

Town and Community Councils Liaison Meeting
Minutes of the meeting held on 29 January 2013 (7.00 pm)

Present:

Stan Zalot
J E Lewis
Cliff Everett
R E Hughes
Elfed Jones
Geraint Parry
Jack Jones
John Jukes
R E Rowlands
Ian Owen
Einion Parry Williams
Arnold Milburn
Margaret A Thomas
Jack Abbott
Michael Dolan
Edward Williams
Anna Jones
Edna M Jones
Margaret Price
Neil R Tuck
Gwenda Owen

Town and Community Councils

Beaumaris
Bodffordd; Llangristiolus
Holyhead
Llanbadrig
“ “
Llanddona; Llangoed
Llanerchymedd
“ “
Llanfaelog
Llanfihangelesceifiog
“ “
Llangefni
“ “
Trearddur
“ “
“ “
Tref Alaw
Trewalchmai
“ “
Valley
“ (Also representing the County
Council re. item 2)

Cllr Bryan Owen
Cllr W J Chorlton
Gwen Carrington
Gill Lewis
Clare Williams
Huw Jones
Gwenda Owen
Mary Sillitoe
Rhian Wyn Hughes

Isle of Anglesey County Council

Leader (Chair)
Portfolio holder –Finance, IT and HR
Director of Community
Interim Head of Function - Resources
Head of Function - Resources
Head of Service – Policy
Empty Homes Officer (item 2)
Rural Housing Enabler
Policy Officer

Also present:

Cllr T H Jones

Isle of Anglesey County Council

Apologies:

Marilyn Hughes
Linda Frazer-Williams
Gwenda Parry
Cllr G O Parry MBE

Amlwch
Menai Bridge
Moelfre
Isle of Anglesey County Council

1. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 October 2012 were confirmed as a correct record.

Matter arising:

Joint Town and Community Council Charter

J E Lewis (Bodffordd; Llangristiolus) enquired as to the status of the above Charter. The Head of Service – Policy explained that the Charter had been approved by the Council's Board of Commissioners in 2012 and was therefore operational. Arnold Milburn (Llangefni) added that all Town and Community Councils also needed to formally adopt the Charter.

2. Empty Homes and Rural Housing

The Council's Rural Housing Enabler and Empty Homes Officer gave presentations outlining the current situation with regard to the above and the Council's approach towards addressing the challenges it faces.

It was emphasised that Town and Community Councils had a key role to play in assisting the County Council by providing local knowledge and raising awareness locally as to what is available to owners of empty properties and first-time buyers. The officers thanked Town and Community Council representatives for the assistance they had provided in the past and encouraged them to continue to work in partnership with the Council.

The presentations were followed by a question and answer session.

Cliff Everett (Holyhead) stated that the Council's housing allocations policy needed to be more flexible, particularly with regard to age restrictions placed on certain properties and the current points allocation system.

Action: Housing Services to identify and address potential barriers to meeting housing need in the Council's housing allocations policy.

3. Meeting the Challenges – Budget Consultation 2013/14

Cllr W J Chorlton opened the discussion on the budget consultation document by stressing that partnership working was more important than ever if the island is to tackle the immense challenges caused by the economic downturn and make the best use of the resources available.

Comments were then invited from the floor. The main points raised by Town and Community Council representatives are summarised below.

- Need to provide partners with more detailed information about cost implications to help them make better-informed decisions as to whether or not it would be possible to take over the running of public conveniences (Llangefni; Valley).
- The possibility of neighbouring community councils working together to run public conveniences (eg Valley and Holy Island areas) was raised – discussions could begin once detailed information on costs etc was made available.
- The closure of public conveniences would be contrary to the Council's Destination Management Plan (Beaumaris)
- It was suggested that Community Councils could work in partnership with local organisations and apply for grants from the Isle of Anglesey Charitable Trust to run public conveniences (Holyhead)
- Reference made to the option of communities entering into a '50-50' partnership with the County Council – this is already operational in Beaumaris (Beaumaris).
- Need to look at introducing charges for using public conveniences (Llanfihangellesceifiog)
- Need to simplify the process and shorten timescales for setting up and implementing social enterprises (Llangefni).
- Winter maintenance (gritting etc) - Volunteers within individual communities could help clear pathways, estate roads etc. in partnership with the local authority (Llangefni).
- Why have four of the five Town Councils have seen a proposed reduction in the 2013/14 precept rate?

Action: Explanation to be circulated in writing to the five Town Councils.

- Suggestion that Community Councils could take advantage of their powers to raise precepts to fund new initiatives (Holyhead).
- Core costs need to be reduced. The increase in members' allowances (which has been set nationally by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales) gives a bad impression (Trearddur).

- Need to ensure that Town and Community Councils are brought into decision-making processes at the outset (Valley; Beaumaris)

Stan Zalot stated that Beaumaris Town Council intended to submit a comprehensive report to the County Council in response to the consultation document and requested a formal response to that report.

The Interim Head of Function – Resources gave an assurance that a response would be provided and added that the Council would also be compiling a report incorporating all views received.

Action: Beaumaris Town Council to be provided with a formal response to its written representations following its receipt.

4. Any other business

4.1 Joint Working Arrangements

In her capacity as the Council's lead officer in developing the partnership with Town and Community Councils, the Director of Community noted her intention develop these arrangements further by going out to communities. As it would not be practical to visit all Community Councils individually, she suggested that communities be grouped together to establish area-based meetings and that a work programme could be developed during 2013/14.

The above proposal was welcomed by the Town and Community Council representatives present and it was agreed that the matter should be discussed in more detail at the next liaison meeting.

The meeting concluded at 8.35 pm.