

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF PORTSKEWETT COMMUNITY COUNCIL

HELD AT PORTSKEWETT & SADBROOK RECREATION HALL

TUESDAY 18th April 2023

Councillors Present:

Mrs C Carne, Mr N Hubbard, Mr G Parker (Chair), Mrs J Thomas. County Cllr Dymock joined the meeting remotely.

Public Present: Mr D Hunt and Mrs H Wilsher

1. PUBLIC MEETING

No issues had been raised by members of the public.

The Chair moved agenda item 15 be taken as the next item, all in agreement.

15. COUNCILLOR VACANCY

a. Councillor Resignation

Cllr Dymock had submitted a letter of resignation from her position as a Community Councillor for the Portskewett Ward. The Electoral Registrations Office at MCC were notified and they provided the statutory vacancy notice which was published on 27th March 2023. Cllr Dymock will continue to represent residents in her role as County Councillor for Portskewett.

b. Update on the Two Advertised Vacancies in the Portskewett Ward

The Chair and Vice Chair interviewed the two candidates for the first vacancy in the Portskewett Ward. It was felt that both Mrs Wilsher and Mr Hunt would make valuable contributions to the Council. No request for an election was made for the second vacancy in the Portskewett Ward, so the Council may fill the vacancy by co-option.

c. Co-option of Councillors for the Portskewett Ward

Cllr Carne proposed both Mrs Wilsher and Mr Hunt be co-opted as Councillors for the Portskewett Ward as there were two vacancies, seconded by Cllr Thomas, agreed by all. **Action: clerk to process documentation.**

2. SIGN THE ATTENDANCE BOOK

a. The Attendance Book was duly signed.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

a. Apologies were received from Cllr Fawcitt who was on holiday and Cllr Nurcombe for family reasons. Late apologies were received from Cllr Adams and Cllr Lillie.

4. DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

a. No interests were declared.

5. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

a. Cllr Thomas proposed the minutes of the March meeting be accepted as a true record, seconded by Cllr Carne, agreed by all. **Action: clerk to publish on website.**

6. CLERK'S REPORT

a. The report had been circulated prior to the meeting. The following updates were given:

Future Provision of Burial Plots - Mr Keyes from Monmouthshire County Council (MCC) Estates responded to the enquiry regarding a potential site for a new burial ground. His response referred to The Quest play area but the enquiry was made in relation to the field owned by MCC situated behind The Quest play area. **Action: clerk to clarify with Mr Keyes.**

Nest Box Competition – ARW School and Portskewett & Sudbrook Youth Club had both confirmed they had no entries for the competition.

Dog Fouling in The Close, Portskewett – Cllr Parker had located the signs and will install them.

Chairman's signature

Establishment of Working Groups – A questionnaire had been drafted for community engagement at the Community Fun Day.

7. **ITEMS OF LOCAL CONCERN (FOR INFORMATION ONLY NO ACTION CAN BE AGREED)**
No issues were raised.

Cllr Dymock Joined the meeting at this point.

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

a. ARW School Governing Body

Cllr Carne had informed members that the ARW School Parent and Teachers Association would like to meet with the Council to discuss their ideas for the future. **Action: Cllr Carne to invite them to the June Council meeting.**

b.1 Give Dog Fouling the Red Card Working Group

Councillors reported that used dog waste bags were being left in the dog bag dispenser boxes. It was agreed that a laminated notice with the slogan “New bags not used bags” be installed on the boxes. **Action: clerk** to produce notices, Cllr Parker to install them.

b.2 One Voice Wales – Monmouthshire/Newport Area Committee

The next meeting will take place on 20th April 2023. Cllr Thomas and the clerk will attend.

b.3 Portskewett and Sudbrook Recreation Hall & Playing Fields (P&SRH)

Cllr Dymock has been working on the compliance documents required. A handyman has been appointed and the foyer has been redecorated.

b.4 Portskewett Heritage Centre

Cllr Nurcombe was not present.

b.5 Portskewett and Sudbrook Church Hall

The next meeting will take place on Tuesday 6th June at 6pm, at the Church Hall.

9. **DISCUSSION WITH COUNTY COUNCILLOR**

Cllr Dymock reported the MCC Corporate Plan will go to full Council on 20th April 2023.

Cllr Dymock had received complaints from residents on Crick Road, Portskewett, about the very poor condition of the road surface. When this was raised with MCC the response from both the Highways and the Operations departments was, there was no budget available.

Residents of Treetops, whose properties back onto the planned footpath in the Crick Road development site, had raised concerns as they believe they own the land the footpath would be on, and have been maintaining it. Cllr Dymock is seeking clarification as to who will maintain the footpath, and cut the trees and hedges. Cllr Dymock felt that MCC’s communication with residents had been poor.

10. **NEW CORRESPONDANCE AND MATTERS RAISED**

a. Response to Public Spaces Protection Order Proposed Areas for Dogs on Leads and Dog Exclusion Areas

Given that families are known to visit The Quest play area and take their dog with them, while children play and have a picnic, it was agreed that the play area should be dogs on lead rather than no dogs allowed. No additional sites were proposed, and the cost of signage was noted. **Action: clerk to submit response.**

11. **PLANNING**

a. Planning Applications Approved/Refused by Monmouthshire County Council

A schedule of applications had been circulated to councillors. This was duly noted.

b. Enforcement Cases

The enforcement cases were circulated on 6th April 2023, and were duly noted.

12. **FINANCE**

- a. New Minimum Wage Rate Payable to the Village Caretaker
From 1st April 2023 the Minimum Wage Rate applicable to the Caretaker increased to £10.42. The budget was set using the proposed rate at the time of £10.32, there would be a resulting overspend of £62.40 for the year. Cllr Carne proposed the new rate be approved for payment, seconded by Cllr Parker, agreed by all. **Action: clerk to update payroll.**
- b. Booking of Rodeo Bull with Funtime Bounce
Funtime Bounce quoted £550 for the hire of the Rodeo Bull for the Community Fun Day, this included an operator and delivery charges. Given the proximity of the event the booking was approved by the Chair. Cllr Thomas proposed the booking be retrospectively approved, seconded by Cllr Carne, agreed by all.
- c. 2023/24 Charge for Dog Waste Collection
From 1st April 2023 the charge for dog waste collection increased to £7.00 plus VAT per bin per empty, this equates to an increase of 7.69% and the budget was set with an increase of 10.1%. There would be a resulting underspend of £65.10 for the year. Cllr Thomas proposed the new charge be approved for payment, seconded by Cllr Carne, agreed by all. The Chair and clerk signed the contract for 2023/24. **Action: clerk to forward a copy of the signed contract to Merlin Environmental Services.**

- d. Pink Paper April
The pink paper for April had been circulated for councillors’ consideration. Cllr Carne proposed the following payments be approved, seconded by Cllr Parker, agreed by all:

	£'s
Salaries	1,393.41
Torfaen CBC – Pension contributions	257.38
HMRC – NIC and PAYE	133.79
Merlin Environmental Services (Waste collection April Inv.1393)	268.80
Portskewett & Sudbrook Recreation Hall (Inv. 191 Hire of Hall March)	24.00
Funtime Bounce (Inv. Ftb-32031 Hire of Rodeo Bull for Community Fun Day)	550.00
Audit Wales (Inv. ARINV/008560 Audit Fees 2020/21)	200.00

Balances held: Current Account £3,322.43, Deposit Account £8,844.77, and Lloyds Account £0.
Action: clerk to make payments.

- e. Grant Application from ARW School for Football Equipment
An application had been received for a grant of £1,000 to purchase football equipment. The grant budget for 2023/24 is £1,000. Cllr Parker proposed a grant of £500 be approved, seconded by Cllr Carne, agreed by all. **Action: clerk to notify the applicant and make payment.**
- f. Quarterly Report on Bank Reconciliations
The clerk reported that Cllr Fawcitt had completed the bank reconciliation check and no errors or issues were identified.
- g. Quarterly Budget Monitoring Report for the 12 months ending 31st March 2023
The report had been circulated prior to the meeting. No issues were raised by members and the report was duly noted. **Action: clerk to publish on website.**
- h. External Audit Report for 2021/22
The external auditors report confirmed there were no matters which required the issuing of a separate issues arising report. The conclusion of audit notice had been published on the website and in the notice boards as required. Cllr Thomas proposed the report be accepted, seconded by Cllr Carne, agreed by all.
- i. Unaudited Accounts for 2022/23
The unaudited accounts had been circulated for consideration prior to the meeting. Councillors raised no issues.

j. 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. It was provisionally agreed the Audit Committee would meet on 9th May 2023, time to be confirmed. **Action: clerk to publish agenda and papers.**

13. TREE SURVEYS

a. Two quotations had been received:

- Treecare Consulting quoted £980 plus vat. They would assess all trees on sites and boundaries using visual tree assessment and provide a report for each site, in which defect trees and groups would have the defect recorded and recommendations for remedial work required, along with priority of work and location details including aerial photo and Ordnance Survey mapping information.
- JRF Contracting quoted £250. A basic visual tree inspection would be carried out at the sites, to identify immediate hazards or possible indications of concern.

The earmarked fund for tree surveys brought forward from 2022/23 is £305. Cllr Parker proposed the contract be awarded to JRF Contracting, seconded by Cllr Thomas, agreed by all. **Action: clerk to notify contractors.**

14. COMMUNITY FUN DAY

a. Update on Progress with Arrangements

An update report had been circulated to councillors. The clerk contacted RPM Bike Display Team but the cost of their display exceeded the budget. The Youth Club confirmed they will be selling soft drinks. The Temporary Event Notice and Street Trading License have been received and confirmation has been received that St John Ambulance will attend.

A meeting of the Events Working group was arranged for 2nd May at 7pm at the Portskewett Inn.

b. Preferred Option for Provision of Rides and Inflatables

Funtime Bounce have been booked to provide the Rodeo Bull. Mr I Bullock from Caldicot had estimated £250 to supply an inflatable with an operator, which would be covered by his insurance. Cllr Carne proposed Mr Bullock be booked to supply the inflatable, seconded by Cllr Thomas, agreed by all. **Action: Cllr Fawcitt to notify Mr Bullock and obtain a copy of his insurance certificate.**

16. PLACE PLAN

Deferred to the May meeting.

17. ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA

No issues were raised.

18. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The Chair thanked everyone for attending and gave the date and time of the next meetings as **Tuesday 16th May 2023** at Portskewett & Sudbrook Recreation Hall, **with the Annual Meeting at 6.30pm to be followed by the Ordinary meeting at 7.00pm.** The meeting was declared closed at 8.15pm.

Mrs Beverley Young - Clerk to the Council