

**MINUTES OF AN EXTRAORDINARY MEETING OF NEYLAND TOWN COUNCIL  
HELD ON 14 JUNE 2023 AT 19:11pm**

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This meeting was recorded and livestreamed.

**PRESENT:** Cllr. B. Rothero  
Cllr. D. Devauden  
Cllr. P. Hay  
Cllr. S. Campodonic  
Cllr. S. Thomas (Deputy Mayor)  
Cllr. Al. Richards  
Cllr. A. Radice

**OBSERVER:** S. Absalom, Press  
D Edwards, PCC Standards Committee  
C.Cllr S Hancock  
2 members of the public

**APOLOGIES:** Apologies were received from  
Cllr. A. Phelan  
Cllr. E. Phelan  
Cllr. M. Harry

**THE DATE OF THIS MEETING WAS SET ON THE 5<sup>TH</sup> JUNE. THERE WERE NO REQUESTS FOR IT TO BE POSTPONED.**

**THERE IS A POLICE INVESTIGATION CURRENTLY ONGOING.**

Cllr. Thomas welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**4209 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 was a Councillor on Llanstadwell Community Council.

Cllr. Thomas explained that there were some issues which should not be discussed, as they are the subject of a Police investigation as a result of the information disclosed at the meeting of 5<sup>th</sup> June 2023, and that we should be mindful not to prejudice a criminal investigation.

**4210 TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE RESIGNATION OF FORMER CLLR. A. LYE**

Cllr. Thomas advised that he had received the resignation from the position of Councillor and Mayor of former Cllr. A Lye on the 6<sup>th</sup> June 2023, following disclosure of information on several issues of concern, raised during the previous evenings meeting. Cllr. Thomas thanked Cllr. Lye for his time as Councillor.

**4211 TO APPOINT A MAYOR FOR 2023-24**

Cllr. Hay raised the query that in the Standing Orders it states that a Councillor has to be in post for two years prior to becoming Mayor. Cllr. Thomas confirmed this is not in the Standing Orders.

Cllr. Thomas stated that following a difficult few months Neyland Town Council needs a period of calm while we focus on positive and productive activity for the community, so that we can put the difficult period well and truly behind us.

Cllr. Thomas proposed Cllr. Rothero for Mayor, this was seconded by Cllr. Devauden.

This was carried six in favour, one against.

The Chair was passed to Cllr. Rothero.

**RESOLVED**

**Councillor Rothero is elected as Chairman of Council / Mayor for the 2023-2024 civic year.**

**4212 A VOTE OF CONFIDENCE IN DEPUTY MAYOR CLLR. THOMAS**

This was proposed by Cllr. Rothero and seconded by Cllr. Radice.

This was carried six in favour, one against.

**RESOLVED**

**Vote of confidence was given to the Deputy Mayor, Councillor S Thomas.**

**4213 TO DISCUSS CIRCULATION OF INNAPROPRIATE EMAILS AND THEIR CONTENTS AND CLOSED GROUP MEETINGS BETWEEN CLLR. M. HARRY, CLLR. P. HAY, CLLR. A. PHELAN, CLLR. E. PHELAN, FORMER CLLR. A LYE AND THE FORMER CLERK**

Cllr. Rothero acknowledged that every Member was now up to speed with the contents of the emails which had first been raised at the meeting of 5<sup>th</sup> June 2023 and that all Councillors were now in receipt of them. He outlined that there are currently two lines of investigation, internal and external.

Cllr. Hay asked if investigations were currently taking place. Cllr. Thomas outlined the position: Dyfed Powys Police are currently investigating and a crime reference number had been provided, the Monitoring Officer has been approached and as a result of conversations and this meeting, the matter may be referred to Audit Wales. There has also been contact with the Ombudsman, and Cllr Rothero confirmed that following this meeting, further progress would be made.

Cllr. Thomas addressed the fact that Cllr. Hay was the only member of the group to attend the meeting and assured Cllr. Hay that he would not be put under any pressure and that if he wanted a break at any time, all he had to do was say.

Members raised concerns about the meetings that had been taking place amongst the closed group and the agendas they were following, and also the negative and derogatory nature of the emails that were being circulated amongst this closed group. Cllr Hay stated that he was not aware that he had intentionally or unintentionally attended any secret meetings, though he did acknowledge that he did meet with the closed group that had excluded half of the Council.

Cllr Rothero listed some of the concerns which had come to light as a result of the disclosure of emails:

Private Meetings with written agenda, without notifying all Council Members.

Not discouraging Councillors within the group from sending vexatious or inappropriate emails.

Talking openly about Council members in a vexatious and demeaning manner.

Arranging a meeting to tamper with the vote for election to positions, harassment and peer pressure placed on Councillors.

Other significant concerns had been identified, but it was not appropriate to discuss those during this meeting.

**4214 A VOTE OF NO CONFIDENCE IN CLLR. M. HARRY, CLLR. P. HAY, CLLR. A. PHELAN, CLLR. E. PHELAN**

The behaviours and actions of these Councillors has brought Neyland Town Council into disrepute. It is unacceptable to exclude someone, belittle them and try to push them out of the Council simply because of their differing views. This was proposed by Cllr. Thomas and seconded by Cllr. Campodonic.

The motion was carried six in favour, one against.

Cllr. Hay instigated a discussion about what this now meant, and it was explained that this would in part, be dealt with by an amendment to standing orders taking place later in the meeting.

**RESOLVED**

**Vote of no confidence was given to Councillor M Harry, Councillor P Hay, Councillor A Phelan, and Councillor E Phelan.**

**4215 A VOTE OF CONFIDENCE IN AND THANKS TO CLLR. A. RADICE**

Cllr. A. Radice informed the Council that the past seven months, where she had been information gathering and monitoring the values and behaviours of Cllr's Harry, Hay, A. Phelan, and E. Phelan, as part of the closed group, had been a terrible time for her and it had taken a direct toll on her health and family life. Cllr Radice explained that she had done this as she felt that a desperate wrong was being done against Cllr. Thomas.

Cllr. Thomas personally thanked Cllr. Radice for this work in identifying the dreadful behaviours of these Councillors and commented that what she had done had been very brave, especially as she was all too aware of the treatment which can be inflicted on someone who challenges the views and behaviours of that toxic group. Cllr. Thomas proposed that this personal thank you, for exposing this behaviour, is echoed by Neyland Town Council with a vote of thanks and confidence in Cllr. Radice. The motion was seconded by Cllr. D. Devauden.

The motion was carried six in favour, one vote against.

**RESOLVED**

**Vote of confidence and thanks were given to Councillor A Radice.**

**4216 STANDING ORDERS**

Cllr. Rothero advised of an amendment to the Standing Orders: Any Councillor who is the subject of a vote of no confidence shall be excluded from representing Neyland Town Council on any external committee, board, group, or other body until an appropriate vote deems that they are able to do so.

Proposed by Cllr. Rothero, seconded by Cllr. Campodonic.

The motion was carried six in favour, one vote against.

Cllr. Hay asked which bodies were included and he was informed that Dragon LNG, The Power Station, the school, and the Burial Board were all included. Cllr. Hay asked for clarification on this, and Cllr Rothero agreed to do so.

**RESOLVED**

**Standing Orders is amended to include: “Any Councillor who is subject to a vote of no confidence shall be excluded from representing Neyland Town Council on any external committee, board, group or other body until an appropriate vote deems that they are able to do so”.**

**4217 TO GRANT ACCESS TO HISTORIC FINANCIAL RECORDS FOR THE PURPOSE OF AN INTERNAL AUDIT**

The outgoing Clerk did not use the Edge system for financial entries. The Internal Auditor is not satisfied with some entries. The membership for Edge has now lapsed but they are willing for the Auditor to access the system FOC. This needs to be completed before the end of June. Cllr. S. Thomas would like to authorise this; however, concerns were expressed by Cllr. M. Harry and Cllr. A. Phelan. This was proposed by Cllr. S. Thomas and seconded by Cllr. A. Radice. There is also a need for alternative accounting software to be procured for the incoming Clerk. This was passed unanimously.

**RESOLVED**

**Access to EDGE Finance System is granted to the Internal Auditor.**

**4218 MAYORS UPDATE**

There were no updates at this time.

**4219 DEPUTY MAYORS UPDATE**

The advertisement for the new Town Clerk is be edited and will go out to Councillors in draft, later this week.

The office is being manned on an ad hoc basis and the email account has been updated to reflect this and provide urgent contact details.

**4220 EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION**

Cllr. P. Hay attended a presentation today to exhibit the 10 sets of graffiti boards from Pembrokeshire Youth Clubs. These boards are 8 x 4 and there was a discussion as to where best they can be displayed in the Town. Cllr. P. Hay suggested the railings outside the Wesleyan Chapel and will ask the owner of the building.

**4221 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Date of next ordinary meeting 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2023 at 19:00.

The meeting closed at 20:15.

**Chairman of Council / Mayor** ..... **Signed**

**Proper Officer / Town Clerk** ..... **Signed**

**Date** .....