

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF PORTSKEWETT COMMUNITY COUNCIL**  
**HELD AT SADBROOK TRINITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
**TUESDAY 16th APRIL 2019**

Councillors present:           Mr A Whiteley (Chair)  
   Mrs C Carne  
   Mr S Essery  
   Mr A Griffiths  
   Mrs C Hubbard  
   Mr P Nurcombe  
   Mr G Parker  
   Mr I Standing

1.   **PUBLIC MEETING**

Two Sudbrook residents attended the meeting to raise their concerns with regard to the new junction joining Sudbrook Road to the Mill Meadows site. There have been several occasions where vehicular accidents have narrowly been avoided.

The Chairman responded that when the community council had raised concerns with Monmouthshire County Council previously regarding the junction, they had been informed that the junction had been inspected and met with regulations.

It was suggested that the community council should request a site meeting with Highways to review the situation again.

The residents had attended a public meeting the previous week regarding the congestion issues Chepstow. Options to relieve the congestion were discussed, which would have a consequential impact on Portskewett, Sudbrook and Caldicot areas. The community Council was asked whether they would be having any input into the discussions on the options being proposed. The council responded that they would express concerns to Nick Ramsay.

2.   **SIGN THE ATTENDANCE BOOK**

The Attendance Book was duly signed.

3.   **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies had been received from Councillor Fawcitt, Councillor Hubbard and Councillor Fox.

4.   **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

There were no interests to declare.

5.   **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

It was proposed by Councillor Carne and seconded by Councillor Parker and agreed that the minutes of the last meeting were accepted as a true record. The Chairman duly signed the minutes.

6.   **CLERK'S REPORT**

The clerk's report for April had been circulated prior to the meeting for the councillor's consideration. The report was accepted by the meeting and the Chairman duly signed the report.

Councillor Parker informed the meeting that he had inspected the equipment requiring repairs at the Quest, and the work would be carried out at the earliest opportunity.

7. **REPORT FROM REPRESENTATIVE ON ARW SCHOOL AND OTHER BODIES**

- a. The Council's representative on the governing body of ARW School reported that the process of filling the Headship position is ongoing.
- b. The Council's One Voice Wales representative had attended a meeting on 4<sup>th</sup> April 2019. He informed the meeting that representatives from the Aneurin Bevan Health Board had done a presentation on the new development at Llanfrechfa Grange. Concerns had been raised at the meeting that Chepstow Hospital would be closed. The Health Board representatives responded that the plan was to improve the use of the hospital, not to close it.

8. **DISCUSSION WITH COUNTY COUNCILLOR**

The County Councillor was not present at the meeting.

9. **NEW CORRESPONDENCE**

a. **Planning Application DM/2019/00384**

The application had been circulated to members prior to the meeting for their consideration. It was proposed by Councillor Nurcombe and seconded by Councillor Whiteley that the application be recommended for approval, this was unanimously agreed by the meeting. The clerk was asked to submit the council's response to Monmouthshire County Council.

**Action BY**

b. **Society of Local Council Clerks Membership**

The cost of renewing the membership for 2019/20 would be £136. It was proposed by Councillor Parker and seconded by Councillor Carne that the membership should be renewed. This was unanimously agreed by the meeting.

**Action BY**

c. **Zurich Municipal Insurance**

Zurich Municipal was offering to provide a quotation for the council's insurance when it was due for renewal. The council had entered into a three year agreement in 2018 with Came and Company so were not in a position to change.

d. **Consultation on Draft Infill Development Supplementary Planning Guidance**

Members felt that a response from the council was not required.

e. **Proposed Closure of Mounton House Special School**

Members duly noted the information received on the proposed closure.

**Planning Applications Approved by Monmouthshire County Council**

00384	Mustoes Vehicle Repair Specialist, Unit 3 The Business Centre, Castle Way, Severn Bridge Industrial Estate, Portskewett	Extension to the existing vehicle repair facilities
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**Planning Applications Refused by Monmouthshire County Council**

01784	72 The Close, Portskewett	Erection of two new two bedroomed semi-detached houses in the garden of 72 The Close, Portskewett.
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10. **FINANCE**

- a. The pink paper for April was circulated prior to the meeting for the councillors' consideration and was duly authorised by the Chairman

The following payments were proposed by Councillor Carne and seconded by Councillor Nurcombe and unanimously agreed by members present:

Salaries	£1,103.26
Torfaen CBC – Pension contributions	£ 209.02
HMRC – NIC and PAYE	£ 110.85
Mr M Weaver – purchase of screwdriver bits for equipment repairs	£ 9.99
St Mary's Church – grant for grounds maintenance	£ 250.00

Sudbrook Trinity Presbyterian Church – hire of hall for meeting	£ 20.00
Society of Local Council Clerks – Subscription 2019/20	£ 136.00

b. Quarterly Report on Bank Reconciliations

Councillor Standing informed members that he had carried out the quarterly check on bank reconciliations on 15<sup>th</sup> April 2019. This covered the fourth quarter of the financial year 2018/19. Councillor Standing confirmed that all entries were present and correct.

d. Budget Monitoring Report for the 12 months to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2019

The quarterly budget monitoring report for the twelve months ended 31st March 2019 was circulated to members prior to the meeting for their consideration.

The clerk informed members that the significant variance to budget was mainly due to no expenditure being incurred against the Sudbrook Community Fund, and no significant expenditure being incurred on the Unidentified Services Contingency Budget. The remaining variance resulted from the following:

- I. Insurance review resulted in a saving of £581
- II. Fewer grant applications were received leading to an underspend of £1,188
- III. No Fun Day was held in 2018 due to WW1 Commemorative events, the resulting underspend being £415.
- IV. There was no election in 2018, the unspent budget of £750 will be held in reserves.
- V. The training budget was underspent by £525.
- VI. The salary budget overspent by £309 as a result of pay awards being higher than anticipated.

The year end balances of £18,043.56 were in line with the forecast balances of £18,235.

Members had no questions for the clerk. The report was duly accepted by the meeting.

e. Update on Minimum Wage Legislation

The clerk informed members that from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2019 the Minimum Wage rate had increased; the hourly rate payable to the caretaker would therefore increase from £7.83 to £8.21.

The budget set for salaries in 2019/20 was £14,419 and expenditure was now anticipated to be £14,423.

f. Unaudited Accounts 2018/19

The unaudited accounts had been circulated prior to the meeting for the councillors' consideration. There were no issues which required bringing to the members' attention, and members had no questions for the clerk.

The clerk informed members that the internal audit had been arranged and that the annual governance statement would need to be completed at the next meeting, when the annual return was approved.

At this point in the meeting Councillor Whiteley proposed that Standing Orders be suspended to consider a grant application from Portskewett and Sudbrook Recreation Hall. This was seconded by Councillor Nurcombe and agreed by the meeting.

Portskewett and Sudbrook Recreation Hall had submitted a grant application for the Oak Grove Community Fund, for financial assistance with grounds maintenance. The expected cost was £2,250 and £725 of the organisation's own funds would be used. The grant requested was £1,500.

As the Oak Grove Community Fund is not available to fund revenue projects it was proposed by Councillor Parker and seconded by Councillor Nurcombe that a grant should be allocated from council funds under Section 56: Payments to support public walks & pleasure grounds provided by anyone. As the council's grant budget is limited it was proposed by Councillor Parker and seconded by Councillor Nurcombe that a grant of £725 be allocated to match the organisation's contribution.

Both proposals were unanimously agreed by members present.

**Action BY**

Standing Orders were reinstated at the Chairman's request.

11. **BEST KEPT VILLAGE COMPETITION**

The clerk informed the meeting that changes were being made to the 2019 competition and judging was expected to take place in September instead of July.

It was proposed by Councillor Parker and seconded by Councillor Standing that the villages of Portskewett and Sudbrook should be entered into the 2019 competition.

The clerk was asked to submit the necessary paperwork when required.

**Action BY**

12. **ITEMS OF LOCAL CONCERN (FOR INFORMATION ONLY)**

**Black Rock Picnic Site**

Two local residents who voluntarily visit the site to recover any recyclable rubbish had once again requested that a dog refuse bin be installed so they would not be sorting through dog waste whilst separating the recyclable materials.

Councillors reiterated that as dog waste bins have to be emptied by a specialist service provider it was not a financially viable option. As the council had already taken steps to improve recycling at Black Rock by having separate bins installed for the different types of recyclable materials, it was felt that the current option was satisfactory.

The meeting was informed of a report of verbal abuse towards a person wanting to use the picnic site car park in order to walk a dog in the area, at the time the car park barrier was being locked.

**Lorries Using Main Road to access Black Rock Road**

Complaints had been received of lorries using Main Road to gain access to a works site on Black Rock Road. Members confirmed that the Leechpool roads could not be used due to the weight restrictions on them so Main Road was the only option for access.

**75 Service Bus**

A Sudbrook resident had raised concerns that the 75 bus service may be discontinued. A number of residents currently use the service. Councillors believed that there may be provision within Section 106 funding from the developments in Sudbrook earmarked for transport which may be able to be used to support the service. Clarification would have to be provided by Monmouthshire County Council.

**One Voice Wales Representative**

Councillor Essery confirmed that he would continue as the council's One Voice Wales representative.

**Items for May Agenda**

It was proposed by Councillor Whiteley and seconded by Councillor Nurcombe that the following two items be included on the May agenda:

1. Sponsorship of the GAVO/MCC Annual Volunteering Awards
2. Consultation on Revised Draft Affordable Housing SPG

**Playground Inspections**

Notification had been received from RoSPA Play Safety that the annual playground inspections would be carried out during June.

**Dog Waste Bin Emptying**

An invitation had been received to join a working group, coordinated by Abergavenny Town Council, to review dog waste bin services across the county. As the community council has no dog waste bins it was felt there would be no benefit in taking part.

### Police Report

The police report for the period covering 20<sup>th</sup> February to 9<sup>th</sup> April 2019 had been circulated to councillors for their information.

### New Website Regulations

The clerk had received notification that new regulations would be coming into force in respect of websites. Members will be updated as more information becomes available.

### Caldicot Comprehensive School

Councillor Nurcombe informed members that new leadership arrangements were being put in place for the school, a strategic partnership was being developed with the Bishop of Llandaff Church in Wales High School. He explained that Bishop of Llandaff has many similarities to Caldicot in terms of its profile, size and ethos and is a high performing school, achieving five excellent judgments from Estyn in February 2018. The partnership offers the opportunity of development across both schools. The Head teacher of Bishop of Llandaff will provide leadership for both schools as Executive Head teacher with Caldicot's deputy head becoming Acting Head of School. The Governing Body believe that this is an approach that will add huge value to pupils' learning.

### Village Caretaker Role

With the new housing developments being built in Portskewett and Sudbrook the caretaker had raised the issue of future caretaking arrangements in the villages, in terms of whether the role would require an increase in hours to cover the new developments. It was suggested that it may be more appropriate to employ two part time caretakers, one to cover Sudbrook village and the other Portskewett village.

## 13. **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and gave the date and time of the next meeting as **Tuesday 21st May at ARW School, Portskewett**, the meeting was then declared closed at 8.40pm.