**CRYNANT COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**HANDBOOK**

**1. WELCOME**

This is the handbook of Crynant Community Council.

It provides the reader with an easy guide to the work and responsibilities of the Community Council.

**2. PURPOSE**

The primary purpose of the Community Council is to represent the interests of the residents of the community of Crynant and to promote the well being of the local area. This work is principally carried out by making representations to the unitary authority for the area (NPT Council), other bodies and agencies such as the South Wales Police, the Welsh Assembly Government/National Assembly for Wales. This will include matters relevant to the ward County Councillor, AM, MP and MEPs.

3. **STANDARDS OF CONDUCT**

Members of the council are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the relevant codes of conduct for elected members of local authorities. Councillors are required to abide by the detailed rules and regulations, which are published for this purpose. Copies of the code will be held by the clerk, or can be obtained from NPT Council.

Members of the council have received copies of the guide published by the Welsh

Assembly Government titled “The Good Councillor’s Guide” and note the advice offered on good practise.

**4. EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES POLICY**

1. The Crynant Community Council are committed to actively opposing racism, sexism and all forms of discrimination faced by minority ethnic people, women, people with disabilities, lesbians and gay men.

**5**. **CLERK/FINANCIAL OFFICER**

Where a statue, regulation or order confers functions or duties on the proper officer of the council in the following cases, he shall be the clerk :-

1. To receive declarations of acceptance of duties.
2. To receive and record notices disclosing pecuniary interests.
3. To receive and retain plans and documents.
4. To sign notices or other documents on behalf of the council.
5. To receive copies of bylaws made by a county council.
6. To certify copies of bylaws made by the council.
7. To sign summonses to attend meetings of the council.
8. To provide a minute book for recording the proceedings of council meetings.
9. To provide an attendance record book.
10. To research for members of the council on issues which might arise?

In any other case the proper officer shall be the person nominated by the council and in default of nomination the clerk.

**6. ACCEPTANCE OF OFFICE**

The clerk will ensure that each person becoming a member of the Council completes a written declaration of acceptance of office.

**7. BUSINESS OF THE COUNCIL**

The business of the Council is conducted via monthly meetings, sub committees and special meetings where appropriate. Monthly meetings of the council are convened by public notice with an agenda prepared by the clerk and distributed to all members of the Council.

**8. ATTENDANCE**

A member will be disqualified if he fails throughout a period of four consecutive months from the date of his last attendance to attend any meeting of the authority, unless the failure was due to some reason, which has been approved by the authority before the expiry of that period.

**9. COMMITTEES**

The Council may form sub committees as appropriate. All their recommendations must be taken back to council for authorisation.

**10. MINUTES/RECORDS**

Minutes of the Community Council meetings must be kept. They must be drawn up by the proper officer of the Community Council (clerk) or a nominated person. They must be accepted as a true record at the next meeting of the Council and signed by the Chair or the person presiding at the start of that meeting. Sub committees and special meetings need not have the clerk present but the chair of the meeting should ensure a record is made of decisions/actions, which arise.

**11**. **BUDGET AND PRECEPT**

**a) Precept and Income**

The main funds and income for the Council come from the annual community charge precept. This is collected by NPT Council and paid to the Community Council in four instalments.

The precept provides an income/budget for the Council.

**b) Donations**

The Council will consider annual donations for local organisations in November of each year.

In exceptional circumstances a donation maybe considered outside of that period.

**12. INSURANCE**

The Council maintains an insurance policy in order to meet any claims for public liability incurred by the Council.

**13. ARCHIVE OF DECISIONS**

The clerk will retain the minutes and records for seven years. Financial records will be kept for the period specified in relevant regulations. The archive of the Council’s minutes has been placed with the Archives service of West Glamorgan.

**PART TWO – RULES AND CONSTITUTION**

**1. THE COUNCIL**

1.1 The Council will be known as Crynant Community Council.

1.2 There are 11 members of the Council who will be elected by those people on the electoral register and who are entitled to vote in relevant elections. The Council will act within the framework of the law and regulations that affect

local government.

**2. QUORUM**

a. The quorum for a meeting of the full Council will be four members.

**3. MEETINGS**

a. The Council will meet once a month (usually on the last Thursday of each month) except in the month of August and December. The statutory annual meeting (a) in an election year shall be held no later than the fourteenth day following the ordinary day of the elections to the council and (b) in a year which is not an election year shall be held on any day in May.

b. Meetings will be convened by a notice issued by the clerk with at least three clear days’ notice given.

c. If the clerk is unavailable then the chair/vice chair should convene the meeting and arrange for a minute to be kept of the meeting.

d. A public notice will be kept in the community notice board informing public of the details of meetings and the contact details of the clerk.

**4. SPEAKERS AND GUESTS**

a. The Council can invite speakers and other guests to address the Council. Such arrangements to be made in consultation with the Chair and/or Vice Chair. Guest speakers will normally be taken as the first item at a meeting of the Council unless the meeting decided otherwise.

b. Members of the public can attend ordinary and committee meetings of the Council and may speak with the permission of the Council.

c. Similarly the press may attend meetings of the Council. Members of the public and the press can be excluded from the meeting for discussion on specific items and for the reasons set out in statutory guidance usually confidential items.

**5. CHAIRPERSON/VICE CHAIRPERSON**

The election of the chairperson must be the first business of the annual meeting of the Council, the chairperson must be a member of the Council whether or not the Council has passed any standing orders, the Chairperson’s procedural authority is derived from the Council as a whole and an individual councillor must obey his/her rulings because they are the rulings of the Council itself.

It follows from this, however, that the Chairperson cannot overrule the Council and that a councillor who is dissatisfied by the Chairperson’s ruling may invite the Council to disagree with it. Such appeals against the chair ought to be very rare. The authority of the Chairperson, as such, is limited to matters of procedure and neither increases or decreases his/her right (in comparison with other members) to discuss the merits of a particular case. It is one of the most difficult tasks to remember that, while the Chair gives him/her authority on matters of procedure, it confers no rights (other than the casting vote) on matters of policy above those possessed by other members.

The chair and vice chair will provide overall leadership to the work of the Council and be responsible for guiding and advising the clerk on any urgent action required between meetings.

**7**. **DECISION MAKING**

**a) Consensus**

The Council will seek to reach decisions on the basis of discussion and reaching a consensus. The chair will guide such discussions and seek confirmation of any common position(s) that emerge through agreement on the words of a resolution to be recorded in the minutes.

**b) Voting**

Every decision must be made by a majority of the members present and voting. Local Government Act 1972 Schedule 12, paragraph 39(1) Amendments to a resolution will be voted upon before the main proposal. Unless otherwise provided by the council’s standing orders the manner of voting at meetings of a Community Council must be by a show of hands. Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12, paragraph 29(1)

Any member may request that the voting on any decision shall be recorded to show whether each member present and voting gave his/her vote for or against that question – this means that there is no requisite minimum number of members who may make such a request.

Local Government Act 1972, Schedule 12, paragraph 29(2)

In the event of a tied vote the chair of the meeting will exercise a casting vote.

A secret ballot can be held if requested by five members present at the meeting. The clerk will arrange to distribute a voting paper, and arrange to count the votes cast in any such ballot. The clerk will give the results to the chair of the meeting to be announced.

**8. INTERNAL AUDIT**

The Council will appoint an internal auditor at the annual general meeting.

**9. EXTERNAL AUDIT**

The clerk will ensure that proper financial records are submitted for audit in accordance with the relevant rules and regulations.

**10. FINANCIAL RULES**

**Orders for the payment of money shall be authorised by resolution of the council and signed by two nominated signatures as per the bank mandate.**

**(a)Where it is intended to enter into a contract exceeding £1000 in value for the supply of goods or materials for the execution of works the clerk shall invite not less than three contractors to submit tenders. Any works under £1000 may be authorised by the chair and clerk without reference to the committee.**

**(b)If no tenders are received or if all tenders are identical the council may make such arrangements for procuring the goods or materials , or executing the works, as it thinks fit.**

**11. ANNUAL MEETING**

At each annual meeting the first business shall be:

* Election of chairperson
* Receive the chairman`s declaration of acceptance of office or if not then received to decide when it shall be received.
* Election of Vice Chairperson
* To consider the payment of a chairman`s allowance.
* To appoint cheque signatories.
* To receive a financial report from the clerk
* Election of other appointments
* Any other business specified in the summons.

**12**. **VACANCIES AND CO OPTIONS**

17.1 After advertising by public notice in accordance with the Local Government Act 1972 any vacancy that occurs, the council can co-opt eligible electors to fill vacancies**.**

17.2 Expressions of interest in being co-opted should be submitted to the Council via the clerk.

**13. DISPUTE**

Any dispute over the interpretation of these rules will be resolved by reference to any models or good practise published by UNLLAIS CYMRU and/or the Welsh Assembly Government. If matters remain unresolved UNLLAIS CYMRU will be asked to offer advice.

14. Unauthorised activities:

No member of the council or of any committee shall in the name of or on behalf of the council :-

1. Inspect any lands or premises which the council has a right or duty to inspect; or
2. Issue orders;

Unless authorised to do so by the council or the relevant committee.