



Minutes

Minutes of the AGM of the St Nicholas with Bonvilston Community Council, called by Cllr Ian Perry, via video and telephone conference on Wednesday 30th December at 19:30

PRESENT:

Cllr. I Perry (Chair)
Cllr. G Rowson

Cllr. J Griffiths
Cllr. P Moss

ALSO PRESENT:

S. Hillman (Clerk)

[1] APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr. K Ward, Cllr. S Cockrell, Cllr. E del Torto, Cllr. C Jones & Cllr A Brown

[2] DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None

[3] TO REVIEW THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS:

A. Standing Orders

Cllr. I Perry put forward that he has a few small amendments to this documentation. He proposed to simplify the documentation and to make it more modern. Cllr. I Perry proposed all 20 instances of the word **'his'** to be replaced by the word **'their'** to make it gender neutral.

Cllr. I Perry also raised the issue of the removal of 3L and to leave empty – because of the use of ZOOM. As we do record these meeting now for the purpose of writing up minutes accurately and it would be harder to stop people recording due to technology (this is currently happening in England and rolling out to Wales very soon).

Cllr. I Perry asked if there were any other changes the Council Members wanted to change.





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Cllr. G Rawson raised concerns regarding amendment **'13 i - serve on councillors by delivery or post at their residences a signed a summons by email confirming the time, place and the agenda; and'** stating that not everyone has access to email, and they would still need the paper copies.

Cllr. I Perry responded that it is set by default, changed from paper to email and nothing would change with the delivery or post to resident if they require the paper version. It is just changing the default, which is standard practice now and the copies will now be available in Colour.

No objections these amendments.

Proposer – Cllr. J Griffiths
Seconder – Cllr. G Rawson

B. Social Media Policy

Cllr. I Perry circulated these.

Cllr. I Perry stated that the current Social Media Policy had been written by One Voice Wales, which is now believed to be little bit dated and rather complex as it applied to a mix of employees and councillors and it was being confused as to what part applied to them. Cllr. I Perry proposed to have a simplified version and it would be based on a policy that is already used in Wales, but it is not the One Voice Wales policy but rather one that is being used elsewhere.

Cllr. I Perry then gave opportunity to members to comment on this for feedback and thoughts.

Cllr. P Moss raised the issue that he did not receive the policy.

Cllr. I Perry assured that he had sent the policy and Cllr. J Griffiths confirmed that it was sent and received with 2 attachments via email and hard copy.

Cllr. I Perry also mentioned that the policy is also available on the website if anyone wished to view.

Cllr. P Moss questioned if this was a standard policy used from elsewhere.

Cllr. I Perry confirmed it was a policy from primarily Cwmbran and that it is a more simplified and modern version.





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Cllr. I Perry clarified that it has a more defined policy to be civil, tasteful, and relevant if you talk about or mention the council on any social media platform, especially if you comment about the council as a councillor to follow the Social Media Policy guidelines.

Cllr. P Moss raised concerns about expression of personal opinions of councillors on social media on a personal account and being misconstrued as the opinion of the council when it is not. Cllr. P Moss asked if there was a way to include this into the policy that personal comments made by councillors needed to be clear on social media and separate to official business so that it is not confused as being a message from the council.

Cllr. I Perry stated that the Council does have its own Facebook account and that we needed to be careful with the use of social media and its connections with councillors. Cllr. I Perry also mentioned an instance in the past where an incident did happen with the Facebook account, but to ensure that anything that is not related to the Council should not be posted from its Facebook account.

Cllr. P Moss asked if this should be part of the policy.

Cllr. G Rawson confirmed that the policy states ***'does not contain any personal information'***

Cllr. P Moss questioned if that meant that if it is an opinion that it should note as such.

Cllr. I Perry then clarified that if you make a post with a personal Facebook account it would be assumed that the person in question would be making a personal statement and that should be default unless you say otherwise. Because it would be public knowledge that it was a councillor making these comments and carefulness would be needed when expressing such opinions and to refer to the code of conduct and not to bring the council into disrepute.

Cllr. I Perry proposed to adopt this.

Proposer- Cllr. P Moss
Seconder – Cllr. J Griffiths

C. Welsh Language Policy





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Cllr. I Perry proposed not to change anything and stay the same.
Everyone agreed with this.

D. Risk Management Policies

Cllr. I Perry proposed not to change anything and stay the same.

No Objections

Cllr. I Perry proposed that the Clerk will investigate this and come back with any recommendations.

E. Financial Regulations

Cllr. I Perry proposed not to change anything and stay the same.

No Objections

Cllr. I Perry proposed that the Clerk will investigate this and come back with any recommendations for changes or amendments over the next 5 months.

F. Financial Assistance Policy

Cllr. I Perry has one minor proposal – a line that the council took out which did not have to be taken out from last year - ***'applicants can only apply if they have less than the certain amount of their own funds available to them'*** the council took this out because we wanted to give a grant, but it was not necessary to be taken out.

Cllr. I Perry proposed to put it back into policy and maybe the wording is not the best and needs to be looked at and to be clarified.

The policy was reverted back to £5,000.

All agreed to proposal to revert to original policy.

G. Publishing Policy





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Cllr. I Perry raised the issue that the council is supposed to have a Publishing Policy or a Publishing Scheme which details what is supposed to be available and how people can access it, which then is supposed to be published online and currently is not there. This has been mentioned in the past, but there is no record of this anywhere.

Cllr. J Griffiths concurred with Cllr. I Perry that this had been mentioned in the past.

Cllr. I Perry raised that we would need to go to the ICO to gain a new certificate as we now have a new clerk, and we will need the Publishing Policy as part of the guidelines of obtaining a new certificate from the ICO.

Cllr. I Perry proposed that we brought this back to the members of the council back in January 2021, but this would mean holding up the Clerk by doing this for next week and that the time would not permit, or an alternative would be that the members would agree for this task to be delegated to the Clerk and Cllr. I Perry to do and for it to be published in draft form and if any comments or suggestions were raised then this could be brought to the meeting in January 2021.

Cllr. I Perry agreed to put this information available online this evening (30th December 2020) and to circulate.

No Objections

Proposer- Cllr. J Griffiths

Secunder – Cllr. P Moss

4. To consider:

H. Councillor Expenses Policy

Cllr. I Perry raised the issue of councillors being owed expenses and since we do not have a policy it is left the council being unsure of procedure. Cllr. I Perry commented that we need an expense policy to be put in place.





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Cllr. I Perry proposed to delegate this to the Clerk to do within the 5 months, in readiness for the next Financial Year in May 2021.

No Objections.

Cllr. P Moss raised questions of £1,416.00 of expenses made in the 2019-20 Budget Report, and commented it seemed quite a lot. Good argument for clarity to have a policy.

Cllr. I Perry confirmed that this was the former Clerks expenses for stationary, mileage, consumables etc.

5. To approve the report of the Annual Accounts of 2019/20

Cllr. P Moss raised concerns and found the Budget report not clear and needs clarity and fluidity throughout.

The Clerk explained what the Budget Report contained and what needed to be done in the future for clarity and fluidity.

Cllr. G Rawson, Cllr. P Moss and Cllr. J Griffiths suggested to discuss at next meeting.

Not approved

6. Election of an Internal Auditor

Cllr. I Perry raised concerns that this was not being done.

Cllr. G Rawson asked if we had ever had an internal auditor.

Cllr. I Perry confirmed that we had, and it was J Howells the former Clerk of Peterston-Super-Ely.

Cllr. J Griffiths mentioned that she believed the Cllr. E del Torto had done this.





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Cllr. I Perry commented that J Howells may have done this without being elected.

Cllr. I Perry wanted to confirm everyone was happy for J Howells to continue to do it this year.

No Objections.

Cllr. I Perry mentioned that we had failed last year's audit.

Cllr. G Rawson proposed that we find out more information via the Clerk and bring it to the next meeting in January.

Cllr. I Perry clarified that this would be available by 1st February 2021.

7. Confirmation of representatives to outside bodies

Cllr. J Griffiths raised that because of the small council attendance if we could put this off until next meeting.

Cllr. I Perry stated this is only confirmation.

Cllr. I Perry asked if everyone agreed to stick with what we have in place now.

No objections,

Cllr. I Perry then mentioned that we have a vacancy on the one Voice Wales and suggested that it may be useful that the Clerk would go with Cllr. I Perry and become second representative.

No Objections.

Cllr. I Perry nominated Sofia Hillman (Clerk)

Proposer – Cllr. I Perry
Secunder – Cllr. G Rawson

8. Closure of AGM

This meeting closed at 20:15





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These Minutes were approved at the meeting of January 11, 2021

Cllr Ian Perry

Chair

