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**MINUTES OF AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF NEYLAND TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON 7TH AUGUST 2023 AT 19.00pm**

This meeting was recorded and livestreamed.

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

Cllr S Thomas

Cllr D Devauden

Cllr S Campodonic

Cllr M Harry

Cllr P Hay

Cllr A Richards

Cllr A Phelan

Cllr A Thomas

Cllr A Radice (via Zoom)

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

**APOLOGIES:** Cllr E Phelan

There were initial issues connecting the Zoom livestream for Cllr A Radice to attend. This was resolved.

Cllr A Radice had to leave the meeting due to further technical issues with Zoom connection.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for their attendance. The Chair gave a warm welcome to the new Councillor, Cllr A Thomas, and to the new Clerk, Miss Libby Matthews.

**4247 - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

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

**4248 - RECORDING OF MEETINGS POLICY**

The Chair confirmed with Members that they have all received a copy of the updated Recording of Meetings Policy. The Chair advised Members that this was a draft copy and invited a discussion for any amendment recommendations.

Cllr Hay raised the matter of switching the remote access of the meetings to “Teams” instead of “Zoom” as it is reported that there is much less trouble shooting via Teams.

Cllr A Phelan raised a concern that regardless of the Town Council Policy on Recording of Meetings, if a person wishes to have their details removed from the recording, they are within their rights to do so. Cllr S Thomas responded that the Council would keep within Policy of recording meetings and that if a request is made to have details removed, a written and recorded record of this would be

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kept on file. Cllr A Phelan advised that the Council may need to also update the GDPR Policy to reflect the Recording of Meetings Policy. Cllr A Phelan also made a request that it will need to be checked that the length of time recordings are to be kept is correct, as the Policy currently states 10 years. The Chair asked if it was required for that length of time, Cllr S Thomas responded that stated in the previous Policy, any item which may become subject to legal proceedings must be kept for 10 years. The Chair suggested that as it was on the original Policy, stick with the suggested period of archive. Cllr A Phelan responded that perhaps the wording of the Policy could be amended, to which this was agreed.

**Proposal: To accept the Recording of Meetings Policy once amendments have been made.**

**Proposed – Cllr S Thomas**

**Seconded – Cllr A Phelan**

**All in favour**

**Actions: Clerk to amend the wording of item 3.3 of the Policy to link to the GDPR Policy.**

**Clerk to check and to amend item 4 of the policy regarding length of time records**

**are to be held.**

**4249 – TO RECONSIDER MINUTE NUMBER 4130**

The Chair read out a statement he had prepared in support of Cllr S Thomas, regarding the vote of no confidence in him.

Cllr Hay advised that this matter had not been brought to Council correctly and would need to be brought back correctly to discuss. He elaborated that a motion cannot become null and void and that the motion of no confidence must be brought back to Council and voted down. Cllr Hay used the example of the vote to not support the public toilets. Cllrs changed their view on this motion, so the motion was brought back into Council, signed by Councillors, and brought back to the Ordinary Meeting. The motion was then able to be re-voted on.

Cllr A Phelan agreed with the view of Cllr Hay and stated that a minute cannot be removed as it was discussed, and that the motion would need to be brought back correctly to Council and voted down. Cllr S Thomas asked if this was stated in Standing Orders, to which Cllr Hay advised he did not know. Cllr Harry also supported the views of Cllr Hay and Phelan and advised that it is clearly stated in Standing Orders that a motion requires written notice of at least 5 days before the meeting and must be signed by at least 4 Councillors. There was ongoing dispute on the matter between Cllr’s S Thomas, P Hay, A Phelan and M Harry. There was also continued dispute surrounding the wording on the agenda in that you cannot reconsider a minute, only an item.

The Chair advised that although he did not wish to bring this forward into September, he agreed with the views of Cllr’s Hay, Harry and Phelan that the correct procedure should be followed in order to move forward and advised that the motion would be brought back correctly to the September meeting.

Cllr S Thomas asked Cllr’s to clarify the Standing Orders they were referring to, which were elaborated as Standing Orders 7A, 9B and 26B. Cllr S Thomas disagreed that Standing Order 7A

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corresponded with the views of Cllr’s Hay, Phelan and Harry, to which Cllr A Phelan reiterated that the agenda states “To reconsider the minute 4130” but it should read “To reconsider the item from minute 4130” as you cannot amend or remove a minute.

Cllr S Thomas stated that he felt this was being “dragged out for the sake of it”. The Chair advised that he agreed that it should be revisited in the correct way in September, so that in future there can be no come back on the matter and that it can then, hopefully, be put to bed for good. The Chair offered opportunity for any other Cllr’s to speak on the matter, to which there were no further comments. The Chair advised he would now move on to the next item on the agenda.

**4250 – TO APPOINT MEMBERS TO EXTERNAL COMMITTEES, GROUPS, BOARDS, ETC.**

The Chair advised that this item was to be adjourned to the following meeting in September. There were no objections to the matter.

**4251 – CHRSTMAS LIGHTS CONSULTATION. TO REPORT DECISIONS MADE BY WORKING GROUP**

Cllr S Thomas opened by reminding Council that at the last meeting, the Christmas Working Group were given powers to make decisions regarding the set up for Christmas 2023. Cllr Thomas advised that the Group had decided to proceed with “Lite” for the Christmas lights contract, as this was the cheapest quote even with the amount for the installation. Cllr Thomas also said that he had negotiated an additional £600 discount from the original quote obtained. Voting and decisions were made based on the survey completed by the public. There was an overwhelming consensus that the Town Christmas tree be placed on Policeman’s Bank, so this is what has been agreed.

A meeting has been arranged with OGI and Network Plus regarding the ground works required for the tree. OGI have agreed to complete the works free of charge as part of their Community Benefits programme. Cllr A Phelan asked about the previous agreement made with OGI regarding the payment of £1,000. Cllr Thomas advised this will be covered in his Deputy Mayor’s update. Cllr Thomas continued that CEF Pembroke have agreed to provide the cable requirements as a donation to the project. Barrie Jones has also agreed to complete the electrical installation at Policeman’s Bank free of charge. Overall, this has saved the Council and community at least £2,000. The grounds work will commence in the next couple of weeks, currently awaiting confirmation of date.

Cllr Thomas advised that it had been agreed that this years’ Christmas banner will include thanks to OGI and that he has been liaising with Patrick from the Hub to arrange the community liaison day with OGI. Cllr Hay asked to confirm that Barrie Jones will still be installing the Christmas lights, Cllr Thomas confirmed this. Cllr Thomas advised Council that the combined cost of Lite and Barrie Jones still came up cheaper than the alternative quotes from Blanchere Illuminations. There was discussion and elaboration of the difference in costings and options, where Cllr Thomas demonstrated the clear winner on costings was Lite for the contract of the Christmas lights.

It was advised to Cllr’s that there is a height limit of 15ft for the tree on Policeman’s Bank.

Cllr Hay asked if there was a plan set out for Barrie to advise on the placement of the lights. Cllr Thomas confirmed that Barrie is aware of the correct fixtures, fittings, and placements of the lights. Cllr Hay queried if there will be more lights than last years’ display? Cllr Thomas advised that the display throughout the Town would be the same, however there will be additional lights at the Marina.

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Cllr Hay offered his opinion that lights on the lampposts as you come into Neyland, just off the roundabout, would also be of preference. He stated this would be an important addition as this would provide a warm welcome to Neyland for residents and visitors throughout the season.

Cllr A Phelan queried how long we are tied into the contract with Lite. Cllr Thomas confirmed 3 years.

Cllr A Phelan queried if we need to update the insurance to cover Policeman’s Bank, Cllr A Thomas seconded this concern – especially regarding children. The Chair surmised that all electricals and cables will be underground and sealed off, so will not be accessible to the public. Cllr A Phelan also queried if the insurance covers damage to any Christmas lights/tree etc. to which Cllr S Thomas advised there is an uplift in the insurance over the Christmas season.

**Action – Clerk to confirm with insurance what is covered regarding Christmas.**

**4252 – STAFF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT**

Cllr S Thomas advised that during discussions surrounding the new Clerk, it was agreed that if not already obtained, the new Clerk would need to complete the CiLCA qualification once employment has commenced. Upon research, it has been discovered that the SLCC requires 12 months of experience from a Clerk before they can undertake the CiLCA training. However, in the interim, there is the ILCA training, which is an introduction to the CiLCA qualification. Cllr S Thomas also advised that the Clerk would need to obtain SLCC membership, which comes at a fee and that the Council will need to cover this fee.

It was advised by Cllr Thomas that there are grants towards the costing of the ILCA & CiLCA course, provided by the Welsh Government bursary, and that these would be applied for.

**Proposal: The Council to cover the cost of SLCC Membership for the Clerk and to cover the costs of the ILCA and CILCA courses for the Clerk.**

**Proposed – Cllr S Thomas**

**Seconded – Cllr A Phelan**

**All in favour**

**Actions: Clerk to obtain membership to SLCC and apply for the ILCA course.**

**4253 – PAYMENTS TO BE APPROVED**

Cllr Hay queried that there were no payments shown for the Clerk’s pension. The Clerk advised that she was currently setting up a work-based pension plan and that she intended to opt for Nest as her current pension was through Nest. Payments for the Clerk’s pension will begin in September.

Cllr A Phelan confirmed the payment for the Youth Club was agreed at £2,000. Cllr Rothero agreed on this. Cllr Rothero asked Cllr A Phelan if he knew what the budget the Council had provided would cover. Cllr A Phelan advised that £1,509.40 of the budget covers 10 sessions over the summer and the rest covers events for low income families.

Cllr Devauden queried why the new Cllr was not on the list of payments for Cllr allowances. Cllr A Thomas confirmed that she had declined to accept the allowance.

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Cllr Harry asked about the payment for Hi Vis vests. Cllr S Thomas confirmed that due to stock issues, the correct sizes were not available last year, so they have now been ordered.

Cllr Harry queried the Mayor’s allowance, questioning if it had agreed that it would be more than the stated £1,500. Cllr Hay confirmed that the £1,500 allowance is standard for the Mayor, but Council had previously agreed that this could increase by a further £1,500 if required and if passed by Council.

Cllr Phelan queried that Cllr Devauden’s mileage payment was blank on the spreadsheet. The Clerk confirmed she has yet to receive the mileage amount from Cllr Devauden. Cllr Devauden was asked to submit this for payment.

Cllr Hay advised that PCC invoice numbers need to be 10 digits long for the bank to accept them. He advised that three zeros should be placed after the letter M, as advised by the bank.

**Proposal: To confirm and accept all payments to be authorized**

**Proposed – Cllr S Thomas**

**Seconded – Cllr A Thomas**

**Abstained – Cllr M Harry on the basis that he would be declining his allowance.**

**All in favour**

**Actions: Clerk to forward all details of payment to Cllr A Phelan.**

**Clerk to set up work-based pension with Nest.**

**4254 – CLERK’S REPORT**

The Clerk reported that she had received notification from the Pollution Control Inspector from Pembrokeshire County Council that they have tested the water at Neyland Yacht Club and that the results had come back classified as excellent.

* E. coli – 54cfu/100ml
* Enterococci – 4cfu/100ml

\*cfu -Colony Forming Units. Indicated the level of living microorganisms in a liquid.

\*Enterococci – indicator of the presence of fecal matter

The Clerk also reported that she had received a copy of the internal audit report of the accounts for NTC from Bernie Scourfield. The Clerk noted some concerns with the current accounts, advising Cllr’s that there had been a few substantial mistakes made regarding the VAT return for the year 22/23. This has led to an overpayment from HMRC, leaving NTC with a sizeable bill to pay back. The Clerk advised that it was of her opinion and advice given in the audit report that this mistake has been made due to poor accounting and reconciliation of NTC accounts. The Clerk believes NTC would benefit greatly from an Accounting Package, this also corresponds with advice from the internal audit report.

The Clerk thanked all Members for their warm welcome to her new role and for their many offers of support and guidance.

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**Actions: Clerk to research suitable accounting packages to find the best suited.**

**4255 – MAYORS UPDATE**

The Chair advised he had attended two very positive committee meetings. One for the Twinning Committee and one for the Environmental & Leisure Committee.

The Chair advised that one notable thing that had been discussed during the Environmental & Leisure meeting was that the lifespan of the Play Park is deteriorating quickly and that the cost of replacement is now much higher. The Chair believes that the budget for the Play Park needs to be raised.

The Chair updated Members that the Christmas Working Group would like to put together a Christmas Fayre this year and that they would be organizing another meeting shortly to discuss this. The Chair advised Members that this would be an open meeting that all could attend and that this would also include members of the public. The Chair advised that due to the interest shown so far, this could be quite a big event.

Cllr Harry asked if there had been any update regarding the gift for Sanguinet. It was advised that the gift had been returned to the Town Council office due to incorrect customs labels. The Chair advised there could be a possibility of delivering the gift, rather than reposting, as he was currently discussing joining the Neyland Ladies Choir on their trip to Sanguinet in 2024. Cllr Hay asked if there was any opportunity to display the plate received from Sanguinet, Cllr S Thomas suggested the Town Council office.

**4256 – DEPUTY MAYOR’S UPDATE**

Cllr S Thomas opened by advising he had already covered the update regarding the Christmas lights. Cllr S Thomas addressed Cllr A Phelan’s previous question on the £1,000 compensation payment agreed from OGI. It was stated that due to paperwork not being completed, the payment had initially been lost, however, Cllr Thomas advised he had once again secured this amount. Both Cllr’s Phelan and Harry queried that the payment could not have been lost due to the severe disruption OGI had caused throughout the town. There was some discussion surrounding this. Cllr Thomas advised that the £1,000 payment from OGI was to go towards CCTV at the Marina. The Clerk is to look into quotes for the completion of the work required. Cllr Harry offered his opinion that the amount should be more, however, Cllr Thomas concluded that we had gained much more by negotiating the works on Policeman’s Bank to be completed by OGI free of charge. Cllr Thomas did, however, advise that he was scheduling a meeting with Patrick from the Hub and Martin from OGI and that he was happy to discuss this.

Cllr Harry raised the concern that there had been many complaints raised from the public regarding the poor workmanship from OGI during their installations throughout the Town and that members of the public were not happy as they had not received any response from OGI. Cllr Rothero advised that he had spoken with Martin from OGI who had said complaints had not been made through the correct procedure. It was suggested that NTC could share a direct link for customer complaints on their Facebook page for members of the public to utilise.

Cllr S Thomas advised that the handover with the Clerk had now been completed successfully.

Cllr S Thomas reiterated the Clerk’s update regarding the internal audit report and agreed with the Clerk’s view that an accounting package would be beneficial.

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Cllr S Thomas advised he has attended the Mayor Making Parade in Tenby, however, there had not been a particularly good turnout for this.

Cllr S Thomas advised his expenses request for postage was regarding Barclays bank and the updating of the mandate.

Cllr S Thomas advised that the Men’s Shed had been approached to restore the benches after a complaint had been received regarding the state of the benches from former Cllr Andrew Lye. The benches are believed to be structurally sound but needed cosmetic work, involving sanding down, wood treatment and repainting. Cllr Thomas suggested we opt for something more colourful, perhaps blue to match the NTC Crest, but that this was open for discussion. It was advised that the £60 payment included in the July payments for authorisation for the Men’s Shed was a ballpark figure and that the Men’s Shed would submit receipts upon purchase of materials. Cllr A Phelan suggested that NTC purchases materials so that we can claim back VAT.

Cllr Hay advised that ‘Percy’s Bench’ had been damaged and that this had been reported to 101. Cllr Hay advised that all incidents should be reported to 101. Cllr Rothero queried the removal of the benches from St Clements Road. Cllr Harry advised they had to be removed many years ago due to resident complaints about local children throwing litter and debris into the gardens below. Cllr Rothero asked if the benches could be returned due to requests from members of the public. Cllr’s Hay and Harry were both in favour of the benches being returned. Cllr Hay suggested the Clerk to contact PCC to advise NTC would be returning the benches to St Clements Road.

Cllr S Thomas confirmed that in last months’ meeting it was decided that additional Councillor’s would be added to the mandate. He advised that the mandate had now been updated to include himself, Cllr A Richards, Cllr S Campodonic and the new Clerk.

**Proposal: That the Clerk be given a debit card for transactions.**

**Proposed – Cllr P Hay**

**Seconded – Cllr B Rothero**

**All in favour**

**Actions: Clerk to obtain quotes for CCTV**

**4257 – EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION AT THE DISCRETION OF THE MAYOR**

Cllr D Devauden advised members that an invite had gone out to Will Bramble from Pembrokeshire County Council to attend the next meeting. He was yet to receive a reply.

**4258 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Date of the next meeting was set for 4th September 2023 at 19.00pm

This meeting was closed at 20.35pm.

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**Signed** ………………………………………………………..**Chairman of Council**

**Signed** ……………………………………………………………**Town Clerk/RFO**

**Date:** ……………………………………………