

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF PORTSKEWETT COMMUNITY COUNCIL

HELD VIA REMOTE ACCESS

TUESDAY 17th NOVEMBER 2020

Councillors Present:

Mrs C Carne (Chair), Mr C Archer, Miss L Dymock, Mr S Essery, Mr T Fawcitt, Mr A Griffiths, Mr P Nurcombe, Mr G Parker, Mr I Standing, Mr P Fox.

1. **PUBLIC MEETING**

Due to the Government restrictions in respect of COVID19 the meeting was held by remote access and no members of the public had requested to participate. No issues had been raised with the clerk by members of the public prior to the meeting.

2. **SIGN THE ATTENDANCE BOOK**

Due to the remote nature of the meeting it was not possible to sign the Attendance Book.

3. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

4. **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Cllr Fawcitt and Cllr Parker declared an interest in agenda item 13a Oak Grove Community Fund 2020/21 as they are on the committee of Sudbrook Play Park, and had submitted an application.

5. **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

The Chair moved that the minutes of the last meeting were accepted as a true record with an amendment to item 13, where Cllr Griffiths name should be removed. Proposed by Cllr Dymock seconded by Cllr Nurcombe and agreed by all present. **Action: Cllr Carne to sign minutes, Clerk to get amended before publishing.**

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

Cllr Carne reported that the school were preparing the Forward 3 Year Plan, with the emphasis on next year.

7. **DISCUSSION WITH COUNTY COUNCILLOR**

Cllr Dymock reported that work is ongoing for Monmouthshire's Christmas markets and support for businesses. Discussions are ongoing in respect of Corona Virus vaccines. County Cllr Fox reported that MCC are managing the COVID19 situation well, details of the self-isolation payment are on the MCC website. Enforcement of the COVID19 regulations is difficult. A further national lockdown is likely mid-January and local restrictions are likely to continue UK wide.

8. **NEW CORRESPONDANCE AND MATTERS RAISED**

- a. The replacement of Office 2010 will be finalised when the purchase of the laptop is complete.

The Chair moved to suspend standing orders to consider two planning applications received after the agenda had been published and requiring a response before the December meeting. Proposed by Cllr Dymock, seconded by Cllr Archer, agreed by all present.

Planning Application DM/2020/01527

The application was for a double storey side extension and rear single storey extension at 38 Caldicot Road, Portskewett. Members had no objections to the application. The Chair moved that the application be recommended for approval, proposed by Cllr Dymock, seconded by Cllr Griffiths, agreed by all present. **Action: Clerk to submit response.**

Planning Application DM/2020/01568

The application was for the demolition of existing ground floor extension and garage and erection of new single storey extension at Mimosa, 6 Caldicot Road, Portskewett. Members had no objections to the application. The Chair moved that the application be recommended for approval, proposed by Cllr Dymock, seconded by Cllr Griffiths, agreed by all present. **Action: Clerk to submit response.**

Chairman's signature

Standing Orders were reinstated at this point.

9. **MATTERS UNRESOLVED FROM LAST MEETING AND FOR ACTION**

a. **Playlist for Life**

Playlist for Life are a dementia music charity who provide free services promoting the therapeutic use of musical memories for those with dementia. The charity was asking the council to sign up as a Playlist Community Shielding Help Point, to promote the service to the community, to help carers and relatives create playlists. The Chair moved that the council should sign up and support the project, proposed by Cllr Archer, seconded by Cllr Dymock, all in agreement. **Action: Clerk to respond.**

b. **Independent Review Panel for Wales Report 2021/22**

The clerk had circulated the report prior to the meeting for members' consideration. It was duly noted and agreed that no response was required. The contents of the report will be taken into account when setting the budget for 2021/22.

c. **St Mary's Church Grant Application for 2021/22**

A grant application had been received requesting the sum of £500 for 2021/22 towards grounds maintenance of the churchyard.

The clerk reminded members of the statement from the National Association of Local Councils, which sought to clarify the position with regards to a council's ability to make payments to a religious body. The powers in the 1894 Act prohibit councils' involvement in property relating to the affairs of the church; however it is questionable whether subsequent legislation may override the original prohibition. Until such time as a court determines the extent of any prohibition from the 1894 Act, a Council considering making a payment in these circumstances is advised to consider whether it is prudent to take a course of action that it cannot be certain is legally valid.

Members agreed that the churchyard was an integral part of the villages, and now also contained the Heritage Centre, it was therefore felt it would be detrimental to the villages if a contribution was not made. The Chair moved that the council provide a budget of £500 for this in 2021/22, proposed by Cllr Fawcitt, seconded by Cllr Griffiths, agreed by all present.

Planning Applications Approved by Monmouthshire County Council

01027 – Church Field House, Manor Way, Portskewett:

To renovate remaining part of garage into office space.

01316 – The Homestead, Ifton Hill, Portskewett:

Erection of detached double garage in the garden of existing detached house.

Planning Applications Refused by Monmouthshire County Council

No planning applications have been refused by Monmouthshire County Council this month.

10. **FINANCE**

a. **Pink Paper November**

The pink paper for November was circulated prior to the meeting for the councillors' consideration.

The chair moved that the following payments be approved, proposed by Cllr Fawcitt, seconded by Cllr Nurcombe, agreed by all present.

Salaries	£1,201.45
Torfaen CBC – Pension contributions	£ 225.04
HMRC – NIC and PAYE	£ 114.05
Monmouthshire County Council – Grounds Maintenance Contract 2020/21	£2,984.83
Monmouthshire County Council – Summer Play Scheme 2020	£ 1,000.00

Action: Cllr Carne, Cllr Fawcitt and Cllr Nurcombe to sign. Clerk to set up payments.

Balances held: Current Account £3,300.72 and Deposit Account £9,552.32.

b. Budget for Discussion 2021/22

The proposed budget had been circulated prior to the meeting for consideration.

The proposed budget was based on a combination of the actual 2020/21 expenditure to date and the forecast outturn for the year.

The responsible finance officer brought to members' attention the areas within the proposed budget where changes to the proposed figures could be made.

The responsible finance officer reminded members that guidance recommends that reserves equating to between 3 and 6 months expenditure should be held, as a safeguard against unforeseen circumstances. The contingency of £8,750 equated to less than 3 months expenditure.

The responsible finance officer reminded members that the Oak Grove Community Fund was a specific reserve that could not be used to meet ongoing costs incurred by the council.

Following detailed examination of the proposed budget it was proposed by Cllr Parker, seconded by Cllr Nurcombe, agreed by all present that the following amendments be made to determine the final budget for approval in December:

- a. The budget for Monmouthshire County Citizens Advice Bureau should be increased to £1,500.
- b. The budget for St Mary's Church for grounds maintenance should be £500.
- c. The budget for Christmas trees should be increased to £1,500 to allow acquisition of flagpole trees.
- d. A budget of £1,500 should be established to acquire a defibrillator and cabinet.
- e. Website Accessibility Regulations budget be set at £100 to allow for ongoing compliance work.
- f. A Place Plan budget of £500 be provided for costs incurred in the production of a Place Plan.
- g. A budget for Councillor's Allowances of £200 be established, to provide for any future claims.

The revised expenditure budget for 2021/22 would be £52,181.

It was proposed by Cllr Parker, seconded by Cllr Nurcombe, agreed by all present that a precept of £33,500 should be requested. **Action: Clerk to amend budget and agenda for approval at December meeting.**

11. WEBSITE

- a. MCC ran a compliance testing programme on the website the results of which had been shared with members & the website developer. The developer would make the necessary changes required of them, and had advised the council of the areas they needed to resolve. **Action: Clerk to resend developer's response to Cllr Dymock and Cllr Archer.**

The clerk had requested training on the website package. The Chair moved that the training should be arranged when COVID19 regulations allowed, proposed by Cllr Nurcombe, seconded by Cllr Dymock, agreed by all present. **Action: Clerk to arrange training.**

12. PLACE PLAN

- a. Planning Aid Wales will be providing remote training from January 2021. Cllr Archer confirmed that Caerwent and Rogiet Community Councils had confirmed they would share the cost. Cllr Carne and Cllr Dymock will also participate in the training.

Cllr Archer reported that following training there would be three phases in developing the plan:

- Phase 1 – Consultation
- Phase 2 – Produce draft plan
- Phase 3 – Consultation on the draft plan.

13. OAK GROVE SOLAR FARM FUND 2020/21

Cllr Fawcitt and Cllr Parker withdrew from the meeting at this point having declared an interest in this item.

Applications had been received from:

- Caldicot & District Historical Society for the Tunnel Centre in Sudbrook - £920.00
- Sudbrook Play Park to purchase fruit trees - £522.00
- Portskewett & Sudbrook Sports & Leisure to resurface access lane into the Cornfield - £4,000
- Portskewett & Sudbrook recreation Hall for new fencing between Rec Hall & Cornfield - £9,000
- Black Rock Lave Net Fisherman's Association to install power supply to Net House - £5,305.50
- Bertie's Amateur Boxing Club to purchase 14ft boxing ring - £4,950.50

The balance on the Council's donations budget was £600, The Chair moved that the application submitted by Sudbrook Play Park be funded from the donations budget, proposed by Cllr Nurcombe, seconded by Cllr Archer, agreed by all present. **Action: Clerk to respond accordingly and make payment of £522.00**

The grant fund available was £5,000, the remaining applications totalled £24,176. Following discussion the Chair moved that £1,000 be awarded to each project, proposed by Cllr Nurcombe, seconded by Cllr Archer, agreed by all present. **Action: Clerk to request funds from MCC, notify the applicants and make payments when funds received.**

Cllr Fawcitt and Cllr Parker re-joined the meeting.

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

Monthly Police Report

The report had been circulated to members prior to the meeting.

Council Noticeboard at Church Hall

A request was made to relocate the noticeboard as it's proximity to the perimeter wall makes access very difficult. The clerk had also received comments from residents that it's distance from the pavement made reading notices very difficult. The Chair undertook to approach the school to discuss re-siting the notice board on the verge outside the school.

Trees at Richard's Quest

Residents of 53 and 54 Main Road had informed the Council that the trees at the bottom of Richard's Quest have grown very tall and are shading the gardens. Clerk to agenda in December.

Map on the Green

Cllr Griffiths reported that the condition of the map on the village green is good, he has cleaned the glass casing. He has also cleaned the signs in Harold's Field but they need replacing.

Christmas Lights

Cllr Parker will collect the Christmas trees next week. New batteries are required for the lights. The Chair requested that the lights be set to come on at 4pm, the timer is 6 hours so they will go off at 10pm.

Biodiversity report 2020

The clerk reminded members that the Biodiversity report for 2020 needs to be submitted to Welsh Government by the end of December 2020. Cllr Archer agreed to draft the report for approval at the December meeting.

15. **STAFF APPRAISALS**

The Chair will complete the clerk's appraisal now she has returned to work.

16. **LAPTOP**

The purchase of a laptop will be completed when a bank debit card has been obtained.

17. **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and gave the date and time of the next meeting as **Tuesday 15th December, via remote access**. The meeting was declared closed at 8.30 pm.