



Meeting

Members of the St Nicholas with Bonvilston Community Council are summoned to attend a meeting of the council, to be held on **Thursday 18th November, 2021** at **7pm**. Members of the public are welcome, and encouraged to attend, and will have opportunity to address the council.

A hybrid meeting will be held – accessed remotely by internet or telephone, in accordance with the Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Meetings) (Wales) Regulations 2020, or physically in the **Reading Rooms, Bonvilston, CF5 6TQ**. The meeting will be recorded to ensure the accuracy of the Minutes.

Agenda

1. Chair's welcome and introductions
2. To receive apologies for absence
3. To receive declarations of interest
4. Co-option of Member
5. To consider cleaning and repair of War Memorials
6. To receive an update on the Internal Audit
7. To receive updates on completed & actioned projects
 - a. Draft Action Plan 2021-22
 - b. Self-Evaluation Toolkit/benchmarking
 - c. Transparency Code
 - d. Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021
8. Financial management
 - a. Payments to approve
 - i. Meeting room hire – Reading Rooms
 - b. Increase budget for Maes y ffynon Village Green – from reserves.
9. To consider Planning Matters
 - a. Setting up of a Planning Committee
 - b. Plenary Powers / Terms of Reference of a Planning Committee
 - c. Appointment of Members to Serve on a Planning Committee

10. To Consider Publication Scheme
11. To consider Risk Management
 - a. Risk Management Statement to Internal Auditor
 - b. Risk Management Scheme/Policy
 - c. Risk Management Assessment
12. To consider Register of Assets
13. To consider Training Register
14. To consider **Annual Governance Statement**
15. To elect Vice Chair and Responsible Financial Officer
16. To consider bank account card holders

Cllr Ian Perry

Chair



Documentation

Internal Audit Background

Annual internal audit report to:

Name of body:

The Council/Board/Committee's internal audit, acting independently and on the basis of an assessment of risk, has included carrying out a selective assessment of compliance with relevant procedures and controls expected to be in operation during the financial year ending 31 March 2021.

The internal audit has been carried out in accordance with the Council/Board/Committee's needs and planned coverage. On the basis of the findings in the areas examined, the internal audit conclusions are summarised in this table. Set out below are the objectives of internal control and the internal audit conclusions on whether, in all significant respects, the following control objectives were being achieved throughout the financial year to a standard adequate to meet the needs of the Council/Board/Committee.

	Agreed?				Outline of work undertaken as part of the internal audit (NB not required if detailed internal audit report presented to body)
	Yes	No*	N/A	Not covered**	
1. Appropriate books of account have been properly kept throughout the year.					
2. Financial regulations have been met, payments were supported by invoices, expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.					
3. The body assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.					
4. The annual precept/levy/resource demand requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process, progress against the budget was regularly monitored, and reserves were appropriate.					
5. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked, and VAT was appropriately accounted for.					
6. Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.					
7. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with minuted approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.					
8. Asset and investment registers were complete, accurate, and properly maintained.					



	Agreed?				Outline of work undertaken as part of the internal audit (NB not required if detailed internal audit report presented to body)
	Yes	No*	N/A	Not covered**	
9. Periodic and year-end bank account reconciliations were properly carried out.					
10. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments/income and expenditure), agreed with the cashbook, were supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records, and where appropriate, debtors and creditors were properly recorded.					
11. Trust funds (including charitable trusts). The Council/Board/Committee has met its responsibilities as a trustee.					

During 2021, we've not had access to our bank account, or any bank statements, making it impossible to comply with our Financial Regulations. Steps have been taken to ensure no repeat.

The Financial Regulations state:

On a regular basis, at least once in each quarter, and at each financial year end, a member other than the Chairman [or a cheque signatory] shall be appointed to verify bank reconciliations (for all accounts) produced by the RFO. The member shall sign the reconciliations and the original bank statements (or similar document) as evidence of verification. This activity shall on conclusion be reported, including any exceptions, to and noted by the Community Council.



Bank Reconciliations

A bank reconciliation is the process of matching the balances in the accounting records to the corresponding information on a bank statement. The goal of this process is to ascertain the differences between the two, and to book changes to the accounting records as appropriate.

The five steps of Bank Reconciliation

1. Obtain bank statement
2. Open accounts spreadsheet for the relevant Quarter.
3. Make sure the opening balance in your accounting system matches the opening balance of the bank statement at the start of the month.
4. Systematically check (and double-check) each transaction on the bank statement against the record in the accounts.
5. Check that your closing balance matches the balance on your bank statement: Once you've reconciled all your transactions and double checked them, the balance in your accounting system should match your bank statement.

With bank balance now matching the balance in the accounting spreadsheet, successful reconciliation has been achieved.

We've not been updating our Register of Interests when interests have been declared at meetings.

Sufficient detail is missing from some descriptions in our spreadsheet column – the information is held elsewhere.

Some of the rows in the account's spreadsheet had 'collapsed', so were not visible.



Draft Action Plan (2021-22)

Culture and heritage

Achieved:

- Poppies for Remembrance

Ongoing:

- Christmas Trees

Planning

Pass:

- Comment on all planning applications which fall within or impact on our community
- To ensure that any village development is in keeping with the village.
- Planning applications
 - To be rigorous, open and transparent in the review of the planning applications.
 - To proactively shape the planning process and decisions for our community

Working with others

Pass:

- Liaison with neighbouring Community Councils - continued participation at One Voice Wales regional meetings
- Participation at Community Liaison Meetings of the Vale of Glamorgan Council

Democracy

Pass:

- Deliver evidence based and transparent decisions through full meetings of the Council

Ongoing:

- Fill all Community Council seats
- Promote & encourage participation in the 2022 election – with contested elections



Governance

Pass/Fail:

- Making further progress towards attaining the Quality Level of the Local Council Award Scheme

Public Money

Fail:

- Maintain good financial practices, ensuring transparency and value for money
- Financial framework: completing the transition to a more effective and transparent accounting system for the Council.

Highways and Active Travel

Achieved:

- Dropped kerbs where appropriate

Communication: Social Media, Website, notices and letter

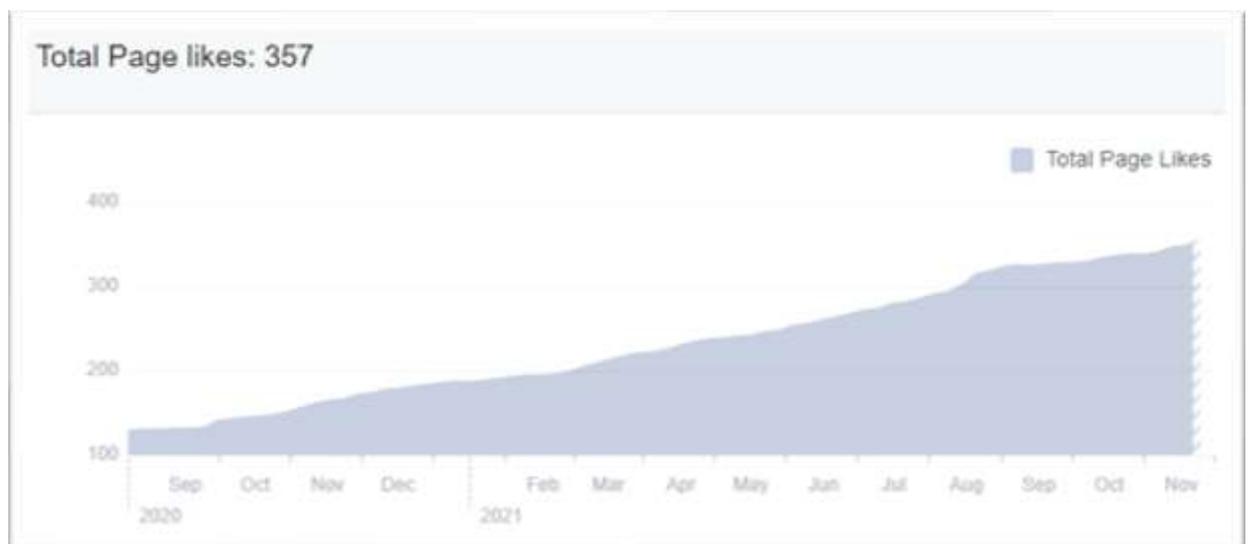
Pass:

- the community in local government.
- website that's up to date - including meeting links and draft minutes.
- Keep noticeboards up-to-date

Fail:

- Regular newsletters

Facebook Page:



Meeting of January 11, 2021 – item 18 a ii – Benchmarking

We've applied to pilot the Self-Evaluation Toolkit.

Our goal for 2021-22 is to achieve compliance with the NALC (England) Foundation Award. This means that the Community Council must publish the following online:

1. Standing Orders and Financial Regulations. ✓ Annual Meeting 5/5/2021
2. Code of Conduct & link to Councillors' Register of Interests. ✓
3. **Publication scheme.** ✓?
4. Annual Return.
5. Information about Council Payments.
6. Calendar of meetings including an **Annual Community Meeting.**
7. Minutes for all council and committee minutes for a full year. ✓
8. Current agendas. ✓
9. The budget and precept information for the current or next financial year.
10. Complaints policy.
11. Council contact details and councillor information in line with the transparency code.
12. **Action plan** for the current year.
13. Evidence of **consulting the community**/Community Engagement Policy.
14. Publicity advertising council activities. ✓ Facebook Page
15. Evidence of participating in town and country **planning.** ✓

The Council must also confirm by resolution that it has:

16. A risk management scheme.
17. A register of assets
18. Contracts for all members of staff ✓
19. Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures ✓
20. **A policy for training new staff and councillors** ✓ July 19. 2021
21. A record of all training undertaken by staff and councillors in the last year
22. A Clerk who has achieved 12 CPD points in the last year.



Transparency Code

A council that is not compliant with the transparency requirements laid out in the Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities or the Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013 an elector could potentially challenge the council in the courts with a judicial review.

Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities

- All items of expenditure above £100
- Full end of year accounts
- Annual governance statements – Publication of the relevant page of the completed Annual Return form will meet this requirement.
- Internal audit reports
- List of councillor or member responsibilities
- Location of public land and building assets

Local Government (Democracy) (Wales) Act 2013

- Information on how to contact the council/clerk
- Contact information for councils members
- List of member responsibilities
- Member's party affiliations (if any)
- Minutes of the council's meetings
- Any documents referred to in the minutes



Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021

Participation at meetings of Community Councils (Section 48)

providing members of the public in attendance with a reasonable opportunity to make representations about any business to be transacted at meetings unless the person presiding over the meeting considers that it would prejudice the conduct of the meeting.

Comes into effect: May 2022 – implemented May 2021

Giving of notices and access to documents to meetings (Section 49)

Minutes (or Decision Notice) to be published within one week of a meeting.

Came into effect in May 2021

Publish a Training Plan. (Section 52)

Comes into effect in April 2022

Annual Reports by Town and Community Councils (Section 52)

Annual Report to be prepared and published as soon as reasonably practicable after the end of each financial year

To report on priorities, activities and achievements during the previous financial year.

Comes into effect in April 2022



Setting up of a Planning Committee

A Council will be asked for a decision on whether delegated authority, i.e. Plenary Powers, should be given to a Planning Committee on planning matters. This Committee would submit a report for information only back to the Full Council each month.

Council Members would be informed of Planning Applications, especially contentious applications, in order that they can either attend the relevant Planning Committee Meeting or submit their comments.

Standing Orders may be amended to reflect a decision to create a Planning Committee.



Planning Committee – Terms Of Reference

Membership: 5 Members of St Nicholas with Bonvilston Community Council

Purpose of the Committee: The Planning Committee is established to oversee planning matters relating to the St Nicholas and Bonvilston Community Wards on behalf of the Community Council and this shall include the following responsibilities:

1. With delegated powers to consider planning applications received from the Local Planning Authority, and to make observations (if any) thereon.
2. To receive notification of appeals to the Planning Inspectorate against any determination of the Local Planning Authority and (with delegated powers) to consider whether to take any further course of action.
3. To formulate views, from a planning standpoint, on any matter referred to the Committee, whether by another Committee or otherwise, which it is considered would result in the submission of a planning application to the Local Planning Authority.
4. To formulate views and make representations as appropriate in respect of all matters relating to public transport in the town.
5. To formulate views and make representations as appropriate in respect of any matter relating to the management and movement of traffic including provision of on or off-street parking facilities and with delegated powers to submit views to the Vale of Glamorgan Council on specific orders for the regulation of traffic.
6. To consider highway related matters not otherwise referred to in these terms of reference including the formulation of views and representations as appropriate.
7. To formulate views and make representations as appropriate on any matter relating to the built environment of the St Nicholas and Bonvilston Community Wards.
8. With delegated powers to respond to all consultation exercises in respect of matters within the Committee's terms of reference where there is insufficient time to recommend a response to the Council for approval.
9. To consider matters of a general nature which are incidental to the role of the Community Council in submitting observations on planning applications to the Local Planning Authority.
10. The proceedings of the Committee to be submitted to the Council for acceptance and adoption except where powers are delegated.



Publication Scheme

Available on our website – meetings page

Risk Management

Risks identified and actions taken to prevent reoccurrence

Access to Bank Account

The Community Council found itself with no Member or employee on the mandate of the bank account. The process to add signatures took from August 2020 until September 2021. There were no bank statements from March 2021.

To prevent reoccurrence, all Members (and employees) will be asked to become signatories on the bank account. At present we have five Members on our mandate.

We will also ask for three bank cards, with two required to make an online payment. Query – can visa payments be made without a second person? Can this be capped?

Loss of Clerk

There is no Procedure Manual for the administration of the council. Members were not aware of Bank Reconciliation – even if we'd had the bank statements to do this. A Procedure Manual will be developed to ensure that most Members of the Council could take over the basic admin function of the council.

Draft **Risk Management Policy** and **Assessment** on our website – Meetings page.

Register of Assets

Available on our website – Financials pages for 2020-21 and 2021-22

Training Register/Record

See Members page of our website



Annual Governance Statement

Members of the Council are asked to consider the Council's responses to the questions on the Annual Governance Statement, and agree by resolution.

Annual Governance Statement					
We acknowledge as the members of the Council/Board/Committee, our responsibility for ensuring that there is a sound system of internal control, including the preparation of the accounting statements. We confirm, to the best of our knowledge and belief, with respect to the accounting statements for the year ended 31 March 2021, that:					
	Agreed?		'YES' means that the Council/Board/Committee:	PG Ref	
	Yes	No*			
1. We have put in place arrangements for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> effective financial management during the year; and the preparation and approval of the accounting statements. 			Properly sets its budget and manages its money and prepares and approves its accounting statements as prescribed by law.	6, 12	
2. We have maintained an adequate system of internal control, including measures designed to prevent and detect fraud and corruption, and reviewed its effectiveness.			Made proper arrangements and accepted responsibility for safeguarding the public money and resources in its charge.	6, 7	
3. We have taken all reasonable steps to assure ourselves that there are no matters of actual or potential non-compliance with laws, regulations and codes of practice that could have a significant financial effect on the ability of the Council/Board/Committee to conduct its business or on its finances.			Has only done things that it has the legal power to do and has conformed to codes of practice and standards in the way it has done so.	6	
4. We have provided proper opportunity for the exercise of electors' rights in accordance with the requirements of the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations 2014.			Has given all persons interested the opportunity to inspect the body's accounts as set out in the notice of audit.	6, 23	
5. We have carried out an assessment of the risks facing the Council/Board/Committee and taken appropriate steps to manage those risks, including the introduction of internal controls and/or external insurance cover where required.			Considered the financial and other risks it faces in the operation of the body and has dealt with them properly.	6, 9	
6. We have maintained an adequate and effective system of internal audit of the accounting records and control systems throughout the year and have received a report from the internal auditor.			Arranged for a competent person, independent of the financial controls and procedures, to give an objective view on whether these meet the needs of the body.	6, 8	
7. We have considered whether any litigation, liabilities or commitments, events or transactions, occurring either during or after the year-end, have a financial impact on the Council/Board/Committee and, where appropriate, have included them on the accounting statements.			Disclosed everything it should have about its business during the year including events taking place after the year-end if relevant.	6	
8. We have taken appropriate action on all matters raised in previous reports from internal and external audit.			Considered and taken appropriate action to address issues/weaknesses brought to its attention by both the internal and external auditors.	6, 8, 23	
9. Trust funds – in our capacity as trustee, we have: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> discharged our responsibility in relation to the accountability for the fund(s) including financial reporting and, if required, independent examination or audit. 	Yes	No	N/A	Has met all of its responsibilities where it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts.	3, 6

* Please provide explanations to the external auditor on a separate sheet for each 'no' response given; and describe what action is being taken to address the weaknesses identified.

3



Appoint RFO

Our Financial regulations state:

All accounting procedures and financial records of the Council shall be determined by the RFO in accordance with the Accounts and Audit (Wales) Regulations, appropriate guidance and proper practices.

