

Minutes of the meeting of the Manafon Community Council held on Wednesday the 24th June 2015 at 7.30pm. at New Mills Village Hall.

Present –Chairman Cllr. J. S. Davies, Vice Chairman Cllr. H. Lewis Cllrs. Ms. J. Hall, A. Lewis, C. Davies, T. Jerman, Co. Cllr. Mrs. J. Shearer and the Clerk Mrs L. Stanton.

Meeting was preceded by a presentation/ public exhibition by STW and Fisher German vis a vis the proposed construction of a new sewage treatment plant. This was followed by a general discussion between STW/Fischer German and all councillors. Separate notes taken during exhibition attached as an appendix (1) to minutes.

- 1) **Welcome** by Cllr. J. S. Davies Chairman
- 2) **Apologies for absence** – Apologies from Cllrs. R. Benyon who returned to meeting at agenda item 8.
- 3) **Declaration of Interest** – There were none
- 4) **STW presentation / discussion**

A separate report is attached an appendix (1) from notes taken by the Clerk during the public exhibition 1700 hours to 1915 hours.

As a consensus between those present a number of points were to be tabled back to Severn Trent Water and Fisher-German, Clerk to attend to as follows:

1. Population growth / housing potential, it was felt the numbers were potentially inadequate.
 2. Proposed siting of new plant given there is a local consensus that it could have been further away from the village settlement and the original suggestions were for it to be sited in the “corner field”.
 3. Speed limit reduction on approach to the access, Council believe it is critical that the 30 MPH sign is moved back from present location and will be a matter between the developers and the Highways Department.
 4. Signage, local residents would prefer that there was no direct reference to a sewage treatment plant in the village, and would opt for more subtle signage, for example Severn Trent Water only.
 5. A serious concern is the maintenance and responsibility of the land designated specifically as the flood plain site after the installation/completion of works. Experiences in other areas suggest that if the land is neglected then the function as a flood plain (water attenuation) would be seriously compromised.
- 5) **Minutes of the last meeting**; minutes approved, proposed by Cllr. C. Davies, seconded by Cllr. Ms. J. Hall, agreed by all and duly signed by Chairman Cllr J. S. Davies.
- 6) **Matters arising from minutes (not covered in main agenda)**

Chairman Cllr. J. Davies extended his thanks on behalf of the Council to Cllr. Bob Benyon the retiring Chairman for his hard work and contribution over the last 2 years; this was endorsed by all present.

Clerk confirmed all action points from previous meeting were completed.

Updates on matters arising from Clerk:

7 b) Clerk confirmed there was no liability for pension scheme as earnings of Clerk fall well below qualifying thresholds; “An employer will only need to enrol their workers into a pension scheme if they are aged between 22 and state pension age, working or ordinarily working in the UK, and earning over a certain amount (this is over £192 per week, £833 per month, or £10,000 per year, based on how often the individuals are paid)”.

7 c) Audit Commission - an article was published in the SLCC Magazine (May edition) which seems to suggest that smaller councils will be exempt from external audits and this will be replaced by Annual Assurance Reviews. Clerk was to verify if this legislation is equally applicable to Councils in Wales as article not specific and an initial look at the legislation on www.Gov.uk seems to be “England specific”.

7 d) NALC funding - NALC award of government funding to facilitate new audit and transparency rules for small councils, NALC just referred us back to SLCC so no possibilities identified..

17) Position of Clerk - Chairman went through contract of employment for Clerk with Council, some minor changes to be made and it should be adjusted and retyped and submitted for final approval / agreement at next meeting. Going forward |Cllr. Davies stated that a formal appraisal mechanism for Clerk has to be introduced.

7) Correspondence / Updates from Clerk

A brief resume of relevant correspondence received, if required more information can be made available:

- a)** Changes to recycling by Powys CC had been introduced Clerk had displayed information on notice boards and web site.
- b)** Community Delivery, general discussion ensues, MCC don't control this aspect but elements of the system could affect the local community, Council will continue to monitor. The Newtown cluster meeting had been deferred due to the absence of any meaningful information from Powys CC.
- c)** Update on Broadband facilities in the area received, Clerk will put on web site as grants are available to local businesses. According to a communication from Russell George AM to Cllr. Benyon, *“My office has made some enquiries. You are connected to cabinet 1 on the Tregynon exchange. I've been informed by BT that premises on this cabinet are definitely within scope of the Superfast Cymru project but the area is currently being planned for a fibre to the premises (FTTP) solution rather than fibre to the cabinet due to its location. This will mean that your premises, and those of your neighbours, are potentially set to benefit from much faster broadband speeds in the future. However, the drawback is that you and your neighbours will have to wait longer as this technology requires detailed planning considerations. BT has informed me that this FTTP solution will be available to the area by June 2016. In the meantime, for those who receive a consistent speed of less than 2 Mbit/s, the Access Broadband Cymru scheme is a complementary scheme to the Superfast Cymru project which aims to provide superfast broadband via an alternative solution such as wireless or satellite. The grant scheme provides up to £900 towards 90% of the*

installation costs. Please find attached more information on the eligibility criteria for the scheme.”

- d) Rural development plan – PAVO holding 2 events if any Council need advice on support and financial assistance through this plan; 27th July Brecon, 30th July Newtown.
- e) Resource Efficient Wales offering advice and information to householders, community group and public sector organisations on ways to save energy and water, Clerk has put on notice board.
- f) News item from Published June 2015 SLCC (Society for local council Clerks)

Planning rules holding back the delivery of affordable homes

Local Planning Authorities are warning that planning rule relaxations introduced by the last Government are holding back the construction of affordable housing. The National Planning Policy Framework eased the requirement for house builders to construct a proportion of affordable homes as part of a planning approval. However, a survey by the Town and Country Planning Association shows that many developers are using the changes to argue that they cannot afford to build affordable homes, according to over half of the local authorities polled. More information can be found at www.tcpa.org.uk/resources.php?action=resource&id=1254

- g) Local development plan, consultation closes 20th July, no areas visible in Manafon, apart from the large communities there are no land identifications visible for development opportunities. During consultation period all documentation is available to view on line at www.powys.gov.uk/ldp.
- h) Communication from AM Leighton Andrews illustrating the need for Town and Community Councillors to ensure they were adequately trained to deal with the changes brought about by the reformation of local government, training was available through the National Training Strategy.
- i) News item from Published June 2015 SLCC - *Wind farms - Communities will have more say over Wind Farms. In a written statement to Parliament, Gregg Clark MP, the Secretary of State for Communities, has outlined changes to the planning system aimed at giving communities greater control over onshore wind farms. The changes mean that when considering a planning application for wind turbines in their area, a Local Planning Authority should only grant permission if:*
 - *The site is in an area identified as suitable for wind energy as part of a Local or Neighbourhood plan, and*
 - *Following consultation, the planning impacts identified by affected local communities have been fully addressed and therefore has their backing*

Further information about these reforms to the planning system (which take immediate effect) can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/giving-local-people-the-final-say-over-onshore-wind-farms>

- j) The Government intends to end new public subsidies for onshore wind farms

Published June 2015 SLCC

The Government has announced that new onshore wind farms will be excluded from Government subsidy from 1st April 2016, a year earlier than expected.

There will be a grace period for projects which already have planning permission. The Government also said that it may look at options to continue support for community energy projects.

The Government has already announced measures in the Queen's speech to change the law to give local communities the final say on onshore windfarm applications. More info via this link <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/changes-to-onshore-wind-subsidies-protect-investment-and-get-the-best-deal-for-bill-payers>

k) Rural Crime Survey Published June 2015

The National Rural Crime Network (NRCN) has received Home Office funding to undertake a rural crime and policing survey. The on-line survey will run for about five weeks and it is hoped that the findings will help shape and inform -

** Awareness of crime in rural areas;*

** Encourage crime prevention*

** Government policy; and,*

** Policing and partnership activities.*

More info at this link -

<http://www.nationalruralcrimenetwork.net/research/internal/national-rural-crimes-survey-2015/>

- l)** SLCC has taken on role of Advisor for Wales to provide additional support to members in Wales where some of the legislation is different to England, Clerk and Council regarded as a positive move.
- m)** NEC (National Executive Council) elections 2015 for branch representatives and 23 reserve representatives, not applicable, Powys 2016

8) Compliance with legislation affecting Community Councils and Web site development/update

Web site up and running and meets the revised criteria / legislation and ready for ongoing development. Accounts for last year will only be uploaded once Audit is received back. Able to upload more information/documents than before, generic email address now in place (clerk@manafoncommunitycouncil.co.uk), Clerk will inform all external parties of change to email address ASAP, everything will be transferred to the new lap top week commencing 6th July and Clerk will have some more training from Glenn Roberts so Clerk can maintain site going forwards. Clerk will send small article to David Hall for next Messenger outlining the benefits to local community of revamped web site. It was agreed to make a donation of £50 to the Welsh Air Ambulance in lieu of the development and support work done FOC by Glenn Roberts, proposed by Cllr. Benyon, seconded by Cllr. Ms. J. Hall. Clerk to arrange cheque.

9) Planning

1 planning application received - Planning application received p/2015/0533 in respect of Grid Ref: 318060.5/307800 for Full: Installation of a wind turbine with blade tip height of 48.01m and hub height of 30.5m together with control box, formation of access track and associated works at land at Gaer Farmhouse Golfa Welshpool Powys. Council agreed no objections/reservations necessary.

Co. Cllr. J. Shearer asked if a planning application for the Gwernydd had been received, the Clerk had not seen it so far.

The Clerk was again to contact Planning department and remind them that we require to be informed as any planning applications are approved, this was lacking from Powys CC.

10) Retirement Gift/Discretionary Payments

Clerk to organise a collection between existing and previous Councillor's. Existing Councillors present were in agreement and Cllr. Benyon had provided the Clerk with names and addresses of previous Councillors so they could be contacted in respect of a voluntary contribution. Hopefully this will be resolved at next meeting.

11) Highways

Update in highways was that the jetter will be concentrated in main trunk roads and blockage on minor roads will be attended to when possible. Cllr. C. Davies suggested that the pot hole that has developed over the culvert near The Green should be photographed and submitted to the Highways department, Clerk will attend to.

Cllr. J. Davies registered concerns about the lane leading up to Old Hall; Cllr. C. Davies understood some action might be seen in the next month or so, Cllr. C. Davies to continue to press Highways department for improvements on condition of local roads

C. Cllr. J. Shearer stated that highways department are not doing any surface dressing right now.

12) Reports of Training / Meetings attended

No training/meetings attended.

13) Payment of accounts

There was none except to remind Council of the approval for lap top purchase (£211.47) which had been approved in between meetings by Councillors to enable new web site operating platform to be installed.

Clerk gave an overview of current accounts and provided hard copy to Councillors; expenditure so far amounts to £543.18 including VAT and including purchase of the lap top for Council use.

First instalment of the precept for his year from Powys CC received 30/4, £1100.

Clerk raised matter of a potential cost, the Village Hall notice board was extremely congested these days and often it was difficult to find space for essential documents. Can

we explore the possibility of gaining permission from Village Hall Committee to have a bespoke notice board to the left of the main doors. Council agreed for Clerk to get costings and permission for discussion at next meeting.

PAYE issue with year-end returns may have gone away after last contact with HMRC but Clerk remains unconvinced it is 100% solved, time will tell!

14) Updates from Powys CC

- a) Local public transport, this topic has had a great deal of interest Co. Cllr. Mrs. J. Shearer gave an insight into the proposed changes to local bus services. Clerk will put out info on notice board, a couple of local residents would be asked by Cllr. Benyon to complete a questionnaire provided to Council. Consultation closes 29/6, basically rural areas would lose all community bus services but some may be forthcoming if appropriate funding was secured.
- b) A consultation was in progress vis a vis the reconfiguration of High Schools in North Montgomeryshire, closes 8th July.

15) Date of next meetings

The next meeting of the Council will be held on Wednesday the 29th of July 2015 at 7.30pm.

16) Proposed agenda for meeting 29th July 1930 hours (any additional items arising in the meantime will be added before issuing prior to meeting)

1. Welcome
2. Apologies for absence
3. Declaration of interest (as agenda points arise)
4. Minutes of the last meeting
5. Matters arising from minutes
6. Updates on Sewage Plant from STW/Fischer-German
7. Correspondence / Updates from Clerk
8. Planning Applications
9. Retirement Gift/Discretionary payments - Resolution
10. Highways matters
11. Reports from meetings / training attended
12. Payment of accounts
13. Agenda items next meeting
14. Confirmation of date of next meeting



Lorraine Stanton
Clerk & RFO to the Council

Action Points from Meeting 24th June 2015

Clerk

Points raised on proposed sewerage plant were to be tabled back to Severn Trent Water and Fisher-German

Revamp contract of Employment for approval at next meeting

Clerk will send small article to David Hall for next Messenger

Revamp contract of employment for finalisation next meeting

The pot hole over the culvert near the Green to be photographed and submitted to the Highways department

Clerk to get costings and permission for a dedicated council notice board for discussion at next meeting.

The Clerk was again to contact Planning department re planning applications that are approved.

Councillors

Cllr. J. Davies to set up formal appraisal system for Clerk

Cllr. C. Davies to continue to press Highways department for improvements on condition of local roads