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**MINUTES OF AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF NEYLAND TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY 13TH SEPTEMBER 2023 AT NEYLAND COMMUNITY HUB**

This meeting was recorded.

**PRESENT:** Cllr B Rothero (Chair)

Cllr S Thomas

Cllr D Devauden

Cllr S Campodonic

Cllr A Richards

Cllr M Harry

Cllr A Phelan

Cllr P Hay

Cllr A Thomas

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

**APOLOGIES:** Cllr A Radice

Cllr E Phelan

The meeting opened at 19.02pm

**4283 – TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS REGARDING THE BUSINESS TO BE**

**TRANSACTED**

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 M Harry** | **Personal** | **Item 4** |

Cllr S Thomas declared that he is also a Member of Llanstadwell Community Council.

**4284 – PURCHASE OF ‘PURPLE TUESDAY PARTICIPANTS’ – COMMUNITY COHESION GRANT**

Cllr S Thomas advised Members that he has brought this to Council in correlation with the previously approved application for the Community Cohesion Grant. Cllr Thomas explained that upon applying for the grant, he was made aware of the ‘Purple Tuesday’ training package, and he believes it would be beneficial to the grant and to the Council for the Clerk to partake in the training. He advised Council that the basic training package covers training on inclusivity and would allow Council the full use of the Purple Tuesday promotional literature.

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Cllr Hay asked Cllr Thomas what the benefits of the training would be to the Council. Cllr Thomas advised that the Clerk would have access to the training to distribute to all Members, which would help us to identify people’s specific needs to allow our services to the public to become more inclusive. The training also aids with better production of websites and social media accounts, which would also be beneficial to the Clerk and Council.

Cllr Thomas advised that the cost of the training package is £99.00 inclusive of VAT and asked Council to approve payment.

**Proposal: To approve payment of £99.00 to pay for ‘Purple Tuesday’ training package**

**Proposed: Cllr S Thomas**

**Seconded: Cllr D Devauden**

**All in favour**

**RESOLVED: TO MAKE PURCHASE OF THE PURPLE TUESDAY TRAINING PACKAGE**

**4285 – TO DISCUSS AND CONFIRM DECISIONS FOR THE FIREWORKS DISPLAY**

During the Ordinary meeting of Council held on 4th September 2023, the Chair had advised Members that he would bring to this meeting more information regarding the interest shown from other businesses in Neyland in hosting the Fireworks display. The Chair confirmed that there were currently three options for hosting, which were as follows:

* Neyland CIC
* The Alumchine/Neyland Yacht Club
* Neyland Marina

Cllr Richards asked Members if it was confirmed that the display would be hosted on 3rd November, as discussed in the meeting of 4th September. The Clerk confirmed that the display company and the rides/catering company had both confirmed availability for the 3rd, so it was agreed that the display would take place on 3rd November.

The Chair advised that hosting at the Alumchine/Neyland Yacht Club was found to be unsatisfactory. This would be due to the safety implications of the position of The Alumchine being on a main road and next to the river. The Chair also advised that it was suggested that fireworks could be set off from a pontoon in the river, but that, although this would be achievable, it would be overly complex to organise in the short time we have left to confirm all arrangements.

The second option discussed was to hold the display at Neyland Marina. The Chair advised that he had been liaising with Paul Bowman, the consultant for the Fireworks Display company “Bright Sparks Fireworks”, and that they had looked into hosting the display from Barn Lake Point. It was suggested that the public would be situated around the area of Dolphin Courts and that rides/catering could be hosted from the Brunel Quay Car Park. There was discussion between Members regarding the logistics of hosting the event in this area. Some concerns raised about hosting in this were that there were not many amenities for the public, it would be more difficult to collect donations and the safety implications of hosting along the Marina. There were also concerns raised regarding permission needed to set Fireworks off from Barn Lake Point.

The third option discussed was to host the display from Neyland CIC, where Neyland Town Council have previously hosted this event. It was agreed between Members that this arrangement had worked well on previous occasions. The Chair advised Members of an email which had been sent to Neyland CIC, which read as follows:

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1. *Are Council authorised to invite external caterers (burger van etc) to the event? Yes, last year we permitted a burger van in the rear car park. We would be happy to do so again.*
2. *Are Council authorised to invite children’s rides to the event? Yes.*
3. *Would the Hub be willing to implement a system similar to that of Carnival Day, to help with congestion at the bar & amenities etc? Yes of course. We are getting used to this system now.*
4. *As this is a hugely popular event that brings a large footfall, would The Hub be willing to make a contribution to NTC for the costings of the display (insurance, fireworks etc?) The previous arrangement was as follows; Neyland Town Council put on the display and collected a gate. The gate was used first to recoup the councils’ costs (fireworks) after which income collected was distributed to the chosen good cause. The Hub undertook, in the event of a shortfall in the gate, to share the shortfall 50-50 with the Council. We would be happy for that arrangement to continue again this year.*

The Chair advised that this was a satisfactory response and that Neyland CIC were willing to accommodate, as in previous years. Cllr S Thomas raised a concern that he did not feel as though this was a generous response from Neyland CIC and would it be possible to have further discussions on this. Cllr Harry advised that if a written proposal is sent to Neyland CIC, it would be looked into and considered.

Cllr A Thomas advised that she would be happy to correspond with local companies regarding sponsorship for the event, to assist with costs. It was agreed between members that this was a welcome suggestion.

Cllr S Thomas offered his opinion that as there were only 7 weeks left to organise the event, it would be preferable to agreed to host at Neyland CIC, as other possibilities may be too complex to organise within the time frame, and that we could possibly look into hosting at alternative locations for next years’ display.

**The Chair asked Members to vote for the venue to host the Fireworks Display. The votes were recorded as follows:**

**Neyland Marina: Cllr B Rothero, Cllr S Thomas, Cllr D Devauden**

**Neyland CIC: Cllr S Campodonic, Cllr A Richards, Cllr M Harry, Cllr A Phelan, Cllr P Hay, Cllr A Thomas**

**RESOLVED: FIREWORKS DISPLAY TO BE HOSTED AT NEYLAND CIC ON FRIDAY 3RD NOVEMBER. CLERK TO**

**ACTION AND CONFIRM ARRANGEMENTS.**

**4286 – DISCUSS ARRANGEMENTS FOR CHRISTMAS**

The Chair advised that the Christmas Working Group had attended a meeting and had put together a plan for the Christmas events they would like to host this year. It was advised that the meeting had been an open meeting and that members of the public had been invited along. The Chair advised that the group are proposing the following events, to be hosted as a “Christmas Extravaganza Weekend”:

Friday 1st December

An outdoor Christmas fayre, to be hosted at St Clements Church Hall and surrounding roads. The evening will also include the Santa Run around Neyland, an indoor Grotto inside the Church Hall and Neyland Ladies Choir providing entertainment with a Carol service.

Saturday 2nd December

A Santa Fun Run, to start and to finish at the Brunel Quay car park. Evening entertainment to be organised by pubs and clubs throughout Neyland.

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Sunday 3rd December

A lighting of the tree ceremony, to be held at Policeman’s Bank, with a procession from the Neyland Ladies Choir to the Bethesda Chapel, where the Miscellany will then be hosted.

The Chair asked Members to support the event if they could, as there was a lot in the plan which would require help to organise and host. The Chair also asked Members to allow for a budget to help towards costs of the events planned, but that there would be recouperations in costings from stall pitch fees for the Fayre, sponsors from local businesses and donations from the attractions companies who would be invited to attend. Cllr Hay advised that there is already a budget set aside for Christmas events that could be utilised. The Clerk confirmed that the current budget set aside for Christmas stands at £15,000. There were discussions between Members regarding the budget available. Cllr S Thomas advised that the Christmas Lights had been confirmed and had come under budget, at an estimated total of £11,500 net, leaving a ‘free’ budget of £3,500 net. All Members agreed that this could be utilised to support the planned events for Christmas. Cllr A Phelan also suggested that if the budget were exceeded, it could potentially be subsidised by the reserves fund.

Members discussed the arrangements and were happy with the proposals from the Christmas Working Group. The Chair advised that further details would be confirmed after the working group had had additional discussions regarding all details of the arrangements.

**4287 – TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO EXTERNAL BOARDS AND COMMITTEES**

The Chair opened the discussion by advising Members that, due to recent contentions between Members and the appointment of Members to external boards and committees, it would be a good idea to start from the beginning with appointing representatives from Council. The following appointments were made:

Community Liaison Committee (Waterston)

Cllr D Devauden

Dragon LNG Committee

Cllr S Thomas

Cllr P Hay

Neyland Community School Liaison

Cllr A Thomas

Neyland Youth Club Liaison

Cllr E Phelan

Neyland and Llanstadwell Joint Burial Board Committee

Cllr A Richards

Cllr A Phelan

Cllr B Rothero

Cllr D Devauden

Cllr A Radice (reserve)

**RESOLVED: MEMBERS APPOINTED TO EXTERNAL BOARDS AND COMMITTEES**

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**4288 – PAYMENTS TO BE AUTHORISED**

Members were presented with payments for approval totaling £2,325.00 Net.

Payments included the previously agreed adoption of Scribe Accounting Package, at £2135.00 Net for a 3 year contract.

Additional payments were 5 x payments of £38.00 each for training courses.

Cllr S Thomas questioned the payments for the training courses and asked if there was a budget set aside for training purposes. The Clerk advised that there was a budget of £1000 set aside for training. Cllr S Thomas raised a concern that that was not a large enough sum to enable all members adequate training throughout the year and suggested that at present, only two payments for training courses were accepted and a discussion to be held to increase the budget for training. This was agreed to be added to the Agenda for the next meeting.

**RESOLVED: PAYMENTS TO BE REDUCED TO 2 X TRAINING COURSES. ALL OTHER PAYMENTS ACCEPTED**

**4289 – CLERKS REPORT**

The Clerk reported the following to Members:

1. Upon setting up the Scribe Accounting Package, a discrepancy of £10,000 had been discovered in the budget created for the fiscal year 2023-24. This would need to be addressed and considered by the Finance Committee.
2. A further email had been received from former Cllr A Lye, advising he was seeking payment pro-rata for his period as Mayor.

**Action: Clerk to arrange a meeting of the Finance Committee.**

**Action: Clerk to confirm with One Voice Wales if former Cllr A Lye is entitled to payment for his short term**

**as Mayor.**

**4290 – MAYORS UPDATE**

The Chair handed out a copy of an email he had been made aware of to all Members. The Chair asked Members to read through the information and offer their opinions on the matter. Cllr Hay asked the Chair to elaborate on what it was they were looking at as the Chair had offered no explanation. The Chair elaborated that he had been made aware of the document in front of Members, whereby there had been a historical agreement in place between Neyland Town Council and Neyland CIC that Neyland Town Council would take out a loan from the PWLB on behalf of Neyland CIC for £120,000 on the basis that Neyland CIC would make all repayments directly to Neyland Town Council until the loan was repaid in full. The Chair advised that looking at the set of accounts provided by the internal audit, it shows that Neyland Town Council are making substantial loan repayments to the PWLB, however, there was no evidence to show that Neyland CIC has ever made a repayment. Cllr S Thomas read minutes from an Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 2nd September 2019, minute 2350, where it was resolved **“That authority is delegated to the Town Clerk in consultation with Cllr M Harry to: a) Make an application to Welsh Govt to borrow a further £240,000 to support the Neyland Community Hub Project. b) Authorise the drawdown of £240,000 from the PWLB c) Authorise the payment of the £240,000 to Neyland CIC.”**

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Cllr Hay spoke to Members regarding the matter as he had been a Member of Council during the time the decision from minute 2350 had been made. Cllr Hay explained to Members that the request was made to PWLB for a loan of £240,000, which consisted of an agreed gift towards the Neyland CIC project of £120,000 and an additional £120,000 on behalf of Neyland CIC which would be repaid. Cllr Hay advised Members that the additional loan on behalf of Neyland CIC had been rejected by the PWLB, so the only loan taken out was the agreed funding gift of £120,000. Cllr Hay further elaborated to members that the current repayments Neyland Town Council are making to PWLB are for 3 separate loans. The first is a historic loan taken out many years ago which the PWLB would not agree to take an early repayment to complete this loan. The second is a loan for £240,000 which was taken for a “Development Agreement Plan” with Neyland CIC, which included costings of a lease and additional use of the building facilities once it had been completed. The third loan was for £120,000, which was the agreed gifting of funding to support the project in the interest of the community.

The Clerk confirmed that these loan repayments are correct and consistent with the paperwork she has on file from the PWLB. The Chair advised he would like to further look into the matter to confirm what all loans were for, with attached paperwork.

The Chair also advised that there had been an email received from Audit Wales on 31.07.2023, requiring more information of the substantial loan payments made to The Hub from Neyland Town Council. The Clerk and Members were not aware of this email until The Chair brought it to their attention during the meeting.

**4291 – DEPUTY MAYORS UPDATE**

Cllr S Thomas updated Members that he had made the application for the Community Cohesion Grant, as previously approved by Council, and would provide an update if the application was successful.

**4292 – EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION AT THE DISCRETION OF THE MAYOR**

This item was deferred at the discretion of the Mayor.

**4293 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting was agreed for Tuesday 3rd October 2023, 19.00pm.

The meeting closed at 20.38pm.

**Signed: ……………………………………………….. (Chairman) Date: …………………………………………………**

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