

BRACKLA COMMUNITY COUNCIL



Minutes of the Full Council meeting
held on a remote basis in accordance with the provisions of
The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021
at 6:30pm on Thursday, 18th November 2021

Present:	Cllr K Hughes (Vice-chair)	
	Cllr D Aston	Cllr I Hibble
	Cllr E Caparros	Cllr A Pucella
	Cllr J Chohan	Cllr K Rowlands
	Cllr T Giffard	Cllr J Spanswick
Absent:	Cllr C Jackson	
Residents:	None	
	Ms S Ofnowska, Llias y Goedwig	
Officers:	Ms J van Tonder (Clerk)	
	Mr P Ley (RFO / Assistant Clerk)	
	Ms H May (Admin Assistant)	

As a result of technical difficulties, the meeting commenced at 6:40pm.

Presiding: Cllr Keith Hughes

Cllr Hughes welcomed the new Clerk and thanked Ms May and Mr Ley for their efforts during the period the Council was without a Clerk.

106. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence had been received from Cllr T Walsh.

107. Declarations of Interest

The Clerk advised members that declarations needed only to be made where members had either a personal or pecuniary interest in matters on the agenda.

No declarations of interest were made in respect of the business to be transacted.

Cllr K Hughes indicated he was unhappy that planning application comments could not be submitted as a result of members declaring interests and rendering the meeting inquorate.

The Clerk was asked to provide further guidance on declarations of interest for the next meeting.

108. Public Questions

There were no members of the public present.

109. Guest Speaker: Sasha Ofnowska, Senior Development Officer, Llias y Goedwig

The Chair invited Ms Ofnowska to address the meeting.

Sasha introduced herself as Senior Development Officer for Llias y Goedwig, the Community Woodland Network for Wales.

She advised that, following an evaluation of the borough, Brackla had been identified as one of five sites for the introduction of a tree planting project. Members were informed that Foxfields had been visited the previous week where Sasha had met with residents to discuss the plans and was now looking to engage with the Council.

In response to members suggesting the Council was eager to progress a tree planting scheme at Brackla Hill, Sasha advised she had been asked by BCBC to meet with the residents' group and was assisting them with designs that would look to incorporate seating areas, wildflower meadows and woodland at the same time ensuring accessibility. She went on to suggest some funding may have been identified and once drafted, plans could be brought back to the Council to view.

Responding to a question regarding the proposed timelines for these projects, Sasha advised Foxfields would be planted during the winter with completion by the end of March 2022 at the latest. Plans were currently in the process of being redrawn to increase the use of wildflowers throughout the scheme, a copy of which, together with the feasibility report, would be forwarded to the Clerk for circulation. She went on to say that the trees identified for planting were all native species with 70% Welsh provenance.

7:00pm – Cllr Josh Chohan left the meeting.

7:09pm – Ms Ofnowska left the meeting.

110. Minutes of the previous meeting: 21st October 2021

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: To agree the minutes of the meeting of 21st October 2021 as a true and accurate record.

111. Matters arising not addressed elsewhere

The Clerk reported on the following matters not considered elsewhere:

- Minute 93: Matters arising – problems with the youth shelter
 - Discussed with PCSO who indicated that as the days shorten and the winter weather sets in, the incidence of anti-social behaviour was likely to diminish; to be reviewed.
- Minute 93: Matters arising – Brackla Hill site
 - To be put on the agenda for the next meeting.
- Minute 94: Community Centre committee meeting
 - Scheduled for 25th November 2021.
- Minute 100: Five-year Plan

- On the agenda for review by the Wellbeing of Future Generations Committee.
- Minute 101: Crime statistics
 - Discussed high number of incidents of Violence & Sexual Assault with PCSO who advised that the majority of those was most likely to be minor in nature and included offences such as vexatious posts on social media.
- Minute 102: Members' reports – BCBC bins not emptied
 - These had been reported and was now resolved; subject to ongoing review.

112. Consultations, Meetings and Correspondence

a. Boundary Commission Public Hearings

Members noted the hearings being held during this consultation round pertained to the proposed parliamentary constituency changes.

It was noted, following the review of borough boundaries, at the next elections in 2022, Brackla would be split into four wards with an increase in the number of elected members to twelve.

b. OVW Area Committee nomination – Cwm Taff Morgannwg UHB Stakeholders Reference Group

Members noted the call for nominations from One Voice Wales and agreed Brackla Community Council would not put forward a nomination.

c. Mayor's Citizenship awards nominations

Cllr John Spanswick, current Mayor of Bridgend CBC, informed members the awards were open to both individuals and groups and was an opportunity to showcase the remarkable work of people within the community.

It was agreed the Council would publicise the awards on the website and through social media.

d. Bridgend CBC Town & Community Council Forum – 29th November 2021

The Clerk advised she would be attending and that the Council's representative on this forum was Cllr Joshua Chohan. As a County Borough Councillor, Cllr Kay Rowlands said she would also be in attendance.

113. Finance, Governance and Administration

a. YTD Financial Accounts as at 31st October 2021

The RFO presented the accounts to 31st October and explained the Council was on track in line with the budget.

He responded to a question regarding the overspend on insurance by advising that an entry of approximately £1,000 was yet to be apportioned to the Community Centre. The RFO was asked to follow up on any outstanding roundabout sponsorship revenue.

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: To accept the Accounts to 31st October 2021 as presented.

b. Bank Reconciliation as at 31st October 2021

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: To accept the bank reconciliation as presented by the RFO.

c. Payments made during the previous month

The RFO presented the schedule of payments made for the month of October 2021 totalling £8,423.16.

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: To accept the schedule of payments made as presented.

d. Payment Schedule

The following schedule of cheque payments for authorisation was presented:

01/11/2021	204808	14.00	Fire Safety Direct	Call Out
01/11/2021	809	156.07	Konica Minolta	Photocopier Usage
01/11/2021	810	439.32	NWS Ltd	Waste Collection
03/11/2021	811	1,640.16	Boverton Nurseries	Winter Bedding
04/11/2021	812	54.00	SLCC	Regional Seminar
05/11/2021	813	21.60	TCRM	e mail hosting
05/11/2021	814	159.57	Welsh Water	Water Centre
10/11/2021	815	54.00	SLCC	Regional Seminar
See Staff List	816 - 822	6,215.13	Staff salaries & wages	
18/11/2021	823	1,608.83	MS Property	Grounds Maintenance
	TOTAL	10,362.68		

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: To approve the cheque payments as per the schedule presented.

In response to a question asked as to why the names of staff members had been removed from the authorisation schedule, the Clerk advised that staff salaries were deemed to be confidential and as the payment schedule was part of the public papers, under GDPR, the names of respective employees had been removed.

The Clerk was informed that this was not a decision she should have made as it should first have been agreed by the Council. The Clerk was asked to inform committees first before making any further such decisions.

e. Community Centre utilities contracts

The RFO advised members the current utilities contracts would expire in January 2023. He went on to explain that, based on current usage, had the Council not opted for a fixed rate tariff to 2023, expenditure would have increased by 72% as a result of the recent fluctuations in the energy market.

Members noted the Council had the opportunity to forward-buy to 2027; it was agreed to monitor the general trends in energy prices and defer this to future meetings.

f. Grant Applications received

i. Chorleywood Allotment Brackla

Members considered the application for funding in the amount of £3,000. Following discussion, it was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: To award a grant of £750 to the Chorleywood Allotments.

ii. Brackla RFC

No application had been received in time for the meeting.

iii. Welsh Air Ambulance Service

Following consideration of the application, it was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: To award a grant of £250 to the Welsh Air Ambulance Service.

g. Access to Meetings & Public Question Time Protocol

The Clerk, when asked why this document had been presented, previously unseen, to Council for adoption, explained it had been drawn up to set the framework for improved access by the public to council meetings.

Members discussed the points at length and it was agreed to make amendments to points 4 and 5.

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: To adopt the *Access to Meetings & Public Question Time Protocol* as amended.

114. Community Centre

a. Covid restrictions and hire capacity

Members noted that, whilst restrictions were lifted in the summer that would allow for a more widespread re-opening of the centre, with covid rates still high and winter approaching, it would be appropriate to keep the venue closed to parties for the foreseeable future.

It was agreed to review the position in the new year.

b. Community Centre booking arrangements

The Clerk advised members that the administrative team were in the process of rolling out improvements to the centre booking system and were to be making use of the Rialtas bookings module the Council had purchased several years ago.

The Clerk was asked why this had not first been approved by Council. She replied that this matter fell within her remit as the clerk and had been seen as part and parcel of her duties.

c. Community Pantry and Wellbeing café

Members were advised that the Community Pantry were to begin using the small office room in the community centre as a hub for the distribution of pre-packaged food bags on Thursdays from December.

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: To waive the £3 concessionary room hire fee.

d. Centre Refurbishment

It was agreed to defer this item to the meeting of the Community Centre committee to be held the following week.

It was resolved to suspend Standing Order 3(w) to allow the meeting to continue beyond 2 hours.

115. Open Spaces

a. Pebble Pathway bench unveiling

Members noted the Tremains Woodland Rangers had completed the installation of the bench and had extended an invitation to members to take part in an unveiling.

Members discussed this further and agreed the unveiling should involve the Chair as well as the young lady who had laid the first pebble at the start of the pandemic. In order for her to attend, the unveiling would have to take place after school hours and a date of 26th November was suggested.

Action: Clerk to liaise with Tremains Woodland Rangers

***8:33pm – 8:35pm – The Clerk temporarily left the meeting due to technical difficulties.
8:34pm – Cllr Ian Hibble left the meeting.***

b. Brackla Gateway signs

Members were advised the planning applications for the installation of signs at sites 1, 2 and 4 had been amended. Once checked and signed off, these would be submitted to BCBC Planning.

c. Increase in occurrences of fly-tipping

The Clerk advised there had been complaints of fly-tipped black bags left around rubbish bins across the area and it was widely agreed this, together with a prevalence of broken bottles, was becoming an increasing problem. It was agreed all such incidents be reported to the BCBC Waste team.

Members were reminded BCBC were looking to install an additional ten litter bins.

d. Access to Archbishop McGrath field

Cllr John Spanswick reported a meeting with the school was proving difficult to schedule due to lack of engagement.

Members discussed the ongoing access issues. It was reported the footballers had recently found the field locked and had been unable to access the field for practice.

It was agreed the Clerk would write to the school.

116. Events

a. Christmas arrangements

Members noted the Christmas lighting was scheduled to be switched on by Centregreat on Friday, 26th November and would be illuminated between the hours of 3:30pm and 11pm daily.

Members considered the option of hosting a Seniors' Tea over three sessions for a maximum of 90 guests where social distancing and other covid precautions could be enforced.

It was agreed to hold the event on Friday, 17th December with the Clerk and administrative team making the necessary arrangements.

b. Queen's Platinum Jubilee

It was agreed to defer this item to the next meeting.

117. Forward Works Programme

It was noted this agenda item would be discussed at the upcoming Wellbeing of Future Generations Committee meeting.

118. Members' Reports

- Cllr David Aston raised concern over the number of trees being felled along the Black Path through Briary Wood. It was noted a fair amount of foliage had been cut back, overseen by BCBC through their tree warden, as there had been complaints from nearby residents of a lack of light.

Action: Clerk to ask BCBC to notify Council of future tree works and removal of trees

- Cllr Aniel Pucella wished to commend the Council on its participation on Remembrance Day with the laying of the wreath.
- Cllr John Spanswick advised members that tickets were available for the Borough Mayor's charity raffle.
- Cllr Tom Giffard advised that some of the links on the agenda published on the website were not working.

Action: Clerk to remedy for future meetings

- Cllr Keith Hughes suggested the Council may wish to consider taking on a parcel of unmaintained land off Briary Way that had been handed over to the Crown, should a transfer be feasible.

Action: Clerk to include on a future agenda

It was resolved to introduce Standing Order 3(d) by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted; members of the public to be excluded from the meeting.

9:05pm – Philip Ley and Hannah May left the meeting.

119. Recommendations of HR Committee

Recommendation 1: To increase the RFO's rate of pay from SCP17 to SCP20 with effect from 1st December 2021, to be reviewed following annual appraisals in July 2022.

Recommendation 2: To accept the draft contract of employment for the RFO.

Recommendation 3: To agree:
i) the cessation of the role of Administration Assistant as at 31st December 2021 and
ii) to give the present incumbent notice to 31st March 2022.

Recommendation 4: To increase the rate of pay of all staff currently on the real living wage to £9.90 per hour with effect from 1st November 2021.

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: To agree the four recommendations of the HR Committee.

120. Staff salary standing orders

Members were presented with a schedule of staff salaries to be paid via standing order on the 15th of the month from the Council's current account held with the Co-Operative Bank.

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: To approve the schedule of staff salary standing orders to be introduced with effect from 15th December 2021.

121. Confidential policy document

Members discussed the draft policy as presented by the Clerk.

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: To accept the protocol as presented.

Conclusion of Standing Order 3(d)

9:25pm – Cllr John Spanswick left the meeting.

122. Planning Consents, Refusals and Enforcement since the last meeting

Members noted the planning consents and refusals schedule as presented.

123. Planning Applications since the last meeting

a. P/21/947/FUL – 53 Briary Way, Brackla

First floor side extension over the garage; rooflights in new attic space (rear roof plane) and single storey rear extension.

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: To submit a comment of ***no objection***.

The Clerk was asked to include the full planning list with each agenda.

124. Date of the next meeting

Date of the next meeting: Thursday, 16th December 2021

The meeting concluded at 9:28pm.