

LLANBOIDY COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF ORDINARY MEETING HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 3rd MAY 2023 AT 7.30 PM IN LLANBOIDY MARKET
HALL

PRESENT: Owain Young (OY), Susan Evans (SE), Eleri Jones (EJ), Rhiannon Davies (RD), Rodney Williams (RW), Dorian Phillips (DP), Nigel Thomas (NT), Delyth Dent.

APOLOGIES: Julie Thomas (JT). Dan Scannell (DS) not present.

IN ATTENDANCE: Cathy Davies (CD), Clerk; Jack Griffiths (JG), Tilhill; Iwan Parry (IP), Tilhill.

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC PRESENT: Iori Saer, Kath Lee, Jim Lee, Nessa Stace, Margery Langdon, Graham Scourfield, Hywel Thomas, Vanu Thomas, Rodney, Geoff Bovingdon, Gwyneth Bovingdon, Eddie Field (?), Kathleen Salman, Robert Salman, Michael Houldon, Mary Jordan, Mark Jordan, Annie Davies, Anthony Davies, Heulwen Morris, Pete Morris (21).

It was AGREED to delay the Annual General Meeting and approval of end of year accounts and all other ordinary business than the planned meeting with Tilhill concerning the proposed afforestation of Penback Farm, Llanboidy until the following week May 10th at the same time.

Residents of neighbouring properties to Penback had been invited to attend the meeting also and were informed they could ask questions at the end of the meeting. As no AGM had been held, the Chairperson remained Owain Young.

1. Accounts for Payment

Prior to the start of the open meeting, the following accounts were **APPROVED** for immediate payment.

Market Hall hire and ICO renewal – EJ proposed and SE seconded. ICO renewal to be paid by direct debit. Lighting charges – DD proposed and NT seconded. Election costs – EJ proposed and RD seconded. Admin. Expenses, HMRC and Clerk's salary also approved – proposed by SE and seconded by DP.

Payment	Details	Amount
Llanboidy Market Hall	Hall Hire – September to December 2022	£84
ICO	Renewal of data protection fee – set up direct debit?	£40
CCC	Footway lighting charges for 2022-2023	£1134.14
CCC	Election costs 2022 (overdue - 1 st invoice not received)	£323.32
C. Davies	Clerk's wages (April)	
HMRC	Tax on clerk's wages – paid as agreed at previous meeting	
Admin. Expenses	Quickbooks, printer ink, stamps	£35.40

2. Meeting with Tilhill:

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. He explained that we had prepared a list of questions, concerns and issues which have come from last week's meeting with neighbours and from emails sent to the Clerk. (This was circulated to Tilhill, all members and neighbours). Please ask any questions in addition to the ones we will be asking. He noted that although we understand it is in the process of being purchased for forestry [urposes, Llechclawdd is not yet under Tilhill management. Tilhill confirmed that Goddard Enterprises own Penback, brothers from Shrewsbury whose company is Morris Oils.

The Chair began to read from the sheet of questions and concerns to ask questions of Tilhill.

Chair. Are you getting money from the Glastir scheme to plant?

Tilhill. IP spoke and introduced them. Jack is Area Manager and Iwan is Regional Manager for Wales and Borders for forest management. Manage woods all over the country. Their role with Penback at this stage is to come up with a management plan for woodland creation. No firm plan in terms of the type of woodlands though outlined the max. amount of conifer is 75% and min. of broadleaves of 25% - 30% for bigger schemes. Specific plan has not been agreed. Field boundaries will stay as they are. No plans to get rid of the hedgerows. At this stage nothing is written in stone. Consultation is important. Tilhill see tonight as the start of the consultation process and feed it into the process. Plan is submitted to NRW for agreement or not if then verified put forward for fudnnig through Glastir. Probably about a 6 nmonth process before it's

agreed. Part of the process is they have missed some of the neighbours and not written to them or contacted them.

Chair – end use of timber for firewood amongst other uses?

IP - Lots of other uses eg timber for construction.

Chair: What are they intending to do with the farmhouse?

JG – it will be sold off with a bit of land around it. They will speak to neighbours to see if they have views.

Chair – in letter talks about economic benefits to the area – no-one local has been contacted.

JG – there is scope to use local people. Work done to date has been clearance and tidying up of hedges. 45 mins is based on their current contractors – IP – they are looking for contractors for this and wider Carms area. If there's an opportunity to engage local contractors they will consider this.

Chair – CC spent public money creating clear sightways at the crossroads for visibility reasons.

Chair passed on to DP as County Councillor.

DP - born and bred close to Penback and feels really hurt at the proposed changes to plant trees. Concerned about the killing/ destroying of smaller communities like ours. Not opposed to planting trees in the right place. Lots of existing woods already in the area so what is being gained by planting more? School and the Welsh language will suffer as the community dies. What benefits to the community are there? You haven't started well – not used any local businesses in the work undertaken to date.

Chair – feelings are quite strong against this proposal though not all against tree planting but depends on what kinds of trees etc and how this is done.

IP: We can make sure we do try and engage with local people, listen to their views. Contractors we use are all local and majority are Welsh speaking – living between 45 minutes and an hour from here. They earn their livelihoods from forestry. We can look at using more local people as long as they meet our H and S standards. Understand concerns about local farmland and community and want to keep the language alive. We need work, and forestry and other industries can play a role in this. We

will do our best to develop a plan for Penback that has the best possible outcomes for the local community. Tilhill don't buy or own land.

Chair: lot of the worry is around the use of herbicides and pesticides.

IP: Cypomethrin is not being used - it's banned. They use glyphosates instead.

Chair: Are the herbicides subject to assessment? Where are the findings available?

IP – freely available.

Chair: Will the land be drained prior to planting?

IP. Probably not.

Chair: According to Tilhill website trees don't need good land?

IP: Penback is an average of grade 4 – near the bottom of the scale - according to IP. We don't have grade 1 in Wales. 3 and 4 is majority grade in Wales.

Chair – would you count Penback as marginal land?

IP - not necessarily but has been graded at 4.

Chair: How much of the farm is likely to be planted?

IP – can't say at this stage as need to listen to what people are saying before we finalise plans.

DP – in Pumpsaint you didn't plant on the good agricultural land did you?

IP – no we didn't.

Chair: Would you be planning on planting up the good land?

IP: intention is to plant the whole lot at the moment.

Chair – what do you do with the existing woodland?

IP – depends on the owners as to what they want to do.

Chair – where would the trees be sourced from?

IP we have our own tree nursery in Maelor, Wrexham. We don't import conifers etc. The trees we grow in Wrexham are not imported.

Chair: How tall will the saplings be when planted

IP : 20 to 60 cms.

RW – how long is the rotation of the trees?

IP: Broadleaves 80-100 years. Conifers 30-60 years depending on what they are – 20 metres at maturity. Part of design is to ensure they take the landscape into consideration in consultation with local people. Broadleaves around outside and conifers inside usually.

Chair: Is there an Environmental Impact Assessment on Penback Farm?

IP: None done yet.

Chair: Will it consider bats, local wildlife etc. Have they looked at possible increase in badger population?

IP – not something they can influence.

Chair: Does EIA look at longterm impact on soil acidity, nutrient levels and structure and effect on watercourses. Will it increase likelihood of wildfires?

IP – won't increase likelihood of wildfires.

Chair: What about traffic flow etc.

IP – first few years not much increase in traffic for first twenty years but could be thinning after 20 years and some timber transport in that. Use Carmarthen-based and Pembs. based hauliers.

NT – rotation as you described is not what we've seen on the Preselis.

IP – the scale of that operation isn't seen any more – now max. of 10-20 hectares at a time.

CD: Will you produce a traffic management plan?

IP – traffic management plans in some areas. Traffic management plan not currently a requirement unless planning is required for access etc.

Chair – Penback has connections to the 2nd and 5th US Presidents. Important historic connections.

SE: article outlining how grassland is being lost to urban development and tree planting. Almost 200 million acres.

IP – woodland cover is at 14% in Wales. Drive from Govt is about climate change.

Chair – can you buy credits on carbon emissions?

IP – woodland carbon code in UK relating to new woodlands being created. Stringent process to validate any new woodland through this scheme but owners could sell those credits if they choose to register.

Chair – the owners should be consulting with us.

IP – will pass this on to Goddards.

NT: have any other methods of carbon capture been looked at?

IP – lots of research out there. Important to differentiate between sequestration and storage. Trees do sequester carbon and are good for this. Growing trees sequester carbon whilst growing and can then be used as timber to maintain that carbon capture.

SE – impossible to sequester all the carbon that is being produced.

Chair – tree doesn't take in carbon for the first six years –

IP: yes it's neutral then after that it starts taking in carbon.

RW: most people plant trees in the right place – why do you have to plant trees on this good farmland eg the wrong place.

IP – accept that view but their role is to do the best for Penback.

Chair – opened up to the public for questions.

Questions from the floor:

Anthony Davies – would you consider just planting indigenous trees not conifers.

IP – owners want to plant both.

Annie Davies – why does this not require planning permission?

IP – currently doesn't come under planning except for the EIA. Have to adhere to UKFS – so it is regulated.

Annie – to remove land from agricultural use especially what, for here, is prime arable land e.g. we had to apply for planning permission for a bit of field into garden so why doesn't this require planning permission.

IP – EIA is the equivalent and goes to NRW.

Annie – because it doesn't require planning permission plans for this forest it won't come up on searches?

IP – only once the determination is done.

DP – as County Councillors we are pushing for this sort of scheme to require planning permission.

IP – it's regulated by a different government department but it is regulated.

Neighbour: How many conifers would you plant?

IP - density level of 2500 trees to the hectare. Design will determine how they are planted – usually in groups of individual species. Britain do import most of our timber – second biggest importer of timber after China. We need to reduce our use of concrete and increase timber.

Neighbour: Conifers don't bring the wildlife or under canopy flora but are barren. Not attractive. There is so much land that is not economic to farm.

IP – we try to create new woodlands which are sympathetic to the environment and are well managed and give more chance for wildlife.

Mark Jordan: a number of queries. Herbicides and pesticides – which do you use?

IP – glyphosphate. Very safe.

MJ – will there be run off?

IP – no, I guarantee this.

IP – use Gazelle at the moment – the only approved chemical for the control of pine weevil but currently under review and mzyay well be gone soon. At a stage when we are moving towards much less use of chemicals. Likely to be moving towards bigger trees to curb pine weevil.

Neighbour: Do conifer woodlands reduce the bee population?

IP – not as far as I know. Will be open ground and therefore native species.

Neighbour: You said you would be using local contractors and I provided my details but no-one has been local who you have used. You haven't demonstrated that you will actually do this to date. Our farm is probably grade 5 but very productive. You won't be using local people for planting or spraying because they can't afford to get accredited. Are you going to leave the hedges to grow out or maintain them properly so

we continue to get e.g. woodcock and other birds? Bio diversity will change and likely reduce if the trees are planted.

JG we can look at buffer zones – have to leave 3 metres around hedges.

Chair – many people lay hedges around here.

IP – we can look at this. We've started over last 12 months for local young farmers fully funded and accredited over 3 week periods – will be launched again in the next month or two. Can be older possible contractors – will be a programme.

Neighbour: Can it be held in the local area and not only in the north?

IP - Scheme is for whole of Wales but in first year was only up north. Trying to create links with Coleg Sir Gar or Pembrok College. Probably for this year only in north Wales. Intention to build a contractor base for agricultural forestry.

Neighbour: I farm land adjoining Penback organically so good to know you're not planning to use cypomethrin. Would you be maintaining some sort of access to the watercourse from the river?

IP – if there are opps to improve the local environment we can try to do this. Opps. for local community incl. children to use the woodland etc. In some places we've established car parks for people to access and walk. Can't promise anything.

Neighbour: What happens when the trees are harvested eg scar on the landscape.

IP – will come down to the management of the woodland.

Neighbour: How close to the boundary lines will you be planting? What is the buffer zone in metres?

JG – broadleaves on the outside then a buffer zone. Hedgerow then 3 metre gap then broadleaves eg shrub trees if concerns about tall trees on roadside. IP/JG make it visually pleasing eg with tapering. IP – produce a planting plan usually.

Neighbour: Can you prepare an artists impression from each boundary property?

Neighbour: Shrubs or trees will start 3 metres from any hedgerows?

JG: Yes.

Neighbour: Penback is going to be forest not farmland?

IP – probably – that is the owners' intention.

Neighbour: Do we know where the access is going to be?

IP – not at the moment but probably at the top just after Jabajaks.

Neighbour: In your experience has anything come out of EIAs that can stop the project?

IP - Ancient monument but not much else.

SE- isn't there any non agricultural land you could be planting?

IP – probably is lot of other land foresters would like to plant but we don't choose what gets planted it's government.

SE: what are these areas not allowed to be planted?

IP: Mainly to do with habitat classifications. NRW dictate what happens.

DP – still very concerned that you would never be able to replace the employment created by Penback – JJ Morris responsible for this sort of change. Not helping local community at all. What financial gain to the community is there from this project?? What community benefits are there?

IP – what can you think of?

Chair – thank you to IP and JG for coming. Hopefully this will be the start of a conversation about this.

IP – those people we've missed we want to get in touch with.

Chair: If in doubt ask the CC.

3. AOB (if required)

There was none.

Next meeting date & time: AGM at 7.00 p.m. on Wednesday May 10th. Ordinary meeting @ 7.30pm, Market Hall, Llanboidy.

Cathy Davies – Clerk (clercllanboidy@gmail.com)

