

CYNGOR CYMUNED YSTRAD FFLUR
MINUTES OF THE EXTRAORDINARY VIRTUAL MEETING,
TUESDAY 2ND FEBRUARY 2021 AT 7PM

1. CHAIRPERSON'S WELCOME

Cllr Gareth Owen welcomed everyone to the meeting, to continue with the discussion appertaining to the possible purchase of the former St David's Church, Pontrhydfendigaid, by the Community Council. The aim would be to utilise the building for community use.

Representatives of Ceredigion County Council had been invited to this evening's meeting.

2. PRESENT

Ceredigion County Council (CCC)

Mr Arwyn Davies, Corporate Manager for Growth & Enterprise (AD)

County Cllr Rhodri Evans, Cabinet Member for Economy and Regeneration (RhE)

Meleri Richards; Rural Communities Co-ordinator, Economy and Regeneration (MR)

County Cllr Ifan Lloyd Davies – Lledrod Ward (ILD)

Ystrad Fflur Community Council

Cllr Gareth Owen (Chairperson) (GO)

Cllr Laura Jones (Deputy-Chairperson) (LJ)

Cllr Clare Hughes (CH)

Cllr Angharad Jones (AJ)

Cllr Doug Rowbotham (DR)

Eleri Thomas (Clerk) (ET)

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllr John Jones; Cllr Non Jones; &

Cllrs Alun Price Jones; Mair Jones & Wil Lewis (have no access to the internet)

4. Members of the County Council introduced themselves and outlined their respective roles within the County Council (see above). They would offer advice regarding the feasibility of this project and the steps, which would be necessary, to bring it into fruition.

5. **MR stated that CCC could provide officer-assistance** in relation to the venture. Employees of the County Council were working more from home at present due to the Covid-19 Pandemic; help would be offered virtually. The Local Authority had supported community efforts in the past e.g. at Devil's Bridge and Silian. Lessons could be learnt from good practice and used as models when planning for the future.

It was mentioned that two halls already featured in the Village viz Pantyfedwen Hall and the Pavilion. It was agreed that this proposed initiative would not detract from the facilities already on offer, but rather, enhance the present situation.

It was noted that other places of worship were based at Pontrhydfendigaid and Ffair Rhos and a similar scenario could arise in the future.

6. **AIM OF THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

It was reported that the aim would be to purchase the building of the former St David's Church, Pontrhydfendigaid (via grant funding) and convert into social/affordable housing for Young People.

7. **SOCIAL/AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

It was asked whether planning permission for affordable housing could be applied for, when not the Landlord. *AD agreed to find out.*

It was reported that there was currently a huge demand for affordable housing locally. Young People were unable to start on the housing ladder and 80% was quoted, as the percentage presently leaving the area, as they were priced out of the market.

RhE drew reference to the new pilot scheme, which was trialled by CCC to provide opportunities for local people to start on the property ladder, by purchasing a discounted parcel of land. Should the project prove successful, it would be expanded to other areas in Ceredigion. Two affordable self-build plots had been identified at Parc yr Hydd, Ciliau Aeron.

The Welsh Government often made planning decisions, which did not always agree with the Local Authority's decision.

8. **FUNDING**

Funding could prove a challenge and would be based on evidence of need.

The building was on the market for £120,000. DR supported the proposed project but questioned whether it was realistic for the Community Council to pursue an undertaking, which would require significant capital; he estimated that an additional £180,000 to the asking price would be necessary.

A mix of funding streams were available. Lottery Funding was an arduous process. CAVO could source pots of funding.

9. A Community Engagement Questionnaire/Survey was suggested as a starting point

Draft questions could be arranged.

It was asked whether individuals could be given a list of options and quote the preferred option. An inclusive approach was recommended.

The aim would not be to plant ideas, regarding the future use of the building but rather to seek suggestions, to obtain feedback for the project.

Survey: paper based (could be difficult under Covid-19 restrictions)

Survey Monkey (free online survey tool) could be used on social platforms Fb and Community Council's website.

Should community support be evident then the next step could be taken.

It would realistically require 6-12 months to secure £120,000 grant funding.

10. PLAN OF ACTION

10.1 Ask Mr Mike Lewis and Mr Vaughan Evans whether a period of 6 months grace could be given in order to allow the Community Council the time to explore options.

10.2 Obtain Community Feedback

10.3 Draft Business Plan

4-5 months would be necessary, not to get funding, but to establish a route for funding. The building could be sold to another party but it was felt that the ideas put forward for this building were transferable when considering other properties, which could arise. Advice could be sought from the Welsh Government re the demand for social housing for Young People. It was proposed that the Community Council attempted to purchase houses to be utilised by Young People or work in partnership with housing associations. The Community Council favoured homes for families rather than flats or single units.

The officers of CCC were thanked for their advice and for attending the meeting. County Cllr Ifan Lloyd Davies agreed to be the CCC's point of contact and to drive the project forward.

Officers of CCC left the meeting.

The Community Council reiterated the plan viz:

PLAN

- 1. Speak with ML re possible grace of 6 months**
- 2. Community engagement Survey/ Questionnaire**
- 3. Explore possibility of providing affordable homes**

The Community Council favoured converting the building to social/ affordable housing as opposed to a café. MP Ben Lake and MS Elin Jones could be contacted for support. It was reported that *Tai Ceredigion* had received funding via grants. It was felt that the Community Council could offer a house to a local person at a competitive rate.

Rent to buy was favoured. All money to be re-invested . Community shares were considered.

One pub remained in the Village as the Black Lion had transitioned to a B & B. Red Lion for sale.

It was stated that the Clerk ET would not have to attend future extraordinary meetings, concerning this project. LJ would arrange the Zoom meetings in future and arrangements made for minute taking. A delegation of the Community Council to attend.

CCC had recommended the setting up of a working party to include elected members and members of the community.

The meeting ended at 8.20pm.

===== (signed/date)