

# PENALLY COMMUNITY COUNCIL CYNGOR CYMUNED PENALUN

Minutes of the Remote General Meeting of the Penally Community Council held on Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> October 2020, via Zoom at 6.00 pm.

Present: Cllrs P Bradbury, C Bradbury, J D'Arcy, M Neal and J Rilstone

In attendance – County Inspector Reuben Palin, Sinead Henehan, County Cllr Jon Preston and The Clerk

Prior to the meeting Inspector Reuben Palin from Dyfed Powys Police and Sinead Henehan from Pembrokeshire County Council spoke on matters relating to Penally Army Camp and its use to temporarily house Asylum Seekers.

Councillors present were reassured by Inspector Palin that the Dyfed Powys Police are doing everything they can to ensure the safety of everyone in Penally, the Police presence in Penally has been increased with Police taking regular walks through the village. Inspector Palin reported that there has only been one incident, not connected to the protests, requiring a Police Presence and this did not lead to any further action. The Inspector noted that protesters have the Right to a peaceful protest, to which the Police are taking the necessary reasonable measures to manage the level of disturbance.

Inspector Palin also confirmed that anyone who wishes to leave the camp are able to do so. The Police do not have the power to arrest or return any individuals to the Camp purely on that basis they are outside the camp despite location or time of day. Welfare checks are carried out by Clearsprings employees. (Clearsprings are the Home Office appointed service providers at the camp) These are taken in the form of a telephone call to each camp resident who remains outside the camp after 10pm.

Sinead Henehan confirmed that Pembrokeshire County Council are coordinating a 'help hub' where anyone or any organisation offering assistance or a service to the residents in the camp is being directed. Thus ensuring maximum benefit is used of the assistance offered. If anyone or any organisation wishes to offer any assistance please use the Email - [Penally@migranhelpuk.org](mailto:Penally@migranhelpuk.org)

Councillors stressed to both Inspector Palin and Sinead the frustrations met by all Councillors and Penally residents regarding the lack of information and unconfirmed information being shared on social media. It was agreed that a two-page leaflet be produced by Pembrokeshire County Council and Dyfed Powys Police and distributed to all residents in Penally as soon as possible offering UpToDate information from trusted sources. This will be distributed via the Email network Cllr Neal has established, and through the door with the next Penally Crow News. (Hopefully before the end of October).

In conclusion the Council were reassured that all current health guidelines were being strictly followed by all persons concerned to ensure the safety of residents in and out of the Penally Camp.

Councillors thanked Inspector Palin and Sinead Henehan for their attendance and contribution to the meeting and confirmed that they would be invited to participate in future meetings. Sinead Henehan advised that she could arrange for a health professional to attend the next meeting to advise more details on those issues.

Inspector Palin and Sinead Henehan left the meeting

**2020/10 238 Apologies for Absence – Cllrs S Snow and J Williams-James**

County Cllr Jon Preston requested that the Chair consider changing the order of the Agenda to enable his report be brought forward as he has to leave the meeting early due to work commitments. The Chair agreed to this request.

**2020/10 243 B/F County Cllr Jon Preston's Report**

Asylum Facility

Since the home office appropriated the training camp on or around the 18<sup>th</sup> of September, I have challenged the decision for several reasons. Not only do I believe the camp to be unsuitable for the purpose of accommodating asylum seekers, but I am also not yet convinced that the Home Office has provided enough evidence to support their case for acting under the emergency powers they have quoted in their correspondence to Pembrokeshire county council.

I have presented my case to PCC's head of planning enforcement and to the Welsh minister responsible for local government and planning. In addition to this I have also called on the Home Office and the Secretary of State for Wales to recall this decision as a matter of urgency. I am working with a lawyer at a London based refugee charity who has been advising me on the legalities of the asylum system.

In the matter of possible planning breaches, I have access to independent professional advice. In terms of engagement with the facility I have a link officer at PCC who is managing all the emerging offers of support to the asylum seekers and is also the officer that I will be working alongside in addressing the concerns of the local and wider community whilst the camp is under Home Office control.

I am also working collaboratively with the local Police in forwarding any reports that I receive in connection with the camp outside of the perimeter fence. Last week I addressed the October Pembrokeshire Full County Council and asked that all councilors fact check any information that may be reported to them to ensure that it is accurate and to challenge any malicious fabrications they may become aware of or suspect.

I have engaged with several groups locally and have received offers of support in terms of addressing matters raised directly associated with the situation at the camp. There seems to be an appetite to establish a small working group that can report back to council on matters not normally dealt with in the normal business of the community council. The clerk to council has been working long hours since the camp was repurposed by the Home Office and I offer my support if required.

I am available to anyone or any group in the village who may want to meet with me to discuss this or any other matter. The Covid community network which has been reaching out to the wider Penally community since March has proved to be a critical line of communication to those who may otherwise not be able to access accurate and up to date information about the situation at the camp. Please don't hesitate to contact me.

Prior to Cllr Preston leaving the meeting a short discussion took place on the following points:

- Cllr Preston had advised that he would be working with a group, which includes a Barrister, to work towards Penally Camp being closed to Asylum Seekers (for various reasons) and invited the Community Council to be represented within this group. All Councillors agreed the Penally Community Council have worked tirelessly over the past three weeks to ensure that all residents are provided with up-to-date information from trusted sources, that all residents remain safe during the protests which have taken place and that all Government and Health guidelines /restrictions regarding Covid 19 are being strictly adhered to therefore Penally Community Council do not wish to be represented in this group.
- The public toilets on the station carpark. Cllr Preston agreed to liaise with the toilet owners and request that the toilets are kept open and possibly made free of the time being.

County Cllr Jon Preston left the meeting

## **2020/10 239 Chairman's Report**

In view of the recent events concerning the change of use of Penally Army Camp to a facility to hold asylum seekers whilst undergoing assessment I believe it is necessary that the actions taken by the Community Council require restating.

As with many others the Council first heard a rumour regarding this matter on the evening of 11th

September. During that evening to ascertain exactly what was proposed the Council had conversations with local representatives of the MOD and the Home Office Press Office. On 14th September conversations continued with Simon Hart's office, Pembrokeshire County Council and The Home Office.

On 15th September the Council wrote to the Home Office and copied to all other relevant parties with a list of concerns an extract below refers.

*In that regard it is not unreasonable to request written responses to basic questions regarding the choice of Penally Army Camp to be a centre for Refugees whilst their claims for asylum are considered.*

*We are sure that consideration regarding the following has already taken place:*

- *the location and availability of Health facilities,*
- *factors regarding Policing and the provision of Fire Services,*
- *the provision of education for all ages*
- *the availability of local Welfare services*
- *the location of Penally to Government Offices responsible for the management and resolution of refugee status*
- *implications relating to the current Covid-19 epidemic*

*In this regard we would request copies, or at least the written conclusions, of the individual reports relating to Health and Safety, Security, Welfare, Public Health and Education. The Risk Assessments and Safety Plans should also be included.*

*Only upon the receipt of this information can the refugees and the public be assured that all reasonable steps have been taken to ensure their safety, protection and welfare.*

The Council has not had a response to this letter although certain relevant facts have emerged in Home Office replies to other enquiries.

On 16th September the Council received notes of a meeting held on Monday 14th September between Pembrokeshire Local Authority, Policing, Wales Strategic Migration Partnership and the Home Office.

On 15th September the Council confirmed to the Home Office and to Ian Westley (Chief Executive of Pembrokeshire Local Authority) that whereas the Community Council would work with the County Council it would retain its independence on all matters relevant to the camp. The Council received authority to issue a statement on these notes on 18th September.

The Community Council was invited to take part in a Seminar on 23rd September with the other participants being Pembrokeshire C. C., Dyfed Powys Police, The Home Office, Clearsprings (Camp security and management) and County Councillors. The Community Council raised queries regarding duration of this use of the Camp, the choice of Penally as a suitable location, the absence of adequate communication with the Community and the fact that the situation was made worse in that the agenda was being led and managed by the Press and Social Media. The responses given were not informative and were unhelpful.

Pembrokeshire C.C. hosted a Penally Camp Virtual Meeting on 7th October. This Council was not invited to take a position on the "panel" however we did submit a number of questions relating to matters including Covid, overcrowding in the accommodation and compensation for loss of business and house values. These questions were not included in those raised during the seminar.

The Council on 3 separate occasions has contacted the Home Office with requests that it is given details of the site management team so that it can have direct communication to assist in resolving the concerns of both the residents and the community. The Council has received acknowledgment of this request.

The review above does not reflect the amount of work undertaken by the Council in trying to obtain facts regarding the use of the camp and to allay the concerns of our Community. The Clerk has issued time lines reporting on the emails and telephone calls made on a daily basis.

On a number of occasions the Council has used the email group of Councillor Neal (over 420 separate addresses) and hand delivered (to those known to be without email) to keep the Community advised of facts as they become known.

The County Councillor member on this Council (Jon Preston) has also been extremely active in his own right on representing the concerns of the Community.

The Council will continue to work and act to safeguard both the residents and the Community using its direct links with the Police and the County Council Liaison Officer and with other organisations as appropriate.

**2020/10 240 To disclose any personal interests in items of business listed below**

Cllr Neal declared a person interest in agenda item 2020/10 247

**2020/10 241 To Receive the Minutes of the Meeting Held on the 9<sup>th</sup> September 2020**

Cllr P Bradbury advised the Council that Mr Ian Westley was referred to as Wesley during the County Councillors report. The Clerk advised the Council that any report received for insertion into the Minutes is as sent and no editing is carried out to ensure that no facts are altered. Wesley will be altered to Westley for the official Minutes.

Cllr Neal proposed that the Minutes of the Meeting held on the 9<sup>th</sup> September 2020 be accepted as a true record and signed by the Chair as such; Cllr Rilstone seconded the proposal with all Council in full agreement.

**2020/10 242 Matters Arising from the Minutes - Information Only**

All matters are covered as Agenda items

**2020/10 243 To Receive the Minutes of the Meeting Held on the 24<sup>th</sup> September 2020**

**2020/10 244 Matters Arising from the Minutes - Information Only**

Agenda items 246 and 244 have been carried over to the November meeting

**2020/10 245 Consideration of Correspondence Received**

- Email received from a Penally Resident requesting to be considered for Co-option onto Penally Community Council. The Clerk advised the Council that the criteria to be considered by the Council had been met and confirmed. Cllr P Bradbury advised the Clerk to invite the author to the November meeting to make a 3 minute presentation to the Council about themselves and to enable any questions be asked and answered.
- Email received advising of the forthcoming 'Light up the Lanes' Christmas Light Event. Anyone interested to contact Cllr Mike Neal.
- Email received raising concerns that the Television Signal in Penally is deteriorating. Following discussion, it was agreed this is not a matter that the Community Council are able to assist in and the Author should contact a television aerial contractor for further information.
- Email received from Bourne Leisure confirming that a site meeting will be held towards the end of November 2020.
- The Council discussed the forthcoming Remembrance Service – Arrangements will be finalised in accordance with the Local Government Guidelines and all parties informed.

**2020/10 246 Account(s) for Payment and Bank Reconciliation**

The Clerk presented the cash book balance to the end of August 2020 to the Council along with the bank reconciliation. Cllr Neal proposed that the banking records presented be signed by the Chair as a true representation of the Council's finances to date; Cllr Rilstone seconded the proposal with all Council in full agreement.

#### Accounts for Payment:

09.10.2020	1832	The Clerk (Wages September)	£267.40
09.10.2020	1833	The Clerk (Overtime – September as agreed)	£180.08
09.10.2020	1834	Messrs Lewis (Office Space Apportioned)	£ 73.75
09.10.2020	1835	S/Foot Community Council (Printing Apportioned)	£ 27.11
09.10.2020	1836	Smart Gardens (Grass Cutting September)	£400.00
09.10.2020	1837	Four Seasons (Christmas Tree 2019)	£120.00

Cllr D'Arcy proposed that the above accounts be paid in full; Cllr Rilstone seconded the proposal with all Council in full agreement.

The Clerk advised the Council that an Email had been received from the External Auditor requesting certain information appertaining to the two uncashed wages Cheques (2018/19 accounts). The Clerk advised the External Auditor that the money had been received but the cheques have never been processed through the Council's bank account therefore as this money, one day will be debated, the information remains in the accounts. The External Auditor accepted this response positively and was in agreement in the way they were being accounted.

#### **2020/10 247 Planning Application(s) Received**

**20/0422/PA Trefloyne Manor, Trefloyne Lane** – Proposed golf club house and associated work

Following consideration of all information provided regarding the above planning application, Cllr P Bradbury proposed that Penally Community Council do not object to this planning application but raise major concerns regarding the narrow, hazardous, single track access roadway which does not afford a pavement or cycle track and connects to the village road which is a safe route to Tenby Schools; Cllr D'Arcy seconded the proposal with all Councillors eligible to vote in full agreement.

#### **2020/10 248 Reports from Council Representatives**

During County Cllrs report (Minuted report received following the meeting) in the meeting, Cllr Preston raised two points in particular, that were discussed by the Council -

- Cllr Preston also requested that all Councillors present consider that he, and not the Clerk, communicate on behalf of the Community Council regarding all matters appertaining to Penally Camp. Cllr P Bradbury reminded Cllrs that a resolution had been made at the Emergency Meeting held two weeks ago awarding the Clerk delegated Powers, with the Chairs assistance, to carry out all communications on behalf of the Community Council on all matters appertaining to the Camp. Cllr P Bradbury also advised Cllrs that if they would like this resolution reconsidered, according to Standing Orders, two Cllrs could request such in writing to the Clerk.

Cllr D'Arcy proposed that the communication arrangements remain the same and the Community Council remain a separate entity from the County Councillor; Cllr C Bradbury seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

#### **2020/10 249 Reports from Council Committees**

**Cllr C Bradbury – On Behalf of the Grounds Committee**

Cllr C Bradbury reported that – Smart Gardens (the Community Council grounds maintenance contractor) had been requested to carry out a leaf clearance round the centre of the village and to clear the weeds around the kerbs at the entrance to the village.

Cllr Neal brought to the Councils attention the hedge cutting that has been carried out by Pembrokeshire County Council at the Tenby end of Penally Village. All Cllrs agreed that all works had been carried out to a high standard.

**Agenda Items:**

**2020/10 250 To receive any updates regarding Penally Army Camp**

Nothing to report under this agenda item. All information has been minuted above.

**2020/10 251 To consider the response received from Pembrokeshire County Council regarding the 50 MPH on Penally Bye Pass**

To enable Cllrs time to read and digest the report this item will be considered at the November meeting.

**2020/10 252 To consider the response from Pembrokeshire County Council regarding the management of trees in their ownership**

All Cllrs present acknowledge receipt of the report from Pembrokeshire County Council. No further action regarding this heading at this moment in time.

**2020/10 253 To consider the price of replacement handrail to the steps on the Village Green**

The Clerk advised the Council of the one price received, to date, to replace the unsafe hand rail. To ensure this area remains safe Cllr P Bradbury proposed to accept the price from Pembrokeshire County Council to install a new, galvanised handrail; Cllr J D'Arcy seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement.

**2020/10 254 To consider the draft design of the Information Board – as presented by the Penally History Group**

Following consideration of the design of the Information board, Cllr P Bradbury proposed that the design be accepted and the History Group be advised of such; Cllr J D'Arcy seconded the proposal with all Cllrs in full agreement. Cllr Neal will advise the History Group of the Councils approval of the design.

**Date of next meeting 11<sup>th</sup> November 2020 5.45pm to enable the holding of the co-option interview.**

**Meeting closed 21.15**