

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

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

Welcome – The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

127. Opportunity for members of the public to raise any points at the meeting.

It was noted that Heulwen Hulme, a prospective County Councillor candidate standing at the next elections in May attended as member of the public.

128. Apologies for absence – Cllr. J. Davies

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

130. Minutes of the last meeting

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 as proposed by Cllr. R. Benyon, seconded by Cllr. T. Jerman.

131. Matters arising from minutes

Web site health check and agendas completed by Clerk, web site still needs number of electors in the parish, waiting on up to date figure from electoral roll.

Clerk unable to review reserves as no confirmation from Powys CC on precept request, will complete once that decision is known.

Chairman to address a couple of things with regard to meeting conduct, carried forward to next meeting.

Minutes of meetings (publication) – Clerk had established that under the Local Government Act 1972, section 100(C) refers to Principle Authorities and as such Parish Councils are excluded from this section of legislation, therefore, all minutes at Parish level must be published and there can be no such thing as a “confidential or sealed” record appended to published minutes. Generally we have few amendments to minutes so it was therefore unanimously agreed that to ensure compliance we will publish draft minutes once produced by the Clerk clearly stated as draft minutes until approved at next meeting and suggestion was made to have Chair review before publishing, this point to be finalised at next meeting when Chair present.

Cllr. Benyon asked for confirmation of the CHC April meeting date, Clerk to provide.

Superfast Broadband update, Clerk had been chasing BT contact Martin Jones, reply received 27/2 as follows:

Subject RE: Superfast broadband update

From martin.5.jones@bt.com

To clerk@manafoncommunitycouncil.co.uk

Date 27/02/2017 12:09

We have had to add some additional structures into the build to reach more premises in the area. This has meant us having to re-plan some of the fire build. This has now been done but it has delayed completion to April. I know this isn't ideal but the good news is that more premises in the area will benefit once the build is complete.

Regards,

Martin Jones MAPM - NGA Programme Manager Wales – BT Group

Mob:+44 (0)7411 286456 E: martin.5.jones@bt.com

Residents had noticed a deterioration on broadband speeds recently, Clerk had reported this to Russell George AM, one local resident had complained directly to Customerhelp@wales.gsi.gov.uk about the continuous delays to availability, and some residents had complained to the Clerk also all had been forwarded to Russell George in advance of March meeting. Clerk also to inform MP Glyn Davies accordingly.

Cllr. Jerman reported that Berriew football club Berriew FC had been approached and offered sum of money if they would allow a company to increase height of one of the FC flood lights to accommodate/install mobile phone signal boosting device for mobile signal to be improved in the area. Clerk advised that we were still awaiting feedback from other community councils in the valley as to whether they are prepared to support a joint meeting with EE about the tetra mast and provision of hot spots that could have boosters installed, we need the support of other communities for this to be an effective meeting, Clerk had sent reminders.

Highways will be dealt with under main agenda item.

132. Rhiew Valley Senior Citizens Fund

The Rhiew Valley Senior Citizens committee wanted the Council to take over the current funds of approximately £416, seemingly it is compatible with their constitution and it was thought it could be transferred and set up as a restricted fund under the control of the Council. The accounts will be frozen if no activity very quickly, it was suggested to Cllr. Hall that they set up a direct debit of £1 per annum as there was some activity on the account. As it was not clear if the Council could commit to being stewards of a 3rd party fund Clerk would check with Audit Office / OVW. Even if this was acceptable under the financial constraints imposed by Audit office on councils it was felt that any future mergers of councils could be problematical. It was also suggested that Cllr. C. Davies pass it to the Village Hall committee and Violet Gethin as Treasurer as they are not governed by the Welsh Audit Office it may be feasible for them to administer the fund. Clerk to establish if any possibilities and report back ASAP.

133. Neighbourhood PCSO

Clerk had previously circulated details of the local rural PCSO for the area operating out of Newtown, there was an offer to attend any meetings in the future if there were any concerns locally, noted by all but not felt necessary at this moment in time but would extend an invite to meeting after the elections.

134. Correspondence Updates / General updates from Clerk

Clerk had completed the online questionnaire covering Community and Town Councils Survey 2017 – Service and Asset Management, we had declined to participate as we do not have assets not provide services such as cemeteries, play areas etc., but we were asked to respond to sections that did apply.

Refuse derived fuel warning issued to farmers and landowners – also placed on web site.

The Powys Community Safety Partnership has warned Farmers and landowners in the county they could be targeted by criminal groups who are looking for land to illegally store a combustible type of waste.

Clerk confirmed we had renewed our (free) membership for PAVO for another year.

Welsh government consultation available on reforming local government, link had been circulated to Councillors to participate.

A literacy residency was on offer in Brussels for month of May, posted to web site and notice board, advertising for someone to participate on a project commemorating the First World War.

OVW and SLCC joint event 12th July at Ewloe Flintshire, open to Clerks and Councillors £65 per booking, Clerk had scrutinized agenda and felt there was nothing significant to Manafon CC, no bookings required.

Recycling update - Monday waste collections are to cease and collections will be made on 4 days, this is part of a budget response to save £500,000 on recycling costs and against savings Powys CC need to achieve of £29.8 million over next 3 years. Clerk will publish notices to website and noticeboard. Households will be notified shortly of new collection details and refuse will have to be outside properties by 0630 on day of collection.

IRP (Independent remuneration panel) for Wales has published its report, available on line and previously circulated to Councillors to view, Clerk had not found anything in the report of any significance for Manafon CC.

Powys CC has launched an online publication called Powys Newslines, reports on local issues and events; only significant factor was the confirmed rise in Council Tax approved for the coming year at 3.9%. Clerk will publish to web site.

Powys CC have alerted Clerks to a printer helpline scam which is particularly pernicious, it lures unsuspecting people into a trap as it encourages victims to unknowingly contact the fraudsters of their own accord. Clerk will publish to website and noticeboard.

First World War commemorative plans, Clerk outlined the bigger plans with meeting being organised by “Wales Remembers”. Discussion ensued; seemingly some communities are making the laying of wreaths this year more personal, the Commonwealth War Memorial web site has more details, <http://www.cwgc.org> . Council suggested a local appeal to our Community for information on local war heroes, Clerk to publish something on website and then maybe we could organise a public event depicting same, for further discussion.

135. Planning Applications/Updates

No new applications, only update relates to P/2016/1260 – Ceunant, consent granted 8/2/2017.

136. Highways matters

Cllr. T. Jerman raised the issue of the mud and damage (potholes) caused by the STW work which was particularly bad down Cefn Bach Lane and at the top where it joined the Llanfair Road and outside of the Chapel. Cllr. T. Jerman stated that the Clerk had been requested to report it to STW, Clerk responded that it was not the case but Clerk would now flag it up to STW if that was the instruction.

Canaan Bridge, Cllr. C. Davies informed the meeting that this was now resolved, highways were going to replace the rails and reflectors.

Clerk had reported a number of flooding issues to highways on the 1/3/2017 prior to meeting: particularly in relation to:- Drainage issues along a few stretches of the B4390 from Manafon to Pantyfydd, chased up on the issue of the drain below Bronheulog, | Glyn Cogan to Lower House Farm, around Cil Derwen to Pantyfydd, supposedly solved a few months ago but not successfully, Clerk also reported that when any cleaning took place large piles of debris were left nearby and simply being washed back into drains. One issue by the caravan park on the Berriew Road was reported to Welshpool copy to Berriew Clerk.

137. Reports from meetings / training attended

Clerk had attended a free online webinar session of 1.5 hours organised by the Welsh Audit Office, there is significant focus right now on aspects of Financial Management and Governance in Community Councils. After the last external audit the Audit Office reported on a number of areas that Councils across Wales had to learn from and improve. This webinar was to share examples of learning and good practice in particular focusing on budgeting and internal audit.

In addition to this the Audit Office have launched a programme of free training modules mainly in Llanrwst or Cardiff some on line, so far nothing jumps out of the schedule as being relevant to Manafon CC.

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

Clerk had had a meeting with the internal auditor about the accounts for 2016/2017 and the letter of appointment was read to Council, it was the same letter of engagement as issued last year where the appointment was agreed for a 3 year period, it was proposed by Cllr. J. Hall and seconded by Cllr., E. A. Lewis and unanimously agreed by all to appoint Mrs A Gawne as the internal auditor for 2016/2017 accounts.

Audit themes and programme for forthcoming audits have been advised as follows:

Audit programme and themes for 2016-17 to 2020-21

In his annual report on the financial management and governance of Community and Town Councils published on the 30th of January 2017, the Auditor General of Wales reveals more about future audits: To read more this link to read more section 8 pages 40-42, [Audit Office Financial Management Community Council 2017](#)

- "For the 2016-17 audit, auditors will focus on the arrangements councils have made to adopt a Code of Conduct for members, and to ensure they are properly dealing with payroll issues.
- "For the 2017-18 audit, auditors will focus on the effectiveness of internal audit and how councils manage their reserves and balances.
- "Looking forward to 2018-19 and beyond, the Auditor General's programme will continue to look at common issues arising during the annual audit, and will also incorporate a review of the sector's response to the Well-Being of future Generations Act 2015.

Payments requiring authorisation, PC monitor £108.61 incl VAT, Clerk had emailed Councillor's 22/2 outlining option in respect of the purchase requisition discussed and agreed in principal at previous meeting.

An opportunity had arisen to secure a monitor at a good saving (around £30) and with free delivery, deal was available for 24 hours only, majority of councillors had replied to confirm to go ahead. Cllr. Jerman stated that he had not been contacted on the matter and Clerk could have telephoned him, Clerk confirmed that to be the case as no email available for Cllr. Jerman, a decision was needed ASAP and there had been sufficient support from Councillors to proceed with the purchase. The payment was proposed by Cllr. J. Hall and seconded by Cllr, R. Benyon and agreed by all except Cllr. T. Jerman to approve the purchase and payment to Clerk. Cllr. Jerman wished it to be minuted that he did not agree with the purchase as he thought it unnecessary and therefore was not in agreement with authorising the payment. Based on the majority decision it was agreed to authorise the payment and cheque was duly signed.

As an aside to this a discussion developed on the merits and demerits of what warranted telephone contact from the Clerk. This will be an agenda item for April meeting for discussing best means of contacting individuals telephone or email ?, which is more efficient/cost effective and most reliable way of clerk communicating with all councillors and receiving a uniform and recorded response in form of email which stays on system. It was also discussed that there should be an agreed expenditure limit granted to Chair/Vice Chair for any unforeseen or necessary expenditure needing agreement in between meetings, this to be tabled for agenda at AGM meeting.

Clerk office expenses for the year 2016/2017 of £100 per contract of employment, Clerk salary for the year breakdown of £1500 basic salary plus reimbursements of extra hours worked during the year amounting to 60 hours £750, Clerk confirmed that this included some March hours but the claim was for less than would be worked as there were additional meetings to attend in March, additional hours every month have been approved and signed off at each meeting and attached to minutes.

OVW (One Voice Wales - annual membership renewal due £44.00.

Travel expenses for OVW meeting claimed by Cllr. J. Davies, £7.60.

Payments were agreed and proposed by Cllr. J. Hall and seconded by Cllr, R. Benyon and it was resolved by all (except in the case of the PC Monitor purchase) to authorise specified payments above, cheques duly signed by Cllrs. R. Benyon, and J. Hall.

Clerk provided Council with the YTD expenditure sheet and bank reconciliation, total expenditure YTD £ 4297.27 including £58.27 VAT, £ 4239.00 excluding VAT, however, total expenditure including items still outstanding for the year is forecast to be £4258.80, there will be around £20 in travel expenses for March, performance against budget will be an approximate overspend of £820.

Anticipated reserves at this stage are expected to be in the region of £3000. Bank balances as at 15th February £4441.08, reconciled by Clerk, copy statement made available to Council for inspection.

Clerk had not fully risk assessed the forecasted reserves fund, 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.

Payroll, Clerk confirmed that on approval/payment of annual salary the RTI / FPS update would be submitted and Clerk would pay tax as it was a personal responsibility to settle, FPS has to be submitted before 5th April.

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

139. Agenda items next meeting

Apologies for absence

Opportunity for members of the public to raise any points the meeting.

Declaration of interest

Minutes of the last meeting

Matters arising from minutes – Communications between Clerk & Councillors; Meeting Conduct; Highways;

Minutes of meetings (publication)

Summary of Council activities and achievements

Elections; Community Council & Powys Council

Correspondence Updates / General updates from Clerk

Broadband/Mobile updates

Planning Applications / Updates

Highways matters

Reports from meetings / training attended

Financial update from Clerk – expenditure YTD, budget comparison, end of year accounts if completed in time, update on external audit details, payroll updates & payments to be authorised

Agenda items next meeting

Confirmation of date of next meeting/s: specifically addressing May AGM & June meeting dates.

Manafon CC – 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.

Montgomeryshire Broadband Summit Newtown 1400 20th March run by Russell George, Julie James AM attending as responsible for Superfast Cymru, attendance has to be requested as spaces are limited, Clerk and Cllr. Benyon to attend.

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

SLCC Llandrindod Wells - Future Branch Meeting Dates 6th July 2017 including AGM, 7th September 2017 & 7th December 2017, Clerk attending at least one date TBC but likely to be 7th December unless agenda points at earlier meetings are relevant to Manafon CC.

Meeting closed at 2135 and Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance