

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF PORTSKEWETT COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**HELD VIA REMOTE ACCESS**

**TUESDAY 15<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2021**

**Councillors Present:**

Mrs C Carne, 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. No members of the public had requested to participate, and no issues had been raised with the clerk.

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 Archer who was in London, Cllr Fawcitt who had a business meeting and Cllr Essery.

4. **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

There were no interests to declare.

5. **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

- a. Cllr Carne proposed that the minutes of the Annual Meeting be accepted as a true record, seconded by Cllr Nurcombe, agreed by all present. **Action: Chair to sign minutes, Clerk to publish on website.**
- b. Cllr Nurcombe proposed that the minutes of the May meeting be accepted as a true record, seconded by Cllr Standing, agreed by all present. **Action: Chair to sign minutes, Clerk to publish on website.**

6. **CLERK'S REPORT**

The clerk's report for June had been circulated prior to the meeting for members' consideration. The following updates were received:

**Notice Board by the Church Hall** – clerk to contact Paul Keeble at MCC re relocating the noticeboard.

**Code of Conduct Training 9<sup>th</sup> June** – Cllr Standing received notification from Helena Fox that the training was cancelled, so had not participated. Cllr Parker confirmed he and Cllr Fawcitt had attended. **Action: clerk to establish what happened and re-book Cllr Standing onto a training session.**

**Odour from Sewage Pumping Station, Sudbrook** – clerk had been informed that as initial inspection had not identified any problems, odour loggers would be installed to carry out monitoring for a period of 28 days. The information would then be analysed and any findings be reported back. **Action: clerk to pass information to Cllr Archer. Cllr Archer to share on the Council Facebook page.**

**Village Planters** – additional planters suggested for the entrance to Sudbrook village and in the vicinity of The Villas in Sudbrook. **Action: clerk to agenda when Redrow have completed work at Mill Meadows.**

The watering rota for existing planters was agreed as follows:

- Monday - Cllr Parker
- Tuesday – Cllr Nurcombe
- Wednesday – Cllr Standing
- Thursday – Cllr Griffiths
- Friday – Cllr Carne
- Saturday – Cllr Fawcitt
- Sunday – Cllr Dymock

**The Quest** – Wording on sign relating to dogs changed to read "No dogs in the play equipment area". This sign to be flat (no fish plates) to be fitted to a fence. **Action: Cllr Nurcombe to obtain Welsh**

translation, **clerk** to change order with Blitz Media and add fencing off of the play area to the July agenda.

Adoption of Telephone Box on Crick Road – **Action: clerk** to pass details for BT contact to the Chair.

Flagpole on Village Green – **Action: clerk** to contact the residents of 1 Crick Road to establish if there would be any objection to the flagpole being installed on the green outside their property. **Clerk** to establish whether power supply would be available from streetlight NY741.

Annual Plan – Cllr Carne reported that it had been agreed at the working group meeting to hold a public meeting in the Village Hall, when COVID regulations allowed, to establish what residents' priorities would be. Cllr Dymock asked whether a Survey Monkey would be used, Cllr Carne confirmed it would.

Planning Working Group – a meeting was arranged for Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> July at 2pm via Microsoft Teams.

Grass Cutting Harold's Field and Stowball Common – The clerk had contacted MM Gardening Services, there had been no further response. There were mixed views from residents and Councillors as to whether paths should be cut or whether the whole of each area should be cut. Cllr Dymock thought paths should be cut, however the majority agreed that the whole of Harold's field should be cut as it had not been done since last Autumn and vegetation was getting a hold. A higher cut would be carried out (4" to 6") to allow small wildlife to move out of the way. It was agreed that a path would be cut around Stowball Common as the area is mainly used by walkers. **Action: clerk** to contact Neville Bartlett and Mark Taylor to provide estimates.

Cllr Parker proposed the report be accepted, seconded by Cllr Nurcombe, agreed by all present. **Action: Chair** to sign report.

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

Cllr Carne reported that there had been no meetings of the Governing Body.

8. **DISCUSSION WITH COUNTY COUNCILLOR**

Cllr Dymock informed members the Delta variant of COVID19 was now the dominant variant in Wales. It was mostly affecting the population under 30 years old. Cllr Dymock was heavily involved with establishing why Abergavenny Football Club had been demoted to Tier 2 in the league when they met more requirements than teams in Tier 1. Cllr Dymock also reported that the decision taken by Monmouthshire County Council to reduce grass cutting to promote wildlife habitats and biodiversity has been very controversial. Some residents support the initiative and appreciate the more natural looking environment, others see overgrown verges and other areas as looking untidy and uncared for. Pathways have been cut in common areas where people walk and verges have been cut where safety is an issue.

9. **NEW CORRESPONDANCE AND MATTERS RAISED**

a. **Monmouthshire County Council Review of Community Boundaries**

One Voice Wales supplied a briefing on the current position. When Welsh Government sign off the review, orders should be issued giving guidance to those Councils who's areas are to be split up or dissolved. Until that time OVW recommends Councils consider how the implications of the review affect them, and begin conversations with neighbouring councils to identify assets or services that may need to be transferred between them. Once legal orders are issued, if any questions remain unanswered, OVW will provide support to resolve remaining issues. The Local Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales announced on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2021 that Final Recommendations were being published and that Welsh Government may, if it thinks fit, make an order giving effect to any recommendations made to it by the Commission either as submitted or with modifications. Any order giving effect to such recommendations shall not be made until after the expiry of six weeks from the day on which the recommendations were submitted to the Welsh Government.

Councillors felt that the planned changes for the Portskewett area were not seen to have great implications for the Community Council. **Action: clerk** to provide a copy of the report to Cllr Parker.

b. **Public Health Wales: National Survey of Volunteers**

Public Health Wales engaged a company to conduct a national survey of people who volunteered during the COVID19 pandemic. Their aim to learn lessons from the community-led response in Wales.

Information sheets and social media images were supplied to reach out to local communities to respond.

**Action: Cllr Dymock** to share with COVID Volunteer group and **Cllr Archer** to publish on Facebook.

c. Active Travel Consultation

Active Travel is looking at planning for the future to promote cycling and walking as means of travel. The consultation is looking for feedback on the maps which have been developed showing walking and cycling routes. Cllr Parker commented that better links are required from Mill Meadows to the coastal path, the old Dinham railway line could provide a link with Caldicot, and an improved link is needed from the coastal path at Black Rock to Chepstow. **Action: Councillors to submit responses to the clerk. Clerk to agenda draft Council response in July.**

d. The Queen's Green Canopy Initiative

The initiative invites people from across the UK to "Plant a Tree for the Jubilee" to mark Her Majesty's platinum jubilee in 2022. Cllr Parker proposed a copper Beech be planted on the village green, seconded by Cllr Nurcombe, agreed by all present. **Action: clerk to confirm with Mark Cleaver that MCC have no objections.**

e. Provision of IT support by Pisces

The clerk asked if Pisces provided an IT support package for a monthly or annual fee. It was confirmed that this was not available, work was carried out as and when required and billed accordingly. It was agreed to wait until the invoice for the recent work was received before making a decision.

f. Planning Application DM/2021/00781

The application related to Beacon Business Park, Severn Bridge Industrial Estate, and was for a proposed 3000Sq. Ft GF warehouse extension. Councillors had no objections to the application. Cllr Parker proposed the application be recommended for approval, seconded by Cllr Carne, agreed by all present. **Action: clerk to submit response.**

The Chair moved that agenda items 9g, 9h & 9i be considered together. Agreed by all present.

g. Planning Application DM/2021/00836 - related to 75 Main Road, Portskewett.

h. Planning Application DM/2021/00863 – related to 79 Main Road, Portskewett.

i. Planning Application DM/2021/00877 – related to 67 Main Road, Portskewett

The applications were each for provision of hardstanding and dropped kerb. Councillors supported the applications as it would help through traffic by removing parked vehicles from the road, however concerns were raised as the road narrows in the area where the accesses would be and it is also on a hill, which could be dangerous for vehicles using the accesses, especially as other vehicles parked roadside may obscure the view. Cllr Parker proposed the applications be approved subject to the issues raised being checked out by MCC Highways, seconded by Cllr Dymock, agreed by all present. **Action: clerk to submit responses.**

j. Planning Application DM/2021/00849

The application related to 92 Treetops, Portskewett and was for a single storey rear extension. There were no objections raised. Cllr Dymock proposed the application be approved, seconded by Cllr Nurcombe, agreed by all present. **Action: clerk to submit response.**

k. Planning Application DM/2021/00918

The application related to 32 Arthur's Court, Gray Hill View, Portskewett and was for a proposed Extension and associated works. There were no objections raised. Cllr Dymock proposed the application be approved, seconded by Cllr Nurcombe, agreed by all present. **Action: clerk to submit response.**

Planning Applications Approved by Monmouthshire County Council

No applications were approved this month.

Planning Applications Refused by Monmouthshire County Council

No applications were refused this month.

10. **FINANCE**

a. Minimum Wage Rate Increase

The National Minimum Wage Rate applicable to the Caretaker increased on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 from £8.72 per hour to £8.91 per hour, an increase of 2.18%. The budget for 2021/22 had allowed for an increase of 3%. Cllr Dymock proposed the increase be approved, seconded by Cllr Carne, agreed by all present. **Action: clerk to update payroll accordingly.**

Chairman's signature .....

b. Pink Paper June

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

	£'s
Salaries	1,222.41
Torfaen CBC – Pension contributions	225.03
HMRC – NIC and PAYE	112.16
Lloyds Multipay Card Payment (June)	1053.04
One Voice Wales (Code of Conduct training 20.5.21 CA)	15.00
Play Safety Ltd (Annual Playground Inspection The Quest Inv 55831)	103.20

Balances held: Current Account £8,025.80, Deposit Account £9,552.32 and Lloyds Account £32.

**Action: Clerk to make payments.**

c. Renewal of Norton Antivirus

The Norton Subscription will expire on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2021. The renewal notice received quoted £19.99 to renew for one year, the price would rise to £64.99 per year thereafter. When the laptop was set up the gentleman from Pisces had installed Avast, Malware Bytes and Super Anti-spyware. He had advised that there was no need for Norton in addition to these, and that it often contributed to poor performance in equipment. Cllr Parker proposed the Norton Subscription should not be renewed, seconded by Cllr Dymock, agreed by all present.

11. **BEST KEPT GARDEN COMPETITION**

a. Update to be given at July meeting. **Action: Cllr Dymock and Cllr Archer to progress.**

12. **SPRING CLEAN CYMRU**

- a. The litter pick on 29<sup>th</sup> May was attended by 20 volunteers, who were split into small groups. Treetops and Arthurs Court were very clean, as were Main Road and Leechpool. More litter was collected along the main road through Sudbrook, as the wind blows it into pockets in this area. Four bags of recyclable waste and 12 bags of general waste were collected in total. **Action: clerk to write thank you letter to children who participated, and to Magor and Undy Community Council who lent equipment.**
- b. It was agreed to hold another litter pick event on Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> August. Volunteers to register interest with clerk so numbers can be managed. Sudbrook coffee shop to be notified of the event. **Action: clerk to advertise for volunteers at end of June in notice boards and on website. Clerk to arrange to borrow equipment from Keep Wales Tidy Hub. Cllr Dymock to arrange to borrow equipment from Magor and Undy CC.**

13. **TREE INSPECTION REPORT**

a. Due to work commitments Richard Cornock had not yet been able to undertake the work. **Action: Cllr Fawcitt and Cllr Parker to move football post.**

14. **PROVISION OF DOG WASTE BINS**

The caretaker had reviewed the proposed locations for dog waste bins, he advised bins at the second level crossing in Sudbrook and by the school would not be required. The following locations were proposed:

- By the old mill entrance at the junction of old Sudbrook and Mill Meadows.
- At the end of the footpath on the corner of Sudbrook playpark.
- At the junction of Sunnycroft and Black Rock road.
- At the bus shelter near 46 Main Road (must be roadside so not by alleyway entrance to the green behind Hill Barn View).
- At bottom of track leading to The Quest (must be roadside so can't be at Quest entrance).
- Stowball Common (next to the bin near the bench).
- At the Sudbrook entrance to Harold's Field.
- At the Recreation Hall entrance to Harold's Field (assuming access for collection via car park).
- At Southbrook View entrance to the Cornfield.
- On Caldicot road at the top of the lane leading to The Close.

- At Sudbrook end of the coastal path.
- At Black Rock end of the coastal path.

The caretaker advised that the existing bin on the green is little used for dog waste, whereas the bin in the field fills up every week as it is used by those walking from the Recreation Hall to Sudbrook Road. Bins need to be located roadside for collection so a dog bin could not be located in Harold's Field, however the bins at the Recreation Hall entrance to the field and the Sudbrook entrance would cover this area.

Sue Parkinson at MCC provided advice on siting dog bins and offered to advise on the proposed locations and to see if any permissions would be needed.

The following quotations had been obtained for the supply of 8 bins:

Glasdon UK Ltd – 50lt bin	£2,290.75 incl. VAT and delivery – delivery time confirmed on ordering.
Kingfisher Direct – 45lt bin	£2,515.20 incl. VAT and delivery – delivery time 6 to 7 weeks.
Earth Anchors Ltd – 45lt bin	£1,584 incl. VAT and delivery – 7 to 10 days.

All bins are constructed from heavy gauge, zinc coated steel and polyester powder coated; bag retainers keeps liner bags in place; come with dog waste logo.

Annual cost of emptying 8 bins on a weekly basis £1,664.

Cllr Carne proposed Earth Anchors Ltd quote should be accepted, seconded by Cllr Parker, agreed by all present. **Action: clerk to circulate list of locations to councillors to determine the first 8 locations, and agenda in July.**

15. **NHS, Social Care and frontline Workers Day – 5<sup>th</sup> July 2021**

The flagpole for the Village Green had arrived, Cllr Parker will follow up with Redrow re Sudbrook flagpole. Two flags for the event had been ordered but not yet received. The clerk had received a draft press release for use in publicising the event and updated guidance relating to COVID19 regulations for the event. Cllr Fawcitt and Cllr Parker will raise the flags at 10am. Cllr Parker suggested erecting fencing around the Portskewett Flagpole to enable the memorial flower display to be used. Residents to be asked to observe the 2 minute silence at 11am from outside their residences as COVID regulations prevent large gatherings. Clerk confirmed Gethin will ring church bell 73 times commencing at 8pm. Press release to be published on the website, Facebook page and in noticeboards. **Action: Cllr Parker to install flagpole and erect fence. Clerk to publicise event.**

16. **OAK GROVE SOLAR FARM FUND 2021/22**

It was agreed that letters inviting applications for the 2021/22 fund should be sent out to local community groups. It was agreed the deadline for submission should be 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021. **Action: clerk to send out letters and application forms.**

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

Overgrown Hedge

The Laurel hedge on the approach to the railway bridge on the Sudbrook road is overgrown and in need of cutting back.

Anti-social Behaviour

A multi-disciplinary meeting was held regarding anti-social behaviour in Sudbrook. A further meeting will be held at the end of June.

Playground Inspection

During the quarterly inspection of the Quest the caretaker identified the following issues:

- Multi-swing seat needs further repair.
- The climbing access to the slide has been treated for decay but will need further attention in the future.

The caretaker will continue to monitor these issues.

Play Safety Ltd have completed the annual inspection of the Quest, their report will be circulated, for discussion in July.

The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee Beacons

Notification had been received that 2<sup>nd</sup> to 5<sup>th</sup> June 2022 has been announced as the Platinum Jubilee Weekend, of which The Queen’s Platinum Jubilee Beacons is part, being held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> June. Participation to be considered in July.

St Mary’s Place, Portskewett

A Western Power vehicle has been parking on the entrance road to St Mary’s Place. The waste collection vehicle cannot gain access due to the parked vehicle and rubbish collections have been missed as a result. Concerns have again been raised over access for emergency vehicles. Request for yellow lines to be made to Paul Keeble at MCC.

Sudbrook Waste Collections

Waste collections are regularly being missed in Sudbrook. Dewi lane to be notified.

Withy Beds, Leechpool

A tree bough is protruding from the hedge on Middle Road, Leechpool, in the area of no.24. MCC to be asked to make safe.

Next Door App

Residents have received promotional material. Advised to ignore.

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.

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

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and gave the date and time of the next meeting as **Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> July 2021 at 7pm, via remote access.** The meeting was declared closed at 9.20pm.

*Mrs Beverley Young  
Clerk to the Council*