

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

This meeting was recorded.

IN ATTENDANCE: Cllr. P Hay (Mayor)
 Cllr. A Phelan
 Cllr. M Harry
 Cllr. E Phelan
 Cllr. A Richards
 Cllr. A Thomas
 Cllr. S Hancock
 Cllr. D Matthews
 Cllr. S Campodonic
 Cllr. B Rothero
 Cllr. D Devauden
 Cllr. S Thomas

APOLOGIES: Miss. Libby Matthews – Town Clerk & RFO (attended via livestream to assist Cllr. Phelan)

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Several Members of the public (in person & via livestream)
 Mr. Tom Sinclair – Press, The Pembrokeshire Herald.

Due to the Clerk sending apologies, Cllr. Ellen Phelan agreed to minute take for the meeting. These minutes have been completed by the Clerk, utilising both Cllr. Phelan’s minute notes of the meeting, along with the recording of the meeting.

4453 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS REGARDING THE BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED

Name:	Interest:	Agenda item(s):
Cllr. M Harry	Personal; Non-paid Director of Neyland CIC	N/A
Cllr. A Phelan	Personal; School Governor Police & Crime Commissioner	15
Cllr. D Matthews	Personal & Prejudicial; Employed by Neyland Community Hub	8,10,11 & 13
Cllr. S Thomas	Personal; Llanstadwell Community Councillor	N/A
Cllr. S Hancock	Personal; County Councillor Dyfed Powys Police Panel	15

Cllr. Rothero wished to contest the validity of the Co-option of Cllr. Matthews, as he believed the appointment should be ratified in Full Council. Council had a brief discussion, and it was put to Cllr. Rothero that this is not the process followed or required for a Co-option to be valid, that all Members were invited to attend interview and therefore, have a vote, and that this process has not happened for any other Member, including himself, who have been Co-opted onto NTC.

4454 – REPRESENTATION BY THE PUBLIC (limited to 15 minutes)

Members of the public who were in attendance in person were invited to address Council. The members of public raised concerns regarding a petition that had been given to the Council regarding Cllr. Harry. Cllr. Harry was asked if he would apologise for the comments made which initiated the petition. Cllr. Harry responded that the comments were taken out of context. The conversation was moved on.

Cllr. S Thomas read out an email he had received from Mr. Ian Hatchett, regarding the agenda item 'Disbandment of the Christmas Working Group'. It stated that Mr. Hatchett was disappointed to see the item on the agenda and that he was currently attempting some fund-raising for the group for this year.

4455 – TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING 03.02.2025

06/25 – (4435) To add that it was Cllr. Hay's view that the Council was being disrupted.

07/25 – To amend the spelling of Cllr. Rothero's name.

09/25 – (4439) To amend the word precept.

09/25 – (4440) To amend to 'Community Asset Transfer'.

Proposal: To accept the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council on 03.02.2025, with above amendments, as a true record of the meeting.

Proposed: Cllr. S Thomas

Seconded: Cllr. M Harry

10 in favour, 2 abstentions

RESOLVED: MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL ON 03.02.2025, WITH ABOVE AMENDMENTS, ARE ACCEPTED AS A TRUE RECORD.

4456 – MATTERS ARISING

07/25 – (4435) Cllr. A Phelan withdrew his statement and apologised to Cllr. Devauden.

07/25 – (4435) It was queried if there had been a vote regarding whether or not the minutes which include mention of the Clerk's grievance against some Council members should be published or not. It was agreed that this had not happened.

09/25 – (4440) Council were advised that a meeting had taken place with the TC's solicitor to discuss the Community Asset Transfer of the Brunel Quay Toilets, along with the lease's for the Skatepark and the Belle Vue field. It was confirmed that all matters are progressing positively and are now happening in a timely manner. The meeting was attributed to being positive and informative by Cllr. Thomas.

09/25 – (4441) It was confirmed that matters had progressed with NTC's decision to part-fund the Library for 5 years and that PCC had requested an opportunity for a press release. Cllr. Hay advised that this was taking place tomorrow (04.03.25, 11.00am) and all were invited to take part in the photo.

11/25 – (4446) It was asked if this item could be placed on the agenda for April.

13/25 – (4452) A heated debate ensued regarding the validity of the two EGM's that had been called and had taken place, but had not been recognised as legitimate meetings by the Mayor and the majority of Councillors.

4457 – TO DISCUSS THE REVISED RECORDING OF MEETINGS POLICY

The Clerk had circulated a revised Recording of Meetings Policy for Council to consider due to the discrepancies between the policy and Standing Orders, as well as contentions arising multiple times due to the recording of meetings, with some members feeling recordings had been weaponised and were causing unnecessary issues and some members feeling that recordings were being hidden with untoward intent. Cllr. S Thomas had submitted a list of amendments he disagreed with as he believed the current Recording of Meetings policy that he had drafted was fit for purpose. Cllr. Rothero also submitted an amendment where he wished for the policy to allow anyone who wishes to record the meetings should have permission to do so. Cllr. A Phelan had submitted proposals for a few edits to wording (please see additional documents).

Cllr. Hay gave an overview of the purpose of the recording of meetings. He advised that NTC initially introduced this in approx. 2017 for the sole purpose of aiding the Clerk with accurate minute taking. There is no law stating that meetings must be recorded, and it is at the prerogative of each individual Council on whether to do so. Cllr. Hay further advised that the only legal record of any Council meeting are the minutes, which are discussed, amended and confirmed by Council as a true record of the meeting before they are published.

A debate ensued regarding the recording of meetings policy, with accusations of 'secrecy and corruption' being made and countered.

Cllr. S Thomas made the following two proposals and requested a recorded vote for both.

Proposal: The current Recording of Meetings policy is fit for purpose and should be left as is, but Standing Orders are to be amended to bring them in line with the policy.

Proposed: Cllr. S Thomas

Seconded: Cllr. D Devauden

For: Cllr. S Thomas, Cllr. Devauden, Cllr. Harry, Cllr. Hay, Cllr. Campodonic, Cllr. Rothero, Cllr. Hancock, Cllr. A Thomas.

Against: Cllr. A Phelan, Cllr. E Phelan.

Abstention: Cllr. Matthews, Cllr. Richards.

Proposal: To amend to include in the policy that anyone is free to record the meetings.

Proposed: Cllr. S Thomas

Seconded: Cllr. D Devauden

For: Cllr. S Thomas, Cllr. Devauden, Cllr. Harry, Cllr. A Phelan, Cllr. Campodonic, Cllr. Rothero, Cllr. Hancock, Cllr. A Thomas.

Against: Cllr. Hay, Cllr. E Phelan.

Abstention: Cllr. Matthews, Cllr. Richards.

Proposal: That Councillors must declare if they are recording the meeting.

Proposed: Cllr. A Phelan

Seconded: Cllr. M Harry
All in favour

Cllr. Harry suggested an option to look into posting the recordings on to the Town Council website.

4458 – TO RESOLVE ON WHETHER COUNCIL WISH TO RE-ADD CLLR. S THOMAS TO THE BANK MANDATE

Cllr. S Thomas proposed that this should not be discussed but put straight to a vote as he had declared he no longer wished to be added to the mandate. Cllr. Hay advised he had included it in the agenda as Cllr. Thomas had requested several times to be put back on the mandate, however he was aware that many Councillors had concerns regarding Cllr. Thomas being re-added. Cllr. Hancock suggested that either the item be removed from the agenda entirely, or that no vote should take place on this regardless. This was unanimously agreed, and the item was finished.

4459 – TO DISCUSS THE MONTHLY TELEPHONE AGREEMENT

Cllr. S Thomas raised concerns that the monthly telephone bill was too high and that he felt Council should have control over their own phonenumber rather than pay for and receive this service via The Hub. He also raised a concern that he has seen the monthly bill rise recently, but the phone in the Council office was not even working. The Clerk advised Cllr. E Phelan remotely that the telephone in the Clerk's office was working fine and had been for some time and that the bill has remained the same since at least the beginning of her employment in August 2023.

Cllr. Harry advised that whilst the Hub had attained a new telephone/internet contract with OGI, which came cheaper than the previous BT contract, The Hub had also recently upgraded the livestream system and were now incurring a monthly bill for this as well. He advised that the difference in these costings worked out pretty evenly, but he was sure that if the Hub received a written request to review the cost to NTC, they would be more than receptive to look at it.

4460 – THE DISBANDMENT OF THE CHRISTMAS WORKING GROUP

Cllr. E Phelan had brought this to the agenda, with the support of Cllr's. Hay, Harry and A Phelan. Her proposal (please see additional documents) outlines concerns regarding the conduct of the Christmas Working Group, the unlawful decision making, the high costs incurred and Council being unable to monitor spending.

Cllr. S Thomas defended the Christmas working Group and its conduct, and a debate ensued on the matter, without giving Cllr. Phelan an opportunity to initially present her agenda item with her reasonings, as is customary. Overall, the general feeling between Councillors, aside from those on the Christmas Working Group, felt that they agreed with Cllr. Phelan's concerns.

Proposal: To disband the current Christmas Working Group and return the responsibility of Christmas plans and events to Full Council.

Proposed: Cllr. E Phelan
Seconded: Cllr. A Thomas
11 in favour, 1 against.

RESOLVED: THE CHRISTMAS WORKING GROUP TO BE DISBANDED.

Cllr. Hay further commented on the matter, that if the members of the Christmas Working Group wished to continue to arrange Christmas events within the town, they were of course welcome to do so, as long as they are aware it would not be under the encumberment of NTC or in their capacity as Councillors. They would be more than welcome to apply for the Council's Community Enhancement Grant to request support towards events, much in the same way the Carnival CIC Committee do.

4461 – TO DISCUSS AND AUTHORISE PLANS FOR THE SANGUINET VISIT

Cllr's Hay and A Phelan explained to Council that we are having a visit from adults and school children of Sanguinet and that they and the Clerk were working with the school to plan a hosted event for the visit. The plans were outlined as a buffet evening, with Neyland Ladies Choir providing some light entertainment. There are also plans for a cricket match for the children to take part in for entertainment. This is to be held at The Hub Bar and Sports Hall on Wednesday 30th April 6.00pm – 9.00pm.

11 were in favour of these plans with 1 abstention.

4462 – TO DISCUSS AND AUTHORISE PLANS FOR VE-DAY

Cllr. Hay advised that the VE Day Group had met and had discussed plans to celebrate and commemorate VE Day. The group had come up with an 'Afternoon Tea' on 8th May, approx. 3.30pm-5.30pm, with some light entertainment from VIP Class Acts and potentially the Neyland Ladies Choir. Cllr. Hay further advised that the group had considered organising a WWII themed 'Dance' on the Friday evening (10th May), with possibly a live band. It was also confirmed that there would be a Beacon Lighting on the evening of 8th May at 9.30pm to coincide with the UK wide plans. This would be advertised and people were welcome to attend, but this would not be an event as such.

There were no objections to these plans.

4463 – TO DISCUSS AND AUTHORISE PLANS FOR EASTER

Cllr. Hay suggested to Council that we have both an Egg Hunt as well as a Puzzle Trail through Neyland with clues, ultimately leading to a small prize. It was discussed that the Egg Hunt should take place at Neyland Play Park. It was further discussed to approach Neyland Co-Op and other local shops to get involved and possibly offer donations.

There were no objections to these plans.

4464 – TO CONFIRM THE DATE OF FIREWORKS FOR NOVEMBER 2ND 2025

Cllr. Rothero suggested hosting the event at the Marina this year. Cllr. A Thomas felt that it wasn't particularly safe for children at the Marina, particularly during the dark and this is when the event would be hosted. This was agreed. An alternative date of the 7th was suggested and discussed, with some difference of opinion on the best day to host. It was advised that we could not have our event on the 5th as this is when Milford Haven Round Table hosts their event every year and we would not wish to coincide with their event. It was ultimately felt by the majority that the 7th was too far passed Bonfire Night and people may have lost interest by that time, so the 2nd November was proposed.

Proposal: To confirm the date for the Fireworks event for 2nd November 2025.

10 in favour, 2 against.

RESOLVED: COUNCIL TO HOST THE FIREWORKS EVENT ON 2ND NOVEMBER 2025

4465 – TO DISCUSS THE ADOPTION OF THE DEFIBRILLATOR IN THE CHANGING ROOMS OF THE ATHLETIC CLUB

Cllr. E Phelan advised that the Clerk had explained that she had been approached by Marc Gower, a Forst Responder, as the defibrillator situated inside the changing rooms at Neyland Athletics Club was currently orphaned with no guardian. He had asked if NTC would be willing to adopt the defibrillator and become the guardian. Mr. Gower had advised the Clerk that he had, that day, replaced the pads and batteries and ensured the defibrillator was emergency ready and that the likely cost to NTC to adopt the defibrillator would be approx. £100 every 3 years for replacement pads and batteries.

There were no objections to the adoption of the defibrillator.

4466 – TO WRITE TO THE CHIEF CONSTABLE REGARDING THE LACK OF POLICE PRESENCE IN NEYLAND, MILFORD HAVEN & PEMBROKE DOCK

Cllr. Harry had brought this to the agenda as he felt there was a considerable lack of Police presence around the towns and that it was increasingly difficult to attend a station and be able to talk directly with officers. There was a short discussion on the matter with Cllr. Hancock suggesting that the Police & Crime Commissioner is invited to attend a meeting to discuss concerns directly.

Action: Clerk to invite the Police and Crime Commissioner to attend a meeting with NTC.

4467 – OUTSTANDING MATTERS

No outstanding matters at this time.

4468 – PAYMENTS TO BE APPROVED & FINANCIAL UPDATE

Council had been circulated, ahead of the meeting, a list of expenditure for February 2025 totalling £9,732.77, a copy of the Bank Statement and a full Bank reconciliation, which showed no discrepancies.



Payments Feb
2025.pdf



Bank Statement Feb
2025.pdf



All Banks Reconciled
Feb 2025.pdf

Council had also been circulated a list of payments to be approved, totalling £3,761.15.



Payments for
Authorisation.pdf

20/25

All payments were approved with no objections.

4469 – CLERK'S REPORT

No Clerk's report at this time.

4470 – MAYOR'S UPDATE

No Mayor's update at this time.

4471 – EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION AT THE DISCRETION OF THE MAYOR

No exchange of information at this time.

4472 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was set for Monday 7th April, 7.00pm.

Meeting closed at 9.00pm