

Minutes of the Council meeting of the Manafon Community Council held on Wednesday the 7th September 2016

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

63. Welcome

64. Apologies for absence (absence forms to be signed off)

Apologies received from CC. Mrs. J. Shearer

65. Declaration of interest

No obvious declarations of interest, any which arose during meeting, would be dealt with under that agenda point.

66. Minutes of the last meeting

Minutes were discussed in full, it was unanimously agreed that the minutes were an accurate and representation of the meeting therefore resolved by all to accept as a correct record of the meeting, proposed by Cllr. C. Davies seconded by Cllr. H. Lewis.

67. Matters arising from minutes / Action Points update

55 – Link to Powys CC re grass cutting; Cllr. J. Davies said link had not worked, Clerk advised that sometimes these links can fail, Cllr. Benyon also reported that contrary to the information from Powys CC the grass areas in Glan Rhiw had not been cut on the 4 occasions suggested, only once and that means that the housing association and Powys CC are paying for service they are not receiving. Council instructed Clerk to report these matters to a higher level in Powys CC.

56 – Covered under agenda item 68.

59 – Cefn Coch should just read Cefn.

Various highways matters carried forward as there has been a change in personnel, contact is now Aled Jones, email aled.jones@powys.gov.uk telephone number 01686 611580. Ragwort is a reportable weed, can be reported via Powys CC web site with a specific location.

68. Water Pressure issues, update from STW

Clerk informed Council of several conversations that had taken place with STW (Severn Trent Water) (Kelsey - 0800 0320142), still unable to get feedback/commitment on the matter of the asbestos pipe between New Mills and Manafon.

With regard to pressures, the replacements to valves in the main at The Green were complete however, water pressures were still erratic, and STW assured Clerk they would install pressure loggers in the near future and monitor pressure.

Cllr. Benyon said the leak in Glan Rhiw was still not fully resolved but understood repairs were underway and it was now in the hands of Powys CC to complete. Cllr. Benyon suggested reporting this issue and the matter of grass cutting (see above) to the head of housing for Powys CC.

69. Correspondence Updates / General updates from Clerk

Clerk gave an update on Community recycling sites and the possibility of removal of some, Powys CC are reviewing all sites across Powys now the rollout of kerbside collections is complete.

Clerk made Council aware of a consultation (closing 19/10/2016) in respect of the proposed changes to how Environmental Impact Assessment applies to Town and Country Planning, link for participation already forwarded.

Clerk made Council aware of a consultation (closing 23/9/2016) in respect of external audit fees and rate scales, in view of the costs of the external audit (see financial report agenda item 75) recently undertaken Clerk will ensure the consultation is completed in time.

70. Planning Applications/Updates

Clerk advised Council that Powys CC were currently exploring the possibilities for a new software package that would make searches in the Planning Section of Powys CC more user friendly.

No new applications received, the bi-weekly updates from Planning Department are being received, only update currently was a 34 page additional information document (redacted) Flood Consequences Assessment in relation to planning application P/2016/0168.

71. Highways matters

Prior to the meeting the Clerk had circulated the spreadsheet detailing all highways issues raised and current status. Due to change in contact at Highways department some of last month's reports were still outstanding, Clerk was assured they would be looked into ASAP. No new issues to report.

Clerk informed Council of some new road works in the area, all related to ongoing work of STW, all will be placed on notice boards and web site.

72. Superfast Broadband / Telecommunications

Superfast Broadband - Manafon CC will convene a public meeting at the start of the next meeting 5th October; Martin Jones of Superfast Cymru has agreed to address the meeting. Clerk will post notices earlier than normal agenda on boards and web site, and will invite other local community councils.

Superfast Broadband was due to be rolled out for this month so situation will be monitored and updates available at next meeting if not before.

Mobile coverage - As more information was available for the meeting it was decided to incorporate this update in tandem with the broadband update rather than general correspondence as the 2 are hand in hand in terms of Rhiew Valley communications. Cllr. Benyon has been relentless in pursuing various bodies, providers, MP's, Ofcom etc. to secure some commitment for the valley and adequate mobile coverage in the near future. Current status: Recent correspondence from the assembly office suggests no indications from any of the major providers that coverage will be available at any time in the future. Council will write to Home Secretary outlining the frustrations of all residents in the Rhiew Valley that lack of access to mobile networks and the implications this has for many people within the communities concerned.

Cllr. Benyon had provided Clerk with some information from Vodafone on improving 3G signal at home with Vodafone Sure Signal, Clerk will upload details to web site, basically a one off cost of £69.

What is a Vodafone Sure Signal?

Vodafone Sure Signal creates a 3G signal in your home. It's ideal if you live in an area where it can be difficult to get mobile reception, like a rural location or a basement flat. It fits into a normal plug socket so doesn't take up much space. You can register up to 32 Vodafone numbers to a Sure Signal and up to 8

people can make calls at the same time. To use a Sure Signal (one-off cost £69) you'll need a Vodafone mobile phone, voice-enabled tablet or dongle connected to our network, plus a broadband connection with a minimum upload and download speed of 1Mbps.

Further details can be found on Vodafone's website:

<http://www.vodafone.co.uk/shop/accessories/sure-signal/index.htm> or
<http://shop.vodafone.co.uk/shop/mobile-phone/accessories/SKU75375-white>

Telephone kiosks – Both Manafon and New Mills kiosks had notices of intended closure posted in them 21st August, declaring 42 days' notice period before service withdrawn, any comments could be made to the planning department Powys CC. Clerk to advertise this on web site to explore in community if it was felt there was any value in trying to retain the kiosks for historical and nostalgia reasons and explore costs of retaining.

73. Installation of churchyard toilet (Per letter to Cllr. Benyon from Toby Jones)

Correspondence had been received from the Parochial Church Council of Saint Michael and All Angels Church Manafon, outlining plans to erect accessible toilets in the Churchyard, Council unanimously agreed to support the project in principle.

74. Reports from meetings / training attended - None

75. Full financial update from Clerk including audit completion

Clerk submitted current financial reports to Council including Audit results, expenditure YTD, and expenditure versus budget comparison. Synopses on finances are as follows:

Audit: Grant Thornton issued an unqualified Audit for the year ending 31st March 2016. Clerk expressed frustration at 2 minor points raised by Auditors in respect of 2015/2016 Audit,

Clerk informed Council that the charges for the Audit were considerably higher than anticipated/budgeted, previously to LBDO we paid £80 plus VAT, the Welsh Audit office had appointed Grant Thornton as external auditors and charges were now based on work undertaken and were considerably more, we could expect an invoice for £186 plus VAT. There was a consultation in progress in Audit fees and Clerk would ensure our objections were clearly stated, particularly as it makes a mockery of them monitoring actual expenditure versus budgets. Clerk would return the customer survey report to Grant Thornton expressing dissatisfaction at level of charges and having not been informed of the thematic for 2016/2017 FY by Grant Thornton.

Expenditure YTD:

Total expenditure YTD was £671.89 this includes £8.81 accrued expenses to Clerk for postage not yet claimed, Clerk advised that apart from the invoice due for the audit the only expenditure anticipated in the short term was some small stationery items including printer cartridges.

Expenditure versus budget:

Budget YTD was £3519 (inclusive £40 VAT) so expenditure well below budget YTD. Items that are going to be over budget are: Audit Fees, Clerk's extra hours, Clerk training.

Bank Balances: balance as at statement date 15th August current account £3165.06, includes VAT rebate of £120.68, balance on high interest account as at last statement date 2nd June £1898.24, total reserves £5063.30.

Payroll - Additional hours worked by Clerk: Clerk had spent 3 hours resolving issues with web site and email as a result of the external hosting company transferring to new servers, this with the help of Glenn Roberts which Clerk and Council are grateful for his assistance in these matters, extra hours were approved and unanimously agreed by all and added to running total YTD and duly signed by Chairman Cllr. J. Davies. YTD cost of additional hours to Clerk £137.50.

Bank interest: Clerk had received notification from HSBC that the terms on the 'high interest' account were changing and effective from 26th September the interest rate would drop to 0.03% per annum, effectively reducing our annual interest to approximately £0.66 pence PA. Previous attempts to find anything any better had proved futile.

Payments: No payments to be made, Cllr. H. Lewis submitted travel expense claim for OVW meeting June Clerk to raise cheque for approval at next meeting.

Subscriptions: Clerk made Council aware of membership to CPALC which was a web site for Clerks and Councillors and had much more useful information available than SLCC and OVW for the practicalities of the duties of Clerk and Councillors and the ability to perform health checks on aspects such as meetings, web site, conformity etc. etc. Membership was on an individual basis not corporate but Council agreed it was worth trialling for a year and assessing benefits. Clerk would be reimbursed membership of £25 plus VAT (VAT reclaimable) this motion was proposed by Cllr. J. Hall was seconded by Cllr. R. Benyon and unanimously by all to accept.

76. Agenda items next meeting (This meeting would open with a Public Meeting addressed by Martin Jones of Superfast Cymru)

- A. Welcome
- B. Public Meeting Superfast Broadband
- C. Apologies for absence (absence forms to be signed off)
- D. Declaration of interest
- E. Minutes of the last meeting
- F. Matters arising from minutes (specifically STW if any updates received) / Action Points update
- G. Adoption of revised Model Code of Conduct
- H. Correspondence Updates / General updates from Clerk
- I. Planning Applications/Updates
- J. Highways matters
- K. Reports from meetings / training attended
- L. Financial update from Clerk including budget comparison, payroll update and payments to be made.
- M. Agenda items next meeting
- N. Confirmation of date of next meeting/s

Chairman thanked everyone for attending, meeting closed at 2150 hours.