

MINUTES OF AN ORDINARY MEETING OF NEYLAND TOWN COUNCIL, HELD ON MONDAY 13TH NOVEMBER
2023 AT NEYLAND COMMUNITY HUB, 7.00PM

This meeting was recorded.

Live stream via Teams lost connection as the meeting began.

IN ATTENDANCE: Cllr B Rothero (Chair)

Cllr S Thomas
Cllr A Thomas
Cllr E Phelan
Cllr A Phelan
Cllr M Harry
Cllr D Devauden
Cllr S Campodonic
Cllr A Richards

APOLOGIES: Cllr P Hay

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Miss Libby Matthews – Town Clerk/RFO

Cllr R Diggle, Llanstadwell Community Council, on behalf of the Neyland and
Llanstadwell Joint Burial Board Committee

Cllr A Radice had joined the meeting via livestream, however, connection was lost as the meeting began

The meeting opened at 7.03pm

Cllr Rothero raised a concern about the inability for members to join meetings via livestream due to the recurring technical issues with the software. He was concerned that members who were willing, but unable, to join via livestream may become subject to the legislation surrounding a Councillor being dismissed from Council when the threshold of non-attendance is met. Cllr Rothero asked if there was protection for members who were unable to join through the fault of the Council's ability to securely provide a livestream. This is to be looked into by the Clerk.

**4311 – TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS REGARDING THE BUSINESS TO BE
TRANSACTIONED**

The onus is on Members to declare interests which may relate to the meeting and/or any transactions to be made.

Member:	Interest:	Agenda Item:
Cllr Mike Harry	Personal; Non-paid Director of The Hub	N/A
Cllr Steve Thomas	Member of Llanstadwell Community Council Member of the Burial Board	N/A

4312 – THE CHAIR OF THE BURIAL BOARD TO PRESENT THE BUDGET REQUEST FOR 2024-25

The Clerk for the Burial Board had previously supplied an estimated outlook of the income and expenditure for the Neyland & Llanstadwell Burial Board, with an estimated forecast for the next 5 years. This had been circulated to all members in advance of the meeting.

The Chair invited Cllr Diggle to speak, who opened his presentation with a thanks to Neyland Town Council for accommodating him at the meeting. Cllr Diggle began by addressing the fact that some assumptions had been made by the Burial Board in regard to the projected forecast circulated to members. He advised that the forecasted income/expenditure has been based on a 5% inflation rate per annum, however, this did not take into consideration that this likely will not reflect the increase in national minimum wage. The main income for the Burial Board comes from burials and this number was variable from year to year. Cllr Diggle advised that the budget presented had included an estimated income based on 12 burials per annum, this number, however, could not be guaranteed and may decrease/increase. Cllr Diggle also advised that there were plans to look into reducing the expenditure of the Burial Board by potentially outsourcing the groundman's work. There was discussion between Cllr Diggle and members on the figures provided and the potential differences that there may be due to lower/higher burial numbers, difference in inflation rates and capital expenditure incurred by the burial board.

Cllr Harry asked Cllr Diggle if there were any further plans to increase the income for the Burial Board in the way of trees/national burials. There was discussion between all surrounding potential ways in which to increase income and Cllr Diggle confirmed that all would be looked into further by the Burial Board in later meetings. Cllr Diggle advised that the Burial Board, as a committee, were more than happy and open to looking at any and all suggestions of increasing the income, so that the budget request from both NTC and LCC would reduce. Cllr Diggle also confirmed that 75% of the overall budget for the Burial Board came from NTC and that LCC had not yet decided on the amount they would agree to give the Burial Board, but it had been agreed that LCC would follow the lead of NTC and match their budget increase to reflect that of NTC. There was further discussion on the potential subsidy from the allotments, if it was agreed upon that the allotments would be placed in the field behind the current burial field. This was, however, decided that as there is no current agreement on the allotments being placed there, this could not be taken into consideration at this time, and that any income from allotments would currently be a long way off.

Cllr Rothero enquired as to why the current request from the Burial Board was lower than it had been in previous years. Cllr Harry advised that, historically, the Burial Board had a substantially larger amount in their reserves than NTC, so it had been agreed upon at the time to lower the budget given.

Cllr Rothero suggested to members that a fixed increase of the budget for the burial for the following 3 years to be agreed by Council, however, upon further discussion, it was agreed between all that a 12 month agreed budget would be more sensible, as NTC complete their budget annually and that the figures provided by the Burial Board were based upon estimation, so it would be unwise to agree to a 3 year fixed increase at this stage. It was, however, agreed that for the year 2024-25, the budget provided by NTC would increase from the requested £3,500 to £4,500, to assist in the Burial Boards potential loss of income and would be subject to revision after more accurate figures were provided in 12 months' time. Cllr Diggle also agreed that this was the most sensible option and that he would be more than happy to present to NTC again in 12 months' time.

Proposal: To increase the budget for the Burial Board for 2024-25 to £4,500

Proposed: Cllr A Phelan

Second: Cllr D Devauden

All in favour.

RESOLVED: THE BUDGET FOR THE BURIAL BOARD TO INCREASE TO £4,500 FOR THE YEAR 2024-25

Cllr Diggle thanked all members for their time and agreement on the budget and left the meeting.

4313 – TO DISCUSS THE BUDGET FOR 2024-25

The Clerk opened the discussion by advising members that the circulated document named “Initial Budget View” had been produced by an informal chat between Cllr A Phelan (current Chair of the Financial Committee) and herself. The Clerk had advised that as this was her first year of putting together a budget, she had requested some assistance and discussion with Cllr Phelan, who has previous experience on the matter and as the current Chair of the Financial Committee. The Clerk invited Cllr A Phelan to continue with an overview of the initial figures.

Cllr Phelan first addressed the budget for Elections, as the figures provided shows huge over expenditure for this year (2023-24), however, just to remind members that there was currently a £14,000 budget allocated in earmarked reserves for elections. Cllr A Phelan invited members to make any comments/considerations they had in regard to figures provided. This was followed by a discussion between all members on the initial figures provided, where there was further elaboration on what certain budget headers covered, the need for an increase in in some budget headers, but a potential decrease in others, based on the current figures and potential forecast/planning for the following year.

It was suggested by Cllr Rothero that a meeting was called for the Finance Committee to further discuss figures in more detail and then return to Council at the following meeting with a more detailed view of the precept request/budget for 2024-25. This was agreed as a good idea by all members.

Action: The Clerk to call a meeting of the Financial Committee.

4314 – TO DISCUSS AN INCREASE IN THE BUDGET FOR TRAINING FOR MEMBERS AND TO PLAN A TRAINING SCHEDULE.

Cllr Rothero opened the discussion by asking if there was any sort of template/mandatory training schedule available for Council to utilise. The Clerk advised that she was not sure and that she would contact One Voice Wales for advice/suggestions. Cllr Rothero also suggested that a sensible number of training courses for members would be around 4 per member/per year. This was agreed as a sensible suggestion, pending advice from One Voice Wales. It was agreed for the Clerk to obtain advice from One Voice Wales and bring it to the Financial Committee meeting for further discussion and agreement on a sensible budget for the year 2024-25.

4315 – TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL, 03.10.2023.

The opening paragraph should read “nominated” and not “elected”.

4295 – B4325 not B425

4295 – To clarify that NTC have agreed to support the suggested amendment to the 20mph blanket speed limit on the B4325, excluding the section of Kensington Road and the High Street.

Proposal: To approve the minutes, with amendments, of the Ordinary Meeting held on 3rd October 2023

Proposed: Cllr A Phelan

Seconded: Cllr A Thomas

6 in favor

3 abstentions due to non-attendance at the meeting dated 03.10.2023

RESOLVED: MINUTES, WITH AMENDMENTS, TO BE APPROVED AS A TRUE RECORD.

4316 – MATTERS ARISING

4295 – Cllr A Phelan suggested the Clerk ask Cllr P Hay on bow to retrieve data from the speed signs, to assist with the speeding issues.

4297 – (4262) Has Standing Order 25B been removed from Standing Orders? The Clerk confirmed it has.

4262 – (4248) The item has not been returned to the agenda again. There was disagreement between members on the relevance of this now returning to the agenda. The Clerk is to seek advice on this matter from One Voice Wales.

4298 – Cllr S Thomas advised that the delay in bringing this to Full Council was to enable him to complete due diligence on the matter. Cllr Thomas also advised members that the Clerk had been made aware of this email, however, he had agreed to continue with the matter as he had originally corresponded with Audit Wales regarding this.

4286 – Cllr S Thomas that Barry Jones had now been contacted regarding the lights switch on.

4290 – Cllr S Thomas advised that the information had been gathered due to him originally asking Cllr Harry for a copy of the lease agreement between NTC and Neyland Community Hub. Cllr Thomas advised that Cllr Harry had told him to find it himself, so this is how the information had been gathered. Cllr S Thomas also informed members that the information had been found within a file in the Clerk's office, of which he had asked the Clerk if he could look at the file.

4302 – It was advised that Cllr Hay had historically looked into the legal enforceability of an Enhanced DBS check and had previously been told that this was not enforceable. Cllr Phelan and the Clerk confirmed that the advice was still the same, so it would be looked at the amend standing orders to encourage an Enhanced DBS certificate for members, rather than to enforce.

4303 – Cllr Rothero asked if it would be more beneficial to form a committee for matters outstanding rather than have as an agenda item for each meeting. There was a discussion between members that this may over complicate matters and that an update from the Clerk on each matter would be sufficient to update on any outstanding matters.

4304 – Cllr S Thomas asked Cllr Harry what he had done to be proactive on the matter. The Clerk confirmed that it had been agreed that she would contact Hywel Dda Dental Service, via letter, and that she had done so, but had not yet received a response.

4306 – To clarify that a historical decision was made that Neyland Town Council are committed to supporting Neyland Community Hub.

87/23 – The Clerk was thanked for the successful Fireworks Display. Cllr S Thomas advised that, albeit incorrect that he had volunteered to source a card machine, this had been done. The Clerk was also thanked for arranging a successful Remembrance Sunday Parade.

4317 – A PROPOSAL TO ADD A STANDING ORDER ENCOURAGING MEMBERS TO OBTAIN AN ENHANCED D.B.S CERTIFICATE

There was further discussion on this matter surrounding the complexity of a DBS certificate and that, as there was not a generic certificate available to cover all situation, this may not be appropriate to add as a standing order. Cllr Rothero queried why it would need to be a standing order, with Cllr E Phelan advising that the Standing Orders are there for the body of the Council, and whilst members change, the Council as a body will not. It was agreed that there would be further investigation into the suitability of the type of certificate required and would be brought back to Council at the next meeting.

4318 – WALES AIR AMBULANCE COMMUNITY COUNCIL APPEAL

The Clerk advised Members that she had received an email from the Wales Air Ambulance appealing to Community Councils for donations. Cllrs all agreed that historically, Neyland Town Council had donated £100 towards Wales Air Ambulance under the s137 act. It was agreed that this should be done again.

Proposal: To use s137 funding to donate £100 to the Wales Air Ambulance on behalf of Neyland Town Council.

Proposed: Cllr A Phelan

Seconded: Cllr D Devauden

All in favour.

RESOLVED: THE CLERK TO PAY A DONATION OF £100 TO THE WALES AIR AMBULANCE ON BEHALF OF NEYLAND TOWN COUNCIL.

4319 – ANY CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE REVIEW OF COMMUNITY ARRANGEMENTS PEMBROKESHIRE

The Clerk advised members that she had circulated an email to all asking for any comments they wish to make towards the Review of Community Arrangements Pembrokeshire, and that if they had any requests, please could they forward them via email for submission.

4320 – AN INVITATION FROM THE MID AND WEST WALES FIRE SERVICE FOR A MEMBER OF THEIR TEAM TO ATTEND A MEETING TO PRESENT THEIR CONSULTATION DRAFT SERVICE PLAN 2040

The Clerk advised that she had received an email with an invitation from the Mid and West Wales to attend a meeting with Cllr's to present their Consultation Draft Service Plan 2040. Members asked if this was currently just for Council, or if it was open to the public. The Clerk advised she was unsure but would look into this.

Proposal: To invite the Mid and West Wales Fire Service to the next Council meeting of the 4th December.

Proposed: Cllr D Devauden

Seconded: Cllr A Phelan

All in favour

RESOLVED: TO INVITE THE MID AND WEST WALES FIRE SERVICE TO THE MEETING OF DECEMBER 4TH TO PRESENT THEIR DRAFT SERVICE PLAN 2040.

4321 – AN UPDATE ON CHRISTMAS EVENTS

The Clerk was invited by the working group to speak first on the Christmas Events, as she had earlier sent an email to Cllr Rothero expressing her concerns over the Christmas Weekend. The Clerk advised members that advice given to Cllr Rothero was that, due to the shortage of time left until the Christmas Weekend and the so far lack of support/guidance in organising the 4 separate events, and due to spiraling costs being incurred in regard to the planned Christmas Market, it would be her advice that perhaps if the Market were dropped from the plans this year and the other 3 events concentrated it, it may be more viable for the weekend, as a Christmas Market is quite complex to organise, with only 3 weeks to go until the planned event. The Clerk had

also presented members with a list of potential expenditure for Christmas events, totaling £4,635.87 Gross, £3993.81 Net. This list was subject to change, with further costings being expected, but also the potential to reduce costings currently showing on the list.

Cllr Harry asked the Christmas Working Group why none of the planned events had been brought to Council for discussion and approval. He advised that the Working Groups could not confirm and authorise decisions without it being agreed by Full Council and that as this had not been done, he was concerned at the events going ahead. Cllr Harry also advised he was concerned at the mounting costs of the events. Cllr S Thomas advised that he and Cllr Devauden had managed to secure £3,500 in donations towards the event from various companies.

A robust discussion ensued between members surrounding the authority for the Working Group to have confirmed the Christmas events and to make purchases/decisions regarding the Christmas events without it being brought before Council to be discussed and agreed upon in the correct and proper way.

There were further questions from members asking the Working Group to elaborate how the events were being managed and to divulge further details of each event.

Cllr's S Thomas & Rothero addressed members and apologised for the oversight by the working group on believing that plenary powers had previously been granted, which would have allowed the group to make purchases and confirm events, without the need to come back to full council. Cllr S Thomas then proposed that, as this was a time sensitive issue, the working group be given powers to continue with events.

Proposal: The Christmas Working Group be granted plenary powers to organise the weekend as planned and to be given plenary powers to use the surplus of the budget set aside for Christmas Lights, as well as the donations of £3,500 from outside companies.

Proposed: Cllr S Thomas

Seconded: Cllr B Rothero

7 in favour, 1 against

Cllr E Phelan abstained

RESOLVED: THE CHRISTMAS WORKING GROUP GIVEN PLENARY POWERS OF SPEND AND ORGANISATION OF THE SURPLUS BUDGET AND DONATIONS RECEIVED FOR THE CHRISTMAS WEEKEND.

4322 – AN UPDATE ON OUTSTANDING MATTERS

1. **Kensington Road Speed Issues** – A letter has been sent to Pembrokeshire County Council, but there has been no response yet. The Clerk will continue to chase for an update.
2. **A477 Speed Limit Reduction** – Members had been circulated an update from Pembrokeshire County Council, which stated that the motion to reduce the speed limit had not received full support, so could not currently go ahead. The Clerk has been asked to contact C. Cllr Paul Miller, to ask if he had any further views on the matter following the serious incident on the A477 between Honeyborough Roundabout and Barn Lake Point.
3. **HHVC School Transport Support** – Members had been circulated a response letter from Pembrokeshire County Council outlaying their policy for transport for children whose parents had chosen for them to attend a school outside of their current catchment area. The policy has been forwarded to the members of the public who approached NTC for support.
4. **20MPH Exemption to the B4325** – The Clerk advised that there had been no correspondence from Pembrokeshire County Council as of yet. The Clerk was asked to send a second letter to Pembrokeshire County Council, clarifying that we were requesting that only sections of the B4325 be exempt, similar to what is in place in Milford Haven, and to outlay the plan we were requesting consideration on.

5. **Hywel Dda NHS Dental Provision** – The Clerk had missed this from the original agenda and apologised. She confirmed that she had sent a letter to Hywel Dda but had not yet received a response. The Clerk is to follow up on this.

Cllr A Phelan asked if there was any update on the Transfer of the North Field to the Athletic Club. The Clerk advised that she had received an email from the solicitor regarding the matter that morning. The Clerk advised that as she was not fully aware of this matter at present, she would further correspond and look into this and update members once she had any further update.

4323 – PAYMENTS TO BE APPROVED & FINANCE UPDATE

Members had been presented with the current view of the bank accounts, which was as follows:

Current Account:	£46,434.76
Mayor's Fund:	£290.34
Earmarked Reserves:	£19,000.00
General Reserves:	£9,054.26
Total in Banks	£74,779.36

Members had been presented with the list of expenditure for October 2023 which totaled £5,243.88 Gross, £4,963.92 Net.

Members had been presented with a list of payments for approval totaling £6,495.87 Gross, £5,796.01 Net.

Proposal: To authorise the list of payments for approval

Proposed: Cllr S Thomas

Seconded: Cllr M Harry

All in favour

RESOLVED: TO AUTHORISE ALL PAYMENTS ON THE LIST OF PAYMENTS FOR APPROVAL

4324 – CLERK'S REPORT

Pembrokeshire Archives

The Clerk reported she had received an email from Pembrokeshire Archives advising that they have a lot of duplicate minutes on record for Neyland Town Council and have asked permission to shred all duplicates. Members agreed this was a sensible suggestion and were happy for Pembrokeshire Archives to do so.

Maple Leaf Designs – Inclusive Wheelchair Roundabout

The Clerk reported that she had received an email from a company called 'Maple Leaf Designs' who had historically provided NTC with a quote for an inclusive wheelchair roundabout. The company were asking to confirm if this was still an ongoing project or if this could be closed off their system. As this was historic to the

Clerk's employment, she asked Council if this was currently an ongoing project. Members advised that it would be sensible to keep this project open and discuss further at the next Environmental & Leisure Committee meeting.

Community Flower Order

The Clerk reported she had been contacted by Pembrokeshire County Council asking if NTC were happy to be quoted for the same flowers that were purchased for this year. Members agreed they were happy with the flowers from this year and were happy for the Clerk to confirm quotation for the same again for next year.

Firework's Money Raised

The Clerk reported the following funds raised from the Fireworks Display:

Fireworks Display Donation Income

Cash Donations	£2,076.70
Card Donations	£42.27
Rides & Catering Donation	£300.00

Total	£2,418.97
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Fireworks Display Costings

Bright Sparks Fireworks	£2,000.00
Insurance	£437.50

Total	£2,437.50
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£18.53 Loss incurred

Members all agreed that this was a great result from the donations.

Play Park Maintenance

The Clerk reported she had received an email from Cllr P Hay asking that we go ahead with the play park swing gate repair. Cllr Hay had advised in his email that replacement parts would be around £600 plus VAT, but that work could be completed by NTC if parts were purchased. This was advised to be discussed and confirmed in the next Environmental & Leisure Committee.

Christmas Closure

The Clerk asked members if NTC had standard days of closure over the Christmas period that she should adhere to, or if she could use her annual leave days at will. Members confirmed that there is no requirement for closure, so it would be fine for the Clerk to make her own choice on closure dates. The Clerk confirmed she would update members shortly with her preferred dates for annual leave, as she wishes to coincide this with the school holidays.

4325 – MAYOR’S UPDATE

The Mayor reiterated his thanks to the Clerk for the organisation of a successful fireworks display and Remembrance Sunday Parade.

4326 – DEPUTY MAYOR’S UPDATE

The Deputy Mayor advised that much of his updates had already been covered during the meeting. He advised members that the “Free Pints for Veterans” scheme had been a great success this year, with more vouchers redeemed than last year.

Cllr A Phelan suggested that it would be a good idea to send a letter from NTC to the Parade Marshall who attended our Remembrance Parade to thank her for her exceptional job and also to Milford Haven Town Band. This was agreed as a good idea.

Action: Clerk to send a thank you letter to the Parade Marshall and Milford Town Band on behalf of Neyland Town Council.

4327 – EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION AT THE DISCRETION OF THE MAYOR

Cllr E Phelan advised she had further correspondence on the Youth Project and that she would forward updates to the Clerk.

4238 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was set for 4th December 2023, 7.00pm at Neyland Community Hub.

The meeting closed at 10.14pm

Signed:..... (The Chair) Date:.....

Signed:..... (Town Clerk/Proper Officer)