



Council Name	Blaenhonddan Community Council
Name of Meeting i.e. Full Council / Cabinet/ Scrutiny Committee	Monthly Meeting (October)
Meeting Date	16-10-2023

Please provide feedback on the following areas:

Question	Commentary
Were you able to access the meeting either virtually or in person or were there any difficulties?	<p><u>Answer</u> <u>Please highlight which of the three options below was applicable:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Not able to access or attend the meeting</li><li>• Accessed/attended the meeting but difficulties viewing and hearing matters</li><li>• Accessed/attended the meeting and was able to view and observe without difficulty</li></ul> <p><u>Comment</u></p> <p>Meeting attendance was in person although it was possible to attend virtually if required. As an observer, it was not clear if any members were attending online as there were no introductions made and there was no obvious indication of online attendance.</p>
Were you able to identify the status of individuals in the meeting i.e. officer or member?	<p><u>Answer</u> <u>Please highlight which of the three options below was applicable:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Not possible to determine the status of individuals in the meeting</li><li>• Determination of some individuals but not all</li><li>• Able to identify all members and officers and present</li></ul>

	<p><u>Comment</u></p> <p>The Chair introduced herself as did the council Clerk. As there were two observers of the Standards Committee present, they were introduced by name, but no other representatives/members of the meeting were introduced. The observers were not invited to explain their role or the function of the Standards Committee. This was a missed opportunity.</p>
<p>Were you able to access an agenda or copies of reports prior to the meeting?</p>	<p><u>Answer</u>  <u>Please highlight which of the three options below was applicable:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Access to agenda and reports not provided</li> <li>• Access to agenda only</li> <li>• Access to both agenda and all public papers under discussion</li> </ul> <p><u>Comment</u></p> <p>Documents were provided electronically, and a small number of hard copies were available for members. No checks were made as to whether the observers had access to these documents, or whether there was any sensitivity attached to them. Again, this is a missed opportunity to ensure ethical/GDPR treatment of documentation was ensured.</p>
<p>How was the meeting managed?</p>	<p><u>Answer</u>  <u>Please highlight which of the three options below was applicable:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Serious concerns that meeting did not function appropriately and no controls in place.</li> <li>• Some concerns about manner of meeting and the general conduct of business</li> <li>• No concern and meeting managed appropriately</li> </ul> <p><u>Comment</u></p> <p>Some members addressed questions, through the Chair, others did not. However, all matters were appropriately dealt with, and all normal protocols were observed. Questions were raised over several issues, sometimes this was by raising a hand, other times it was by polite interruption. There was some minor chatting whilst other conversations were in process. This was not overly disruptive, but a protocol / behaviour issue. The Chair did ask on two occasions for chatting to cease and for all matters to be addressed through her.</p>

<p>Were you able to understand the decisions that were being made at the meeting?</p>	<p><u>Answer</u>  <u>Please highlight which of the three options below was applicable:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not able to understand decision being taken and the process followed</li> <li>• Able to understand decision making but process seemed confusing</li> <li>• <b>No concerns and able to understand decision making and process</b></li> </ul> <p><u>Comment</u></p> <p>It was difficult to establish if all members in attendance were using their mobile devices to access documents or whether they were engaged in other private matters. Votes were taken on decisions but not all members voted consistently as they were using mobile technology (telephones). Decision making followed normal protocols of nominee, seconder, and unanimous decisions/voting. Unanimous votes were taken even though at least two decisions were deemed unanimous and the same person did not actually indicate agreement/non-agreement. It would be more appropriate to ensure all hands were raised/not raised when taking votes. At least one vote was taken when a member had left the room temporarily. This was an inappropriate practice.</p>
<p>Did you have any concerns relating to standards or ethics (i.e. any concerns regarding compliance with the member's code of conduct?)</p>	<p><u>Answer</u>  <u>Please highlight which of the three options below was applicable:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Concerns that will require future consideration by members of the Standards Committee and the Town/Community Council</li> <li>• Some concerns but these were addressed by the Clerk or Councillors themselves and no further action necessary.</li> <li>• <b>No concerns</b></li> </ul> <p><u>Comment</u></p> <p>Requests for financial aid were made to the Council by various parties. Declarations of conflicts of interest were raised. A decision was taken to support a national charity with financial aid even though it was pointed out that council policy was historically to only support local charities. The decision nonetheless stood even though objections were made post-vote.</p>

	No behaviours were observed which indicated any form of unethical practice. Minor disagreements were raised but these were politely addressed. The Chair sought views and attempted to move matters forward. The Clerk was also very professional and both parties worked effectively.
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I agree that my feedback can be shared both with the Standards Committee and the Council to whom this feedback relates.