

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF PORTSKEWETT COMMUNITY COUNCIL

HELD VIA REMOTE ACCESS

TUESDAY 20th APRIL 2021

Councillors Present:

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

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.

Cllr Archer had received complaints from Sudbrook residents regarding the extremely bad odour emanating from the Sewage Storage Pumping Station located in a field near the entrance to the village. Residents are concerned that with the increased building on the Mill Meadows site, along with the extra underground storage tank that has been installed, the odour will only increase.

Councillors agreed responsibility lies with Welsh Water. **Action: Clerk to write to Welsh Water.**

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**

Apologies had been received from Cllr Fawcitt, Cllr Essery who was unable to attend due to illness and Cllr Richards due to work commitments.

4. **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

There were no interests to declare.

5. **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

- a. The Chair moved that the minutes of the last meeting were accepted as a true record, proposed by Cllr Archer, seconded by Cllr Nurcombe, agreed by all present. **Action: Cllr Carne to sign minutes, Clerk to publish on website.**

6. **CLERK'S REPORT**

The clerk's report for April had been circulated prior to the meeting for members' consideration.

The following updates were given:

Cllr Dymock attended a site meeting at the caravan outside the Old Shipyard. The occupant was offered accommodation but refused it. Monmouthshire County Council officers are pursuing the issue.

Cllr Dymock confirmed that Monmouthshire County Council have keys for the bollards on the coastal path. If necessary the emergency services would use bolt cutters to gain access.

Cllr Dymock confirmed the information on Grants for hospitality industry and associated businesses had been published on the council Facebook page.

Cllr Archer confirmed the Biodiversity Report had been drafted. **Action: Cllr Archer to forward report to clerk for consideration at the next meeting.**

The Chair moved that the report be accepted, proposed by Cllr Dymock, seconded by Cllr Archer, agreed by all present. **Action: Cllr Carne to sign report.**

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

Cllr Carne had nothing to report from ARW School.

Cllr Carne attended the OVW branch meeting on 15th April. The guest speaker was from Natural Resources Wales. The discussion centred around flooding and fly tipping. Councils commented that they found it difficult to get a response to queries and that there should be better liaison between public bodies. A contact number was provided.

Cllr Carne attended the Dog Fouling Awareness meeting on 18th March. An awareness day is being held in Abergavenny on 22nd April. Portskewett awareness day will be arranged when COVID restrictions allow.

Cllr Carne raised the issue of providing dog waste bins in the community council area. Following discussion on Health and Safety issues associated with handling refuse bags containing dog waste, the clerk was asked to provide information on the cost of installing bins and having them emptied, for consideration at the next meeting. **Action: Clerk to obtain costings and agenda in May.**

8. **DISCUSSION WITH COUNTY COUNCILLOR**

The County Councillor was unable to attend the meeting. Cllr Dymock reported that Richard John will become leader of MCC in May and Cllr Fox will become a back bencher. Cllr Dymock informed councillors of a new fund available to support local skills, entrepreneurship and innovation. The fund is for pilot projects in 2021/22. A livestreamed event is being held at 4.30 on 27th April for anyone interested in applying to the fund. **Action: Clerk to publish information on website.**

9. **NEW CORRESPONDANCE AND MATTERS RAISED**

a. Correspondence from Lloyds Bank

Notification had been received from Lloyds Bank that a payment of £100 had been made to the council as compensation for the time taken to clear two cheques through the bank account.

b. Consultation on Litter and Fly-tipping Prevention Plan for Wales

No comments were made on the plan by councillors. It was agreed that no response would be submitted.

Planning Applications Approved by Monmouthshire County Council

00054 Land off Black Rock Road, Portskewett Conversion of redundant store

Planning Applications Refused by Monmouthshire County Council

No applications were refused this month.

10. **FINANCE**

a. Renewal of SLCC membership for 2021/22

The cost of renewing membership for 2021/22 would be £185. Cllr Nurcombe proposed that membership be renewed, seconded by Cllr Parker, agreed by all present. **Action: Clerk to renew membership.**

b. SLCC & OVW Joint Virtual Conference

The conference will be on 13th May 2021 from 10am to 4pm, the cost is £54, and is open to clerks and councillors. Cllr Carne proposed the clerk should attend, the cost being shared with Llanbadoc Community Council, seconded by Cllr Archer, agreed by all present. **Action: Clerk to book a place.**

c. Application for a Grant from St Mary's Church

An application for a grant of £500 had been received from ST Mary's Church, Portskewett, to help meet the cost of grounds maintenance. The clerk reminded councillors of the advice from NALC regarding payments to churches for grounds maintenance. Cllr Archer proposed a grant of £500 be approved, seconded by Cllr Parker, agreed by all present. **Action: Clerk to notify church.**

d. Payroll Payments Schedule 2021/22

The schedule covers the monthly payments for the clerk's salary and pension and the caretaker's salary. Cllr Archer proposed the schedule be approved, seconded by Cllr Parker, agreed by all present.

e. Pink Paper April

The pink paper for April was circulated prior to the meeting for the councillors' consideration. Cllr Archer proposed the following payments be approved, seconded by Cllr Parker, agreed by all present.

	£'s
Salaries	1,206.65
Torfaen CBC – Pension contributions	225.04
HMRC – NIC and PAYE	108.16
SLCC – membership for 2021/22	185.00
SLCC - SLCC & OVW Joint Virtual Conference (clerk)	27.00
St Mary's Church – Grant for Grounds Maintenance 2021/22	500.00

Balances held: Current Account £2,167.99 and Deposit Account £9,552.32.

Action: Clerk to make payments.

Chairman's signature

At this point in the meeting the Chair moved that standing orders be suspended to approve payment of two additional invoices and approve training for Cllr Archer.

One Voice Wales invoiced the sum of £30 for a councillor's attendance at Code of Conduct training on 19th March 2021. Cllr Dymock proposed the payment be approved, seconded by Cllr Parker, agreed by all present. **Action: Clerk to make payment.**

Mr P Murphy invoiced the sum of £200 for carrying out the internal audit for the year ended 31st March 2021. Cllr Parker proposed the payment be approved, seconded by Cllr Nurcombe, agreed by all present. **Action: Clerk to make payment.**

Planning Aid Wales/One Voice Wales are holding an online event on 23rd June 2021; Regenerating Welsh Towns and Communities post Covid-19, which Cllr Archer and Cllr Dymock would like to attend. The cost is £50 per attendee. Cllr Parker proposed Cllrs Archer and Dymock should attend, seconded by Cllr Nurcombe, agreed by all present. **Action: Clerk to book two places.**

Standing orders were reinstated at this point.

f. Unaudited Accounts for 2020/21

The unaudited accounts had been circulated for consideration prior to the meeting. The clerk confirmed the internal audit had now been completed, and no issues had been raised. The Annual Return will be presented for completion and approval at the May meeting.

g. Quarterly Report on Bank Reconciliations

Cllr Standing had carried out the quarterly check on bank reconciliations. He confirmed that all records were correct.

h. Quarterly Budget Monitoring Report for the 12 months to 31st March 2021

The report had been circulated prior to the meeting for members' consideration. Cllr Nurcombe proposed the report be approved, seconded by Cllr Dymock, agreed by all present. **Action: Clerk to publish on website.**

i. Meeting of the Audit Committee

The audit committee are required to carry out the review of internal control prior to completion of the Annual Return at the May meeting. Virtual meeting will be held on 4th May at 2pm. **Action: Clerk to publish agenda and papers.**

j. No BBQ Signage for The Quest

Most of the signs available were small, the clerk had obtained 2 estimates:

- Amazon - 30cm x 20cm x 1.2mm rigid plastic, cost £5.78 incl vat and delivery
- Key Signs – 20cm x 15cm x 1mm rigid plastic, cost £8.65 plus £4.95 p&p

Councillors agreed that due to the issues with dog fouling, signage should also be installed saying "no dogs allowed in this area", and that all signs should be bilingual. **Action: Clerk to obtain quotes for both signs in English and Welsh.**

k. Acquisition of Laptop, Docking Station and Office 365

Cllr Archer had obtained 3 quotes for the required equipment, details had been circulated prior to the meeting. Option 1 was the recommended option with 2 years Care and Repair cover, at a cost of £699. Cllr Nurcome suggested the family licence for Office 365, at a cost of £79.99. Cllr Archer proposed Option 1 be acquired with 2 years Care and Repair cover and a Family licence for Office 365, seconded by Cllr Parker, agreed by all present. **Action: Clerk to make purchase.**

l. Cost of Reprinting Portskewett and Sudbrook Map

The clerk tried to contact Caldicot Printing but had no response. The clerk had found 3 prints of the map, and had sold one to the resident who recently enquired about them, so 2 copies remain. It was suggested a small watermarked copy be put on the website, when photos are available, informing the public copies are available from the Council. **Action: Clerk to contact Chepstow Printers to establish printing cost.**

11. **ANNUAL PLAN**

The working group met and a draft Annual Plan had been circulated for consideration. It was suggested that defibrillators and defibrillator training be added to the plan, and that Harold’s Field should be added under “Taking Care of our Environment: Maintenance of the Quest”. Cllr Nurcombe proposed that, with the additions, the plan be approved, seconded by Cllr Parker, agreed by all present. **Action: Cllr Archer to update plan.**

12. **COUNCIL INSURANCE**

a. **Update on Land Under Responsibility of the Council**

The clerk reviewed council records. A Monmouthshire Association of Parish Councils document dated 21.1.1969 showed land registered without application by the registration authority (MCC); this registration was provisional. Later correspondence did not confirm the registration. The document refers to: Black Rock Common, Stowball Common, The Village Green.

Linda Lang from the Estates department at MCC confirmed that the area of Village Green by the barns is registered as part of Harold’s Field and is owned by MCC. Correspondence in PCC records (28.6.2000) states the area of village green adjacent to the Old Dairy was part of County Farms Holding Land, and has been adopted as part of the highway by MCC, but is not owned by MCC. Linda Lang confirmed the area adjacent to 1 Crick Road and that adjacent to 56 Caldicot Road are not owned by MCC, but may also have been adopted as part of the highway.

Tudor Baldwin from MCC Land Charges department has confirmed that there is no record of ownership of Stowball Common and Black Rock Common, and that Black Rock Common extends up to the walls of the barns. Correspondence from 1991 states common land has no ownership but any Local Authority may take reasonable steps to care for it.

Correspondence from 1969 indicates that a Mr Rennie believed Stowball Common was in his ownership, later correspondence neither confirms or denies this.

Cllr Archer proposed that land registry searches be carried out to establish any registered ownership of the areas of land in question, seconded by Cllr Parker, agreed by all present. A budget of £150.00 was agreed. **Action: Clerk to complete the searches.**

b. The clerk received confirmation from the insurance company that the caretaker’s competency to carry out playground inspections would not be challenged if, due to COVID19 restrictions, he was unable to renew his certification prior to the current certification expiring.

The current insurance includes cover for the play equipment at Sudbrook Play Park, which is now insured by MCC. It is only the Multi-play Equipment, valued at £10,220.90, which has a value specified for insurance and on the asset register. The remaining equipment is listed on the asset register with no value as there are no known records and it is a community asset. Cllr Nurcombe proposed the equipment at Sudbrook Play Park be removed from the asset register, and the insurance company be notified that the Multi-play equipment should be removed from the policy, seconded by Cllr Dymock, agreed by all present.

Mike Moran advised it would not be necessary to do an asset transfer as he believes MCC installed the first equipment in the early 1980’s, and more recent additions have been funded from Section 106 monies and solar farm grants.

13. **SPRING CLEAN CYMRU**

a. An event is being held across Wales from 28th May to 13th June 2021. Cllr Dymock proposed the Council organise a litter picking event on 29th and 30th May, seconded by Cllr Parker, agreed by all present.

Action: Clerk to contact Keep Wales Tidy and ask for 100 litter pickers and bag holders, and boxes of gloves; and to inform insurance company. Cllr Parker to undertake risk assessment for the event. Cllr Dymock to organise publicity and volunteer groups.

14. **TREE INSPECTION REPORT**

a. Cllr Parker reported that work has commenced on the tree at the Quest but has not yet been completed.

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

Police Report

The monthly report had been circulated to members prior to the meeting. There were no issues raised by Councillors and the report was duly noted.

Retired Police Dogs of Gwent

This is a newly formed Community Interest Company set up to promote the wellbeing of retired police dogs. They are seeking financial support in order to provide assistance with vet bills to owners of retired police dogs. The request was noted.

20 Station Road, Portskewett

It was reported that a large pile of brushwood is stacked against the property, which is wood clad, and is considered a fire risk to the property and the neighbouring property. Clerk to advise MCC Environmental Health Department.

Cyclists at Black Rock Picnic Site

Youths have been using the coastal path through the picnic site as a cycle track and using a humped area of ground to jump bikes over. There have been incidents of people walking, being hit by the cyclists, and one person was hospitalised as a result.

Litter at The Quest

Complaints have been made by residents about litter at The Quest. The caretaker visits the area regularly and removes any rubbish.

Flag Poles and Flag Pole Christmas Trees

Clerk to continue to follow up on flagpole at Redrow site. Cllr Parker to obtain quotes for 4m Flag Pole Christmas Trees.

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

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and gave the date and time of the next meeting as **Tuesday 18th May 2021 at 7pm, via remote access, the meeting to be preceded at 6.30pm by the Annual Meeting.** The meeting was declared closed at 20.50pm.

*Mrs Beverley Young
Clerk to the Council*