

BEGUILDY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 13th APRIL 2010 AT KNUCKLAS COMMUNITY CENTRE

Present: Cllrs. A. Tippet (Chair), K. Jones, Ms. A. Hoyle, and Ms A Jones.

Apologies: Cllrs. C Thomas, E Harris P Swancott and W O'Leary.

A letter was handed into the meeting by Cllr C Thomas informing members that he was unable to attend council meetings at the present time for personal reasons.

In Attendance: County Councillor J. Brunt and 1 member of the public.

Role of Housing Enabler-Miss S Hobby.

Miss Hobby gave her presentation on the role of the Housing Enabler.

PUBLIC COMMENTS MADE PRIOR TO THE BEGINNING OF THE COUNCIL MEETING:

No comments from members of the public.

MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL MEETING:

Declarations of Interest. Members were requested to declare any personal and/or prejudicial interests they may have in matters to be considered at the meeting in accordance with the Local Authorities (Model Code of Conduct Order) (Wales) Order 2008.

Personal

Cllr. K. Jones, Cllr Hoyle: Heyope Charity matters, being members of the Knucklas Community Centre Management Committee.

MIN 4984 APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting on 9th March 2010 were approved without amendment and duly signed by the Chairman.

MIN 4985 MATTERS ARISING

The Clerk informed the meeting that an extension for comments on the Garreg Lwyd wind farm environmental supplementary report had been agreed by Powys County Council till 21st April 2010. An additional report regarding cumulative visual appraisal and a supplementary cumulative assessment had been received since the last Council meeting together with comments from Natural England and the Shropshire Area of Outstanding Beauty organisation.

Members discussed these additional papers and agreed that the Clerk write to Powys County Council objecting to the proposed Wind farm development for the following reasons:-

- Has the impact of construction noise and dust been considered by the report writers?
- Has the impact of Lorries delivering materials to site been fully considered by the report writers?
- Has the impact of infrasound been considered by the report writers?
- The report refers to an ETSU standard in 1996. Have the report writers updated there calculations to current day levels or do they not need to do so?
- Can the Wind Turbines be transported buy Helicopters?

MIN 4986 COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT

County. Cllr. John Brunt presented his paper as the County Councillor. (see below)

County Councillor's report to BCC 13 Apr 10

1. Potholes.

In response to Cllr Brunt's request, at the Feb meeting, Cllr Tippett reported potholes around the railway bridge at Knucklas. As there were no other reports and no councillor was able to accept the offer of meeting with Cllr Brunt and the Highways Manager, Cllr Brunt said he would proceed with the meeting in order to persuade Powys County Council to give further priority to the repair of potholes in the area.

2. Police Helicopter Incident

Cllr Brunt presented to the committee, the statement that he had received from Chief Superintendent Hughson of Dyfed Powys Police, explaining the deployment of the police helicopter during the recent adverse weather conditions.

3. Beacon Garage

In response to a request from the Chairman, Cllr Brunt agreed to seek answers, from Powys County Council, to specific questions relating to the clearance of the garage site

MIN 4987 FINANCE

1) Payments: The following payments were agreed -

N King Clerk (salary net of Tax and NI)	£193.58
H M R C -Tax	£48.40
Felindre Women's Institute	£225.00

2009/10 accounts were presented by Clerk to the meeting. Members agreed details given. (see attached)

MIN 4988 PLANNING

To consider the following applications:-

1). P/2010/0322:Erection of an Agricultural stock building at Cwmyrerig Farm Lloyney
Members supported this application on the proviso that this building would not have a change of use in the future to housing development.

MIN 4989 HIGHWAYS, HOUSING AND ENVIRONMENT

Clerk to write to County Councillor Wyn Jones asking the date of the meeting for Community Councils that may be affected by wind Farm development

MIN 4990 GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE

a) to consider membership of One Voice Wales. Members agreed to renew their membership

b) to consider Shropshire County Council Local Development Plan-Consultation on issues and options. Members noted.

- c) to consider letter from resident G Duthie. See letter attached and response.
- d) to consider Planning Liaison meetings for Town and Community Councils. Members noted
- e) to consider invitation to County Service of Remembrance. Members noted
- f) to consider newsletter and renewal for Heart of Wales Line. Members noted and agreed to renew its membership.

MIN 4991 HEYOPE RECREATION GROUND

(1) The minutes for the meeting of the 9th March 2010 were approved without amendment and duly signed by the Chairman.

MIN 4992 INFORMATION ITEMS

Cllr K Jones confirmed that a Circular Trail had been agreed. In addition Cllr K Jones reported that a riding Trail had been agreed in Beguildy called Ride Powys.
Cllr K Jones reported that Beguildy Priorities in Communities was looking at any known "rights of way" in the Community.

MIN 4993 AOB

E Mail from G Duthie. Chairman read out e mail and requested that the Clerk write to Mr Duthie confirming that this matter had been previously answered.
The Clerk to contact Arriva (Wales)Trains to check why access to Knucklas Station has not been improved

The meeting ended at 9.15pm.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 8.00pm 11th May at Felindre Community Centre.

TO The Chairman Powys County Council Standards Committee
The Chairman Powys County Council
R. Williams M.P.
K Williams A.M.

C.C The Chairman Beguildy Community Council
County Councillor J. Brunt
The Press
Interested parties in the upper Teme Valley

Pant-y-Beudy
Felindre
Knighton
Powys
LD7 1YT
01547 510633

Dears Sirs and Madam,

24th. March 2010

I write questioning the probity of meetings held in camera, attended by elected representatives, to discuss so called benefits from wind farm development in Powys.

Why are these meetings being held in camera by our County Councillor with the Community Councils in his/our area to discuss Community Benefits from Wind Farms? At the last (March) Council meeting, the fact that the County Councillor was calling yet another meeting was publicly discussed by Community Councillors and a date and location confirmed. Also a document was handed round between Councillors but not read out to the public. This I believe was the basis for the proposed meeting.

I am aware that many members of the community perceive the offer of benefits in this way as a bribe by another name. Fair-minded people on both sides of the Wind Farm debate are morally disturbed by this practice, which is contrary to the accepted standards of a modern democratic state.

Consider the following points:-

- 1) County Councils/Councillors have no jurisdiction over Community Councils. A County Councillor in attendance at a Community Council meeting is simply a member of the public, possibly invited to report on local matters; courtesy requires due deference to his /her office, but no more.
- 2) On what basis are our elected (local) representatives attending meetings called by a member of the public?
- 3) Why are these meetings held in camera precluding public scrutiny?
- 4) Why is no Agenda distributed to the Public?
- 5) Why is no effort made to ensure that the Public is aware of what their Community Council is doing in their name?
- 6) What provision is made to establish who may attend or speak at these meetings; are attendees required to make any declarations of interest?
- 7) Are other speakers present and if so who are they?
- 8) Why are no minutes issued?
- 9) What part do paid Council officers play in these clandestine meetings?
- 10) How does this conform with the Councillors Code of Conduct?

All the foregoing questions must be answered individually, accurately, without dissemblance and immediately. Prevarication will only serve to increase suspicion that our local government systems are seriously open to question.

Although this letter is written as a result of questions surrounding Wind Farms, in essence it calls into question the operation of local government practices in respect of any planning application. Those who support this type of payment to secure planning acceptance should realise that they could suffer from some unwanted development themselves, secured by a developer in the same way, in the future.

This whole concept is perceived as being corrupt. In allowing it to go on at any level contaminates not only those who allow it but equally those that they recruit to this practice. It brings local government into disrepute.

Any time spent by a Community Council considering how it pursues so called benefits must be balanced equally in time and effort safeguarding the well being of those members of the community who in effect will be paying for others so called benefit.

Beguildy Community Council should understand that its function is to look after the well being of all of its residents and should be open to scrutiny at all times.

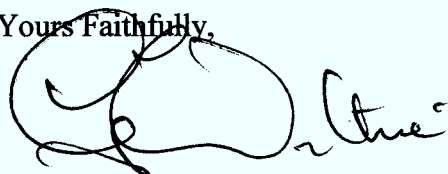
Powys County Council should offer honest leadership to the wider community and set an example as to how equity is meted out to all

M.Ps. and A.Ms. will all be concerned because turning a blind eye to these activities undermines democracy and turns ever increasing numbers of people away from the rule of law and from any belief that their vote matters. Equally, what is happening in our local community shows, that any claim made by Government to have undertaken open Public Consultations will be doubted.

The fact that these points are raised here, in this way, serves to illustrate that the only way forward in Wind Farm planning applications is by Public Enquiry.

I look forward to receiving your response to all the points raised

Yours Faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Geoffrey C. Duthie', written over the typed name below.

Geoffrey C. Duthie

This letter shows little understanding of this question and the way it has to be handled, and carries false accusations.

The salient point is that we are elected representatives. When we have discussions with other parties or obtain information from other organisations. It would be unworkable to give seven days notice of a public meeting every time any of us wanted to do this as implied in this letter. The only meetings that have to be open to the public are our regular Council meetings.

We have had open discussions at our council meetings to obtain interested constituent's thoughts on the subject of community benefits should any wind farms affect our area.

The meeting the letter refers to was not called by our County Councillor. The Council Councillor advised us that PAVO were offering four different meetings in different parts of Powys to offer their expertise to Community Councils on ways to go forward with community benefits and warn us of pitfalls other community councils had fallen into. All the while it has been stressed that community benefits are not planning gains and are not part of planning concerns and are not contractual but voluntary good practice on behalf of the developers. The meeting we went to about two weeks ago was not an official meeting as such. There was no agenda and no concrete outcomes that needed minuting. Pavo just gave us information. As we progress, hopefully drawing together the six community councils affected by TAN 8 area B, meetings of these six councils will need agendas and minutes will be necessary to record progress. When we have all the councils working together the proposed scheme for dealing with the funds from community benefits will be put to the communities as a whole for comment and suggestions before the final scheme is put in place. It is not envisaged that the community councils will administer any funds from community benefits. This will be done by a Trust set up from people within the communities involved who have the necessary expertise.

Community councillors attend more meetings than just their own community council meetings as part of their remit as councillors. (Powys County Council liaison meetings and One Voice Wales meetings for example) The meeting the other week was similar in that it was not attended by all our councillors, in fact there were four of us present.

As regards community benefits being "bribes" this cannot be so as they are not part of the planning process, over which we have very little influence anyway. The inference that we should not be thinking about community benefits now is ludicrous. IF these projects go ahead we must know how we are going to act if we want to do the best for our community. If we did not have plans in place in case the windfarms get planning permission I can just imagine the letter being written condemning us for not being prepared - with copies to all and sundry.

You must be aware that all community councillors are volunteers, who have been voted into place, and trust us to do the best we can for the community. Why would we do otherwise? – We are part of the community. We will keep you advised as and when we feel it appropriate. We are not full time employees who can spend lots of time writing copious bulletins about every step we take. We will report at our meetings any salient decisions taken. Trust us to do our best and remember your personal view is not the only view we as councillors have to consider. We must consider the views of all our constituents.