

Minutes of the Council meeting of the Manafon Community Council Wednesday

1st November 2017

Present – Cllrs J Davies (Chair), J. Hall, R. Benyon, C. Davies, & I. Prentice, Clerk L. Stanton & CC H. Hulme

Welcome – The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Absent: Cllr. T. Jerman

Apologies – Cllr. E.A. Lewis

244 Declarations of interest – None

245 Minutes of the last meeting - Acceptance of minutes for accuracy, proposed by Cllr. Hall, seconded by Cllr. Prentice, unanimously agreed by all to accept as a true record of meeting.

Matters arising from minutes

(224) – War memorial, Clerk had contacted Leach re previous repair; they had inspected by stone mason and agreed flaking not acceptable and duly repaired.

246 Resolution on Members Declarations of Interest forms – Discussed fully along with content of forms, all Councillors present agreed there was no reason not to complete the forms but the final decision rested with individual Councillors, Cllr. Prentice reminded everyone based on recent Model Code of Conduct training that any Councillor not completing has to bear the consequences (not the Council) should there be any breach of the conduct or a complaint made against a Councillor. It was unanimously agreed that for those deciding to complete the forms the AGM would be the annual staging date for submitting forms to Clerk, any interim changes must be advised by respective Councillor to the Clerk in writing immediately they are aware. Clerk to send final blank copy to remaining Councillors and to receive completed forms from remaining Councillors at January meeting.

247 British Legion Poppy Appeal – Clerk had been asked if Council were making a donation to the British Legion Poppy appeal this year, a £20 donation was proposed by Cllr. C. Davies and seconded by Cllr. Hall, unanimously agreed for Clerk to raise cheques and pass to Mrs. Benyon.

248 Broadband/Mobile updates - Mobiles – Efforts to secure mobile coverage for the valley continues, investigations ongoing to establish if operators are prepared to accept 3rd parties onto the emergency services masts, we are unsure if the impact on the Manafon mast once service is defunct, C. Cllr. Hulme to progress this one, Clarks Communications and Neofab are not attending any public or Council meetings but other communities want / need to be in mobile coverage, will the 2 masts at Tregynon and Manafon be able to “communicate” to each other. Latest update on Superfast broadband is that work is ongoing the installation appears to be more or less complete after a few teething issues and testing is underway, seemingly Openreach have been fined £40 million by OFCOM for failing to deliver per their contracted terms, Clerk will update website as more info available.

249 Community Social Evening - The first social evening was a resounding success with 28 villagers attending, feedback suggests that everyone had a thoroughly good time and it was wonderful to see so many people supporting the event so making it an enjoyable social occasion for the community as a whole and contributing to the health and wellbeing of our parishioners. Council thanked the Clerk for organising; a small subcommittee will be set up for future organisation. Following on from this success Manafon CC will run them on a regular basis and for November it will be Wednesday 29th. Having discussed the options on timings it was clear that we need to consider the needs of families with children and avoid clashes with Tregynon youth club, the optimum appears to be a Friday and a start time of 7 PM. In 2018 we are proposing to run the social evenings on the 4th Friday of each month starting at 7 PM. 2018 dates booked with village hall so far are the Friday's 26th January and 23rd February, providing there is sufficient support we will confirm remainder of dates for 2018 in the New Year. The Clerk will produce a questionnaire for the November evening to solicit the views of parishioners as to what they would like to see included in future. It was important to advise parents that children are indeed very welcome but must be accompanied by a responsible adult. A suggestion was made to occasionally include an optional quiz (to run during the course of the evening not a designated quiz) being a family orientated quiz with small prizes for the winners, also for those being willing to participate to take a photo of the next event to add to the website and for Christmas 2018 include a raffle. All costs covered by the Council under the section 137 expenditure limits, estimated to be around £30 per month depending on future activities.

250 Correspondence received and any general updates from Clerk

Woodland Trust, Clerk confirmed the Sessile Oak tree received and arrangements need to be made for planting Cllr. Hall informed meeting that the Church was reluctant to allow the planting of trees within the churchyard, it was agreed that Clerk will pot up the tree for over winter and a decision will be made in new year as to siting, one possibility was the amenity areas of the proposed development next to Trem Hirnant.

Welsh Government news – we have been advised of a new scheme setting out the basis of a new relationship between the Welsh Government and local government, the Local Government Scheme will look at the wider public services and will deliver services according to the principles of the Well-being of Future Generations Wales Act 2015. This means a more holistic approach to decision making in public services, recognising the importance of working together with citizens, Community & Town councils are likely to play an increasingly integral role in the functioning of communities in Wales with an expectation they will take on more responsibilities in the future.

Audit fees, Clerk read out the response of OVW to complaints on increased audit fees for smaller councils, preference is for a return to fixed fee arrangements, Chair asked for copy of last audit invoice for OVW meeting January

Some charitable requests are arriving, Clerk will retain until January meeting when distribution of donations will be discussed.

Clerk had requested details from ptsa @ Powys via a vis eLearning, so far no response as to what available.

OVW innovative practice awards, closing date for entries 25th January, circulated to Councillors should it be decided to participate Council to inform Clerk at January meeting with details.

251 Data Protection Act 2018 – Clerk participating in an online webinar being run by SLCC Training for GDPR, booked for 11th January 1230 1.5 hours.

252 Highways matters - Site meeting 20th October with highways dept. Powys CC to discuss all highways issues/concerns, Cllrs. Benyon, C. Davies, T. Jerman & C. Cllr. Hulme attended;

Response from highways department -: The 4 main issues in Manafon area were not as productive I'm afraid;

- 1. Bryn Teg and speed/visibility - I didn't agree with the Community Councillors concerns on some of the issues raised here. Their proposal to widen the corner was not practical and far too costly. Speed is not the issue down this bank, the poor alignment and the 'Stop' at the Junction prevent speed from being a problem. The speed issue from Manafon is being monitored by our Traffic Engineer and Chris will be able to update us with some options shortly. I agree that visibility is poor from the junction here but with no land available to improve this the best and most cost effective option is to try and reduce the speed from the Manafon side of the Junction.*
- 2. Cefn Bach Lane and Llanwyddelan Bridge area, - Landowner was not willing to donate any land or remove the hedge at this location and therefore improve the visibility, so I'm afraid there is a limited amount the Authority can do. I will investigate the cost of installing a mirror at the junction. Paul will again schedule some ditching and drainage works at this junction, the ditch has again been damaged by agricultural machinery.*
- 3. The road at Bronheulog SY21 8BW B4390, previously reported as Bwgns hole. – There is some minor depression in the carriageway at this location but as yet it does not form a safety defect. The HGSS supervisor will continue to monitor this, and we will include it in any future planned surface dressing patching along this road.*
- 4. The lying water between the Fynant and The Green on B4390 Manafon – Paul had already instructed cleaning of the drainage grips along this road and will arrange further to remove the issue as much as is practical without installing additional drainage*

Item from Cllr. Benyon; a delivery driver had complained about 3 inches of slurry on the road leading down to B4390; Cllr. Benyon will take up with farmer.

253 IRP (Review Panel) Update - Following on from previous discussion it was proposed by Cllr. C. Davies and seconded by Cllr. Prentice and unanimously agreed by all present that as the outcome of the proposals will not be known until February 2018 the budget for next year should include the proposed mandatory payments to Councillors as per the specification in the IRP annual report.

**Extract from IRP report and proposed mandatory payments towards costs and expenses
(Manafon CC is group D)**

The Independent Review Panel is of the view that Community and Town Councillors are not volunteers because further to the democratic process they have accepted formal responsibilities and they all face some degree of liability in respect of the Council functions they are running. Also, the Panel wants any member who has personal support needs and or caring responsibilities to be able to fulfil their role.

To reflect this, the Panel is mandating payment of a contribution to costs and expenses, and reimbursement of the costs of care, for all members of Community and Town Councils. Where not mandated, each determination requires a formal decision by each of the community or town councils' annually. A Council can adopt any or all of the non-mandated determinations but if it does make such a decision, it must apply to all its members.

In all cases, any individual member may make a personal decision to elect to forgo part or all of the entitlement to any of these payments by giving notice in writing to the proper officer of the council.

Community and town councils must make a payment to each of their members of £150 per year for costs incurred in respect of telephone usage, information technology, consumables etc.;

Community and town councils in Groups B, C or D are authorised to make an annual payment of £500 each to up to 5 members in recognition of specific responsibilities. This is in addition to the £150 payment for costs and expenses if that is made.

Community and town councils are authorised to make payments to each of their members in respect of travel costs for attending approved duties. Such payments must be the actual costs of travel by public transport or the HMRC mileage allowances as specified in report:

Community and town councils must provide for the reimbursement of necessary costs for the care of dependent children and adults (provided by informal or formal carers) and for personal assistance needs up to a maximum of £403 per month. Reimbursement must be for the additional costs incurred by members in order for them to carry out their approved duties. Reimbursement shall only be made on production of receipts from the carer.

Clerk to include mandatory/proposed payments in draft budget for 2018 to 2019 FY and to check with HMRC about the impact / actions required in respect of these additional expenses claimed by Councillors. Agenda item next meeting to finalise.

254 Planning - Application P/2017/1186 received for 3 dwellings in Pantyfydd, as not in our Parish no comment required, only provided for info to bordering Parish.

255 Reports from meetings and/or training attended – Cllr. Benyon advised that he had resigned as a Governor from Ysgol Rhiew Bechan can continue as Council representative for now or another member of the community can represent the parish as an observer, agenda item next meeting.

256 Financial update from Clerk – accounts YTD, pension/payroll updates & payments to be authorised - Clerk had chased the Elections Office for an indication on Election costs, not yet available as some corrections were being made, Clerk will chase again as information needed for budgetary & reserves purposes.

Clerk gave overview of expenditure, YTD expenditure excluding VAT is £923.89, balance in current acc. £4895.92, high interest act. £2426.71 total funds £7322.63, expenditure versus budget is minus £5350.43, majority of expenditure being March 2018, expenditure forecast £6090.87, compared to budget minus £183.45, spread sheets provided to Councillors. Bank statements made available for inspection.

Payments to be authorised:-

Date Trans	Expenditure	Nett £	VAT £	Actual Gross £	
27/09/17	Councillor training x 2 Councillor induction (after £40 bursary)	£40.00	£0.00	£40.00	
13/10/17	Domain name - Fasthosts Domain Renewal 5 years	£34.95	£6.99	£41.94	Cheque total to Clerk £78.58
14/10/17	L Stanton Stationery various	£2.98	£0.60	£3.58	
25/10/17	L Stanton Stationery copier paper	£4.17	£0.83	£5.00	
25/10/17	Village Hall Social events refreshments (Sec 137)	£28.06	£0.00	£28.06	
17/10/17	Audit fee - External	£186.00	£0.00	£186.00	
18/10/17	Clerk training Data Protection via SLCC	£30.00	£6.00	£36.00	
12/09/17	Councillor training model code of conduct via LCTC	£29.54	£0.00	£29.54	
12/09/17	Clerk training model code of conduct via LCTC	£29.54	£0.00	£29.54	

Payments proposed by Cllr. Benyon, seconded by Cllr. Hall all in favour and duly authorised.

257 Budget discussion 2018/2019 - Clerk presented draft budget, this has to be finalised at January meeting in order for precept request to go in before deadline. As part of the budget discussions Clerk had requested a review (long overdue) of office expenses reimbursement and suggested this was brought into line with the 'industry' norm of £3 per week, £156 for the year, Cllr. Hall asked if this was in fact sufficient, Clerk agreed to it and suggested an annual review in line with inflation was more realistic, unanimously agreed by all to fix this for 2018/2019 budget. Add in all mandatory payments proposed in IRP report, other specific items to be resolved, village hall grant, and increase donations by £20 to include Royal British Legion, add to January agenda to be resolved and budget to be finalised.

Draft budget including adjustments discussed at meeting amounts to £6,699.32 subject to final ratification.

Clerk provided Councillors with a copy of the external audit theme to consider in tandem with reserves account and budget finalisation January.

258 Meeting dates 2018

To remain as 1st Wednesday of the month except December no meeting, AGM may determine the date for |May meeting being changed, Clerk to update website and notice boards. Next meeting 3rd January 2018 1930 hours.

259 Updates from County Councillor –

Children's services have had a poor performance, an improvement plan has to be in place in next 21 days as imposed by the Welsh Office, Powys CC have 90 days to make improvements, more foster carers needed. New building policy for Wales now looking at sustainability and more focus on retro-fitting. Powys CHC committee member is visiting hospitals and looking into bed blocking, ambulance service, additional investment in 5 paramedics, 1 technician and 3 urgent care assistants, generally response time well below the 20 minute targets. Grass cutting, by end of November should be a decisions to take back in house for next year. Winter plan is same for this winter as last year, includes provision of salt bins etc., anyone who feels they need salt bins locally should contact highways department. Restoration of potholes should be improved, Powys has invested in a jet patcher which will seal pothole repairs better and will be hiring out. No major resurfacing plans for roads in Rhiew Cynon ward. Powys CC have introduced a local procurement policy with target of £0.27 to £0.81 pence in the pound being solicited from local businesses and should make it easier for local businesses to win tenders.

260 Agenda items next meeting

Welcome

Apologies for absence

Declarations of interest

Minutes of the last meeting

Matters arising from minutes
IRP Proposals to be resolved and determinations specified adopted where applicable
One Voice Wales membership/benefits review
School governor's representative
Correspondence received and any general updates from Clerk
Highways
Planning
Broadband/Mobile updates
Reports from meetings and/or training attended
Financial update from Clerk – accounts YTD, including expenditure/pension/payroll/payments to be authorised
Budget finalisation 2018/2019
Updates from County Councillor
Agenda items next meeting

Date of Council meetings - next meeting Wednesday 3rd January (including budget finalisation) no December meeting scheduled, list of dates for 2018 can be found on website and noticeboards.

Dates of external meetings: - OVW- Tuesday 23rd January 2018, Wednesday 18th April 2018 and Wednesday 13th June 2018, Clerk to attend SLCC Powys branch meeting Llandrindod Wells 7th December.

Community Social evenings: Wednesday 29th November 1900 hours, thereafter the 4th Friday of the month 1900 hours commencing January 2018

Chairman thanked everyone for attending, meeting closed at 2205 hours.