

Minutes of a meeting of the Manafon Community Council held on Wednesday the 4th February 2015 at 7.30pm. at New Mills Village Hall.

Present – Cllrs. R. Benyon, Chairman, J. S. Davies, C. Davies, T. Jerman, H. Lewis, Mrs. E. A. Lewis, Mrs. J. Hall, C. Cllr. and the Clerk Mrs L. Stanton.

- 1) Welcome by Cllr. R. Benyon Chairman
- 2) Apologies for absence – Apologies from Cllr. Mrs. J. Shearer.
- 3) Presentation by Ruari Lean of Vattenfall. Copy meeting notes from RL attached. Documents supporting the information divulged at meeting could be made available to Councillors if required, all Councillors agreed for the Clerk to divulge their private address to PPG.
- 4) Declaration of Interest – Cllr. J. Davies & H. Lewis vis a vis payment to Village Hall.
- 5) Minutes of the last meeting – Some councillors said the summary of action points at back of minutes was useful. Signing of minutes proposed by Cllr. T. Jerman, seconded by Cllr. J. Hall and agreed by all to approve the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday the 7th January 2015, minutes signed by the Chairman.
- 6) Matters arising from the minutes:
 - a) Highways - agenda item 6
 - b) Local housing needs – referred to in agenda item 8 OVW meeting.
 - c) Recycling - agenda item 9.
- 7) Correspondence/Updates from Clerk – Clerk informed meeting of all correspondence received since last meeting.

Still receiving correspondence that is more easily disseminated electronically, printing is prohibitive due to time / costs involved, Councillors agreed filtering and dissemination of emails between meetings proving satisfactory. (Cllrs. C. Davies & T. Jerman said not to send minutes of OVW meetings, discussion at council meetings sufficient for them).

Main items covered:-

- a) Newsletters from AM's / Local MP's, councillors advise no need to forward as in receipt directly if signed up.
Community Council Legislation - ***The aim is to bring sections 55 to 58 of the Local Government Democracy (Wales) Act 2013 into force on 1 May 2015.***
Please see link: <http://wales.gov.uk/consultations/localgovernment/access-to-information-town-councils/?lang=en>
- b) ***Reforming Local Government Power to Local People White Paper Public Services published***
View legislation at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/anaw/2013/4/part/5/crossheading/access-to-information/enacted>

The closing date for responses is 28 April 2015. Clerk said this would make an upgrade of website a priority for compliance and she would pursue if we had been approved for the Web Site development grant.

- c) Email received from Welshpool resident via Cllr. J. Davies, related to a personal health issue, Clerk sent polite reply suggesting that they get in touch with local MP's who are fighting for locally delivered health services, as the originator of the letter had already written to Minister of Health then little we could do.
 - d) Clerk informed meeting of the joint OVW event May 14th - the email had been forwarded 19th Jan, event @ Llandrindod Wells should any councillors wish to attend details were available.
 - e) Clerk informed meeting of a workshop run by the ICO covering Data Protection and Freedom of information Acts, date of event 5th February @ Aberystwyth & 24th February @ Haverfordwest.
 - f) Clerk informed meeting of the email received related to the Powys Local Development Plan 2011- 2026 - Update at January 2015. Basis of correspondence - about the latest position with the preparation of the Powys Local Development (LDP). The representations that were received on the Deposit LDP, 2014 can be viewed on-line through the refpoints in each of the consultation documents found on the following webpage.
<http://www.powys.gov.uk/en/planning-building-control/local-development-plan/>
 - g) Clerk received One Voice Wales response to the 'Consultation on Overriding Easements and Other Rights, had been forwarded to councillors with email, during meeting passed to Cllrs. C. Davies & Jerman as more related to landowners.
 - h) Correspondence received from PAVO with invitation to become members FOC, Cllr. J Davies gave a brief insight into PAVO and it was agreed to take advantage of membership which may become more relevant with the progression of devolved services. Proposed by Cllr. E. A. Lewis, seconded by Cllr. J. Hall. Clerk will continue to filter correspondence and distribute as appropriately and effectively as is required.
- 8) Archiving – Clerk pursued local storage but proved to be cost prohibitive. Cllr. J. Davies said he had spoken with Kerry Robinson @Llandrindod Wells vis a vis archiving of minute books etc. Could be digitally recorded at cost of £25 per hour, unable to quantify number of hours. Otherwise can be stored Cllr. Benyon stated there had to be some sort of caveat that MCC had to be contacted before any moving or destroying of valuable records. . Clerk advised that she did not have sufficiently secure storage available at home and Cllr. J Davies generously offered to retain them at Old Hall for the foreseeable future, proposed by Cllr. C. Davies, seconded by Cllr. E. A. Lewis.
- 9) Highways – A number of reports of ongoing issues with standing water and general poor state of the roads.
- a) Clerk confirmed that a number of gulleys had been attended to since last meeting and specifically addressing the matter if the standing water at the location of Glyn Cogan,
 - b) Cllr. Benyon had addressed the complaint that had been received concerning poor visibility at junction when entering onto the B4390 at the Green. **NB – since meeting the Clerk can report that some action has been taken in respect of cutting back the hedge to improve visibility.**
- 10) Planning Applications/Approvals – none received.
- 11) Reports of meetings attended
- a) **OVW meeting 27th January 2015 at Llanbrynmair attended by Cllr. J. Davies and Clerk Lorraine Stanton. Minutes will be circulated when received from OVW, brief summary:-**

Presentation by Sue Simpson (Executive Support Manager) of Powys CC on the

Community delivery/Devolved services project.

- ✚ Significant reductions in funding to end of decade can be expected; Powys CC funding is complex and they do benefit from a funding net due to the large geographic area and small population but means come out worse in terms of funding from central government. Spending reductions to be achieved per annum are around 4% of total budget, £6.8 million. Council tax revenues equate to approx... 3.25% of Powys CC revenues each 1% represents approx. £628,000 income, savings/efficiencies to be found in financial year 2016/2017 are £10.07 million.
- ✚ Many services are under threat, therefore some services will cease at best be significantly reduces and overall can expect less in terms of overall service provisions. Emphasis in maintaining valued services, i.e. vulnerable people, value for money paramount but people will have to take more responsibility themselves. Some remodelling of council services, develop local economies, identifying true costs of some services very difficult, Powys CC operating with about 500 less staff so everything is challenging for them.
- ✚ Conversations as to what is important to retain is critical, Powys CC will continue dialogues with local community councils and Forums and develop the “clustering” concept, there has to be some dialogue on the ground. All councils in UK have to change their approach to service delivery; small councils may think they cannot take on board some services hence why the cluster approach may be beneficial with economies of scale as a collective may be more viable. Some innovative developments in England have been achieved; possibly some can be replicated in Wales.
- ✚ Statutory obligations are key focus, i.e. social welfare, education etc. If a service is to be devolved then Powys CC would expect to subsidise at 50% of what the cost was to the Council to provide originally.
- ✚ Any devolved services will still be monitored by Powys CC and an equitable solution across the whole county in terms of funding for devolved services was paramount.
- ✚ Funding cuts are already happening and the pace of change currently is too slow needs some more momentum to move more quickly so requisite savings can be achieved by Powys CC. Powys was deemed to be the most critical county where devolved services is concerned and it was hoped by end of March at the end of various cluster meetings there would be a clearer picture.
- ✚ A series of questions were put from the floor from various local councils.

General OVW agenda

- ✚ Cllr J. Davies raised the matter of section 106 local planning restrictions and the impact on those seeking affordable housing. He submitted a letter from one resident to the Chairman outlining the difficulties faced by local residents. Made the point this was not just a local issue and nor was it specific to Wales, it was a UK wide issue. A request was made that OVW take up this matter with financial institutions and the Minister of State for Wales. It would seem that the financial institutions don't understand the concept/principle or if they do, they need to change their policies and ensure local people can get funding for affordable housing.
- ✚ Training – Councillors and clerks should be persuaded to take up some of the training offered by OVW, particularly as there is likely to be some governance change to Town & Community councils in the near future. Likely that all T & C councillors will have to undergo training to ensure they can fulfil their roles and obligations.
- ✚ Powys Regeneration partnership has been wound up.
- ✚ National Grid consultation closes 9/2/2015.
- ✚ Date and venue next meeting, **22nd April 2015 at Machynlleth**

- b) **Community Delivery – Newtown and Llanllwchaiarn Town Council - an invitation to participate Monday 2nd February attended by Cllrs. Benyon and J. Davies. Brief**

summary:-

- + An exploratory information gathering meeting of community and town councils, consultative meeting to see if there are ways forward for cluster Groups.
- + It was commented that it would be hard to attract councillors in the future as taking on devolved services comes with 'baggage' some of which may not be sustainable.
- + Some facilities are /can only be used by people in main towns e.g. swimming pools, leisure centres, libraries, bus services etc. These could become very fractious as they are difficult and potentially complicated to devolve as it could be that some areas pay twice for the same service....
- + Cllr. J. Davies said that PAVO were working with some organisations to assist taking over devolved services as there were many factors to take into account, not least legal liabilities.
- + It is difficult to look at clusters for devolved services due to a lack of hard facts, particularly about the costs and liabilities, without the right information it was impossible to evaluate, measure and even impossible to manage ultimately. An example being the rural bus services and how / where they were funded.
- + Manafon CC will keep its options open in respect of 'clustering' and establish what / where / how Manafon may be affected.

12) Recycling - Clerk reported that the majority of local residents seem to have received the additional recycling boxes now still some issue with those that are not so accessible to main road. Residents will need to deal with their specific issues on an individual basis as needs will be varied. Clerk reported that a communication had been received in respect of changes to the disposal of clinical waste; she had placed this in the 2 notice boards as it may be important to some residents.

13) Finance / Payment of accounts –

- a) Village Hall grant £400
- b) OVW Training for Clerk 24th February £35 (50% bursary applied for)
- c) Clerk provided the YTD financial summary of MCC accounts as discussed at last meeting. Spreadsheet provided to council detailing expenditure YTD and expenditure forecast for remainder of financial year, with a view forward to the new financial year 2015/2016 some details on anticipated expenditure include but will be required to be discussed at next meeting as we approach end of this financial year. Clerk will ensure spreadsheet maintained on monthly basis should Council require.
- d) Expenses, Clerk will provide the travel expense form to councillors and any with outstanding expenses should bring them to the next meeting as we are approaching the end of the financial year.
- e) Investment strategy – Clerk suggested review of the Standing Orders/Investment Strategy at next meeting as one needs to be in place for next financial year.
- f) Banking, Clerk advised that there had been some difficulties in getting the change of clerk details across to HSBC, Cllr. Hall had been into HSBC and now had appropriate forms. Details completed by Clerk and signed by authorised signatories Cllr. Benyon & Hall, Clerk would take to HSBC personally to ensure they understood the urgency. Whereabouts of bank statements since November need to be investigated with HSBC as neither the previous nor incumbent Clerk had received them.
- g) Nature / number of bank accounts, Clerk wondered if it was essential going forward to maintain 2 accounts when levels of interest on high interest were so poor. Suggested some banks were offering better interest on current accounts and Clerk would investigate further and report at next meeting.

14) Agenda items for the next meeting

1. Minutes of the last meeting
2. Matters arising from minutes
3. Correspondence / Updates from Clerk
4. Archiving
5. Planning
6. Highways
7. Web site development
8. Reports of meetings attended
9. Recycling
10. Payment of accounts / Budget forecast / Expenditure YTD

15) Date of next meeting – The next meeting of the Council will be held on Wednesday the 4th of March 2015 at 7.30pm.

As there were was no other business to discuss the Chairman thanked everyone for attending and the meeting closed at 2215 hours.

Lorraine Stanton

Clerk to the Council

Action points from meeting 4th February 2015

- a) **Clerk** to provide PPG / Vattenfall with Councillor's private address in order that they can receive copies of documents available in relation to the Mynydd Lluet y Graig Project.
- b) Web Site development. **Clerk** to pursue the grant and explore possibilities / options with developer.
- c) **Clerk** to issue the travel expense form to councillors and any with outstanding expenses should bring them to the next meeting.
- d) **Clerk** to review the Standing Orders/Investment Strategy for next meeting.
- e) **Clerk** to liaise with HSBC in respect of change in Clerk details and outstanding / future statements.
- f) **Clerk** would investigate any different possibilities / alternatives to improve interest rates on bank accounts before next meeting.