

BRACKLA COMMUNITY COUNCIL



Minutes of Full Council meeting held at 6:30 pm on Thursday, 20th June 2024

This meeting was held on a multi-location basis in accordance with the provisions of The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021

Location – The Boardroom, Oak Tree Surgery, Whitethorn Drive, Brackla CF31 2PQ

Members Present

Cllr E Caparros (Chairman)
Cllr K Hughes
Cllr L Lewis
Cllr J Spanswick
Cllr R Smith
Cllr J Llewellyn-Hopkins
Cllr S Winkley
Cllr K Hoy
Cllr W Kendall
Cllr S Griffiths

Others Present

Mr M Evans – Clerk to the Council
Miss H May – Administrative Officer
Mr P Ley – Responsible Financial Officer

1. To receive Apologies for absence

PCSO Andrew Osborne
Cllr M Payn
Cllr C Cadogan

2. To receive Members' Declarations of Interest in respect of the business to be transacted

Cllr Kendall declared a personal interest as a BCBC Councillor and as a member of its Development Control Committee and a prejudicial interest in relation to item 16, Planning.

Cllr Llewellyn-Hopkins declared a personal interest as a BCBC Councillor and as a member of its Development Control Committee and declared a prejudicial interest in relation to item 16, Planning.

Cllr Griffiths declared a personal interest as a BCBC Councillor and as a member of its Development Control Committee and declared a prejudicial interest in relation to item 16, Planning.

Cllr Caparros declared a personal interest as a BCBC Cabinet Member.

Cllr Spanswick declared a personal interest as Leader of BCBC and a prejudicial interest in relation to item 16, Planning.

3. Public Questions (limited to 10 minutes – S/O 3g).

There were no questions raised.

4. To agree Minutes of the Full Council Meeting dated 16th May 2024

Resolved:

The minutes were unanimously approved.

5. To agree Minutes of the Annual General Meeting dated 16th May 2024

Resolved:

The minutes were unanimously approved.

6. To note matters not addressed elsewhere on the Agenda – Clerk’s Report.

The Community Centre Playground.

- Sutcliffe Play are waiting for their contractor to get back to them with a date to rectify the issues reported by Cllr Spanswick.
- No payment has yet been made by Brackla CC to Sutcliffe Play.
- The Clerk continues to try and find someone that can paint the slide & climbing frame unit.

Update from PCSO, Andrew Osborne.

- The DVSA (Driver & Vehicle Standards Agency) have agreed to send a team to Brackla either in July or August with a view to stamping out the boy-racers at the Triangle Car Park.
- Main issues lately have concerned land by the allotments in Badgers Brook, with youngsters smoking cannabis and being a general nuisance.
- PCSO patrols are now taking place in the area at various times throughout the day and it has been prioritised on their evening shifts.

Fly-tipping at rear of Hazeldine Avenue.

- Cllr Kendall had advised the Clerk of an incident of fly-tipping adjacent to 20, Hazeldine Avenue.
- This will be discussed by Cllr Kendall in this Member’s Report later in the meeting.

Keep Wales Tidy.

- The Clerk has again chased Brian Jones from Keep Wales Tidy with a view to establishing a litter-picking hub in Brackla but as yet, has not received a response.
- Cllr Spanswick confirmed that his own enquiries have revealed that KWT claim to not have the resources currently to set up any new hubs.

Energy Efficiency Survey.

- The Clerk met with Michael Switzer from Awel Aman Tawe at the Community Centre last week, a community energy charity committed to tackling the climate emergency.
- He identified a number of potential cost-savings and advised that a large number of grants are available at no cost to the Council.

- We await his report and formal recommendations.

Review of Contracts & Service Agreements

- The Clerk had planned to discuss this at the current meeting but decided to postpone this until the next HR & Finance Committee meeting on Tuesday 2nd July 2024.

At this point in the meeting the Chair welcomed Brackla CC's newest Councillor, Cllr Steve Winkley and wished him success in his new role.

7. Matters pertaining to Finance, Governance and Administration.

a. To receive YTD Financial Accounts as at 31st May 2024.

Resolved:

The accounts were approved unanimously.

b. To note bank reconciliation as at 31st May 2024.

Resolved:

The bank reconciliation was approved unanimously.

c. To note Payments made during the previous month.

Resolved:

The accounts were approved unanimously.

d. To approve Payment schedule as presented.

<u>Date</u>	<u>Cq No</u>	<u>Amount (£)</u>	<u>Payee</u>	<u>Details</u>
1.6.24	205380	362.40	JRB Enterprises Ltd Switch Contractor Services	20,000 x poop scoop bags
1.6.24	381	162.84	Ltd	PATT Testing/replace emergency
1.6.24	382	462.00	Lads and Dads	Chair's Charity 2023/24
1.6.24	383	1,041.60	RBS Ltd	Accounting Services
1.6.24	384	175.63	Viking	Cleaning Materials
1.6.24	385	635.00	Hokey Cokey Events	Fun Day Activities Light for Community Centre
1.6.24	386	6.95	Woodcraft/ B Jones	foyer
1.6.24	387	87.18	NWS Ltd	Waste Collection Led Tube Bulb Community
1.6.24	388	29.34	G-Lec/B Jones	Centre
1.6.24	389	134.17	Viking	Cleaning Materials
1.6.24	390	142.85	NWS Ltd	Excess Waste
1.6.24	391	529.90	NWS Ltd	Waste Collection
11.6.24	392	29.00	Wickes/B Jones	Toilet Seat
12.6.24	393	288.00	SLCC	Clerk membership
12.6.24	394	229.00	SLCC	RFO membership
15.6.24	395	994.68	Admin Officer	Wages
15.6.24	396	353.86	Centre Caretaker	Wages
15.6.24	397	831.98	HMRC	Tax/NI

15.6.24	398	1,342.70	RCT	Pension
15.6.24	SO	1,159.50	RFO	Wages
15.6.24	SO	442.96	Centre Cleaner	Wages
15.6.24	SO	1,905.63	Clerk	Wages
20.6.24	399	2,045.83	MS Property	Grounds Maintenance

Resolved:

The payments were unanimously approved.

e. To approve Annual Return for 2023/24

Resolved:

The Annual Return was unanimously approved.

8. An update regarding a complaint about the conduct of Brackla Community Council's Grounds Maintenance Contractor.

The Clerk advised that he had been contacted by Cllr Spanswick on 6th June 2024 to advise that he had been the subject of a personal attack, from Brackla CC's Grounds Maintenance Contractor, Mike Punter (of MS Property) on the Bridgend Independent Group's Facebook Page, in response to the Waste Services situation at Bridgend CBC.

Cllr Spanswick advised that he would be making a formal complaint regarding this matter to both Brackla CC and Bridgend CBC.

The Clerk advised that following the receipt of this complaint he examined Brackla CC's existing Complaints, Grievance, Whistleblowing and Social Media Policies and had strong doubts as to whether these policies were applicable in these circumstances. This was a view shared by One Voice Wales when the matter was referred to them by the Clerk.

OVW commented that the crux of the issue is whether the Contractor is in breach of any implied (rather than explicit) conditions of his contract. If Brackla CC take the view that the Contractor is in breach of implied conditions, OVW have reserved the opportunity to obtain legal advice on behalf of Brackla CC regarding the Contractor's freedom of expression.

Cllr Spanswick made it clear that he has not once criticised the quality of work carried out by BCC's Grounds Maintenance Contractor. He has complained about the Contractor's failure to adhere to health and safety requirements on several occasions and this is the reason he believes for the Contractor's personal comments on Facebook which amount to defamation of character.

Cllr Spanswick's wife had recently sighted the Contractor working in Brackla without wearing a high-viz jacket and advised Cllr Spanswick of this who reported the matter to the Clerk. The Contractor had spotted Mrs Spanswick and this led to her subsequently receiving a Facebook message from the Contractor containing a "pair of eyes".

Cllr Spanswick stated that the above harassment of his family was unacceptable.

The Clerk clarified that the messages on Facebook had been in the name of Mike Punter whilst the Grounds Maintenance contract with Brackla CC is in the name of his business, MS Property.

The Clerk advised that no legal advice had been sought to date from Kelly Watson within BCBC's Legal Department.

The Clerk proceeded to provide details of the emailed comments he had received from Mike Punter. He claims to be harassed due to Cllr Spanswick's wife spotting him whilst carrying out work on non-Brackla CC land albeit not whilst wearing a high-viz jacket. Mike has asked for the opportunity to attend a meeting of the HR & Finance Committee to discuss this matter. He has advised that he will be submitting a complaint to the Ombudsman about the harassment he has received.

It was suggested that Brackla CC could provide non-branded PPE that the Contractor could use whilst carrying out any work in Brackla. Cllr Griffiths strongly opposed this and said that the Contractor should be wearing Brackla CC-endorsed PPE whilst working for Brackla CC so that residents can clearly see that work is being carried out with the full endorsement of Brackla CC.

The Clerk advised that the contracts for both MS Property and our gardener, Dave Thomas, stipulate that PPE must be worn at all times (no mention is made of "Brackla CC-endorsed hi viz vests").

Resolved:

It was unanimously resolved that the Clerk should seek further legal advice from One Voice Wales and Kelly Watson at Bridgend CBC before inviting Mike Punter to attend a meeting of Brackla CC.

9. Donations - requests for financial assistance.

The Clerk advised that the only application received was from 4th Bridgend Guides but they had not completed and returned a Donation Questionnaire, so the request could not be considered at this time.

10. Bridgend CBC's Summer Play Scheme.

The Clerk advised that this scheme has been supported by Brackla CC for many years.

Resolved:

It was unanimously resolved to pay the requested £3,900 towards Bridgend CBC's Summer Play Scheme.

11. An update regarding works at Brackla Hill.

BCBC has written to residents advising that work is due to commence on Monday 24th June 2024.

A recent meeting was held between Brackla CC's County Borough Councillors and BCBC officers regarding the building of a path. Funding has been obtained for what would be a fully engineered tarmac path with the project now being put out to tender.

The proposed steps at Brackla Hill have been delayed – the situation will be reassessed once the new path has been completed.

12. Formalising an Induction Pack for New Councillors.

The Clerk explained that he had put a pack together of helpful documents for new Clerks including summaries of relevant legislation, policies and procedures and contact details of fellow Councillors.

It was agreed that it would be useful to include a schedule of the training courses available from One Voice Wales.

Resolved:

It was unanimously resolved to approve the new induction pack and to also make it available to existing Councillors for their perusal.

13. An Update Regarding Brackla Fun Day – Saturday 29th June 2024

We are anticipating a record number of stallholders at the event.

We only have a single provider of hot food currently; there are a number of events being run on the same date and there appears to be a shortage of available food vendors.

A skip has been hired which will be located in the Community Centre car park. The rubbish from the Fun Day will need to be transported from the school site at the conclusion of the event.

14. A Discussion Regarding Brackla Fireworks Display.

The Clerk explained that he would unfortunately not be able to attend the event, now that it is not being held on 5th November 2024, due to a previously booked prior engagement.

Resolved:

It was agreed that by a majority of seven to three that the Fireworks Display would take place on Friday 1st November 2024.

It was unanimously agreed to accept the quote from Pendragon Fireworks & Pyrotechnics for £4,360 + VAT (a 5% increase from last year).

15. Members' Reports.

Cllr Hughes –

There was a lack of signage pointing out the recent roadworks at Brackla Way. The whole road was closed (instead of a single carriageway). Many residents' daily journeys were delayed.

Cllr Griffiths –

A query regarding the grass-cutting contract was addressed by the Clerk who indicated that the contract included an Appendix of all the areas to be cut throughout Brackla.

Cllr Winkley –

It was mentioned that grass adjacent to Lavender Court had not been cut. This area is not usually cut by Brackla CC but the Clerk advised that our Contractor had recently spent 3 hours mowing the area (at no charge to Brackla CC).

Cllr Spanswick –

The litter bin at Chorley Wood Allotments is a real concern. It is always full and there is regular fly tipping in the area. It may be that this bin will have to be removed if the situation does not improve.

Cllr Kendall –

A complaint has been received about fly-tipping at a non-adopted site. A sofa, chair and a fridge-freezer has been dumped at land off Hazeldine Avenue. Bridgend CBC won't remove the items as it not on their land.

The Clerk advised that he had spoken with the resident concerned as well as with Bridgend CBC (who confirmed that it was not a matter for them).

It was mentioned that our Contractor could be asked to clear the items on an ad-hoc basis. It might be useful for Brackla CC to develop a strategy for mapping and dealing with patches of unadopted land throughout Brackla.

Cllr Kendall asked that the matter be listed as an Agenda item at the next Full Council Meeting.

16. To consider Planning Applications received since the last meeting.

Firstly, a comment regarding an application that was considered at last month's Full Council Meeting:

- **P24/197/FUL** 6, St Davids Close, Brackla CF31 2EX

Our submission from last month has not yet been uploaded on to the BCBC Planning Portal.

Furthermore, the Tree Agent has submitted a new report but it is dated on the same date as the original report, i.e. 14th March, and it does not make clear which points have been changed.

- **P/24/229/FUL** 14, Bishopswood, Brackla CF31 2LT

Proposal: Single storey porch extension to side elevation.

Resolved:

No objection to this application (N.B. as previously relayed by Clerk to BCBC in his role as Proper Officer)

- **P/24/274/FUL** 11, Kingfisher Close, Brackla CF31 2NY

Proposal: Retention of inclusion of land into curtilage and boundary fence.

Resolved:

- We don't feel this application is setting a precedent for executing a "land-grab".
- The residents recognise that they have taken over responsibility for a TPO tree.
- Further to the above comments, the Council has no objection to this application.

Meeting closed at 8:15pm

Date of the next meeting – Thursday, 18^h July 2024