

**MINUTES OF AN ORDINARY MEETING OF NEYLAND TOWN COUNCIL, HELD ON MONDAY 2ND
SEPTEMBER 2024, 7.00PM AT NEYLAND COMMUNITY HUB**

This meeting was recorded and livestreamed.

IN ATTENDANCE: Cllr. P Hay (Mayor)
Cllr. A Phelan (Deputy Mayor)
Cllr. E Phelan
Cllr. M Harry
Cllr. A Richards
Cllr. A Thomas
Cllr. S Hancock
Cllr. S Campodonic
Cllr. B Rothero
Cllr. D Devauden
Cllr. S Thomas

APOLOGIES: None received.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Miss. Libby Matthews – Town Clerk & RFO
Mrs. Donna Matthews & Mr. Ian Hatchett – Members of Public

The meeting opened at 19.00pm.

**4479 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS REGARDING THE BUSINESS TO BE
TRANSACTIONED**

Member:	Interest:	Agenda Item:
Cllr. S Hancock	Personal; Member of family in the Police Force Sits on the Police and Crime Panel for Dyfed-Powys	Item 14
Cllr. M Harry	Personal; Non-paid Director of Neyland Community Hub	N/A
Cllr. A Phelan	Personal; Member of the Neyland Carnival Committee	Item 12
Cllr. S Thomas	Personal; Member of Llanstadwell Community Council	N/A

84/24

Cllr. E Phelan queried as to why Cllr. D Devauden had set up 2 x cameras in front of him on the table. Cllr. P Hay asked the Clerk if Cllr. Devauden had requested permission to record the meeting, as per Standing Orders. The Clerk confirmed that he had not. Cllr. Hay asked Cllr. Devauden to remove his cameras, to which Cllr. Devauden refused.

Cllr. A Phelan raised a point of order, requiring that a motion be moved to a vote that Cllr. Devauden be excluded from the meeting due to inappropriate behaviour, this was seconded by Cllr. M Harry. Cllr. Devauden advised Council that he would remove his cameras, which he then did. The motion was revoked.

4480 – REPRESENTATION BY THE PUBLIC (limited to 15 minutes)

The Mayor addressed members of the public and welcomed them to speak with Council.

Mr. Ian Hatchett thanked the Mayor and addressed the Clerk, welcoming her back after she had been absent due to sick leave. He further addressed the agenda item regarding the proposal for NTC to advertise the current vacancy on Council as a Youth Representative, as whilst he felt this was a great idea, he was unsure if legislation allowed the vacancy to be changed to a 'Youth Representative'. As this had been brought to the agenda by Cllr. E Phelan, she addressed Mr. Hatchett and advised him that she had ensured she had looked into the legislation and that the proposal was sound, and that she would be elaborating further once the agenda item arises.

There were no further representations from members of public.

Cllr. Hay addressed Council to remind all that an official grievance had been filed to Council by the Clerk, with allegations of harassment and bullying she believes to have received from 3 members of Council. Cllr. Hay asked that all Council be aware of and mindful of this throughout the meeting and their interactions with the Clerk and how Council conduct themselves during the meeting.

Cllr. B Rothero responded that he felt the Clerk should leave the room during discussion surrounding the draft minutes of the Ordinary Meeting 01.07.2024 as the minutes include direct discussion of her complaint to the Ombudsman. This was overall disagreed with by Council, with Cllr. A Phelan reminding Cllr. Rothero that the Clerk does not have any personal or prejudicial interest in discussions as she does not have voting powers. There was further discussion and disagreement on this subject, with Cllr. Rothero citing the Clerk's complaint to the Ombudsman as a reason for her to leave the room.

The Clerk reminded all Council that there is an open investigation currently ongoing with the Ombudsman regarding several complaints relating to members of NTC and as per instruction from the Ombudsman, this should not be discussed in any capacity.

4481 – TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING 01.07.2024

68/24 – Cllr. S Thomas advised his declared interest was not 'personal & prejudicial', but that he had declared this as a personal interest. He requested this to be changed. This was agreed.

69/24 – Cllr's S Thomas & D Devauden felt that the entire page should be removed from the minutes, as the discussion was surrounding an employee (the Clerk). This was discussed, with disagreements raised from members, as the minutes are a reflection of the meeting, and the paragraph was factual of the discussion which took place. Cllr. Phelan asked Cllr's Thomas &

85/24

Devauden if their feelings were the same for page 70/24, relating to the former Clerk to the Burial Board, whereby she had addressed Council with accusations of bullying and harassment she had believed to have received from Members of NTC during her employment? There was further discussion on both pages of the minutes. A vote was called for both pages to remain in the minutes, with the outcome as follows; (69/24) 7 in favour, 3 against, 1 abstention. (70/24) 6 in favour, 4 against, 1 abstention. Both pages are to remain in the minutes.

- 69/24 – Cllr. Devauden wished for the paragraph to be removed which discussed allegations he had put to the Clerk and Council via email, accusing the Clerk of ‘alcoholism and extra-marital affairs’. Cllr. Devauden denied he had said this, stating that he had said ‘allegedly’. Council fervently disagreed, citing the email had sent to full Council regarding this. Cllr. Devauden proposed the paragraph be removed, which was seconded by Cllr. S Thomas. Cllr. A Phelan proposed an amendment to include the word ‘allegedly’ in the paragraph, which was seconded by Cllr. Harry. This was voted 6 for, 5 against. The paragraph shall remain but will include the word ‘allegedly’.
- 70/24 – Following the above discussion, Cllr. A Phelan requested for the word ‘alleged’ to also be included within the paragraph relating to the former Burial Board Clerk’s allegations. This was agreed.
- 71/24 – mistakes were noted and asked to be amended (VPOT & Santa Fun Run)
- 72/24 – (62/24) Cllr. A Phelan requested that the word ‘alleged’ was added, this was seconded by Cllr. Harry. The vote was 9 for, 2 against. The word alleged is to be included.
- 73/24 – Cllr. A Phelan proposed.
- 76/24 – Cllr. S Thomas advised he wished for the sentence ‘Expenditure got out of hand’ to be removed. Cllr. E Phelan advised that this was in relation to her words, and that she felt that it encompassed her view correctly. This will not be removed.
- 76/24 – Cllr. S Thomas requested that the additional sentence ‘Cllr. Harry stated he thought that the Christmas events should be held at the Hub’ be included in the paragraph. This was agreed with 10 in favour and 1 abstention.
- 78/24 – The Clerk was asked to clarify who proposed and who seconded the motion.

Proposal: To approve the minutes, with the agreed amendments, as a true record of the Ordinary Meeting of Council 01.01.2024.

Proposed: Cllr. M Harry

Seconded: Cllr. S Hancock

7 for, 4 against

RESOLVED: THE MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF COUNCIL, WITH AGREED AMENDMENTS, ARE ACCEPTED AS A TRUE REFLECTION OF THE MEETING.

Cllr. A Phelan – 20.00pm-20.05pm

4482 – MATTERS ARISING

- 69/24 – Cllr. M Harry asked Cllr. D Devauden to clarify what he meant regarding the comment he made about the former Clerk. Cllr. Devauden responded with ‘no comment’.
- 71/24 – (61/24) The Clerk was asked for an update regarding the Audit submission. The Clerk advised that the internal audit was underway and should be completed ahead of the next meeting, allowing Council to sign off the external audit at the October meeting.

86/24

- 72/24 – (4474) Cllr. S Thomas asked if the public consultation for the 20mph speed limit had been posted on our social media. The Clerk advised this had not yet been done. Cllr. P Hay asked the Clerk if she could do this ASAP.
- 73/24 – (4475) Cllr. Hay advised Council that the defibrillator had been installed. The Clerk further elaborated on the management of the defibrillator.
- 73/24 – (4474 65/24) Cllr. S Thomas asked if the cheque had been received from RWE. The Clerk advised that she had chased several times, but this had not yet been received. Cllr. S Thomas offered to chase this up.
- 75/24 – Cllr. Hay advised that the investiture chair had been taken to Frame for refurbishment.
- 76/24 – Cllr. S Thomas commented that he felt the Christmas expenditure did not get out of hand.
- 79/24 – Cllr. S Thomas was asked for an update on the Community Cohesion Fund and the event he had planned to organise. Cllr. Thomas advised that unfortunately, the application for the grant was not successful this year, which means the event will not be going ahead.
- 81/24 – Cllr. Hay advised that he had facilitated a meeting between PCC and the owners of the house, which had taken place. PCC will now need to take this to their committee to discuss if this is viable within the budget, but that this will be regarded as a high priority. Cllr. Hay also asked the Clerk to chase up PCC regarding the new signs for the car park.

4483 – TO REVIEW THE REQUIREMENT OF THE LIVESTREAM SYSTEM FOR COUNCIL MEETINGS

Cllr. M Harry advised that he had brought this to the agenda as a follow on from the discussion at the previous meeting, which had focused on the legal requirement of having livestream available, which he did not believe to be true. Cllr. Harry further elaborated that the livestream was initially purchased and set up during covid as a way for Council business to continue. He had brought this to the agenda to hear Council's views on the continuation of the usage of the livestream for Council meetings. Members discussed this further, with the general feeling that no, the livestream was not a legal requirement for Town and Community Councils but is a good tool to promote public inclusion to meetings and supports the interest of openness and transparency within the Council. There was discussion on how Council can further promote attendance via livestream. Cllr. Harry wished to clarify that as livestream is beneficial, but not a legal requirement, it cannot be used as a reason to cancel meetings if the livestream is unavailable at the time.

4484 – TO DISCUSS THE REVISION OF THE RECORDING OF MEETINGS POLICY

Cllr. M Harry advised that the reason Council had originally adopted a Recording of Meetings policy, was to assist the Clerk in producing accurate minutes. He further advised that it was in his view that recently, recordings have been utilised in a tedious and vexatious manner, and that he did not believe that this was the purpose of recordings. Cllr. A Phelan agreed with Cllr. Harry's sentiment and further advised that in contradiction to the current Recording of Meetings policy, Standing Orders 3l & 12e state that recordings are to be destroyed once minutes have been produced and approved. There was further discussion on the contradiction between the two, with the Clerk being asked to seek advice on whether policy trumps Standing Orders, or vice versa.

Cllr. S Thomas raised that he had recently requested the recording of the Finance Committee Meeting, of which he was a member of, but did not attend. Cllr. Thomas advised that the Clerk had denied his request for the recording and had not provided this to him.

Cllr. Thomas proposed that the Clerk was to release the recording to him at the earliest opportunity, which was seconded by Cllr. Devauden. Cllr. M Harry proposed an amendment that no vote shall be

taken on the matter until further advice is sought on the discrepancy between Stading Orders and Policy. This was seconded by Cllr. A Phelan. Cllr. Thomas requested a recorded vote, which came as follows:

For

Cllr. S Hancock

Cllr. M Harry

Cllr. A Thomas

Cllr. E Phelan

Cllr. A Phelan

Cllr. A Richards

Against

Cllr. S Campodonic

Cllr. S Thomas

Cllr. D Devauden

Cllr. B Rothero

Abstain

Cllr. P Hay

RESOLVED: THE RECORDING SHALL NOT BE RELEASED UNTIL THE CLERK HAS SOUGHT FURTHER ADVICE ON THE MATTER.

4485 – TO DISCUSS AND UPDATE ON THE LEASE OF LAND FOR THE SKATE PARK AND BELLE VUE

Ahead of the discussion beginning, Cllr. S Hancock declared a personal interest in the legal matters of PCC, given his position at Pembrokeshire County Council.

The Clerk advised that she had attended a meeting with Clare Stowell from PCC and had also liaised with the NTC solicitor to find out the current position of the Lease of Land for both the Skate Park and Belle Vue field. The Clerk had also circulated the draft Heads of Terms relating to the Skate Park ahead of the meeting for Council perusal. The Clerk provided the following information:

Belle Vue Field

Currently awaiting confirmation from 'Fields in Trust' to find out the position of the land being secured with them. A return phone call is expected within this week. PCC are ready to go ahead with the Lease of Land, so as soon as the confirmation is received from Fields in Trust, this can progress.

Skate Park

PCC are ready to go with the Lease of Land for the Skate Park and are currently awaiting further instruction from our NTC solicitor. The Clerk asked if Council were happy with the draft Heads of Terms that had been circulated. Cllr. A Phelan noted that the address for the Council was incorrect and asked for this to be amended. There were no further amendments or queries, so the Clerk asked for a motion to be moved that the draft Heads of Terms are accepted and that she can instruct the solicitor to progress. The motion was moved by Cllr. M Harry and seconded by Cllr. A Phelan. This was voted with all in favour.

4486 – A PROPOSAL TO ADVERTISE THE NEYLAND EAST VACANCY AS A YOUTH COUNCILLOR VACANCY

Cllr. E Phelan advised that she had brought this to the agenda as is something that has previously been discussed and resolved within Council to go ahead, but that it hasn't yet happened. Cllr. Phelan further advised that through her position as the Youth Link Councillor, she had met with Tom Moses and had learnt that as a Council, we are able to have two seats on our Council as Youth Representatives and that given that we currently have an available vacancy, she would like to move forward with the resolution. Cllr. Phelan continued to advise Council on the requirements of advertising for and accommodating for a Youth Representative, with Members further discussing this. A number of questions were raised requiring clarification after further research. Cllr. Phelan and the Clerk agreed to work together to further look into all queries seek advice and then return to Council with an update.

Proposal: To advertise the Neyland East Vacancy as a Youth Representative vacancy, once clarification and advice have been obtained on the specifics of the requirements.

Proposed: Cllr. E Phelan

Seconded: Cllr. A Phelan

10 in favour, 1 abstention.

4487 – A REPORT FROM THE FINANCE COMMITTEE MEETING 08.08.2024, TO INCLUDE DISCUSSION ON ADDITIONAL FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR THE BURIAL BOARD AND THE CHRISTMAS BUDGET FOR 2024

The Committee had met to discuss the predicted additional expenditure NTC were likely to incur for the year 2024-25, which had come about after the confirmed budget and precept for the year. The Committee discussed and altered the budget where possible, whilst taking a realistic view of the current financial position, along with the expected incomings and outgoings for the remainder of the year. Most significantly, the additional expenditure is expected to be in the form of the Public Toilets of which Council have recently resolved to undertake the management of via an Asset Transfer, additional support required for the Burial Board to meet their financial obligations and additional costs for the replacement of the Town Christmas Lights which were no longer fit for use. Ahead of the meeting, the Clerk had circulated the minutes of the Finance Committee meeting along with an overview of the potential revisions of the budget, with a realistic view of the expected incomings and outgoings for the remainder of the year (see additional documents). Members discussed this in further detail and were overall happy with the amendments produced by the Finance Committee.

Cllr. S Hancock left the meeting at 21.30pm

4488 – A REPORT FROM THE CHRISTMAS WORKING GROUP MEETING 27.08.2024

The Christmas Working Group presented their plans to Council for authorisation to go ahead. The plans the group had discussed were as follows:

Lighting of the Tree

To take place on December 1st. To mirror last years' event. The group advised that the picture competition to light the tree would be offered to the PLC this year instead of Neyland Community School. This was

89/24

questioned as to why the school were not being invited to join in. The group advised that they felt that it should go to the PLC this year as Neyland Community School were invited to take part last year. This was disputed by the Clerk and Members, who felt both schools should be invited to be involved. This was agreed.

Christmas Fayre & Grotto

To take place on December 6th. To mirror last years' event.

Santa Fun Run

To take place on either December 8th or 15th. Date is TBC. To mirror last years' event.

Miscellany

Cllr. Hay agreed to correspond with Bethesda to organise the Miscellany for this year.

The working group was asked to advise Council on the budget required to organise all events. The working group asked Council for a £900.00 budget towards events.

Proposal: To accept the Christmas Working Group's planned events for Christmas 2024 and to Budget £900.00 towards the planned events.

Proposed: Cllr. S Thomas

Seconded: Cllr. D Devauden

6 in favour, 2 against, 2 abstentions

RESOLVED: CHRISTMAS WORKING GROUP PLANS ACCEPTED AND A BUDGET PROVIDED OF £900.00

4489 – TO DISCUSS THE CARNIVAL EVENT SUPPORT FOR CARNIVAL 2025

Cllr. A Phelan had brought this to the agenda as he is a Member of the Carnival Event Committee. He advised that the Committee was brand new and had organised their first event this year, which all were in agreement had been fantastic. Cllr. Phelan advised that the Committee would like to begin planning now for the event next year, as they would like to make it even better, and are beginning to ask for support and funding. Cllr. M Harry pointed out how important the Carnival is to Neyland people and that Neyland is renowned for our Carnival across Pembrokeshire. Cllr. Hay also pointed out that the effort and commitment it takes to organise such an event is tremendous. The Carnival Committee received support of £700 from NTC via the Community Enhancement Grant and would like to ask for £800 in support for next years' event. Whilst it was agreed that Neyland Town Council would be happy to once again support the Carnival Committee in any way we could, the Clerk advised, and it was generally agreed, that in order for NTC to offer financial support, this would need to be done either via the Community Enhancement Grant again, or an official proposal from the Carnival Committee.

Cllr. A Phelan proposed support of £800 for the Committee, which was seconded by Cllr. Angela Thomas. Cllr. S Thomas proposed an amendment to ask the Carnival Committee for an overview of their finances along with an official proposal before Council were to award financial support, which was seconded by Cllr. D Devauden. This was voted on with 7 in favour, 2 against and 1 abstention.

4490 – A REQUEST OF SUPPORT FROM PEMBROKESHIRE PEOPLE FIRST

Adjourned to next meeting due to time.

4491 – OUTSTANDING MATTERS

Adjourned to next meeting due to time.

4492 – PAYMENTS FOR APPROVAL

Members had been presented with the following update of the accounts:

Current Account:	£71,426.38
Earmarked Reserves:	£13,000.00
General Reserves:	£9,188.11

Total in Accounts: £93,614.49

The list of expenditure for August 2024 totaled £7,460.48 Gross, £6,638.83 Net. The list of income for August 2024 totaled £37,442.34

Members had been presented with a list of payments for approval totaling £2,426.80

Proposal: To accept and confirm the list of payments for approval

Proposed: Cllr. A Phelan

Seconded: Cllr. E Phelan

All in favour

4493 – CLERK'S REPORT

Adjourned to next meeting due to time.

4494 – MAYOR'S REPORT

Adjourned to next meeting due to time.

4495 – EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION AT THE DISCRETION OF THE MAYOR

Cllr. Rothero read a statement he had been asked to read on behalf of Mrs. J Thomas, former Clerk to the Burial Board.

Meeting Closed: 22.05pm