## **Ordinary General Meeting held on the 8th September 2025. The meeting was held at the Studio, Pontardawe Arts Centre, Herbert Street, Pontardawe with Hybrid facilities by virtual platform Zoom, and commenced at 6.45pm**

## **Present:**

Councillor Mrs J Lord (presiding), B Howells, G Davies, D Brain, M Vincent, Ms L Purcell, M Davies, Ms E Harper (Youth Councillor) (left the meeting at 8.35pm) and T Jones

## **Present online by Zoom:**

Councillor J Nemeth, Mrs G Ffrancon, and H Davies

## **Apologies:**

Councillor A Richards, S Todd, J Watkins, and N Davies (Youth Councillor)

## **12899: Disclosure of Personal and Pecuniary Interests**

Councillor Ms G Ffrancon and T Jones declared an interest in the grant application from Eisteddfod Cwmtawe. They left the meeting for the duration of discussion and decision on this grant. Councillors D Brain and M Vincent stated that they had an indirect interest in the Rhos FC application, as their children attended the club.

## **Resolved** to be noted**.**

## **12900: Signing of the Minutes of the Ordinary General Meeting held on the 14th July 2025**

## **Resolved** that the minutes of the Ordinary General Meeting held on the 14th July 2025 , having been read and confirmed as a true record be accepted by Council

## **12901: Matters raised by Members of the Public:**

None

## **Resolved** to be noted**.**

## **12902: Police Matters:**

Pontardawe

May total crimes 40, June total crimes 41

For June the top four crimes were – 18 Violent, 6 ASB, 6 Other theft and 6 Public Order

The Neighbourhood Policing team had also provided an update on the Pontardawe Music Festival. They confirmed that there had been very few arrests over the weekend and in general feedback on the Policing and the Event in general, had been positive.

Due to the extremely fine weather, the event had attracted a very large number of people that had caused some difficulties for crowd management; however, the Neighbourhood Policing team would look at solutions during their review.

Trebanos

May total crimes 4, June total crimes 14

It was noted that there was a substantial increase in crimes between the two months however Council was reminded that the change in reporting methods might have impacted, as previously advised.

Council did however feel that the position should be monitored

## **Resolved** to be noted

## **12903: Monthly update from the Neath Port Talbot Council Members:**

Councillor Ms R Phillips and A Richards were not present at the meeting

Councillor H Davies

* A local Police reorganisation would increase the number of Police Officers in the area
* As already stated the feedback on the Music Festival had been generally positive with only two arrests over the weekend
* There had been an operation to tackle illegal sales in the Pontardawe area
* The resurfacing of the roundabout adjacent to Ynysderw Road had been completed efficiently with minimal disruption
* CCTV cameras placed in the retail park had prevented motor vehicle access for anti- social purposes, however, this had created a similar problem at the Lidl car park. The store was now considering utilising the gate at their car park, outside of business hours.

**Resolved** to be noted.

## **12904: Grant Applications:**

Councillors Ms G Ffrancon and T Jones left the meeting for the duration of the discussion on the grant application from Cwmtawe Eisteddfod

Councillors M Vincent and D Brain also declared an interest in the Rhos Football Club application as their children were members

Letters of thanks had been received for all grants awarded at the July Ordinary meeting. A report had also been received from the Heritage Centre on the ‘Longest Yarn’ project, which had been forwarded to Councillors

Councillors were also made aware that a grant application would be shortly submitted from the Glantawe Lions for their ‘Tree of Light’, the proceeds of which were donated to the Mayors Charity each year

* Rhos Football Club – Unfortunately although the club did include members from the Pontardawe Town Council area, there was no indication of the percentage of the club as children from many areas were members. The application was also vague – It was suggested that perhaps the club apply to Cilybebyll Community Council, as the club was based in their area, and they could access their grant budget.
* Depression Support Group Ltd (not for profit) – It was felt that the application was vague, without sufficient details of who specifically would benefit, at what location, and what other groups also supporting mental health had been liaised with. It was also noted that the Swansea Bay Health Board was currently working on a Mental Health strategy in the area, that would possibly provide similar support. There was also some uncertainty of possible costs to service users
* Forces Fitness Education CIC – The project had been organised in several areas with liaison with several unitary authorities, however Council felt that the organisation should begin by liaising with Neath Port Talbot Council, rather that the Town and Community Councils initially
* Eisteddfod Cwmtawe – To support the establishment of an annual Eisteddfod as a legacy to the National Urdd Eisteddfod that was held in Neath Port Talbot in 2025. Council was keen that all schools, both English and Welsh, and all levels of Welsh speaking and learning, were encouraged. They were therefore happy to support the project – **Award £750.00**

Council did query what additional assistance was offered to groups to prevent vague applications, however, the Clerk explained that the current policy provided a great deal flexibility intentionally, and therefore while additional assistance was provided by the Clerk for straightforward requests, she was not permitted to guide an applicant outside of the scope of the policy.

**Resolved** that that the grant policy will need to be reviewed by a Policy & Resources committee or full Council, for changes to the current grant scope. An award of £750 would be made to Eisteddfod Cwmtawe.

## **12905: Clerks update on Eco and Wellbeing Committee including Cwmdu:**

Short Term projects identified and action required:

* MUGA at George V Park – A separate meeting had been arranged with Neath Port Talbot Council to discuss a way forward
* Street Art Trail – The Website had now been updated with the information relating to the projects. QR code plaques could now be fitted once the revised design of the Pontardawe Town Council logo had been agreed.
* A risk assessment had been carried out on trees adjacent to the new path at Cwmdu by a qualified arborist. Four local arborists had been approached for quotes to carry out the work in accordance with the timescales set out in the Risk Assessment. Two companies had provided quotes. Council was happy to accept the lowest suitably insured company.
* The Management plan for trees adjacent to the Waun Gron Property boundaries had been carried out by a qualified arborist, with action also to be carried out in accordance with the risk guidance. Quotes would be requested for the work required shortly
* Community Halls – Awel Aman Tawe had responded regarding Council’s request for first steps to improve the Community Halls Energy efficiency. Initially a survey would be required for all halls (this would also be required for any grant applications applied for) – The cost for the organisation to carry out the surveys was £800 for each hall however if it was agreed to carry out the surveys on all halls. The cost would reduce – Council was keen to partner with Awel Aman Tawe on this project, as they had over 20 years’ experience of researching, developing and delivering projects that addressed the climate emergency and the Welsh Governments Carbon Net Zero plan, were based locally, were a community energy charity, and had undertaken many project with grass roots-organisations, including Town and Community Councils. As a result, quotes would not be obtained from alternative companies.

**Resolved**

* That a bilingual logo would be created for adoption by Council.
* The lowest quote from a qualified, insured arborist would be agreed for the work to be carried out on the Cwmdu Glen ‘new path’
* Quotes would be obtained from suitably qualified arborists to carry out the required work from the management plan for the trees at Cwmdu Glen adjacent to the boundaries with properties at Waun Gron. The lowest quote from a suitably qualified and insured arborist would be acceptable.
* Awel Aman Tawe would be contracted to carry out Energy surveys at all three Community Halls

**12906: Significant closures - Pontardawe Swimming Pool, the Cross Community Centre and Gelligron House:**

No additional information was available on the Cross Community Centre, Gelligron House, or Godrergraig School

A meeting had been arranged with Officers at Neath Port Talbot Council and Councillor Cen Phillips on the 29th August to provide an update on the current position. All Councillors were invited.

A full feasibility study had been carried out with the preferred location for a new Swimming pool being adjacent to the Pontardawe Leisure Centre. The Pontardawe Leisure Centre refurbishment was also being reviewed within its current footprint.

Grant funding would be required for the project; however, the feasibility study was the first step. The proposals would be reviewed by Neath Port Talbot Cabinet on the 3rd September and the scrutiny committee on the 31st October 2025.

It was hoped that when suitable grant pots became available, the project application would be ready for submission

## **Resolved** that Council Members will make enquiries with all possible contacts to determine grant pots available that might assist

**12907: Place Plans:**

The Urbanists had completed the additional work requested. This had now been incorporated into the plans.

It was anticipated that the plans would be reviewed by Neath Port Talbot Cabinet at the end of October 2025.

## **Resolved** to be noted.

## **12908: Remembrance:**

Funding for Remembrance at the War Memorial on the 9th November 2025, had been secured, however this was for only one year.

There had also been no objections to the plans submitted to the Special Events Team.

The Clerk had therefore liaised with the Royal British Legion to determine the responsibilities within the partnership for planning the event.

The Royal British Legion suggested a steering committing comprising of Town Councillors, Members of the British Legion, together with flag and poppy co-ordinators.

The Clerk also stated that volunteers would be needed to man the road closure

## **Resolved** that Councillors Lord, Howells, Gary Davies and Meirion Davies will form part of the steering committee.

## **12909: Blue Plaque scheme:**

Councillor Jones provided exemplary application for Blue Plaques for both Harriett Lewis and Dafydd Rowlands. Councillor Jones also had contacts with a separate group who might assist with funding for a celebratory plaque for Dafydd Rowlands.

It was determined that additional information would be required to determine the most effective location for a potential blue plaque and therefore the submission of the applications would be delayed

**Resolved** that the Clerk will obtain additional information on the siting of Blue Plaques

## **12910 :Dog Waste bin at Rhyd y Fro:**

Councillor Richards was not at the meeting and therefore no response was available

**Resolved** to be noted

## **12911: Pontardawe Town Council Emergency Planning:**

The Clerk confirmed that the following had been carried out:

* Items for the Emergency box had been purchased
* Neath Port Talbot Council and the Local Area Co-Ordinator had been contacted however no response had been received
* It was determined that any Councillor could request the Emergency plan be instigated via the WhatsApp group
* £500 per hall would be made available for additional supplies in the event that the Emergency plan was instigated (items could be purchased by a Councillor or Councillors to the maximum value of the budget for each hall, and a claim made to the Clerk for reimbursement following agreement by Council)
* Emergency key boxes had been purchased for Ynysmeudwy and ARCH Halls, and were awaiting fitting

**Resolved** to be noted

## **12912 :Christmas 2025:**

Council was advised that planning for the Winterfest was in progress with the Partners (Pontardawe Town Council, Pontardawe Chamber of Commerce, Pontardawe Heritage Centre and Pontardawe Arts Centre)

Pontardawe Town Council financed the Christmas Lights, fireworks, road closures and Christmas window prizes

The Winterfest for 2024 had been scaled back by necessity due to the significant construction on the forecourt of Pontardawe Arts Centre. For 2025 the Stage could be relocated to the Arts Centre forecourt and the Children’s walking Parade could be reinstated.

The Clerk confirmed that the road closure forms had been submitted to Neath Port Talbot Special Events. Core, South Wales Medical and Pendragon Pyrotechnics had been contracted in line with the budget.

Pontardawe Town Council would also provide the prizes for the Christmas window Competition which would be judged by a Town Poll this year, as would the Parading groups.

The Clerk confirmed that the all the local primary schools together with children’s groups from the Pontardawe Town Council area were invited to Parade

It was requested that there be more focus on the Welsh Language for the stage acts and that the organisers contact Menter Iaith for details. Both Cwmtawe and Ysgol bro dur could be contacted to facilitate acts.

A budget of £500 was available in total for entertainment in addition to the original Christmas Budget to facilitate bilingual entertainment

**Resolved** that an additional £500 in total will be made available to facilitate bilingual entertainment

## **12913 :Environment Wales Act – Section 6 Biodiversity Report:**

The draft report was provided prior to the meeting. No amendments were recommended

**Resolved** that the Section 6 draft Biodiversity Report will be agreed

## **12914 : One Voice Wales Special Committee:**

The Special Committee to discuss changes to the constitution had been cancelled. This would now be discussed at the Annual General Meeting

**Resolved** to be noted

**12915: Planning:**

* P2025/0481: Proposed felling of one beech tree at 20 Lloyd Street, Trebanos
* P2025/0282: Change of use of Existing dwelling at 7 New Road, Ynysmeudwy

# Consultation periods allowed to lapse with the agreement of the Planning Committee

**Resolved** to be noted

## **12916: Youth Councillors:**

Noel Davies, term of office as a Youth Councillor came to an end at the September Ordinary General Meeting. Unfortunately, Noel was unable to attend, due to employment commitments.

He did however provide and email thanking the Town Council for the experience, which he found interesting and enjoyable.

Council thanked Noel for his input during his term in office and wished him well on his future endeavours.

# **Resolved** – That the Youth Representative vacancy will be advertised

## **12917: Contracts of Employment and the Local Government Pay agreement for 2025/26:**

Staff Contracts of Employment had been provided for review prior to the meeting.

Council was also provided with details of the Local Government Services Pay agreement for 2025/26

**Resolved** to agree the Contracts of Employment without alteration, and to also agree to the pay increases for 2025/26 suggested under the Local Government Services Pay agreement for 2025/26, backdated to the 1st April 2025

## **12918 : Crossing Patrol Officer, Swansea Road :**

The Current Crossing Patrol Officer had retired. The Vacancy was currently being advertised by Neath Port Talbot Council (this was also shared on the Town Council social media page). Unfortunately, until a replacement was found, there would be no crossing patrol officer at Swansea Road, Pontardawe

**Resolved** to be noted.

**12919: Account Schedule 428 (July & August 2025), together with Bank Reconciliation:**

All documents were made available to Councillors prior to the meeting.

## **Resolved** that Account Schedule 428 totalling £42132.43 together with the Bank Reconciliation, will be agreed in line with Standing Orders.

## **12920: Email received form a resident via the County Borough Member re Ynysmeudwy Park:**

The letter identified several issues with the Park at Ynysmeudwy. The Clerk confirmed that a ROSPA report was carried out annually to determine risk at all the Town Council’s parks. Any issues identified at ‘High’ or ‘Medium’ were addressed as soon as possible.

Issues identified as ‘Low’ risk were addressed during regular maintenance, or when funds allowed.

The issues raised by the resident, had been identified by the ROSPA report, and were considered ‘low’ risk

There were more pressing actions required at Ynysmeudwy Park, and the Clerk had applied for grant funding that had become available, that might address some of the issues. (Application had been agreed by the Mayor due to the tight timescales)

**Resolved** that Council will be kept up to date with development of both the grants and issues at Ynysmeudwy Park

## **12921: Armed Services Covenant :**

There was a significant amount of information on the Armed Services Covenant available

**Resolved** that Council will be provided with the information available for review initially

## **12922: Cwmtawe School Governor :**

Councillor Jill Lord confirmed that she had been invited to be a Governor at Cwmtawe School

**Resolved** to be noted

## **12923: Consultations:**

Extending the duty for local authorities to broadcast meetings

Revisions to the separate collection of waste material recycling code of practice for Wales

**Resolved** to be noted.

## **12924: Urgent Road Safety Matters and responses:**

None

## **Resolved** to be noted

## **12925: Next Meeting:**

The next Ordinary Meeting would be held on the 13th October with hybrid facilities. The physical meeting to take place at the Gallery, 2nd Floor, Pontardawe Arts Centre, Herbert Street, Pontardawe with support from the virtual platform Zoom.

Signed ………………………………………………………………………

Dated ……………………………………………………………………..