

Minutes of the meeting of the Manafon Community Council held on Wednesday the 3rd February 2016 at 7.30pm., at New Mills Village Hall.

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

1. Welcome by Cllr. J. Davies Chairman

2. Apologies for absence – C. Cllr. J. Shearer

3. Declaration of Interest – None

4. Minutes of the last meeting; minutes proposed by Cllr. R. Benyon, seconded by Cllrs. C. Davies and were approved and agreed by all.

5. Matters arising from minutes (not covered in main agenda) – Highways matters, Clerk to investigate further if issues can be logged on Powys CC website and obtain a reference number for easier follow up. Clerk confirmed production of new logo was still work in progress; all action points from last meeting had been attended to, the only one to finalise is the creation of a proper archive facility on web site, a temporary one was in place but needed to be finalised.

6. Review of Standing Orders (carried over from last meeting) - Clerk had finalised the review of Standing Orders per last meeting and checked to ensure complied with legal obligations for Community Councils. Clerk stated that having compared to other small Community Councils the Standing Orders seemed to be more reflective of a Town Council obligations and we could look in future to adopting a streamlined version that was still compliant. It was agreed unanimously to adopt the revised Standing Orders and review in the future. Clerk was to table as an agenda point to next OVW meeting.

Clerk had also reviewed and revamped the Publication Scheme as that was also out of date, much of what was included could be provided via Web Site, unanimously agreed to adopt revised version, Clerk to upload to website with Council documents.

7. Review of Financial Regulations etc.

Clerk had undertaken a full review of all documentation relating to legal obligations of council and these had been sent to Councillors 31/1 in advance of meeting for their perusal prior to discussion. These included Financial Regulations, Clerk had endeavoured to restrict document to the minimum but at the same time ensuring compliance and that it was an effective working document. It was proposed by Cllr. R. Benyon and seconded by Cllr. J. Hall that the revised document be adopted by Council immediately, Clerk to upload to website with Council documents.

Clerk informed Council that there were a number of other documents that should be produced, agreed, adopted and published to web site, for example, Code of Conduct & complaints procedure, Freedom of Information Policy, Publication Scheme, Asset Register, Register of Interests, Complaints and Concerns Procedure, Health & Safety, various risk assessment etc. etc., Clerk will review all for existence and compliance and during the course of the next few meetings Council with review each one accordingly. **The Risk assessments for review are per email 31/1: - Financial Risk expenditure 2009-10; Modified Income 2009-10; Investment Strategy 13-14; Risk assessment Financial (income); Modified Reserves 2009-10.**

Some questions arose as to necessity of some of these things but Clerk and Chairman reminded Council that compliance to legal requirements was essential, irrespective of size of the Council some legislation applied to all.

Council unanimously agreed to adopt the Ombudsman for Wales Code of Conduct document and the Freedom of Information Policy, and to adopt the revised Publication Scheme, the Register of Interest and Asset Register formats, the Clerk would update with current information and upload all above documents to website ASAP.

8. Correspondence / Updates from Clerk

First item for discussion was the Community and Town Council Engagement Event Draft Local Government (Wales) Bill, after some discussion it was agreed to revert to OVW as follows:

POTENTIAL POINTS TO RAISE – SESSION 1

MEMBERS TO COMPLETE TRAINING

What are your views on principal authorities providing mandatory training for certain matters where community councillors would have to complete appropriate training?

Manafon CC feel that there would be huge unimaginable costs associated in ensuring every councillor is fully trained and for very small community councils it was felt that such an expense /exercise was a nonsense and that mandatory training was unnecessary.

New Councillors to the position should undergo some basic training but specific their role, what should be considered is what skills does a Councillor / potential Councillor need to safeguard their community?

Have you any views on the proposal about the Clerk's duty to look into a matter where a complaint is received that a councillor has not completed compulsory training?

Manafon CC felt that this is beyond the call of duty and potentially beyond the capability of most Clerks

COMMUNITY COUNCIL ELECTION DATES

What are your views on extending the term of office of community councillors elected in 2017 to six years?

Manafon CC felt that it is more democratic to have them every 4 years not 6.

Planning Aid Wales, Clerk had received email from PAW outlining support to Community & Town Councils, offering training, seminars and workshops and resources which included free guidance publications, Clerk to email web site link to Councillors.

Emails received by Clerk vis a vis non-remuneration posts to public bodies, Council felt that circulation was not necessary.

Submission of the Deposit Powys Local Development Plan 2015 to the Welsh Government and Planning Inspectorate for Public Examination and Notice of Proposed Focussed Changes Consultation; an independent Inspector will be appointed to carry out an independent assessment of the overall soundness of the Plan; Councillors had been provided with the link to read the full consultation.

Resource efficient Wales, a Welsh Government service offering free impartial; advice to households on lowering energy bills, Clerk had uploaded information to website and posted to notice boards prior to meeting.

HM the Queen's 90th birthday beacon celebrations, Council informed by Clerk of communication received, Manafon do not have a Beacon so cannot participate in this UK wide scheme.

Clerk advised Council that quite a lot more literature that is hopefully of interest and use to the greater community is being uploaded to website on a regular basis, the most imminent article from website and notice boards is the chipping of dogs before 1st April so hopefully all dog owners are aware.

9. Update on STW Planning Application

Cllr. Benyon attended the Planning Meeting at Welshpool 28th June where the STW application was for discussion. The application was rejected, consent refused, main reason being flood issues outlined by a very detailed submission from NRW, some councillors and planning technicians also felt that the project was too industrial for the proposed location. Cllr. Benyon also suggested that it would be good training for all Councillors to attend one of these meetings as you gained a good perspective on planning applications and how they were processed and how / why decisions were made.

10. Planning Applications/Updates

Clerk confirmed that Powys CC seemed determined to implement the new strategy of electronic distribution of all new planning applications, despite protest from a number of councils. Clerk didn't believe Manafon would be adversely affected as we had few applications and most could be handled by downloading to laptop for meetings.

1 new planning application received P/2015/1270, erection of a bungalow in Manafon.

Whilst MCC agreed the present site was something of an eyesore, there were some reservations as to the appropriateness of this application. Response to be sent to Planning on behalf of MCC as per below:-

Manafon Community Council met on Wednesday 3rd February and planning application was discussed in detail, particularly as a number of local residents affected by this application had made contact with the Council, some of whom will no doubt lodge their own views/objections

There are a number of concerns raised by Councillors in relation to the application;

1. The most obvious issues surround the proximity of the proposed development to existing properties, local residents believe that this development will have an adverse effect on existing dwellings. The encroachment onto both boundaries will have a considerable and significant reduction in light available into the Dolafon property and it will also be detrimental to the wellbeing of the residents of the OAP bungalows. These homes for elderly residents were built by Powys County Council and the environment and surroundings that were intended by provision of these bungalows must be protected for the present residents and for future elderly residents.

2. In respect of highways and access via the gateway, it does not appear to be suitable nor acceptable. This is further substantiated by the fact that the single lane aspect that is caused by residents parking opposite the proposed entrance by the black & white cottages referred to in the application (they are perfectly legal in doing that) and MCC believe it has some serious implications for highways safety, this is worsened when there are any services or events on at the Church in the village when there are more vehicles parked in the roadside. A previous application 27/6/1989 reference M18814 which was refused we believe due to highways issues and nothing has changed since except that there is more and more traffic and more parked traffic on the road side, often obscuring the view for traffic

3. The application suggests connection to mains sewage; given the application by STW for a new sewage plant has been rejected, there is no capacity to connect to mains sewage and seems to contradict this application.

11. Highways matters

Concerns raised about the Parish weir near Trem Hirnant particularly in view of ongoing high water, local residents want Powys CC to check it is fit for purpose and not going to cause a flood. Also residents have reported the increase in pot holes and severity of some on the road leading to the Glyn (Bumford's) off B4390, on the road from New Mills to Llanfair concerns were raised about the steel drain covers, they need checking / fixing as there have been some movement issues associated with some. Clerk to advise highways department ASAP.

12. Reports from meetings / training attended

Cllr. Benyon attended the planning meeting 28th January, primarily to hear outcome on STW application, see above. A couple of the planning committee had reservations about the application as it was felt it was “too industrial” for the proposed location.

Chair & Vice Chair attended the OVW meeting at Abermule, 2 main aspects to report, NEST presentation on free advice on insulation and heating for homes, primarily aimed at homes that were hard to heat, owned outright or privately rented and in receipt of a means tested benefit.

NEST is the Welsh Government Warm Homes Programme that helps everyone in Wales to save money on their energy, whilst offering a whole range of support and signposting through the Nest advice line; as well as the package of free home improvement measures Nest offers to eligible clients.

Nest is open to all householders in Wales and provides advice on saving energy, money management, energy tariffs, and benefit entitlement. In addition to free advice, if you own or privately rent your home and you or someone you live with receives a means tested benefit, you may be eligible for home improvements at no cost. These may include a new central heating boiler, loft insulation, or cavity wall and solid wall insulation.

Clerk would upload NEST details to website and put on notice board.

No training sessions attended.

13. Payment of accounts & Financial update

Clerk had submitted precept forms for next financial year and returned the forms for village hall annual revenue grant scheme FY 2016/2017, confirming £400 from Manafon CC in February 2017.

Clerk had received confirmation of the Section 137 (4) (a) of the Local Government Act 1972 Expenditure Limit for 2017/2017 FY, maximum sum for 2016/2017 FY is £7.42 per elector.

Clerk provided Council with an up to date financial summary for this FY, reserves might be considered high and Clerk reminded Council of the fact that “*Councils have no legal powers to hold revenue reserves other than those for reasonable working capital needs or for specifically earmarked purposes. Earmarked reserves, which are set aside for specific purposes and for savings for future projects, should be realistic and approved by the Council. It is generally accepted that general (un-earmarked) revenue reserves usually lie within a range of three to twelve months of gross expenditure. However, the amount of general reserve should be risk assessed and approved by the Council.*”

The reserves including the high interest account were higher than might normally be accepted but would be significantly reduced once the annual salary and expenses for the Clerk were paid in March, (1 annual payment made covering salary and expenses for tax purposes), the level of reserves was considered by Council and agreed as being acceptable therefore approved.

Clerk had informed Council by email the excessive hours worked during January, well in excess of 30 hours, this was an exceptional month due to an increase in administration (reviewing and updating documents etc.; large numbers of emails and links to explore for further information and large volumes to update to website). Council agreed Clerk should be recompensed for extra hours, Clerk stated that in the spirit of it being a community function she expects to contribute some hours from own time and was agreeable to 10 hours being paid, this will be added to the annual salary payment and listed to the payments to be made in March.

Discussion took place on what if any better investments were available for high interest accounts, Clerk advised explored possibilities but the structure of our banking as a business account does not give us opportunities to change.

Payments as follows:

Bullguard Anti-Virus subscription £59.96 for 2 years, having received a special offer with a reduction of £20 to renew subscription early, because of the significant savings Clerk had taken this offer up, hopefully there will be an opportunity to share this cost with another Council as subscription allows for more than 1 device, subscription now runs to July 2018.

OVW annual subscription £42

Postage £11.98 second class stamps and some large envelope stamps

Travel expenses for meetings attended:- Cllr. J Davies £25.60; Cllr. H Lewis £8.80; Cllr R Benyon £8.00

It was unanimously agreed to accept the payments as stated above and the payment was approved by all.

14. Agenda items next meeting 2nd March

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. Review of Financial Risk Assessments
7. Correspondence Updates / General updates from Clerk
8. Planning Applications/Updates
9. Highways matters
10. Reports from meetings / training attended
11. Financial update from Clerk
12. Payment of accounts
13. Agenda items next meeting
14. Confirmation of date of next meeting

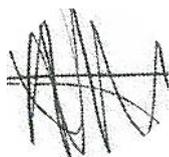
15. Confirmation of date of next meeting, the next meeting of the Council will be held on 2nd March 2016 at 1930 hours.

Meeting closed at 2150 and Chairman thanked everyone for attending.

Proposed agenda for meeting 2nd March is per item 14, (any additional items arising in the meantime will be added before issuing prior to meeting). **Please inform the Clerk of any amendments to minutes above or of any additional agenda items by the latest 24th February** so that notice/summons can be issued / published in good time)

Please note: Future dates for **OVW Montgomeryshire Area Committee** Meetings are as follows:
Wednesday 20th April, and Wednesday 8th June.

Future dates for SLCC Powys Branch meetings, 3rd March, 7th July Llandrindod Wells



Lorraine Stanton
Clerk & RFO to the Council

Action points from meeting Wednesday the 3rd February 2016:

Clerk

Create proper archive on web site for historical information

Continue with logo development

Review all risk assessments including production of H & S policy and assessment for Clerk home based

Send update to OVW on Community & Town Council engagement

Update website with all available documents and information including NEST and revised council documents

Send MCC planning observations on P/2015/1270

Send points raised to highways department and investigate if there is a system on Powys CC for logging issues

Councillors

Cllr. C. Davies (**Carried forward**) - Hedge cutting New Mills, to organise with Alan Buckley the cutting of the hedge as soon as practical when hedge brushing commences.