

# Minutes of Cwarter Bach Community Council - Full Meeting

## Held remotely via Zoom on 7<sup>th</sup> April 2021

In attendance Chair: Glynog Davies, Advisor/Proper Officer: John Rees Councillors: Susan Thomas , Vera Morgan, David Belcher, Andrew Dady, Tony Strutt, Liz Baker

1. Apologies – No apologies received but on behalf of the council Cllr Glynog Davies wished Mair Thomas well and hope for a speedy recovery, after her recent hospitalisation.
2. In Memorandum – Cllr Vera Morgan as invited to pay tribute to former Cllr Ron Lewis, who sadly past away. He was a dedicated Councillor and well liked member of both the council and the community, who will be missed by many.
3. Declarations of personal interest – Non indicated
4. Accepting Minutes of last meeting – Proposed Susan Thomas Second Vera Morgan
5. No matters arising from minutes
6. Finance report – Susan Thomas was elected as RFO (Responsible Finance Officer) vote carried unanimously. Susan took over the finances when Helen Taylor resigned. We didn't know if the signatories were still valid. No bills had been paid from the end of November – 1<sup>st</sup> of March due to problems with the new bank mandate. It has been the Clerk's responsibility to transfer funds from the deposit account to the current account. As we only have 2 signatories Susan proposed Vera Morgan and Liz Baker to become additional signatories on the account. Proposed by Cllr Glynog Davies 2<sup>nd</sup> David Belcher. Cllr Tony Strutt in opposition. No other objection were raised and it carried. Glynog Davies has managed to enlist the help of Meirwyn Thomas from County who is going to do the internal audit. Tony Strutt and Susan Thomas were verifiers for the accounts.
7. Asset Committee report - A meeting held with Bryn Rovers (BR) AFC on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March (that was previously agreed to by former Chair Helen Taylor) was attended by Glynog Davies and Tony Strutt on behalf of the council. Cllr Davies reported that it was a good meeting. Glynog said he admired the work being done by BR. He said members had vision and enthusiasm. There are, however problems with the changing rooms, that are unusable in their present state. The Club are hopeful that they can return to playing matches again from August. There was talk again of them using Maes Elwyn, as this has changing rooms on site, but is also used by the Rugby Club. BR wish to remain on Cae Criced and make it there home. They believe that it could cost as much as £150,000 to complete works to the changing room (portacabins). Cllr Glynog Davies said this project has to be for the future. He offered to speak to County and has spoken to the Leisure Officer who is prepared to have a site meeting with both BR and Cwarter Bach Community Council (CBCC) and hear the suggestions from both parties. Glynog asked councillors to consider 'What is the future for Cae Criced? BR have a 10 yr plan and we need to decide what we are prepared to offer. We need to be honest about how far we can go and Grant Work needs consideration. Cllr Tony Strutt also added that BR want the changing rooms condemned, but it is his opinion they could have remedial work to allow them to function for a few more years. He also got quotes for porta cabins at a cost of £30,000-40,000. John Rees said that Cae Criced is a small field and could only accommodate a small pitch. He asked what BR needed and what size field is required. What does the council provide at the moment? If grants were to be sort by BR

then they would need to show security of tenure they have on the land. We may need license agreements and what sort of notice would be required. BR had suggested they could carry out a lot of the works themselves through members donating their time and expertise. John Rees mentioned that cash payments would be a problem and councillors seemed to have consensus. Tony Strutt and David Belcher both felt that resident's views should be taken into consideration as one problem that arose was talk of removing a playground. This has to be discussed further and it was suggested that another meeting be called to get councillors opinions. John Rees said there was urgency to be fair to both BR and CBCC. Another meeting to discuss further was provisionally accepted.

8. New Clerk – Cllr Tony Strutt said we needed to re-advertise for a Clerk. There was consensus that the job description needs to be simplified. Glynog had mentioned that Meirwyn Thomas, who was going to help finances, had thought about applying for the part-time post but was put off by the job description and the salary for the amount work expected. John Rees said that he had spoken to Helen Taylor about the post and thought that for a small council that spends £100,000-120,000 annually it was a significant portion of budget for staff. He also said that although it would be extra effort in the early months of the job, that would change. He said the Clerk is responsible for the full council and not the sub-committees. The Clerk is answerable to the council but should not be over burdens by requests from individual councillors. Tony Strutt said the Clerk was there to act on command of all councillors – only answerable to full council. Did the Clerk have to sit in on sub-committee meetings? John Rees said he thought the Clerk would want to sit in on sub-committee meetings to maintain a handle on what was going on. John Rees also criticised the council for the last appointment of a Clerk, saying that they had taken on someone with no experience of local government and it had been too much of a big ask for the young Clerk. He did say that it was now time to press the reset button and stop going over old ground if we are to sort ourselves out as a council. We need to get a handle on things. He felt that in 6 months we could pull things back together but it would rely on councillors all working together. Cllr Glynog Davies then said it was important to discuss Cae Criced and Clerk and Cllr Tony Strutt said it was important it should be in next 1-2 weeks. Glynog proposed the next meeting by on the following Wednesday. Cllr Liz Baker said she was unable to attend on the Wednesday, Thursday the 15<sup>th</sup> April was agreed to by all.
9. & 10 Co-option to Brynaman ward and Councillor vacancies. There are councillor vacancies in all wards. Glynog Davies said he had spoken to the monitoring Officer for County and he was advised that we could advertise the now 6 vacancies that we have all at once. This meant that existing applicants would have to re-apply but they would be written to, to let them know. As there were 2 outstanding applications it was voted on as to whether this was acceptable. Motion was carried 5/7 with Tony Strutt voting against and Liz Baker abstained.
10. A Vice –chair was needed and Glynog proposed Vera Morgan as acting chair up to the AGM in May. This was 2<sup>nd</sup> by Liz Baker, majority of members agreed, vote was carried.
11. Correspondence – Planning Development for 60 houses to south of Cwmgarw Road. Most of the council were originally against the development, when it was first published. Liz Baker expressed concern that this may be too many houses and that the school would need to be considered but thought it may benefit the area. John Rees said there were points in favour and points against. It could be good for CBCC and County would be quick to draw on funds for the infrastructure. CBCC would need to enter into discussions for what we could get out of it in term of money for

our community. He also expressed an opinion on challenges that might befall the project with respect to mining. Tony Strutt said there needed to be more discussion as to how it will affect the village as a whole and although he believed Highways had given the go ahead there were concerns locally around issues with traffic. Also is the school big enough? Glynog Davies told council it will be aired at County. He said that the previous clerk's concerns were around the sewage and could the main sewer accommodate that many houses? There is a Section 106 that can be put in place to ensure certain elements are adhered to by the developers. John Rees asked how long we had to put our comments forward. We believe it goes to planning by the 21<sup>st</sup> April 2021. John Rees said that if there were engineering challenges then more houses meant more revenue to cover costs, so number of houses was important to project going ahead and could generate more income into the community. It was to be put on the agenda for the 15<sup>th</sup> April and councillors to bring their thoughts along to the meeting.

Susan Thomas had invoices for payment, street lighting was £7,612, this was thought to be high and Susan and Tony were to discuss further. Insurance was due for payment, Tony Strutt had had a look at it and reported that all seemed in order, this is due for payment by May 1<sup>st</sup> agreed it should be paid. Donations – The Police community fund had made donations to the Cinema and Lles Brynamman, these were top-up payments at 20% of match funding agreed previously by council. Also Council had agreed to donate to Ynys Dwela, Susan was to check amounts agreed (£500 or £1,000) but councillor were happy that this had already been voted on and approved. Voted unanimously. Liz Baker had received an email from former councillor Wyn Churchill expressing her regret at leaving the council. She would have like to be considered for council again. Glynog Davies said that County were aware she had resigned and that she could apply for one of the vacancies that were to be announced.

The Date for the next meeting was confirmed as the Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> April 2021.