21 budget summary and bank balances to council. Resolved. • Clerk presented budget estimate for 2021-22 and explained precept suggestion sheet to council. Resolved that Precept for	Clerk to place notice on website. Clerk to send Precept requirements to NPTCBC.

	2021-22 should be set at £78,750.00 (equating to £49.36 per council tax band D). **Accounts:** Resolved. BACS 132 G. Williams (Reimbursement) £37.94 BACS 133 SSE Electric (Godre'r Graig MUGA) £126.45 BACS 134 Viking Office Depot. (Com. Hall) £98.27 C300 135 Mark Bentley (Ffynnon) £120.00 BACS 136 Cooke & Arkwright (Alltygrug Lease) £250.00 BACS 137 SSE Electric (Community Hall) £139.02 BACS 138 SSE Electric (Ystalyfera MUGA) £134.01 BACS 139 R. Llewelyn (Reimbursement) £264.33 BACS 140 Viking Office Depot. (Stationery) £62.27 BACS 141 BT Broadband (Com. Hall) £56.34 BACS 142-144 Staff Wages & Expenses £2194.50 BACS 145 HMRC (Tax & NI) £234.05 BACS 146 City & County Swansea Pensions £475.90 Transfer from Business Account 121 to Current Account: £ 5,000.00 Resolved.	Clerk to make BACS payments.
4447.	**Planning** – there were no planning applications for consideration. Resolved noted.	
4448.	**Community Hall** • Clerk reported that as the tier level 4 lockdown has been announced for the whole of Wales commencing on 28th December 2020, the hall will have to be closed. Resolved noted. • Chair reported that she had visited the hall and noticed that there were water stain marks on some of the ceiling tiles. Clerk will investigate further. Resolved noted.	Clerk to investigate water marks.
4449.	**Correspondence** • Welsh Government – consultation – Strategy for an ageing society. Resolved noted. • One Voice Wales & Save a life Cymru – defibrillator training. Resolved noted. • One Voice Wales – update on UWP2. Resolved noted. • One Voice Wales – remote meeting survey results. Resolved noted. • Deryck Evans, Audit Wales – 3-year audit cycle information. Resolved noted.	Clerk to forward relevant emails to Cllrs.
4450.	**Other Urgent Business previously notified to Chair or Clerk.** Vice-chair ended the meeting by wishing everyone a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Resolved noted.	
	The next meeting of council will take place via MS Teams on 21st January 2021 at 7:00pm.	