

Minutes of the Council meeting of the Manafon Community Council held on Wednesday the 1st February 2017

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

Welcome – The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and extended a warm welcome to Heulwen Hulme, the prospective County Councillor candidate standing at the next elections in May as a result of County Councillor Mrs. J. Shearer resigning from the Council.

116. Apologies for absence - E. A. Lewis, C. Cllr. J. Shearer

117. Declaration of interest - None at this point, any arising during meeting will be referenced under specific agenda point.

118. Minutes of the last meeting

Checked for errors and omissions Cllr. Jerman pointed to a correction required to spelling error in paragraph 121 correspondence updates - “Superfast Broadband, so the community **will now** when it goes live”. **Should read so the community will know**, amended and signed by Clerk prior to Chair signing off minutes.

Thereafter the correction it was unanimously agreed that the minutes were an accurate and correct representation of the meeting it was resolved by all to accept the minutes proposed by Cllr. C. Davies, seconded by Cllr. H. Lewis,

119. Matters arising from minutes

106 (see 94 & 98 from previous minutes) Grass cutting in Glan Rhiw, Cllr. Benyon was due to have a meeting with representative of Powys CC but no response from Powys CC so far, question if previous contact available or not, Cllr. Benyon to pursue.

110 Highways matters covered in main agenda

112 “what is the point of the Council” and “Council is not value for money” - Considerable discussion amongst Council and clearly a difference of opinion on the matter, Clerk informed Council that we provided a wealth of information to the community, particularly via the web site including job vacancies that was hoped would support those in the community seeking employment. Also Council were extremely active in trying to secure appropriate communications for the community, referenced to broadband and mobile projects and there had been success over the STW plans being rejected. Chairman stated that the news that the Potters recycling centre closure had been rescinded was also a reflection on objections being submitted by Manafon CC and other community councils. It was suggested that if there was a question over the ‘value for money’ of the Council and if that was indeed a general consensus within the community then Council should take it as something of a wakeup call and, going forward at the AGM’s set targets for the year on issues (both potential or current) affecting the community for Council to work on, these should be measurable targets.

Clerk confirmed all actions required from last meeting where complete or progressing, anything significant outstanding will be referred to at appropriate agenda point.

120. Councillor / Clerk training requirements

Clerk informed Council that the training bursaries were due to expire end of February, any training after that may not have a bursary attached as it often took a few months for OVW/SLCC to confirm if bursaries were available for new financial year. Chairman stated that a number of present Councillor's had undergone training in the past which was deemed adequate and any further Councillor training should be deferred until after the elections in case we have new Councillor's to undergo training, it was apparent from OVW meeting that there was a wide spread delay in undertaking training across the board because of the impending elections.

OVW offer a series of modular courses around Wales and will often run something specifically if a request is made and there is sufficient support and one council prepared to act as host and agreeing to pay a set fee that can be shared with other participating councils.

Clerk had received notice of a training course in Cwmbran from SLCC on the fundamentals of social media for councils, given current state of broadband/mobile signal it was felt there was no immediate benefit in exploring social media avenues for the council.

121. Correspondence Updates / General updates from Clerk

Superfast Broadband, Clerk was chasing BT contact Martin Jones, no reply so far.

April "walk for life" a notice had been received for communities to organise walks in aid of wales kidney association, Clerk to out on notice board and web site.

CHC meetings (Powys Community Health Council) Clerk had received forward dates for 2017 and were now on web site and notice board, Clerk suggested in light of comments above (119 – 112) it might be something Council could support by sending a representative to these meetings.

Community networking event 'place plans' @ Newport 7th February, £15 per attendee no bookings required.

Clerk had undertaken a review/health check of meetings and web site to ensure compliance. A number of points in both areas can be improved upon and Clerk will take necessary actions immediately.

OVW had circulated a newsletter published by Pentrych Community Council; Clerk thought it was an innovative way of communicating with the community, and was a good example of how the local newsletter and Council information could be combined although it has to be said they are a much larger community than Manafon, they issued a very comprehensive newsletter 3 times per year and covers 4 villages, this can be viewed in full on their web site

http://www.pentrych.cc/?page_id=87

OVW sent a communication about the Local Government Elections; many types of council had asked advice on how to attract local interest in becoming a community or town councillor, summary of suggestions:-

- Host an Event: Why not consider hosting an event as a council which would offer residents something interesting, but also offer an opportunity for current members to give a presentation on the work of the council and the benefits of being a local councillor? Such an event could also offer an opportunity to chat to some of the

residents on a one to one basis giving them the highlights of working as a councillor and encouraging them to put their names forward. We know of some councils which have arranged a display of old photographs of the area as a basis for an engagement event, which proved successful.

- Groups and other organisations: If you know of any active groups or organisations in the area, why not ask if you can give a short presentation at one of their meetings in order to encourage members to consider being community or town councillor?
- Newsletter: Why not create a newsletter to be distributed to residents in the area gives the council an opportunity to promote it's work and the benefits that are part of working as a councillor.
- Young people: How about considering creating a youth council or having a youth representative? This is obviously a long term method of instilling an interest in local government, but it is sure to pay off in the future.

Manafon CC is keen to invite members of the community to engage in the forthcoming elections and Clerk will place a notice on boards and web site inviting everyone to the next meeting or contact a Councillor for more information. Clerk confirmed she had already posted a lot of information on web site and notice board in respect of community councils including a guide to becoming a councillor and information on the role of community councillors.

Town & Community Councils Survey received, despite Clerk responding that we do not have any assets or services we are responsible for we still have to complete the online 12 page survey, Clerk will attend to.

LDP update – an invitation to attend a meeting in Newbridge on Wye 3rd February from Chris Davies MP for Brecon & Radnorshire, Council; felt there was no benefit in attending a meeting outside of our area.

LDP Bulleting – Clerk had received a bulleting outlining time scales and updates on the Powys LDP, available to Councillor's if required.

Powys CC offering 3rd party services to community councils, letter received outlining offer of (paid for) Payroll Services, declined as we have our own registration with HMRC and deal with payroll under RTI online.

County & Local Council Liaison Meeting Tuesday 7th February, Clerk had received notice of cancellation, quote "Powys County Council has withdrawn its support on the liaison Meeting which was agreed with them". According to the email Powys CC will be organising a liaison meeting after the elections.

Notification received on a project for Powys War Memorials Project: Some funding (partial) was available under certain criteria to repair, restore or maintain World War 1 memorials in Powys, if was felt that the last repairs to our memorial were adequate.

Census test to take place in Montgomeryshire – Powys CC have informed local councils that a large-scale census test will be carried out in North Powys in April as part of the preparations for the 2021 census, this is in conjunction with the ONS (Office of National Statistics). Some 3,300

households will receive a letter in the spring about the test. This letter will include a unique internet access code and instructions on how to complete the questionnaire. There are temporary employment opportunities linked to this census and again Clerk will advertise details on notice board and web site.

Powys CC have started a campaign about the “right waste, right place”, mainly focussed on small and medium sized businesses who may inadvertently run the risk of allowing their waste to be fly-tipped thereby facing unlimited fines. Clerk will put to web site and notice board.

Powys CC have started an upgrade programme in north Powys to replace 5,300 street lights with LED lanterns as part of a £1.55 million investment to save project.

OVW has issued a press release from the Wales Audit office stating that Community Councils need to improve financial management and governance. According to the Auditor General for Wales, too many community council in Wales are receiving avoidable qualified audit opinions and there is scope to further develop and improve on the quality of financial reporting. Clerk stated that we had only one minor observation from last audit and that was felt to be a contentious one, confident we are recording and reporting in the appropriate manner. A copy of the full report can be viewed here by using this link - [Financial-Management-Community-Council-2017.pdf](#)

Powys CC has announced a series of ‘drop-in’ engagement events around the county for February. The multiagency Powys Public Service Board is publishing a Draft Wellbeing Assessment as part of its response to the Welsh Government's Wellbeing of Future Generations Act. And the board now wishes to check with local people to see if it is on the right lines. An on-line survey will also be available early February; Clerk has posted notice to web site and notice board for more info click here [Powys Survey](#).

122. Planning Applications/Updates

No updates no new applications, only correspondence related to procedures for new/alterd street names in the county from Powys CC building control, Clerk would retain for reference purposes if ever applicable.

123. Highways matters

Cllrs. T. Jerman and C. Davies raised the issue of mud on the road surrounding Llanwyddelan bridge and the mud and damage (potholes) caused by the STW work which was particularly bad down Cefnbach Lane and at the top where it joined the Llanfair Road. Highways Supervisor has been requested to make an inspection, waiting to hear further.

Cllr. C. Davies had previously raised some safety concerns about the Canaan Bridge this has now been logged by the Clerk with the highways department.

Both were reminded to include the Clerk in all correspondence and updates related to these issues, Chairman stated that was important to keep a central grip on highways matters, so the highways log could be maintained otherwise we have no record.

Cllr. H. Lewis again reiterated the issues with blocked drains below Bronheulog, Clerk to refer to highways again.

124. Reports from meetings / training attended

Cllr. H. Lewis gave feedback from OVW meeting, Clustering again reared its head and it was felt that it was an inevitability if some services to communities were to be delivered satisfactorily, Chairman stated that if some councils had to join forces and this resulted in increased precepts it was tantamount to double taxation, the post office van services to outlying villages (Castle Caereinion) was mentioned again.

125. Financial update from Clerk – expenditure YTD, budget comparison, pension & payroll updates, payments due

Refunds of 2 x training courses for January which had been cancelled, Clerk had returned money to current account 17th January.

Clerk provided Council with the YTD expenditure sheet and bank reconciliation, total expenditure YTD £1791.06, £1750.23 nett of VAT, however, total expenditure including items still outstanding for the year is forecast to be £4260.86 was explained in the budget forecast.

Clerk had risk assessed the forecasted reserves fund in part but without knowing if precept had been approved hard to know what reserves might be at current year end, agreed to revisit when situation on precept was known and report to Council at next meeting.

Payments requiring authorisation, to Village Hall, £400 grant and £144 rom hire for meetings.

Payments were proposed by Cllr. Benyon seconded by Cllr. Hall and it was resolved by all to authorise said payments, cheques duly signed by Cllrs. C. Davies, and J. Hall.

Purchase requisition, Clerk stated that it was increasingly difficult to maintain the web site via the small screen of the lap top and was more time consuming, ideally a larger square screen was need to be able to view multiple screens/pages. Estimated costs for screen would be between £60 and £100 was thought to be the maximum. Cllr. Benyon stated that it was essential from a health and safety perspective to have the right tools for the job and that the screen was compliant with current H & S legislation. It was agreed by all that the Clerk should source suitable options for discussion at next meeting.

Based on the approved budget the precept amount at £6,000 required for 2017/2018 financial year had been applied for but no response thus far.

126. Agenda items next meeting

Apologies for absence
Declaration of interest
Minutes of the last meeting
Matters arising from minutes
Rhiew Valley Senior Citizens Fund
Neighbourhood PCSO
Correspondence Updates / General updates from Clerk
Broadband updates
Planning Applications / Updates
Highways matters

Reports from meetings / training attended

Financial update from Clerk – purchase requisition, expenditure YTD, budget comparison, pension & payroll updates & payments to be authorised

Agenda items next meeting

Confirmation of date of next meeting/s:

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Manafon CC –1st March, 5th April, subsequent dates for 2017 are the first Wednesday each month unless otherwise notified, May / June may be subject to change for a number of reasons, not least due to the forthcoming elections and AGM requirements.

OVW – 2017 - 19th April; 14th June

Clerk Elections briefing 2nd March Welshpool Clerk attending,

Councillors Powys Electoral Review 2017 8th March Welshpool Cllr. H. Lewis attending.

Meeting closed at 2115 and Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance