**CYNGOR CYMUNED LLANLLAWDDOG**

**LLANLLAWDDOG COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

Minutes of the Extraordinary meeting of Llanllawddog Community Council held at the Church Hall, Llanllawddog and via Microsoft Teams on **Monday 14 April 2025 at 7.00pm.**

**Present:** Councillor Steven Mason (Chairman) presiding

**Councillors:** Nia Bowen, Deborah Dean, Beth Gibbon, Havard Hughes, Philip Hughes, Darrell Lewis and Peter Williams.

County Councillor Neil Lewis

**Clerk to the Council:** Andrew Rees

1. **Apologies for absence**

There were no apologies for absence.

1. **Declarations of interest**

The Clerk advised that Councillors Dean, Gibbon, Havard Hughes, Lewis, Mason and Williams had a dispensation granted by the Standards Committee of Carmarthenshire County Council in relation to being able to discuss, vote and respond to the renewable energy proposals by Green GEN Cymru for the duration of the consultation phases.

1. **Parc y Rhyd, Rhydargaeau**

The Clerk reported on an update on progress on Parc y Rhyd play area in that he was authorised to investigate the feasibility with Sovereign Play of rotating the positioning of the play tower by 90° so that the slides face away from the road and of introducing a balance beam into the design. He stated that Sovereign have confirmed it would not be possible to rotate the play tower by 90° due to its width. However, Sovereign have agreed to and designed into the play area a connecting balance beam with a zig zag weaver and rope wall. Sovereign have also replaced the bug drum with larger rainbow bongo drums. He stated that this was at no additional cost to the project and the Council would have enhanced features to the play area.

The Chairperson informed Council that Sovereign have produced a 3-D image of the play area now submitted. He, Councillor Dean as Lead Member for the play area and Clerk have discussed the possibility of changing the configuration of the log swing so that it has 1 cradle seat and one conventional swing seat. This would enable siblings to play together on the swings as opposed to having 2 toddler cradle seats. The Chairperson informed Council that Sovereign have now advised it would not be possible to increase the height of the log swing beyond 1.8m and that the next size of 2.4m could not be accommodated due to the larger safety zone required.

Members of Council considered that the design of the play area was in line with the Council’s vision with developing a play area for younger children.

**RESOLVED:** (1)That the final design of the play area based on the most recent 3-D Design produced by Sovereign Play be approved with the following modifications:

1. Moving the Abacus Activity Play Panel (referenced D on the plan) sideways slightly to be directly behind the tower with the double bumpy slide but still remaining to the rear of the Play Tower;

2. In the space vacated by the Abacus Play Panel relocating the Steering Wheel Play Panel (referenced F on the plan).

The Log Swing will remain at 1.8m as per the safety advice given by Sovereign Play.

(2) That the Clerk be authorised to place an order for the final layout of the play area.

1. **Response to Consultation on Green GEN Cymru Towy Teifi Project**

The Clerk reported that the Council had been consulted by Green GEN Cymru on the second phase of its consultation on the Towy Teifi Project. He stated that the Council was required to submit a response to the consultation by 16 April 2025. He reminded members that the Council had submitted a response to the first consultation in the Spring of 2024 objecting to the proposals for a new 132kV electricity connection between Lan Fawr, Ceredigion to Llandyfaelog, Carmarthenshire passing directly through Llanllawddog from north to south.

The Clerk reported that Green GEN Cymru have updated their proposals in response to the 2024 consultation, by producing a draft route alignment including proposed pylon locations and placing some sections underground. He stated that Green GEN Cymru believe that the proposed location of the pylons sought to keep the effect on communities and the landscape as low as possible. In its first consultation, Green GEN Cymru proposed a wide corridor which stretched west of the A485. The company as part of the second phase to the consultation proposed a narrower corridor for the electricity line to the east of the A485. He stated that two sections of route run through Llanllawddog, namely section 4 Alltwalis to Rhydargaeau and section 5 (north section) Rhydargaeau to Llandyfaelog. The draft route alignment in Section 4 followed a southerly direction crossing Afon Gwili and to the east of Pontarsais, crossing Nant Corrwg and then east of Rhydargaeau. This section spanned 4.2km, supported by 20 steel lattice pylons at an average height of 29.5 metres. He stated that the route had been chosen to increase distances away from properties in Pontarsais and Rhydargaeau.

The Clerk reported that Section 5 continued southwards from Rhydargaeau towards Peniel ending in Llandyfaelog. The total length of section 5 is 10km with approximately 10 pylons proposed to be located in the Council’s area. He stated that parts of southern section 5 are proposed to be situated underground at Merlin’s Hill and Llandyfaelog.

The Clerk also reported that Green GEN Cymru held a series of consultation events during March 2025, no events were held in Llanllawddog despite representation being made with the nearest events taking place at Peniel and in Llanpumsaint, being outside the proposed electricity route.

The Clerk reported that he had attended the consultation at Llanpumsaint and was able to pose questions to the company’s staff on the project, particularly on undergrounding the whole line given there is a cable ploughing company based in Carmarthenshire, which would create economies of scale and provide employment opportunities for local people. He stated that the company had explained it would not be feasible to place the entire line the length of 53km underground as it would be five times more expensive than connecting the line on pylons. A representative of the company explained that Green GEN Cymru as part of their OFGEM licence are required to achieve best value.

The Clerk also reported that he had made a request to the company that they hold a consultation event as part of the third and statutory consultation, in Llanllawddog and they undertook to do this.

The Clerk outlined the response made by the Council to the first consultation and requested the Council consider a response to the second consultation. Concern was expressed by the Council at the pressure being exerted by the company on landowners to access land for surveying especially vulnerable residents.

**RESOLVED:** Thatthe Council respond to the consultation as follows:

“The Council welcomes de-carbonisation and is supportive of renewal energy projects but not at any cost and not at the cost to ecology in the Tywi Teifi area. The proposed installation of pylons will carry significant environmental considerations along the line of the overhead cable section being visually intrusive to residents. The Council understands from having attended the consultation events in Llanpumsaint and Peniel that you propose to minimise the visual impact of pylons on the landscape by strategically planning the location of the pylons and using designs that blend with the natural environment. However, the Council remains concerned that the pylons will be clearly visible to residents in Pontarsais as Section 4 is in close proximity to residences. There will also be a significant impact of pylons having a clear line of sight to residents as the line rises up the hill from pylons numbered 163 to 166 in Rhydargaeau.

The Council requests that Green GEN Cymru conduct comprehensive environmental impact assessments to ensure that wildlife habitats, including those of protected species, are not adversely affected by the proposals.

The Council notes that Green GEN Cymru has made concessions in this consultation by proposing that two sections be located as part of Section 5 Rhydargaeau to Llandyfaelog of the draft route alignment underground from Llandyfaelog to Idole and beneath the Tywi Valley and Bryn Myrddin. The Council requests that Green GEN Cymru underground the whole of the Tywi Teifi link by the cable ploughing method and not via the trenching method. Given that there is a specialist company who undertake this very nature of work across Europe and based in Carmarthenshire. Engaging a local company to cable plough will create employment as well as having economies of scale.

The Council was informed at the Community Councils Webinar as part of the first consultation that Green GEN Cymru is actively investigating the issue of cable ploughing with a specialist cabling company based in Pencader. The Council is disappointed that it has not received feedback on the outcome of those investigations and can Green GEN Cymru now provide the Council with an update.

The Council would like to receive detail on the cost of cable ploughing compared to the cost of putting the whole 132kV line on pylons for the whole of the Tywi Teifi project.

Underpinning consultation are the Gunning Principles consist of four rules, which if followed, are designed to make consultation fair. The Council is concerned that the consultation is potentially flawed in that you did not hold a consultation event within the Community of Llanllawddog and chose instead to hold an event in Llanpumsaint, a community which is not affected by your project. The Council requests that a consultation be held as part of the third and statutory consultation in Llanllawddog. This is something a member of the consultation staff of Green GEN Cymru undertook to put in place during the Llanpumsaint event.

The Council is of the opinion that the Welsh Government introduces a national policy with a presumption in favour of cabling underground to minimise the visual impact of renewable energy projects throughout Wales. This principle has been established in Denmark where your company has recently received a large investment.

In conclusion, the Council is supportive of the development of renewable energy projects, and it believes the project could contribute towards reducing carbon emissions. However, it is essential that it is balanced with protecting the environment in Tywi Teifi and it is therefore essential that cabling underground via the cable ploughing method be actively pursued to minimise the visual impact on residents.”

1. **To Receive a Report on the Council’s Financial Position for the Year Ending 31 March 2025**

The Clerk reported on the Council’s Financial Position for the year ending 31 March 2025, presenting a summary of receipts and payments, which showed a surplus of £26,471.76. He also presented a Bank Reconciliation, which showed that the Council held balances of £44,034.72 as at 31 March 2025. He stated that the unaudited accounts were being brought to the Council for earlier approval than is customary to enable the Internal Auditor to have sufficient time to scrutinise the information prior to final approval of the audited records by the Council which must be approved by 30 June 2025 at the latest.

The Clerk informed Council that it would be subject to a full audit by Audit Wales and it would in addition to submitting financial records of all its transactions need to evidence plans and strategic documents listed in the report.

**RESOLVED:** That the Council approve the unaudited Statement of Accounts and Balance Sheet for the year ending 31 March 2025.

1. **Bills for Payment**

The Clerk reported on the following liabilities and sought approval for their payment.

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| **Reference** | **Payee** | **Description** | **Amount £** |
| 300106 | Carmarthenshire County Council  | Public Lighting and Electricity Charges for 2024-25  | 1031.15 |
| 300107 | Huw Evans Carpentry and Joinery Services | Erection of Noticeboard | 193.56 |

The Clerk also reported that following the last meeting of the Council a number of cheques were declined to be paid by the Council’s Bank as it considered that the signatures varied from the mandate. He stated that replacement cheques have been issued as follows:

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Reference** | **Payee** | **Description** | **Amount £** |
| 300076 replaced by cheque no. 300101, further replaced by cheque no. 300105  | Llanllawddog Church Hall | Hire of Church Hall – November 2024 and January 2025  | 80 |
| 300079 replaced by cheque no. 300100 | HMRC | Payment of Income tax for January and February 2025 | £188.20 |
| 300080replaced by cheque no. 300102 | Councillor N Bowen  | Annual Allowance 2024-25 (pro rata from May 2024) | 143 |
| 300088 replaced by cheque no. 300103 | Councillor Nia Bowen  | Reimbursement of consumables from working from home (Pro-rata from May 2024) | 47.67 |
| 300098replaced by cheque no. 300099 | Signs of Cheshire Limited | Purchase of Noticeboard | 1056.00 |

**RESOLVED:** (1) That the above payments be approved;

 (2) That the Council noted the replacement cheques issued.

The Meeting closed at 8.15pm