

**MINUTES OF AN ORDINARY MEETING OF NEYLAND TOWN COUNCIL, HELD ON MONDAY 4<sup>th</sup>  
NOVEMBER 2024, 7.00PM AT NEYLAND COMMUNITY HUB**

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This meeting was recorded.

*These minutes have been produced by the Clerk in conjunction with Cllr. E Phelan and the full recording of the meeting.*

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

**APOLOGIES:** Miss. Libby Matthews – Clerk & RFO  
Cllr. B Rothero

**ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:** Mr. Darren Thomas – Head of Infrastructure & Environment (PCC)  
Mr. Stephen Richards-Downes – Director of Education (PCC)  
C. Cllr. Paul Miller  
Mrs. Donna Matthews (Member of Public)

*As the Clerk had given her apologies for the meeting, Cllr. E Phelan had been asked to take minutes for the meeting. Cllr. S Thomas expressed his grievance with this decision, however the Mayor advised that it was perfectly acceptable for a Councillor to minute take if no other options were available. He further advised that as the Agenda was light, he felt it appropriate to continue with Cllr. Phelan minuting.*

**4518 – DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS REGARDING THE BUSINESS TO BE TRANSACTED**

<b>Member:</b>	<b>Interest:</b>	<b>Agenda Item:</b>
Cllr. M Harry	Personal: Non-Paid Director of The Hub	N/A
Cllr. S Hancock	Personal: County Councillor, PCC	Item 3
Cllr. S Thomas	Personal: Member of Llanstadwell CC	N/A

**4519 – REPRESENTATION BY THE PUBLIC (limited to 15 minutes)**

Mr. Darren Thomas and Mr. Stephen Richard-Downes were welcomed by the Mayor. Both advised that they were in attendance to discuss the transport issue with HHVCS, which NTC had been supporting, along with concerned parents of Neyland children, for some months. The Mayor confirmed that this item was to be moved forward on the agenda. Cllr. Hay explained generally what the issue had been and how far NTC had gotten with their support and asked both Mr. Thomas & Mr. Richards-Downes to elaborate from a PCC perspective.

Mr. Darren Thomas began by advising Council that the catchment areas changed in 2018, which made Milford Haven School the catchment secondary school for Neyland children once they reach year 7. At the time of the catchment change, however, there were Neyland pupils already in attendance at HHVC, so transport continued for these pupils, but was stopped for the new influx of learners. This number has declined as children have completed their secondary education. Spare seats became available on the bus transport and were called concessionary seats, these were offered to parents for free, however, this year there were no spare seats. PCC legislation dictates that if parents exercise their parental choice to choose the school their child attends, and that if this school is outside of the catchment area for the child, parents are required to provide their own transport for their child to attend the chosen school. Mr Thomas feels that given the legislation and that parents are made fully aware of this ahead of the decision to choose an alternative school for their child, the onus is on parents to provide the transport as they have chosen to send their children out of catchment.

Cllr. A Thomas mentioned that with HHVC being a brand new school, children who attend this school are provided with many more opportunities and that this often sways parental decision. Cllr. A Phelan asked about the petition which had been publicly circulated and asked what would happen if PCC overturned the decision? Darren Thomas advised that if the catchments changed then they would have no choice. There were some discussions between Cllrs about the facilities in Milford Haven School vs HHVCS, in addition, the fact that the HHVCS is already near capacity. Darren Thomas advised that there has been a significant drop in the Year 7 intake, only 180 this year. Cllr Thomas asked about whether the reputation of Milford Haven School should be addressed as this could potentially have a knock-on effect to the transport issue. Mr. Steven Richard-Downes reflected that every time there is a new school building, PCC do have an issue that see's parents wanting their children to go to the new school, but this does generally cease over time. Cllr. Hancock advised that on Thursday the 12<sup>th</sup> of December, the petition will be discussed in cabinet, as the 500 signatures garnered have automatically triggered this. Cllr. Thomas asked if there was anything at all that could be done to assist local parents. The answer was unfortunately no. Further elaboration from both Mr. Thomas and Mr. Richards-Downes expressed that the education transport budget is already at present at a just under half a million overspend.

Cllr Hay asked for a quick update on the speed limit on the A477 issue. Darren Thomas advised that it was in the works, but moving slowly.

**4520 – TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING 14.10.2024**

92/24 – (4496) Cllr. A Phelan advised that the interests were not correctly recorded.

92/24 – (4496) Cllr. Devauden believes Cllr. Harry's interest should read 'Neyland CIC'.

95/24 – (4499) Cllr. A Phelan disagreed with points 2,3,5 &7

**Proposal: To approve the minutes, with amendments, as a true record of the Ordinary Meeting of Council 02.09.2024**

**Proposed: Cllr. A Phelan**

**Seconded: Cllr. M Harry**

**6 in favour, 5 abstentions due to not being in attendance at the meeting**

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

**4421 – MATTERS ARISING**

96/24 – (4500) Cllr. S Thomas asked why he has been removed from the Bank Mandate and stated that it should have come to full council to be decided. He asked who had advised that there were too many people on the mandate? Cllr. Hay responded that it was a Barclays bank teller. Cllr. Hay further advised that he didn't believe there was anything malicious in the decision as was being insinuated, however Cllr. Thomas strongly disagreed. Cllr. Hay advised he would check with the Clerk.

97/24 – (4501) Cllr. S Thomas queried the reason the NTC were now exempt from HMRC payments and also queried as to how NTC were now in credit by £1,998.00. C. Cllr Paul Miller offered advice that NTC were exempt from paying Employers NI contributions and that this had only recently been rectified. HMRC have back dated the overpayment, giving NTC a credit of £1,998.00 on the account.

97/24 – (4503, 86/24) Cllr. S Thomas asked if there was update on this- there wasn't.

98/24 – (4506) Cllr. S Thomas said that in previous years, the Fireworks Display was funded by donations on the gate only, but now it has changed to 'donations', which includes and donated income from vendors. He asked why this happened. Cllr. Thomas and Cllr. Harry disagreed about this, with Cllr. Harry stating that this was simply Cllr. Thomas' view and not the actual case. Cllr. Thomas stated that the agreement was changed after Council had decided what the proposal be. This was again disputed.

99/24 – (4507) Cllr. Devauden complained that as a Veteran he has been ignored and has not been asked to take up a substantial role in the Remembrance Service Parade. Cllr. Hay responded that Cllr. Devauden has not been asked as the Parade Marshall from last year had been asked to return for 2024 after the 2023 parade. Cllr. Hay further advised Cllr. Devauden that there had been complaints about him when he was historically appointed Parade Marshall and that members of the community had stated they would not wish for him to undertake the role again.

*Cllr. E Phelan asked the Mayor if it could be confirmed whether anyone was unlawfully recording the meeting. She then asked Cllr. Devauden directly whether or not he was recording. Cllr. Devauden stated that he was not, but that he is entitled to if he wishes. Cllr. Harry advised he was not and, due to historic disputes on the matter, Cllr. Hay ended the conversation.*

**4422 – TO DISCUSS FOLLOWING UP WITH OGI ON THE AGREED £1,000 DONATION**

Cllr. Harry advised that there had been a commitment from OGI of £1,000 to be donated to NTC, but we were yet to receive this. Cllr. Harry felt it important that we chase this up. The donation was committed from OGI to be given towards an NTC funded project to the benefit of Neyland. He further clarified that the £1,000 was not given towards Christmas Events, so it should still be available.

**Action: Clerk to follow up with OGI regarding the £1,000 pledged donation.**

*The following discussion was not on the agenda, however C. Cllr Paul Miller advised Council that he was in attendance on behalf of the Neyland CIC to discuss an email received from Cllr. Rothero, outlining concerns he had regarding the financial position of Neyland CIC. C. Cllr Miller was invited to address Council.*

Cllr. Miller first clarified that the sum of £240,000 the CIC had received from the Council was an agreed and legal advance payment for a 25 year rental lease and usage of the new Community Hub building. The second sum of £120,000 was given by NTC as a grant towards the building, as NTC had resolved to support the Hub for the benefit of Neyland residents. If NTC would like a charge on the property, Neyland CIC is not at all opposed to this, but as it would be the third one it would not be worth much. Cllr. Hay queried if this would extend our lease, but Cllr. Miller confirmed that this would not be the case. Cllr. Hancock, Cllr. Miller and Cllr. Harry all explained that this decision was made by the Council, none of it was done in secret, was all above board and with full traceable documentation. The also confirmed that this had been resolved and actioned in Council a long time ago. Cllr. Devauden queried the asset lock, with Cllr. Miller explaining that this is something that is part of a CIC. Cllr. Miller further explained that he thinks people are misinterpreting monies transferring from the Hub to the CIC, but in actual fact, the reverse is true. The care company (Community Care CIC, a sister company of Neyland CIC) is financially propping up the Hub as, at present, the Hub is running in a deficit. Cllr. Thomas expressed that his concern is that Cllr. Harry is acting on behalf of the Hub through Council or has done in the past, without declaring an interest. Cllr. Harry explained once again, that his declarable interest in the Hub is 'personal' and not 'personal & prejudicial' and that this has been confirmed by the Ombudsman. He further reiterated that he, nor other Directors of the Hub have historically, at present nor in the future received any fiscal gain from the Hub. Cllr. Miller further confirmed that the Town Council nominated Cllr. Harry to be on the Council and as such, he has a 'personal' interest and not a 'personal & prejudicial' interest. Cllr. Thomas asked Cllr. Harry and Cllr. Miller whether the hub would be supporting 'Free pints for Veterans' again this year. Neither were willing to commit an answer there and then but were sure they would. Cllr. Miller stated that he just wanted to emphasise that this is a community venture and is for the community, nothing untoward goes on and nothing is pocketed.

#### **4423 – A REPORT FROM THE CHRISTMAS WORKING GROUP MEETING 23.10.2024, TO INCLUDE AN UPDATE ON EXPENDITURE AND A REVISED BUDGET**

Cllr. S Thomas advised that the CWG are in the process of advertising for stall holders for the Christmas Market. He advised that advertising needs to start being pushed on the NTC website and Facebook. He advised that the Clerk has confirmed that insurance required for the Santa Fun Run has been requested and she is at present awaiting a response from the insurance company.

Cllr. Thomas advised Council that expenditure for the Christmas events was as follows: Approx. £650 for selection boxes, £120 for banners, £120 for flyers. Cllr. Hay asked if we could make sure we don't buy too many selection boxes as we always have too many left over. Cllr. Harry stated he is concerned about the electricity bill and thought, as the amount was significantly lower than the previous years' bill, it may be an error. Cllr. Harry felt that this should be kept in mind when considering expenditure for Christmas. Cllr. Thomas stated that it is likely to do with Barry Jones changing some of the towns Christmas lights to LED's.

Cllr. Thomas stated that he had told the Clerk and the Mayor that he would not be organising the tree lighting. He also stated that he has done nothing in regard to the Christmas card competition with the School, whereby last year, the winning children lit the tree. Cllr. E Phelan was able to liaise with the Clerk, who confirmed that the competition is in hand and organised, but discussions were still taking place between herself and the Mayor regarding the Lighting of the Tree event. Arrangements for this will be confirmed this week.

Cllr. Thomas advised that for Friday 6<sup>th</sup> of December (Christmas Market), the road closure application has been submitted. This will coincide with the grotto and will be taking place in conjunction with the PLC's ice rink event. Cllr. A Phelan queried why we can't reuse the banners from last year? Cllr. Thomas said it was because the web pages had been taken down. Cllr. Hay confirmed that the Clerk is in the process of liaising with the website domain have the pages reinstated. Cllr. Thomas clarified that the selection boxes funding is inclusive of wrapping paper.

**4424 – NALC INCREASE IN SALARY FOR 2024/25 (BACKDATED PAYMENT TO CLERK FROM 1<sup>ST</sup> APRIL)**

Figures for the annual increase in pay had been circulated to Council ahead of the meeting and were as follows:



NALC Pay  
Increase.pdf

This was proposed to be accepted by Cllr. S Hancock.

**Proposed: Cllr. S Hancock**

**Seconded: Cllr. E Phelan**

**All in favour.**

Cllr. S Thomas stated that the Clerk's 12 month appraisal is overdue. Cllr. Hay advised this would be discussed at a later date.

**4425 – OUTSTANDING MATTERS**

1. Speed Limit on A477 – No further update
2. HHVC School Transport – No further update
3. St Clements Surgery – Response letter circulated to Council. Council was happy with the response, no further action to be taken at present.
4. Police presence in Neyland – No further update\

Cllr. Harry queried if there was a rota of traffic wardens who routinely worked in Neyland. Cllr. Hancock stated he would be happy to check on this.

**4426 – PAYMENTS TO BE APPROVED AND FINANCIAL UPDATE**

Council had been circulated, ahead of the meeting, a list of expenditure for October 2024 (totalling £3,135.52), a copy of the Bank Statement and a full Bank reconciliation, which showed no discrepancies.



Payments October  
2024.pdf



Bank Statement Oct  
2024.pdf



All Banks  
Reconciled.pdf

Council had also been circulated a list of payments to be approved, totalling £4,767.79.



Payments for  
Authorisation.pdf

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**Proposal: To accept and authorise the Financial update and Payments to Authorise**

**Proposed: Cllr. A Phelan**

**Seconded: Cllr. A Thomas**

**All in favour**

#### **4427 – CLERK'S REPORT**

The Clerk had submitted the following report, which was read to Council by Cllr. Hay:

##### Fireworks Display

The evening was an incredible success – donations to be counted tomorrow, I will circulate total once known.

A few considerations noted for next year:

- Lighting at the gates
- Music
- Earlier start time
- More rubbish bins

##### Remembrance Sunday

Everything is on track. Anyone available to hand out Order of Service at the Cenotaph?

##### Budget & Precept Meeting

Finance Committee Meeting Thursday 14<sup>th</sup>, 6.00pm – all welcome to attend.

##### Defibrillator

Rose & Willow Defib was used on 12<sup>th</sup> October, has been replaced and serviced and is back ready for use.

##### Bank Mandate

Changes confirmed.

##### Public Toilets

Price & Kelway instructed on our behalf – now liaising with PCC solicitors, no further updates.

##### S.106 Grant Money Received

Back dated grant from the Skate Park installation has now been chased and received. £1,897 received from PCC.

**4428 – MAYOR'S UPDATE**

There was no report from the Mayor.

**4429 – EXCHANGE OF INFORMATION AT THE DISCRETION OF THE MAYOR**

There was no information exchanged between Members.

**4430 – DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The date of the next meeting was confirmed for Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> December, 7.00pm

The meeting closed at 9.12pm