

Pontyclun Community Council
'Town Status' Working Group

Minutes for meeting: 29/08/2023

Meeting was held in person (with virtual option) in the office at Pontyclun Community Centre at 13:30.

Present:

Cllrs Jamie Daniel, Wayne Owen, Sian Assiratti.

Apologies:

Cllrs Susan Owen, Amanda Sparks, Rhys Williams.

Working group convener: Cllr Jamie Daniel

JD opened by thanking WO and SA for their presence and continued support for this proposal.

Public consultation

The Council carried out its consultation in the summer

This included:-

1. Letter to all shops in central Pontyclun - and talked about to many owners at that time.
2. 4-week open consultation on website - landing page on which consultation is has been visited by about 1600 people with over 3200 views in the timescale.
3. Discussions on 1-2-1 basis by Councillors with residents/businesses in area - approx. 750 discussions.
4. Discussed with residents at Council stall in Picnic in Park & at Food and Drink Festival.

In addition the proposals have been discussed at a number of Council meetings and one Councillor also included these proposals in their election manifesto

JD informed WO and SA that no negative comments had been received, with all responses received expressing a preference being in favour.

One resident responded with a detailed correspondence which raised a number of issues. JD addressed a series of questions with WO and SA and collectively resolved to answer/ amend the proposal as appropriate.

1. He asked why a poll was not commissioned?
 - a. This was because we estimated that this could cost around £10,000 to conduct; and due to the nature of the proposed boundary it would be difficult to execute in practice.

2. If the main aim of the proposal was to help businesses, then why did the boundary not including the Ivor arms in Brynsadler. The proposed boundary excludes this owing to the conterminous nature of the border of the boundary with the river. However, the working group agrees that this is a special circumstance and is willing to recommend remedying this boundary specifically around the Ivor Arms but for the proposed boundary to be otherwise unchanged.
3. There were three questions regarding grants
 - a. 'Who will apply for the grants?' - this is for the businesses to do on a case-by-case basis, unless stated otherwise.
 - b. 'Who will draw up the specifications for the grant applications?' - this will be done by whichever grant provider is in question. Generally, this will be either RCTCBC, the Welsh Government, or the U.K. Government.
 - c. 'Who will administer the grants' - this is like the previous question, and this will also be done by whoever is the grant provider.

Overall the results of the consultation can be summarised as:-

- 100% of email respondents indicated a positive view of the proposal.
- When the council's Chairman and Vice Chairman spoke to high street businesses about this proposal, all who expressed a view were broadly in favour of the proposal.
- Anecdotally, conversations between councillors and residents have been almost entirely in favour of this proposal.
- It is also noted that this was a manifesto commitment for an elected councillor on this council, and their election in and of itself is highly indicative of broad support for this proposal.
- It is also noted that elected representatives of Pontyclun Labour, Plaid Cymru, Conservatives and independents have championed this proposal to date.

Process to change status

If the Council wishes to progress then they will need to pass a resolution to affect the change and notify relevant stakeholders.

It should be noted that if this does happen and at any time in the future if Pontyclun Community was to be extinguished then the Town status would also lapse. If the Community Council was to be disbanded then the local electors could hold a meeting to remove Town status if they wished.

Post change actions

If Council was to progress change of status it would be opportune to raise awareness and maximise any benefits accruing from this

- Councillors will need to lobby relevant RCT CBC departments to ensure that Pontyclun was included in projects/activities for towns – current and future new ones
- Council should consider promotional activities around town status – eg Issuing honorary freedoms to residents who have made significant contributions to the community.

Recommendation

Based on this consultation, combined with broad political support from all elected parties within Pontyclun, the recommendation of this working group is that the council proceed as follows:-

1. The consultation to remain open until the Council meeting and is also promoted on the Council Facebook account. This will allow more people opportunity to comment before the Council meeting. Additional comments to be advised at Council meeting prior to final decision.
2. That the area defined within the proposal document, subject to the previously stated boundary amendment, be recognised as a town by Pontyclun Community Council and to notify RCTCBC and other relevant stakeholders.
3. That Pontyclun Community Council is renamed as Pontyclun Town Council with immediate effect.
4. As noted in the Consultation document, whilst the Council will call itself a Town Council changes to signage, logos etc to be done within existing budgets or as and when a change is required due to damage, aging etc rather than being changed just because of the name change.
5. Town status working group to remain in place for the rest of the year to commence activities to maximise opportunities to benefit from the Town status