

05/25

**MINUTES OF AN ORDINARY MEETING OF NEYLAND TOWN COUNCIL, HELD ON MONDAY 3RD
FEBRUARY 7.00PM AT NEYLAND COMMUNITY HUB**

This meeting was recorded.

These minutes have been written by Mrs. Deborah Yea, the Temporary cover Clerk for the meeting.

IN ATTENDANCE: Cllr. P Hay (Mayor)

Cllr. M Harry
Cllr. E Phelan
Cllr. A Phelan
Cllr. A Richards
Cllr. A Thomas
Cllr. S Hancock
Cllr. S Campodonic
Cllr. B Rothero
Cllr. D Devauden
Cllr. S Thomas

Mrs Deborah Yea – Minute Taker

APOLOGIES: None received

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: 8 Members of the public

Meeting opened at 7.01pm

The Mayor introduced the Minute Taker Mrs Deborah Yea and advised she has taken minutes for Neyland Town Council (NTC) previously, he continued, this is a last minute decision due to the Clerk being under considerable stress recently and over the weekend has reached the tipping point.

The Mayor advised that there is a new system installed for remote dial in, and apologised no one knew how to operate it, this would be resolved for the next meeting.

4434 - TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS REGARDING THE BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED

Member:	Interest:	Agenda Item:
Cllr. M Harry	Personal; Director of Neyland CIC	N/A
Cllr. S Hancock	Personal; County Councillor at PCC	Item 7 Item 8
Cllr. A Phelan	Personal; School Governor	Item 9
Cllr. S Thomas	Personal; Llanstadwell Community Council	N/A

4435 – REPRESENTATION FROM THE PUBLIC (LIMITED TO 15 MINUTES)

A member of the public raised a post the Mayor had put on Facebook (FB) in December stating to “*put up or shut up*” if the members of the public did not like the way they were running NTC. The member of the public continued to and informed the Councillors he attended the extraordinary meeting which was recently held to which the Mayor did not attend and he should of, to hear what his community wanted.

The member of the public continued to which he demanded The Mayor stepped down with immediate effect. The member of the public explained the connection he had with Neyland Community Council, his Grandparents had represented the town of Neyland, he further went on to explain that the post he reference initially was removed, after being reported and referenced another comment made if the Councillors did not have the stomach to hold a meeting in December and January, they should not be Councillor, and also should step down with immediate effect. The Member of the public noted that he drank in numerous places in Neyland one of those being the Forresters Arms, demonstrating to the members that he does not have any significant connection to Cllr. B Rothero. Cllr. B Rothero approached the member of the public to come to the meetings after seeing his post on FB. The member of the public expressed his frustration, he had been bought into the post without the Mayor investigating the full facts. Hillary and Kenneth Richards were named as his Grandparents and would not have stood for what is currently going on within the Council. It was noted, it was not he “cronies” that requested for the Mayor “Peter Hay” to step down but the member of the public.

The Mayor then asked him for his name which he provided Nicholas Wilson (NW). The Mayor responded, he did not believe he has posted anything saying “Shut up” he did suggest that three Councillors pull their necks in and made no reference to any member of the public. NW said he is referencing the FB post made in December with the Mayors name at the bottom not the post wind your neck in which comes from the term wind your neck in or loose your head from when we used guillotines, the Mayor respond that was silly brining that in and NW’s response was he noted it as it can be considered as a threat.

The Mayor informed NW that it was of his view that we have a council that is being disrupted dramatically by three Councillors on his right (the names of the councillors were not referenced). The Mayor then said we have a Clerk who is being abused, threatened and put in an official grievance to this council. The majority of Councillors have supported there is substance to her grievance, the Mayor explained the reason the Clerk was not in attendance today is because she received a threatening email from a NTC Councillor this morning which she has taken to the police. The Mayor also stated that both himself and his wife have also taken three if not four malicious emails to the police. Cllr. D Devauden interrupted with point of order “what happened nothing” to which the Mayor did not agree with point of order, NW then interrupted the Mayor referencing the FB post in December, the Mayor responded that he takes on board what he said and he is doing the best he can, everyone is welcome to their opinion, like he is welcome to his opinion, The Mayor reiterated he is doing the best he can for this Council in circumstances you would find hard to believe and that he was happy with his response.

Cllr S Thomas spoke stating that the Mayor did put a post on FB “Put up or shut up” and no matter what your views are that it is an abuse of power for your own ends the same as it was with Cllr M Harry. Cllr A Phelan responded to Cllr S Thomas and noted that in June / July 2022/23 was this also an example of abuse of power with a FB post made and commented “one rule for you and another for everyone else just to clarify”. Further conversations took place around the FB post made in December to which Cllr A Phelan noted that is was a email to Councillors, the Mayor then published so everyone could see, Cllr S Thomas noted that they received the email, it did not need to go on FB. Further conversations took place and everyone talked over each other. The Mayor advised if you wish to complain there is a procedure you can

follow that can be completed by Councillors and Member of the public. Cllr D Devauden spoke and asked “does that include lying to the ombudsman twice?” A member of the public interjected, as the Mayor of Neyland he should have a level of decorum, the Mayor responded noting the level of decorum he achieves with what goes on around him is astonishing, and advised the member of the public to try and understand what they are putting up with.

A member of the public noted as the Mayor he had used a four letter swear word in public to which Cllr A Phelan commented that is was Cllr D Devauden and the Mayor advised the member of the public they were correct it was him. Cllr D Devauden called for Cllr A Phelan to withdraw his statement, to which the Mayor responded that there was no need to withdraw it as he admitted saying the swear word. A lot of talking over each other took place with Cllr D Devauden referring to a Councillor as having “dementia”. The member of the public stated the Mayor is the first citizen of Neyland that she found the language the Mayor used as objectionable and the Mayor noted it and he takes it in board. A member of the public noted that the Council had received a grievance from the Clerk and of the reporting to the police but requested they are not for public consumption and it does not need to be discussed in public meetings the member of the public also noted his sympathy to what the Clerk is going through. The Mayor responded by acknowledging that it is not being discussed just noting that it has happened. A discussion took place over the grievance from the Clerk being made public, and whether it should have been. A number of people talked over each other and it was agreed by all those talking that they were right to publish the official grievance but no other information. Cllr D Devauden noted a post on FB that accused three Councillors of sexually harassing the town Clerk, an exchange of strong words shouting at each other took place between Cllr D Devauden and a member of the public who identified herself as the Clerks mother, due to the shouting at and over each other unable to capture the exchange.

19:16 Cllr B Rothero left the meeting.

The Mayor asked if there was anything else, a member of the public identified herself as Mrs Pamela Perceval – Maxwell and addressed the Mayor saying on the 16th January on behalf of a number of residents she handed the Mayor a petition and questioned when is likely to be debated by the Council. Mrs Pamela Perceval – Maxwell then raised a second housekeeping point as to why the Town Council Website was not up to date, the three meetings taken place in 2025 have not had their agenda’s published, the meeting of the 16th January, 22nd January and tonight’s meeting the Mayor responded by say he did not know why but would find out. Further discussion took place as to when the petition will be discussed by the Council. The Mayor noted that it is difficult times at the moment, a member of the public asked should that Petition not have gone onto the Agenda for the next meeting as soon as it was handed to him to which the Mayor responded understanding what they are saying and that he and NTC are under considerable pressure, and that every spare hour is being spent looking at the Burial Board, due to the past Clerk leaving it in a considerable mess, Cllr S Thomas commented that the Mayor was a liar backed up by Cllr D Devauden saying he was a pathological liar. The Mayor advised the Councillors that by tomorrow the accounts for a previous year will be submitted to Audit Wales, the Burial Board may be fined and acknowledged he did not know why it wasn’t submitted in time and noted that if he was paid for the work he was doing the Council would be bankrupt. The Mayor advised that he is trying to be as even handed to all people and noted he didn’t want to be here and a member of the public said he could resign to which the Mayor responded saying that it is his choice to be here and he will stick with it.

Representation from the member of the public ended.

Cllr S Thomas asked the Mayor if he was going to retract his statement about the lying. The last time the burial board was discussed HMRC was referenced stating they were not being paid and noted that the

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Mayor was the second signatory signing these off, a lot of talking a raised voices continued talking over each other.

A member of the public then noted that they should all resign dissolve the council and move forward for the goodness of the town as this meeting is fascial, allow others who are not going to squabble this was an issue a long time before the current Clerk joined, and the Mayor disagreed and noted that it will be sorted out reasonably soon and took on board the member of the public's comment. The member of the public finished by stating that no one wants to help NTC due to the way they are all acting.

19:20 Member of the Public left the meeting

4436 - TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING 4TH NOVEMBER 2024

108/24 – Cllr D Devauden made reference to the Remembrance Day Parade where the Mayor had received a complaint with the Mayor having a choice about the band or Cllr D Devauden taking part, the Mayor noted he remembered it well and he had made a comment, a generic comment , the Mayor advised we have had complaints about Cllr D Devauden in the past and stated if it was the choice between Cllr D Devauden or the band we will have the band, he did not mean to implement Milford Haven Town Band and hoped it would be taken as a very generic comment to move on. Cllr D Devauden said if we have received a complaint then it should be recorded in the minutes. The Mayor noted to Cllr D Devauden there are actually noting in the minutes to be complained against to which he agreed.

Proposal: To approve the minutes, with amendments, as a true record of the Ordinary Meeting of Council 04.11.24

Proposed: Cllr. A Phelan

Seconded: Cllr. M Harry

8 Favour, 1 Against, 1 Abstention

4437 - MATTERS ARISING

103/24 - Cllr S Thomas raised why the Mayor who was aware that the Clerk was not attending why did he not explore all routes to obtain another Clerk for the meeting, the Mayor advised that he explored all routes and that no other option was available so Cllr E Phelan took the minutes.

104/24 – The Mayor noted we had a good response from Pembrokeshire County Council (PCC) with regards to the School transport. Cllr A Phelan noted there have been further development, it is going to Cabinet next week and Cllr A Phelan will be sending letters to the Council, other external organisations and parents and will update with further details when they are known in the next meeting. Cllr S Hancock advised that it has been referred to cabinet to review the catchment area, if they were to change back to Haverfordwest High then transport would be provided.

4438 - TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY MEETING 16TH JANUARY 2025

Cllr S Thomas requested in reviewing the minutes to go at a slower pace to enable time to read and review.

01/25 – Cllr S Thomas noted a paragraph in italics unsure why and also the title of the petition needs to be included, it was agreed to add it.

03/25 – (4433) The Mayor wanted to add in a note that the burial board will require more money up to £5,000 but it was not added to the precept this year.

Proposal: To approve the minutes, with amendments, as a true record of the Extraordinary Meeting of Council 16.01.25 with the amendments noted above

Proposed: Cllr. S Hancock

Seconded: Cllr. A Thomas

9 Favour, 1 Abstention

4439 - MATTERS ARISING

02/25 – (4431) Cllr S Thomas queried the mandate information provided in these minutes verses the November meeting, with regards to information on the mandate was it from a teller or over the phone, the Mayor did not know where the information came from and confirmed it was from Barclays bank and did not question what form of communication the information came in. Cllr S Thomas accepted that reply and then asked for an update as to where we are with getting him back onto the mandate the Mayor was not sure at what point we were at with the mandate and Cllr S Thomas requested could he have an update by the end of this week, to which the Mayor noted he would try to get an update as it has been going on since November.

03/25- (4433) Cllr A Phelan requested that we formally note that the agreed precept has been provided to Pembrokeshire Count Council.

4440 - TO APPROVE THE INSTUCTIONS TO NTC SOLICITOR REGARDING THE COMPLETION OF THE COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER FOR THE BRUNEL QUAY TOILETS

Cllr A Phelan said he would propose, Mayor requested conformation that everyone had seen this and Cllr S Hancock added this has been discussed many times, this is safeguarding in vital public facilities and advised he would second Cllr A Phelan.

Proposal: To instruct the Solicitor on the completion of the CAT for the Brunel Quay Toilets.

Prosed: Cllr. A Phelan

Second: Cllr. S Hancock

4441 - TO AUTHORISE THE AGREEMENT PEPAED BY PCC REGARDING NTC RESOLUTION TO 50/50 FUND THE NEYLAND LIBRARY FOR 5 YEARS

Mayor requested conformation that everyone had seen the documents, Cllr A Phelan had a few questions which he is happy for the clerk to email the answers.

1. Why have we got to pay fully in April?
2. If the £5,600 is not fully utilised, will we be able to claw the money back? Needs to be a more in-depth agreement.
3. If we pay for 50% do we get a say in the running of the library and if there are any decisions potentially controversial who is the final say?
4. It states for the next 5 years we are paying £5,600 is it going to stay at this?

A response was provided by a couple of Councillors stating Q4. was discussed last time and it is part of the agreement. Cllr S Thomas noted that if it was a year-on-year agreement it would potentially go up with inflation. The Mayor asked Cllr A Phelan what objections did he have to this agreement. Q1. Was discussed between the Mayor and Cllr A Phelan as to why it could not be paid in increments better cash flow for NTC

the Mayor said that it wasn't a great deal of money and paying in increments was additional administration where Cllr A Phelan responded he doesn't mind doing that. The Mayor asked did anyone have any feeling on the questions raised by Cllr A Phelan. Cllr S Hancock noted that PCC would be delighted to have the 5 year commitment from NTC and obviously there will be increases in salaries and oncosts which PCC will happily absorb, Cllr S Hancock further went on to explain that having the librarian there is an asset to the town as they carry out a lot of customer services duties it is a valuable role. Cllr S Thomas pointed out that we should not be moving on this if Cllr A Phelan has outstanding queries he needs resolved. Cllr A Phelan advised they were general queries not to stop this proposal going through, Cllr S Hancock noted that NTC would have no say in the running of the library therefore responding to Q3. Mayor advised that we would just be putting funding in. Cllr S Thomas asked was Cllr A Phelan removing his queries to which he agreed.

Proposal: We accept the agreement and the Mayor to sign on behalf of NTC.

Proposed: Cllr S Hancock

Second: Cllr A Phelan

All in favour.

4442 - TO DISCUSS AND CONFIRM AN NTC HOSTED EVENT FOR THE SANGUINET SCHOOL VISIT

The Mayor asked Cllr A Phelan to provide an update on this. Cllr A Phelan advised that himself and the NTC Clerk visited the school awaiting confirmation of dates and information from the school. The Mayor advised the Councillors Sanguinet School will be visiting Neyland Community School, and will organise events. NTC have approached the school to see if they can support any of these events. Cllr S Hancock requested the dates of the visit this was unable to be confirmed, Cllr S Hancock then went on to suggest with historical visits they have visited County Hall where Cllr A Phelan responded advising that potentially this has already been planned. The Mayor advised that we need to support, and asked what they are doing for transport where Cllr A Phelan advised that is all sorted, and went on to suggest NTC potentially hold an evening event and but a buffet on? Cllr S Hancock asked where they were staying which we were unable to confirm. The Mayor confirmed NTC will support and will leave this with Cllr A Phelan to bring an update and confirm how we can support the visit.

4443- TO DISCUSS IDEAS FOR NTC CELEBRATIONS OF VE-DAY 80TH ANNIVERSARY.

Cllr S Hancock suggested we set up a working group for this, further discussions took place. Cllr S Hancock advised that last year we had 80th Anniversary of D Day where the focus was on commemoration and this is a celebration with the national theme being "Lamp Light of Peace" Cllr S Hancock reiterated he would like there to be a working group as there are so many different ideas which you can borrow from other Community Councils and lots of intergeneration's ideas linking in with the Youth Club, Neyland Community School, Pensioners Voice, Luncheon Club with all represented and can bring everyone together. The Mayor asked was anyone aware it was a bank holiday, Cllr E Phelan confirmed it was not according to google, a member of the public confirmed that is not a bank holiday and that another group that could be utilised is the Dyfed Army Cadets – Neyland attachment. The Mayor pointed out is it a working day/ School day. Cllr S Hancock added he is the Armed forces Champion for the Council for Pembrokeshire there are also a lot of good ideas coming through and that we need to have a look at working group. Cllr S Hancock again suggested to set up a working group and update on key milestones and actions on a monthly basis at the meeting. The Mayor advised we have provisionally booked the hall for the afternoon and evening. Cllr E Phelan asked wouldn't it be better to have it on the weekend? It was agreed to leave it to the working group to decide. The Mayor referenced the beacon and that we could use it. The Mayor suggested anyone who would like to be in the working group to email the NTC Clerk by the

end of this week so they can coordinate and communicate who will be on this group to enable them to get together.

4445 - TO CONSIDER AND FOLLOW UP WITH OUTSTANDING GRANTS AVAILABLE TO THE COUNCIL

Cllr M Harry requested this as an agenda item as there are grants that should be available to this Council we need to know where they are and our position on them the £1,000 OGI grant was referenced. Money available from Pembrokeshire County Council for the community gardens, make sure that is not lost. Windfarm negotiations for approximately £12,000 we must not lose sight of these for the goodness of the town. Cllr M Harry request if the Clerk could dig some of these out to see where we are with them, bring them to the council with her findings. They need to be reviewed and discussed at NTC meetings. All agreed. The Mayor requested for the Councillors to have a think as to what the grant money could be spent on. Cllr M Harry reminded the Mayor he was looking at spending the windfarm money on some equipment for the park, the Mayor responded that is was for path to the park. Cllr M Harry also noted that the windfarm money might not still be available. The Mayor then explained the background to the path. The Mayor then invited Cllr P Miller to speak where he addressed the Councillors and updated them on the Windfarm. Cllr P Miller advised the windfarm came in 2012 which was before it became mandatory, they must support the community benefit schemes. Cllr P Miller continued to explain there was an agreement non-binding voluntary community level for approximately £10,000 to £15,000 per year but no one has followed through with this agreement, even though we might have missed the boat on this it would be worth Neyland and Llandstadwell Community Councils joining together to reach out and investigate. Further discussions continued around the history of the windfarm and the Community benefit scheme and how the windfarm company name will have changed further investigation to be completed.

4446 - TO WORK WITH PCC TO FIND A SUITABLE LOCATION FOR THE SPEED SIGN

Cllr M Harry added this as agenda item as it has been discussed a number of times. Cllr M Harry suggested that we have meeting with PCC and decide on the location of a speed sign. The Mayor responded to say he has been through this with PCC and suggested where it should go, PCC have amended the signs so they are now smaller and more accurate. An ideal place would be on top above their sign and when the Mayor put that to PCC they thought that was a reasonable request. Therefore we have a position and we therefore need to move forward and get the speed sign. Cllr M Harry then confirmed back to the Mayor , “this is agreed with PCC” so we can push this forward the Mayor agreed. Cllr M Harry requested in the next meeting can we decide what sign we need, the Mayor confirmed he had already done a lot of work on this and had shared it with the Councillors about camera what the options are, costs and was it worth it this has not gone any further, Cllr A Phelan acknowledged saying he thought it had been agreed on one camera. A member of the public asked where the location of the camera was going to be, the Mayor explained the location of the camera up the hill past the Co-op first turning at Foxglove into the car park the other side of the road against the wall of Cleddu Insurance, the signs there. The old signs have been made smaller and it has been suggested if we want to put a camera there then PCC would be quite amenable, it would have to be a battery-operated camera, further discussions took place as to how you would manage the battery charging to ensure they are always working. The Mayor proposed going back to get some quotations and options available for the speed cameras bring them back to the next meeting for it to be agreed, he continued to point out this is not in our budget. Cllr M Harry said in principle this had already been agreed to which the Mayor confirmed.

4447 - TO DISCUSS THE CO-OPTING OF A NEW COUNCILLOR

The Mayor advised Two applications have been received with only one position available therefore we need to have a meeting with the candidates to assess them. Cllr S Thomas addressed the Mayor that several members in the community had approached him as they had emailed the clerk expressing interest asking for more information and had not heard anything back, the Mayor advised he would speak with the clerk. A discussion took place as to whether it needed to be full council or not.

Proposal: Interviews to be held with a full council to be arranged ASAP.

Proposed: Cllr. A Phelan

Second: Cllr. M Harry

Mayor will ask the Clerk to organise a suitable date when the candidates and councillors available.

Cllr D Devauden asked the Mayor can we ensure the two people who have tried to register are contacted, the Mayor responded by saying he will make sure the Clerk contacts them and they might have fallen out of the application time frame. Cllr S Thomas advised one of them responded very quickly so will be well within the time frame. Cllr S Thomas reiterated this needs to be actioned before the Co-option meeting is called.

4448 - OUTSTANDING MATTERS

None outstanding

4449 - PAYMENTS TO BE APPROVED AND FINANCIAL UPDATE

Approval of the Clerks salary. Cllr S Thomas asked who approved them in December and January as there wasn't a meeting. The Mayor organised the payments, he continued the full council did not authorise the Clerks salary in December and January which is an administration issue, as a Council it is not an option not to pay the Clerk. Cllr S Hancock advised we have to honour the Clerks contract.

Cllr S Thomas asked for an update on the November payments and he had not received visibility of them despite asking on the 16th January. The Mayor advised that the payment report would have been completed today had the Clerk not go to the police. The Mayor advised that this report needs to be sent out in plenty of time providing councillors the time to review.

4450 - CLERKS REPORT

No clerks report

4451 - MAYORS REPORT

No Mayors report

4452 - EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION

Cllr D Devauden forewent his £52.00 a year expenses so he could have a hard copy of the minutes every meeting so he could take them up to the public records office after every meeting each month. Cllr D Devauden went into further detail with the Mayor as he was charged £4.75 per meeting as he had handed

his allowance back. The Mayor advised of the national agreement that all Councillors are entitled to £52.00 a year to cover paper/ printing / ink. Cllr D Devauden does not have a printer so is unable to print the minutes off therefore does not claim the £52.00 per year. The Mayor asked for clarification on what his point is, further discussions took place around the this and then the conversation moved on with no agreed outcome.

Cllr S Thomas advised the Clerk has been asked a number of times why the December and January extraordinary meetings were deemed unlawful and no reason had been given. The Mayor advised he would not call them unlawful, they were not constitutionally called, to which Cllr. S Thomas responded they were and it would be interesting to know the reasons why they were unlawful. The Mayor responded again with they were not constitutionally called and this is why he put an email out stating it was not an official NTC meeting, the Mayor advised he made the decision on behalf of NTC should anyone wish to object they can do.

Cllr D Devauden then quoted section 12 of the Local Government Act was used to call a meeting twice, the Mayor advised it was his understanding that is was not constitutional. Cllr S Thomas requested for an email detailing why it was not called lawfully to be sent to him. Further discussions took place and the Mayor continued to re iterate it was not constitutionally called. A member of the public pointed out that the Mayor had used the term unlawful on his FB post to which the Mayor apologised. Cllr D Devauden again asked as he used the Local government act section 12 and Cllr B Rotheroe used the standing orders therefore it was lawful. The Mayor responded that you have to be write on a piece of paper and at least two councillors sign it and be provide to the Clerk no emails were checked. The Mayor advised they can use any authority to place an objection to his decision. Cllr S Thomas asked where does it say it has to be written and the Mayor advised should you wish to complain please contact the relevant authority.

Meeting closed at 8.20pm.