

21 June, 2023

LLANELLI RURAL COUNCIL

Minute Nos: 79 – 81

At a Special Meeting of the **POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE** of the Llanelli Rural Council held at the Council Chamber, Vauxhall Buildings, Vauxhall, Llanelli, on Wednesday, 21 June, 2023 at 3.45 p.m.

Present: Cllr. R. E. Evans (Chairman)

Cllrs.

S. R. Bowen	J. P. Hart
T. M. Donoghue	S. N. Lewis
A. Evans	J. S. Phillips
N. Evans	W. E. Skinner
S. M. T. Ford	A. G. Stephens
B. M. Williams	

79. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology for absence was received from Cllr. D. M. Cundy (Cllr. T. M. Donoghue deputising).

80. MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

81. COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT FUND REVIEW

Further to Minute No. 267 (14 December, 2022, refers) members considered the general parameters of the community development fund grants policy.

During lengthy discussion it was opined the grant fund had lost its impact and general purpose because year on year, and having been led by the grants policy scoring matrix, the grants panel had repeatedly allocated grant awards to the same organisations for the same events or purposes because they had scored the highest marks when assessed against the scoring matrix. This was perhaps in preference to other equally deserving different causes in other electoral wards across the council's area. It was also highlighted that the Community Development Officer spent a considerable amount of time in annually administering the scheme in order to prepare an agenda of valid project applications for consideration by the council's grants panel using the scoring matrix to sift applications. In view of such it was moved that the grant scheme should be discontinued with immediate effect and that the corresponding budget saving of £20,000 be used for some other purpose but recognising the supply of Christmas trees in connection with celebrating Christmas events was widespread and popular. Therefore, the council should continue to support the procurement of Christmas

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trees but by its own direct means in order to attract better value for money through a single bulk purchase order based on procuring one Christmas tree per electoral ward. During the debate of the motion no consensus could be reached on how best the council should cater and respond to direct community requests for the supply of a Christmas tree, particularly in instances where an electoral ward was made up of more than one community. Some wards had more than one Christmas tree provided because of this. Moreover, there was no consensus on how any surplus funds remaining from the grants budget might be utilised in the future. Notwithstanding these points, it was felt the current arrangements could no longer be sustained given the natural bias attached to the processing of repeat projects through the existing grant framework. The motion was ultimately put to the vote and subsequently a recorded vote was requested. The motion was carried by seven member votes to two member votes with three abstentions and the names of members and how they voted upon the motion was recorded as follows:

<i>For</i>	<i>Against</i>	<i>Abstained</i>
S. R. Bowen	A. Evans	S. M. T. Ford
T. M. Donoghue	J. P. Hart	J. S. Phillips
N. Evans		A. G. Stephens
R. E. Evans		
S. N. Lewis		
W. E. Skinner		
B. M. Williams		

And it was ultimately,

RESOLVED that the Community Development Fund be discontinued with immediate effect. However, a proportion of the budget should be used to procure Christmas trees for the council’s seven electoral wards with one tree being procured per ward and that the local ward members determine where best to erect each Christmas tree.

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The meeting concluded at 4.50 p.m.

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The afore-mentioned Minutes were declared to be a true record of the proceedings and signed by the Chairman presiding thereat and were, on 11 July, 2023 adopted by the Council.