

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

**HELD VIA REMOTE ACCESS**

**TUESDAY 21st SEPTEMBER 2021**

**Councillors Present:**

Mrs C Carne, Miss L Dymock, Mr T Fawcitt, Mr A Griffiths, Mr P Nurcombe, Mr G Parker, Mr I Standing.

**Member of the Public Present:**

Mr J Adams and Mr P Holley.

1. **PUBLIC MEETING**

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 were received from Cllr Archer who was on holiday.

4. **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Cllr Dymock and Cllr Nurcombe declared an interest in agenda item 18.a as they are on the committee of the Portskewett and Sudbrook Recreation Hall and Playing Fields who had submitted a grant application.

5. **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

- a. Cllr Carne proposed that the minutes of the July 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.**

6. **CLERK'S REPORT**

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

Community Support Officer Mike Martin had not been able to locate the mobile speed camera. He forwarded the following purchase costs; solar powered unit £3,650, mains powered unit £2,650 plus cost of providing electricity supply.

Monmouthshire County Council had confirmed there would be no issue with relocating the notice board in the Church hall grounds to the grass area in front of the school boundary fence, however they asked that it be kept at least 450mm from the edge of the footway. Cllr Parker and Cllr Fawcitt undertook to relocate the notice board.

The clerk reminded Councillors that if they did not wish to claim any allowances to which they were entitled they must put it in writing.

Cllr Dymock confirmed the Public Health Wales National Survey of Volunteers had been shared with the COVID volunteer group.

Mr Cornock had confirmed they would remove the lower branches from the tree at The Quest, identified as a potential risk, during the Autumn.

Cllr Dymock confirmed she had obtained copies of the village map and would pass them to the clerk. The Planning working group had not had the opportunity to meet and draft a proposal for the operation of the group.

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

**Japanese Knot Weed**

A resident reported the presence of Japanese Knot Weed in the vicinity of the coastal path in Sudbrook. Cllr Dymock had received photographs of the location which she would forward to Jonathan Wassal at Monmouthshire County Council.

Council Notice Boards

Cllr Carne sought clarification on the use of Council noticeboards to promote local activities. The Station Road board is larger and can hold eight A4 documents, the other four will hold three. It was agreed that Council documents must be displayed as a priority, if any space was remaining information from other organisations could be displayed. A community noticeboard was suggested for each village. The clerk gave a guide price of £500 per board.

Withy Bed, Leechpool

Cllr Standing reported that Withy Bed was in need of cutting back.

Cyber Security Webinar

The clerk asked to attend a Cyber Security Webinar being run by the Society of Local Council Clerks, the cost of which was £30 plus VAT. This was approved by the Chair.

The Chair welcomed Mr Adams and Mr Holley to the meeting.

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

a. ARW School Governing Body

Cllr Carne reported there would be a meeting of the Governing Body week commencing 27<sup>th</sup> September 2021.

b.i Portskewett Heritage Centre

Cllr Nurcombe reported that the opening ceremony had been postponed due to COVID19 restrictions. Pupils from ARW School were due to visit the centre next week and risk assessments were being conducted to ensure the visits could go ahead.

b.ii Portskewett and Sudbrook Recreation Hall & Playing Fields

Cllr Nurcombe reported that the committee continued to meet weekly and good progress was being made. Current bookings are double previous levels, and the community was able to make more use of the hall. The committee are working very hard to resolve issues that arise and ensure the venue operates as a community asset.

b.iii Give Dog Fouling the Red Card Working Group

The next meeting is being held via Teams on 23<sup>rd</sup> September at 11am. Cllr Carne is unable to attend and no one else is available. **Action: clerk to send apologies.**

**9. DISCUSSION WITH COUNTY COUNCILLOR**

Cllr Fox was not present. Cllr Dymock informed members that an emergency had been declared in the Social Care Sector across Gwent. Cllr Dymock also reported a shortage of lorry drivers which will lead to problems in the supply chain.

**10. NEW CORRESPONDANCE AND MATTERS RAISED**

a. Request to establish a vegetable plot to support a mental health project

A request had been received to establish a vegetable garden on Stowball Common to support a mental health project. Councillors would like to support the project but have no land in registered ownership to facilitate it. Cllr Dymock proposed the Cornfield Project be approached to establish whether they could accommodate the project, seconded by Cllr Fawcitt, agreed by all. **Action: clerk to write to Cornfield Project.**

b. Future Meeting Arrangements

The 2021 Act provides that Councils must ensure that any person is able to join a Council meeting remotely. A hybrid meeting, where some attendees are face to face and some join remotely, must allow the meeting to be joined by telephone as well as virtual options. The minimum requirement is that all attendees should be able to hear and be heard.

The clerk contacted ARW School to establish whether they would allow the meetings to re-commence there, no response had been received yet. **Action: clerk to follow up with the school.**

Cllr Fawcitt proposed the meeting continue via Teams until further advice is received, seconded by Cllr Griffiths, agreed by all.

c. Consultation on Public Spaces Protection Order on Dog Controls in Monmouthshire

Monmouthshire County Council are consulting on issues related to dog fouling and whether certain areas should be designated as no dogs allowed or dogs to be kept on lead. Cllr Dymock proposed given the potential diversity in views Councillors should submit individual responses, seconded by Cllr Griffiths, agreed by all. **Action: clerk to re-circulate the consultation information.**

d. Provision of Rubbish Bin for Football Club

The Chair was approached by the football club with a request to provide a rubbish bin at Portskewett and Sudbrook Recreation Hall and Playing Fields. The clerk obtained the following estimates:

- Topsy 2000 90lt like Cornfield - £202.72 incl VAT
- 25lt post mounted with top - £125.77 incl VAT
- 50lt post mounted with top - £164.89 incl VAT

Cllr Fawcitt asked who would be responsible for emptying the bin. After some discussion it was agreed the football club would need to take responsibility for emptying it. Cllr Fawcitt proposed the council provide a Topsy 2000 bin for the football club, seconded by Cllr Carne, agreed by all present. **Action: clerk to notify the football club and purchase the bin.**

e. Consultation on Local Taxes for Second Homes and Self-catering Accommodation

Welsh Government are consulting on the discretionary powers which allow local authorities to levy a higher rate of council tax on second homes and long-term empty properties. They are also asking for views and evidence on the criteria used to define a property as self-catering accommodation for local tax purposes.

Cllr Parker raised the issue of the St. Pierre Caravan Park, where the lodge owners would qualify as second homeowners. Cllr Dymock suggested Councillors submit an individual response if they wished to do so. **Action: clerk to re-circulate the consultation information.**

f. Consultation on Initial Proposals Published by Boundary Commission for Wales

The consultation related to the initial proposals for changes to parliamentary constituencies in Wales. Councillors agreed previous responses had been submitted and nothing further was required.

g. Consultation on "Shaping Wales Future: national milestones and indicators to measure our nation's progress"

The consultation sets out Welsh Government proposals for setting the first wave of national milestones for Wales to improve the well-being of future generations. It also seeks views on the impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the national indicators.

Cllr Dymock suggested the consultation be shared on the Council Facebook page and website, and Councillors should submit individual responses if they wished to do so. **Action: clerk to re-circulate the consultation information.**

11. **PLANNING**

a. [Planning Application DM/2019/00846](#) – the application related to the land development South of Crick Road, Portskewett, and was for discharge of condition no. 4 of outline planning consent DM/2018/00696. Councillors considered the application between meetings and recommended it for approval. Cllr Nurcombe proposed the recommendation be retrospectively confirmed, seconded by Cllr Parker, agreed by all present.

b. [Planning Application DM/2020/00321](#) – the application related to the land development South of Crick Road, Portskewett, and was for discharge of conditions 7,8,10 and 16 of planning application DM/2018/00696. Councillors considered the application between meetings and recommended it for approval. Cllr Nurcombe proposed the recommendation be retrospectively confirmed, seconded by Cllr Parker, agreed by all present.

c. [Planning Application DM/2021/00812](#) - the application related to 36 Leechpool Holdings, Portskewett, and was for modification of condition 3 relating to DC/2017/01053. The condition needed to be changed to bring it into line with the later existing permitted use of the garage as per DM/2018/01230. Councillors considered the application between meetings and recommended it for approval. Cllr Nurcombe proposed the recommendation be retrospectively confirmed, seconded by Cllr Parker, agreed by all present.

- d. **Planning Application DM/2019/01485** – the application related to the land development South of Crick Road, Portskewett, and was for discharge of conditions 5 and 11 of planning consent DM/2018/00696. Cllr Parker reported that MCC and Natural Resources Wales had already confirmed conditions had been met. Cllr Parker proposed the application be recommended for approval, seconded by Cllr Fawcitt, agreed by all present. **Action: clerk to submit response.**
- e. **Planning Application DM/2021/01286** – the application related to the land development South of Crick Road, Portskewett, and was for discharge of conditions 6,12,13,14,17 and 18 of outline planning consent DM/2018/00696. Cllr Parker proposed the application be recommended for approval, seconded by Cllr Fawcitt, agreed by all present. **Action: clerk to submit response.**

Planning Applications Approved by Monmouthshire County Council

00781	Beacon Business Park, Norman Way, Severn Bridge Industrial Estate, Portskewett	Proposed 3000 sq.ft (278 sq.m) GF warehouse extension
00836	75 Main Road, Portskewett	New hardstanding and dropped kerb
01021	Unit 5f Castle Way, Severn Bridge Industrial Estate, Portskewett	Change of use of Unit 5f to B2 with A1
00849	92 Treetops, Portskewett	Single Storey Rear Extension – Reconsultation - amended plan showing movement of boundary wall.

Planning Applications Refused by Monmouthshire County Council

No applications were refused this month.

12. **FINANCE**

a. **Pink Paper August**

The pink paper for August was circulated to Councillors for approval prior to the following payments being made:

	£'s
Salaries	1,339.26
Torfaen CBC – Pension contributions	225.03
HMRC – NIC and PAYE	141.36
Lloyds Multipay Card Payment (August)	3.00
Mm Garden Services & Fencing (Cutting Harold's Field & Stowball Common)	350.00
Playsafety Ltd (Playground Inspection Training for Caretaker)	552.00
One Voice Wales (Code of Conduct training 7.7.21 IS)	15.00
Mr M Weaver (Travelling Expenses for Playground Inspection training)	86.40

Balances held: Current Account £14,144.14, Deposit Account £9,552.32 and Lloyds Account £32.00.

Cllr Standing proposed approval be retrospectively confirmed, seconded by Cllr Fawcitt, agreed by all present.

b. **Pink Paper September**

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

	£'s
Salaries	1,214.53
Torfaen CBC – Pension contributions	225.03
HMRC – NIC and PAYE	110.16
Lloyds Multipay Card Payment (September)	115.28
Usk Valley Promotions (Invoice 1404 Construction of Councillor Page on website)	75.00

Balances held: Current Account £12,404.14, Deposit Account £9,552.32 and Lloyds Account £32.

**Action: Clerk to make payments.**

c. Mobile Phone for Clerk

The Chair requested quotes be obtained for a mobile phone to ensure the clerk was contactable.

**EE Quote** - Samsung A12, 1gb data, unlimited calls and texts at £16 per month, annual cost £192.00.

**Three Quote** - Samsung A12, 1gb data, unlimited calls and texts at £17 per month, annual cost £204.00.

**Sim only with EE IMO Q2 Plus Mobile Phone:**

EE sim only at £12 per month, annual cost £144.00 plus EE IMO Q2 Plus Mobile Phone from Argos £29.99 - Total cost £173.99 yr 1.

Cllr Carne asked why it was necessary for the clerk to have a mobile phone, Cllr Parker referred to the fact the clerk is employed part-time. Guidance says a clerk should be available between the hours of 9am and 5pm, but where a clerk is employed part-time an answer machine may be used. The clerk confirmed that 95% of the time she is at home due to working part-time for two councils, and an answer machine is in place to take calls if she is not there. Any messages are picked up and actioned on return.

Cllr Parker proposed that a mobile phone was not necessary, seconded by Cllr Griffiths, agreed by all present.

d. Replacement Batteries for Defibrillators

It is recommended that defibrillator batteries are replaced every 5 years, if they have not been replaced previously. The defibrillators were installed in 2016 and require iPad SP1 disposable battery pack. The following estimates were obtained:

- Safety First Aid                    £198 plus VAT, free delivery
- Defib Store                            £165 plus VAT, free delivery
- St John Ambulance                £182 plus VAT, £4.95 delivery
- Panda Medical                        £175 plus VAT, free delivery

Cllr Parker proposed 2 batteries be purchased from the Defib Store, seconded by Cllr Fawcitt, agreed by all present. **Action: clerk to purchase batteries.**

e. Portskewett and Sudbrook Junior Football Club Grant Application

The football club were seeking a grant to provide additional signage to the club and approach road and to develop a website to attract new members, 70 children are currently enrolled with the club. The club's funds are reserved for coach education and winter training.

The club requested a grant of £880 made up of signage cost of £204, cost of website development £420 and website hosting £18 plus VAT per month.

The grant budget available was £1,000. Website hosting is a revenue cost and cannot therefore be funded by a grant. Councillors were happy to support the application for signage costs of £204, but agreed that it should be funded from the Oak Grove grant fund. Cllr Parker proposed a grant of £204 be approved from the Oak Grove Community Fund, seconded by Cllr Carne, agreed by all present.

**Action: clerk to notify the football club and make payment.**

f. Portskewett and Sudbrook Junior Football Club Request for Financial Assistance Towards Provision of Defibrillator at Portskewett & Sudbrook Recreation Hall and Playing Fields

A request had been received for funding towards providing a defibrillator in a locked cabinet, approximate cost £1,350. Caldicot and Chepstow Lions may provide £400 and other funding sources are being explored. The clerk had provided information on a grant of £300 available from Cymru Hearts.

The grant budget available was £1,000. Cllr Fawcitt informed the meeting of a requirement for football teams to have a defibrillator on site to be able to continue to run. Councillors were happy to support the request but agreed that it should be funded from the Oak Grove grant fund. Cllr Carne proposed a grant of £250 be approved from the Oak Grove Fund, seconded by Cllr Parker, agreed by all present.

**Action: clerk to ask the football club to complete a grant application form and make payment.**

13. **BEST KEPT GARDEN COMPETITION**

- a. No submissions were received for consideration via social media. Vouchers had been donated as prizes. It was agreed the competition would run in the previous format for 2021, nominations to be made to Cllr Griffiths who would judge the winners. One prize would be awarded in each of the Council's wards.  
**Action: Cllr Standing, Cllr Parker and Cllr Griffiths to nominate gardens for consideration, Cllr Griffiths to determine the winners.**

14. **PROVISION OF DOG WASTE BINS**

- a. Sue Parkinson from MCC advised the position with Merlin Waste has stabilised and MCC are looking into establishing a Monmouthshire wide contract with a provider, managed by MCC. Cllr Dymock proposed the Council go ahead with installing dog waste bins, seconded by Cllr Nurcombe, agreed by all present.  
**Action: clerk to progress.**

- b. Earth Anchors Ltd had confirmed the price quoted for the bins of £1,584 incl. VAT and delivery. Merlin Waste could install the bins at a cost of £10 per bin, total cost £80. Merlin Waste confirmed the cost of emptying bins at £5.50 per bin per week, an annual cost of £2,288. Total cost in 2021/22 £2,808 which would be funded from unidentified services contingency, leaving £5,142 in reserves.

Cllr Dymock proposed an order be placed with Earth Anchors Ltd and Merlin Waste be contracted to install the bins, and empty them on a weekly basis, seconded by Cllr Nurcombe, agreed by all present.

**Action: clerk to place order with Earth Anchors Ltd and arrange installation of bins and collection of waste with Merlin Waste.**

- c. Monmouthshire County Council are taking the lead on establishing a Monmouthshire wide contract for dog bin emptying services. The proposal is to develop a 5 year contract with the option to extend for another 2 years. The contract would be advertised on the Sell to Wales website. MCC would manage the contract, making monthly payments to the contractor and invoicing Town and Community Councils on a monthly basis for the waste collection. Additional waste left by dog bins would be paid for directly by the respective Town or Community Council by negotiation with Merlin Waste, but also subject to the contract. Cllr Dymock proposed the Council support the proposal, seconded by Cllr Carne, agreed by all present.

**Action: clerk to notify Susan Parkinson at MCC.**

15. **DEFIBRILLATOR ACQUISITION**

- a. Confirmation had been received from the Community Heartbeat Trust that fixings were available to enable a defibrillator cabinet to be fitted to the style of telephone box on Crick Road.

- b. Information had been received from Cymru Hearts, a charity supporting the provision of defibrillators, on a grant available of £300 toward the cost of a defibrillator. The defibrillator they supply is the advanced dual functioning Mindray C1A semi-automatic Defibrillator. This model can carry out daily self-diagnostic tests meaning maintenance is extremely limited, but more importantly it can be applied to both adults and children at the flick of a switch rather than having to waste time changing the pads. The usual cost for Mindray C1A Defibrillator is £1,045.00, allowing for the £300 grant the required minimum donation for the defibrillator would be £745.00. The charity would normally supply a cabinet as well but do not have one suitable for a telephone box of the type on Crick Road.

- c. The Community Heartbeat Trust were recommended by BT to supply equipment having worked together to develop the specification suitable for telephone boxes. They also have written consent from BT to connect equipment to the electricity supply. They could supply a fully automatic ipad SP1 defibrillator for £995 plus vat. They offered three options for cabinets:

- an unlocked, heated cabinet with pull tab opening for £450 plus vat.
- A defib safe 2 at £525 plus vat.
- A Century cabinet, double insulated with lined inner for £695 plus vat.

Cllr Parker proposed a fully automatic ipad SP1 be purchased from the Community Heartbeat Trust with an unlocked heated cabinet, seconded by Cllr Fawcitt, agreed by all present. **Action: clerk to place order and arrange installation.**

16. **VACANCY FOR COUNCILLOR IN PORTSKEWETT WARD**

- a. Two expressions of interest in the vacancy had been received and invitations to observe the September meeting had been sent to the interested parties. It was agreed candidates should be asked to submit their C.V. with an application letter for consideration by Councillors.

17. **QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE**

- a. Update on Queen's Green Canopy

An application had not been submitted to the Woodlands trust as the packs available were 15 trees, 105 trees or 420 trees.

- b. Purchase of an Oak Tree

The following quotes had been obtained for a single English Oak tree:

- |                                 |                                  |                              |
|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|------------------------------|
| • Trees Direct                  | 1.75 - 2 metres 15L pot          | £ 65.00 plus £18.50 delivery |
| • King & Co The Tree Nursey Ltd | 1.75 - 2 metres 10L pot          | £ 65.00 plus £47.50 delivery |
| • King & Co The Tree Nursey Ltd | 2 - 2.5 metres 10L pot           | £ 75.00 plus £47.50 delivery |
| • King & Co The Tree Nursey Ltd | 2.75 metres 8-10cm girth 35L pot | £156.00 plus £47.50 delivery |

Cllr Parker suggested a purple Beech tree as an alternative as they change colour 3 times during the year, and would grow to around 20ft in 20 years. As an example the cost of a 10ft tree would be £70. Cllr Nurcombe proposed a Beech tree be purchased, seconded by Cllr Carne, agreed by all present.

**Action: Cllr Parker to source trees and circulate details to councillors.**

- c. The Queen's Platinum Jubilee Beacons

MCC advised that Sudbrook Camp was still owned by Harrow Estates. Harrow Estates advised permission should be sought from Redrow. The clerk had been unable to make contact with the Redrow representative. Registration for the event had not been completed as permission to use the Camp had not yet been received. **Action: Cllr Parker to pursue with Redrow.**

18. **OAK GROVE GRANTS**

Two applications had been received:

- Portskewett & Sudbrook Recreation Hall & Playing Fields for the purchase and installation of CCTV and intruder alarm system costing £3,636.00. The organisation had funds of £10,771.08, required to meet running costs and other essential work not meeting the grant remit.
- Portskewett with Sudbrook Church Hall for the purchase of equipment to maintain the grounds and to provide public seating at a cost of £600. The organisations funds are required to meet running costs.

Cllr Parker proposed both applications be approved, seconded by Cllr Carne, agreed by all present.

The application from Portskewett and Sudbrook Junior Football Club for signage was also taken into account alongside the two applications above, along with the grant of £250 approved towards a defibrillator.

**Action: clerk to invoice MCC for funds, notify applicants of grants awarded and make payments when funds received.**

19. **LAND REGISTRY SEARCHES**

- a. Update on Land Registry Searches

The clerk had submitted title searches on the following areas:

- Black Rock Common
- Stowball Common
- The Village Green – adjacent to Harold's Field
- The Village Green – adjacent to 56 Caldicot Road
- The Village Green – adjacent to 1 Crick Road
- The Village Green – adjacent to The Old Dairy, Main Road

Monmouthshire County Council had previously advised that The Village Green adjacent to Harold's Field was registered to them and was covered by the lease agreement on Harold's Field. They had also advised it was likely that the 3 remaining areas of the Village Green had been adopted by highways.

HM Land Registry had returned the title searches saying none of the six areas of land were registered according to their records.

**Action: clerk to forward correspondence with MCC to Cllr Dymock and contact Deborah Hill-Howells via teams to establish what documents MCC hold and enquire as to whether they intend to register the land.**

b. Applications to Register Land

The clerk sought advice from HM Land Registry on registering land. They advised it would be best to engage a solicitor to provide expert knowledge on what type of application should be made and supporting documentation required. **Action: Cllr Fawcitt to make enquiries with a solicitor, Clerk to agenda for feedback in October.**

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

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending and gave the date and time of the next meeting as **Tuesday 19th October 2021 at 7pm, to be held remotely.** The meeting was declared closed at 9.08 pm.

*Mrs Beverley Young  
Clerk to the Council*