

Penllyn Community Council

Clerk to the Council
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Minutes of an Ordinary Meeting of Penllyn Community Council held
at the Llansannor Community Hall, City

7.00 p.m. on Monday 6th February 2023

Present - Councillors, P. Summers (Chair) (Llansannor), M. Bancroft (Ystradowen), Parisa Eslambolchilar (Penllyn), D. Fardo (Penllyn), Helen Harbour (Ystradowen), E. P. Jarvis (Llansannor), S.C. Howells (Ystradowen), A. Jarvis (Ystradowen), C.Roach (Penllyn), L. Tiessen (Penllyn).

Also in attendance: Mr A. D Williams Clerk to the Council, Vale of Glamorgan Cllr C.Champion, PC Stuart Elson.

363) Apologies for absence

Cllr J.N Evans.

364) Declarations of interest under the Council's Code of Conduct.

None.

365) To confirm the minutes of the Council meeting held 5th December 2022

Resolved: The draft minutes of the meeting be approved.

366) Matters arising from minutes other than appearing below

(a) WG Electoral Administration Consultation (Modernisation of electoral administration) (Minute 349 (a) refers) - The Chairman confirmed that he had submitted a response on behalf of the Council.

(b) Ystradowen Active Travel Route (Minute 349(b) refers) – VoG Cllr Champion did not accept the assertion, that the scheme was not progressing due to local opposition, was disingenuous.

Resolved: Council stands by statement and minute 349(b) stands as is.

367) Community police matters

PS Stuart Elston in attendance.

Incidents / crime January 2023 reported as follows:

Road traffic 1

Hare coursing etc. 1

The public are encouraged to report via 101 even issues considered minor as taken together often provide useful intelligence.

368) Vale Council Matters

(A) Highways matters

(a) Schedule of outstanding and ongoing highways issues.

(i) New issues

(a) Winter gritting – The Chairman had circulated prior to the meeting copies of emails he had sent to Vale highways operational manager 17th, 18th and 20th January 2023, and to the Vale Director 30th January, regarding the absence of winter gritting in the past week.

The Chairman reported that todate, apart from an acknowledgement from The Director, a response is still awaited.

(ii) Ongoing issues

(a) Flooding – The Clerk reported that the matters raised at January Council were reported to Vale highways by email 13th January 2023, to which a response is still awaited. The Chairman's email as referred to above also included reference to ongoing flooding issues.

For the purposes of completeness, the comprehensive email / letter sent by the Chairman to the Vale Director is reproduced below:

“To: Vale of Glamorgan Council: Cllr Mark Wilson - Cabinet member for Neighbourhood and Building Services, Miles Punter - Director Environment and Housing, Michael Clogg - Operational Manager Engineering /Neighbourhood Services and Transport.

30th January 2023

Dear Sirs

INTRODUCTION

Over the last few weeks and, unsurprisingly perhaps, particularly during the recent bad weather, many residents and this Community Council have reported a large number of significant issues with flooding and gritting. These reports have been made both on the Vale Council reporting site and in several cases directly by email from the Council Clerk or Chair to Mr Clogg.

We would record our appreciation for the efforts of Mr Clogg and his teams in the difficult conditions. However, a significant number of the issues reported, whilst exacerbated by the recent extreme weather are in fact long standing problems which are now long overdue for permanent remedial action; matters which appear to be beyond the remit of the Operational Managers office to offer a response.

This Community Council recognises that in most instances emergency remedial work has been undertaken recently and significantly, on many previous occasions and we do recognise and understand that there is a limit to what can be achieved to accommodate extreme weather conditions. We are also aware that financial constraints may limit the speed with which some capital issue can be addressed.

However, this Council would highlight:

- i) The matters set out below are long standing, long-term issues which have been exacerbated but not caused by recent extreme weather. As such they represent a real, present and ongoing danger to the safety and public health of residents of the rural Vale.
- ii) Repeated and ultimately ineffective emergency short-term or temporary remediation (as previously undertaken by the Highways department) is an inefficient and costly use of the Council resources and scarce funds, which would be more efficiently utilised by undertaking the required permanent structural repairs [from maintenance or capital budgets] to prevent future recurrence.

As the issues listed below have all been previously reported, recently and/or in the last year to Vale of Glamorgan Council Highways Department [and where appropriate to Welsh Water], only a brief summary of each issue is included again here.

The Community Council will be pleased to provide any additional information required to clarify locations and/or to add to that previously submitted to the VoG Operations Manager and if appropriate to provide local Points of Contact to support further site visits.

Penllyn Community Council would therefore request an urgent report from the Vale of Glamorgan Council Neighbourhood Services and Transport Department setting out the Vale Councils position and your proposals for the permanent resolution for each of these issues.

A. MAJOR LONG STANDING FLOODING ISSUES

1. Regular sustained flooding of A4222 north of Tudor Garage Ystradowen and S bends approaching the county boundary.

Heavy prolonged deep standing water on bends causing traffic to deviate from safe route. This has resulted in several accidents [which may or may not have been recorded]. Local indications suggest absence of suitable roadside gullies rather than blockages. Highways action to date has been limited to providing temporary flood signs.

2. Regular sustained flooding of bend/junction between Court Farm and Church Farm Llansannor Heavy prolonged deep standing water on bend causing traffic to deviate from safe route. As well as the risk to moving vehicles this road becomes impassable to pedestrians, cyclists and smaller vehicles for significant periods. Gullies exist, draining into an old soakaway which is very occasionally pumped by Highways. However, to keep road clear it would now need to be pumped almost daily during winter/wet periods. Since this issue has only become apparent in recent years it would appear the old soakaway has either partially collapsed or reached the end of its useful life and requires rebuilding.

3. Newton road from Newton House Farm to junction bottom Pen y Lan hill and side road to the Barn and Newton farm Heavy prolonged deep standing and running water on both roads causing traffic to deviate from safe route. As well as the risk to moving vehicles this road becomes impassable to pedestrians, cyclists and smaller vehicles for significant periods.

The road is drained by combination of roadside ditches and enclosed culverts. Some clearance work has been undertaken by Highways in the past however the roadside culverts and those under the road/junctions are blocked/collapsed or are too small to prevent the majority water spilling onto highway. Although most of the culverts are roadside and the responsibility of the Highways authority, they have reportedly told some residents that certain culverts are on private land and responsibility of the landowner. It appears however that not only has the Council failed to address the issues with the highway sites it has done nothing to follow up or enforce the repair of the culverts it considers to be privately owned, nor to liaise with NRW to ensure the land drainage system to the River Thaw is adequately maintained.

4. Sustained flooding and sewage contamination road Graig Penllyn to Pont y Rhyd junction Heavy prolonged deep standing water on highway, adjoining gardens and adjacent pumping station where it becomes contaminated with raw sewage, because roadside ditch is 'dead headed'. Residents have reported that at the point where the ditch ends there was a 'big drain pipe' buried in the ground which used to carry the water further down to the River Thaw. This pipe was reportedly blocked during works carried out on the fresh water supply pipes. This matter has also been reported to Welsh Water due to presence of sewage, however there appears to be some dispute between highways and Welsh Water regarding liability.

5. Penllyn to Llanharry Road adjacent to Hillside Farm and Degar hill Prolonged deep standing water along a significant length of road and bends has reappeared causing traffic to deviate from safe route and making the road impassable to pedestrians, cyclists and smaller vehicles. Extensive work was undertaken by Highways to repair/replace culvert etc. on this stretch of road last year. However, the reoccurrence, extent and severity of recent flooding would suggest a culvert may have again become blocked and require ongoing maintenance or additions measures are required.

6. Maendy Road (A4222) to Newton West of disused rail bridge & Newton fork junction Water run off from Watery lane / A4222 Limited flooding of highway and significant running water draining from 'Watery Lane'/A4222. Work was carried out by highways/landowner to west of disused bridge during summer 2022 which appears to have been largely successful in preventing serious flooding at bridge. However, run off from the inadequate drainage at Watery Lane / A4222 junction

entering Newton/Llanharry road is still causing flooding of highway. Structural improvement and/or ongoing maintenance required. The fork junction west of Newton has also recently been locally flooded. This is a new flood site suggesting additional inspection/clearance of local drainage ditches is required.

7. Llansannor to Trebettyn road south of Court Drive The prolonged deep standing water on bends has reappeared causing traffic to deviate from safe route and blocking cyclist and pedestrians. Since the ditch and runoffs had previously been re dug this would suggest further ongoing and more regular maintenance is required to maintain this drain or additional work undertaken with NRW and adjoining landowner to reopen drainage ditches to the River Thaw.

8. Trerhyngyll - Ffalds lane, Jane Hodge and Culvert from Wellgreen to Jane Hodge Standing water on roads blocking traffic and pedestrians. Ongoing maintenance required. Drainage culvert pipes blocked, have not been cleaned for some years. Ditches and run offs by Jane Hodge in need of re-clearance. NOTE All the above sites represent significant hazards and prevent normal access throughout the winter and wet periods. In cold conditions they are additionally a significant cause of icing on the roads and road traffic incidents. This is exacerbated by gritting issues set out below. As many of these sites are located on bends and hills there is very significant risk of serious collisions causing life changing injury or death.

B. TREATMENT OF ROADS DURING ICY CONDITIONS

9. Prior to and again during the recent severe weather this Community Council has brought to the attention of the Operational Manager Engineering /Neighbourhood Services and Transport, deficiencies in the road treatment (gritting) arrangements for these Councils wards.

These fall into two categories:

- i) Failure to reliably undertake routine treatment of roads designated by the Vale of Glamorgan Council as “Green routes receiving precautionary treatment” even when these have become dangerously iced, unless repeated chased by residents and this Council. This includes roads through Penllyn/ Graig Penllyn and City and roads outside Llansannor School (causing closure on at least one occasion) and ‘Roads at risk’ due to their gradient or frozen residues from flooding.
- ii) Failure to review the “green routes”, as requested, to include two key stretches of road which provide: Critical and/or sole access to communities. Their omission is contrary to the Vale Councils published policy and criteria for routine treatment of such roads. As previously advised to the Highways department these two roads are:
 - a) The road from Penllyn to Llanharry via Ton Breigan which provides routine access for school transport and wider vehicles in general, to a significant number of properties and farms and from Penllyn to Llanharry and Llansannor School. [To avoid the steep gradient and severe width limitation in City.]

b) The road from the fork junction west of Newton, (with road from A4222 to Llanharry) through to City, including Pen y Lan Hill, which provides the only access for residents of Newton, Pen y Lan, Trebettyn and Llansannor to safe treated roads.

10. Apart from the significant safety concerns, the failure to include these roads within the designated green routes is particularly frustrating to residents as gritting vehicles are frequently seen using these roads with the gritting system turned off, for access to other areas. Therefore, adding these sections to the designated routes would have a minimal impact on route time or cost.

11. The failure to address the long-term flooding issues set out in A above, combined with the recent cold weather produced a significant number of extremely dangerous areas of ice on these untreated roads and resulted in several serious accidents, which could easily have caused significant injuries or fatalities. Attempts by residents, this Council and we believe the Police, to get treatment for these sites was frustrated by lack of action and/or communication from Highways department. The Community Council appreciates the pressure which the Department no doubt found itself under, however, the resources and the system for prioritising such emergency sites require urgent investigation and review.

C. COMMUNICATION

12. Whilst this Council appreciates the historic lines of communication between it and the Highways department have been reasonably effective. It was however notable that under the pressure of the recent poor weather return communications stopped entirely and all our communications even those relating to emergency events have gone unanswered.

13. Whilst the Community Council appreciate Mr Clogg and his team would no doubt have been very busy, it is essential that two-way communication are maintained, particularly at times of emergency or when there is additional stress on the system, so the Community Council can keep residents informed. If only to prevent duplicate and unnecessary reporting and consequent potential waste of staff time.

14. We would urge the Neighbourhood Services and Transport Department to review and address the weaknesses in its communications procedures to ensure reports, especially those from TCC's and other local agencies are always answered in a timely fashion.

15. it is critical that a reliable method is established with the resilience to ensure sufficient information is provided in a timely manner during adverse events to enable residents to be kept fully advised of the actions being taken and any issues or delays which might occur. This is particularly important at times of emergency, extreme weather or when the Council resources are under stress.

D. ACTIONS

16. Penllyn Community Council therefore request the Vale of Glamorgan Council Neighbourhood Services and Transport Department undertake an urgent senior level review into the long term, ongoing issues set out above.

17. Should the Department require any additional information from this Community Council in regard any of the matters raised, we would be pleased to provide it and or answer any questions raised.

18. Based on that review, the Community Council would request a report from the Vale of Glamorgan Council in regard to its position on each of the issues raised and your proposals for their permanent resolution, with time scales.

Phil Summers CHAIR PENLLYN COMMUNITY COUNCIL 30 Jan 2023”

(b) Road signage – No change from previously reported , replacement finger signs for Newton still not fitted due to problems with fixings etc., and relining Newton and Ystradowen not progressed due to amount of winter gritting salt on the highway.

Resolved: That all as above be noted.

(B) Other matters

(a) Public Rights of Way, Newton / Pen-Y-Lan (Cllr Eslambolchilar)

Resolved: Clerk to write to PRow at the Vale requesting further progress report on repair of styles for report to next meeting of Council.

369) Chairman and members reports and communications

None

370) Delegates reports

(a) One Voice Wales , Vale Area Committee 16th January 2023 (Chairman and Cllr Eslambolchilar)

Items of particular note discussed comprised of the important role Community and Town Council's could play in building resilient places for nature, The Finance & Governance Tool Kit, also difficulties in the sector of recruitment and retention of Clerks.

(b) Report of Minor Authority Governor, Llansannor CIW School, governing body meeting

Chairman reported that the minutes of the Governors meeting 23rd November 2022 had been circulated to councillors, next meeting scheduled for 23rd February 2023.

371) Matters relating to land holding

None

372) Planning applications

(c) New applications:

Application No.	Location & proposal	Community Council's Recommendation
2023/00005/FUL	The Sycamores, St. Owains Crescent, Ystradowen Take down existing garage/conservatory. Construct new two storey extension to side/rear elevation to provide family room, bedrooms and bathroom. Change bedroom into home office/study	No objection
2023/00006/FUL	Tafarn Barn Stables, Trerhyngyll Proposed menage and amendments to agricultural machinery and hay store as approved 2020/00441/FUL (raising agricultural machinery store ridge height by 1.0m) including upgrading of paddock to avoid flooding from adjacent highway	No objection
2023/00027/FUL	Badgers Hollow, Graig Penllyn Proposed alterations to form new separate access and associated works	No objection
2023/00093/LAW	The School House, Penllyn Single storey rear extension	No comment

Resolved: The recommendations as set out above be forwarded to the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

(d) Replacement LDP – Spatial Strategy and Growth Options – Vale Council engagement session 8th February 2023

The Chairman had circulated papers for the session as provided by the Vale Council, and his intended comments to the session.

The comments focus on a perceived lack of attention in the documents to the needs of smaller communities preventing them from developing, contrary to the objectives as set out in Welsh Government's Future Wales 2040, Well-being of Future Generations Act, as well as the Vale Council's own Vision and RLDP objectives.

Resolved: The following comments be conveyed to the session, that:

- (a) The settlement hierarchy is amended and updated so that the existing category of Minor Rural Settlements is reclassified as Rural Settlements and the category of Minor Rural Settlement is used to identify all small hamlets and settlements not currently listed.
- (b) The adopted Spatial Strategy and resulting RLDP includes the specific statement to the effect that small scale developments particularly of affordable housing, be permitted in Minor Rural Settlements as above, where appropriate to address local needs.

373) Finance

Payment of accounts:

Chq No.	Payee	Details	Amount £.p
715	Mr AD Williams	February 2022 Salary	301.00
716	Llansannor Community Hall Assoc.	Hire charges 2022 (January to December) – 13 No. meetings @£20	260.00
717	Mr Barrie Oliver	Salmons Wells, annual maintenance	250.00
718	One Voice Wales	Member's training November & December 2022	385.00
719	Mr AD Williams	February 2022 Salary	301.00

Resolved: Schedule of payments as above be approved.

374) Clerks Correspondence

Nothing further

375) Member's training programme 2022/23

The Chairman reported on continuing progress with the above.

376) Boundary Changes - Community Review (Minute 349 (b) January 2023 refers)
- briefing with the Local Democracy and Boundary Commission 1st February 2023

Chairman outlined the initial comments that he had conveyed to the meeting, vis in relation to properties at Highgrove Ystradowen, on the Thaw river Llansannor, and in Pen-y-llan.

Resolved: That the residents in these locations be circulated with letters to ascertain their views.

377) Any other business

Council's Annual Dinner – Chairman to report back to next meeting

378) Date time next meeting

Next meeting 7.00 pm Monday 6th March 2023.

Signed:

Chair

Date: