

Minutes of the Council meeting of the Manafon Community Council held on Wednesday the 4th January 2017

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

Welcome – The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting

103. Apologies for absence - Cllr. J. Hall,

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

105. Minutes of the last meeting

Checked for errors and omissions, correction to **Reports from meetings / training attended** Cllrs. H. Lewis & R. Benyon should read Cllrs. H. Lewis & J. Davies attended. 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. E. A. Lewis,

106. Matters arising from minutes (advertisement costs, election costs, kiosks, grass cutting, recycling, highways)

94 & 98 Highways – Cllr. E. A. Lewis advised Pantyfydd drain blockage completed, Cllr. H. Lewis advised Bronheulog drains not dealt with, and Clerk to escalate again. Grass cutting in Glan Rhiw, Cllr. Benyon was due to meeting with representative of Powys CC to resolve, will have update next meeting.

83 advertisement costs – Clerk attended SLCC branch meeting and discussed with other Clerks, most had paid £73 to £144, the majority at the top end, Clerk will take up with County Times next time we have to place an advert and try and reduce the size but we have to use minimal legal requirements for any declarations.

95 BT phone kiosks, Clerk confirmed that Powys CC Planning department had confirmed in writing that our concerns about health & safety and kiosk becoming an eye sore were unfounded, BT would be removing them in their entirety.

96 cost of providing Wi-Fi at Village Hall, feedback from village hall committee was positive and they agreed with it in principle, once timescales available for superfast being live Clerk will establish best packages available.

96 Recycling Clerk confirmed that the concerns of the Council specifically related to the potential for increased fly tipping had been relayed to Nigel Brinn at Powys CC and we had written assurance they would be incorporated into the consultation responses, which had been considerable according to Cllr. Brinn.

96 Elections update - Clerk had ascertained costs of elections for budgetary purposes @ £1600, more detail under heading budget below.

99 Typing errors see 105 above, should read Cllrs. H. Lewis & J. Davies attended not Cllr. R Benyon.

100 Clerk confirmed we had written confirmation from the Pensions Regulator that our declaration of compliance was registered.

107. Action Points update - Clerk confirmed all actions required from last meeting where complete or progressing.

108. Correspondence Updates / General updates from Clerk

Annual invitation to Buckingham Palace garden party, Clerk to submit Chairman's name to OVW.

Invitation to meeting of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRP), a round table discussion to establish if the IRP meets the needs of Community & Town Councillors, venues too far away to justify attendance for something that is unlikely to impact Manafon CC.

Mobile project, Clerk had been unable to establish contact details for the Ceredigion project, Clerk had established that the funding they received to install their own mast was no longer available anyhow, Cllr. J Davies said that the funding would not have been available to Powys anyhow. Clerk had escalated a request to the Home Office and EE that the local tetra mast be made available for public use but as yet no responses, it was resolved that the mobile project should go on the back burner until such time as some benefit could be seen for the effort going into it as progress was not really evident.

Superfast Broadband, the installation of infrastructure has commenced in line with what BT reported prior to Xmas, Clerk will monitor the fibre "journey" so the community will know when it goes live.

100 years of Remembrance, Clerk informed Council of the Nations intention to light beacons commemorating the end of the war on 11th November 2018.

Community engagement network event related to planning– Swansea 17th January, £15 per attendee, no bookings required.

Diversity in democracy programme- programme to increase the diversity of individuals standing for local government to raise the profile of local government. Contains information for the community should anyone have an interest in becoming a Councillor, Clerk will publish to web site along with a Welsh Government notice advertising the forthcoming elections.

109. Planning Applications/Updates

Application reference P/2010/0890 land at Esgair Cwmowen Nr Carno, additional information had been submitted, as far as Clerk could establish nothing of any significance as redacted submissions, duly noted by all.

Clerk confirmed consent (subject to S106 status) had been awarded 13/12/2016 to development adjacent to Trem Hirnant, application number (s) P/2015/0168 and P/2015/0760.

New application received reference P/2016/1260, farm workers dwelling in land at Ceunant, Llanfair Caereinion SY21 ODG, application studied by Council and no objections raised, proposed by Cllr. T. Jerman, seconded by Cllr. E. A. Lewis, it was resolved by all to support the application.

110. 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. Both had contacted highways department directly reporting these issues and were in consultation as to remedies, Cllr. C. Davies had requested a meeting to discuss as the issues at Llanwyddelan Bridge were evident prior to STW commencing work in the area.

Cllr. C. Davies had also raised some safety concerns around the Cannan Bridge a “multi-parish” site, seemingly the reflector rails are missing from the approach and it is unsafe.

Both were asked to request that the Highways department include the Clerk in all correspondence and updates related to these issues 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.

111. Reports from meetings / training attended

Clerk had attended SLCC branch meeting in Llandrindod Wells 24/11. Found it useful and informative and depending on speakers/agenda felt 1 / 2 attendances per annum would be useful and would try to establish a car share arrangement for future meetings.

Quick synopsis SLCC - Presentation of a software package for use by local councils, Clerk felt we were too small and had too few financial transactions to justify expenditure of £600.

Banwy have Clerk vacancy, Clerk had considered but declined.

Gwilym Rippon gave an overview on training available for Clerk’s & Councillors and stressed the need for all to be adequately trained and the pressure was coming from the Assembly on training, bursaries for Clerks available from SLCC, Councillors from OVW where applicable, bursary is confirmed on an annual basis if supported by Government, current schemes end on 17th Feb, all have to be submitted **prior to commencing training** not accepted as a retrospective submission. It was recommended that ALL Clerks book the local council administration course when in their area.

Advertisements accepting revised Model Code of Conduct, Clerk discussed with all present, most had paid £73 to £144, the majority at the top end, only one had paid less than £73, Brecon & Radnorshire, a very small local paper unlike County Times which is part of NWN Media Ltd.

Election reserves, seemingly very few council’s do this but it is recommended that all UK Community & Parish Councils make an earmarked reserve in their budget every year building up reserves to cover election costs, recommend figure was £350 per annum, and carry forward as an accrual.

Some Councils were experiencing issues with Powys CC over asset transfers, does not impact Manafon CC.

SLCC want an increase in the mentoring of Clerks in Wales as significant differences sometimes between Wales and England Community versus Parish Councils.

112. Budget 2017/2018

Clerk had adapted the draft budget from November meeting to take account of changes discussed then and impending elections, copies issued to Council; Clerk reminded Council that the budget was to be finalised and approved at this meeting as precept application was to go in next week.

At this juncture Cllr. T. Jerman expressed his views and quote - "what is the point of the Council?, and the Community Council is not value for money" unquote.

Chairman Cllr. J. Davies stated that if that was the view, what could/should Council do about it?

Discussion surrounding budgeted items for 2017/2018 financial year:-

Every expenditure item was discussed in depth and changes made to the proposed budget accordingly.

Major discussion points were thus:

Section 137 charitable donations; after much discussion it was decided to set aside £100 for charitable donations that benefit the Community, proposed by Cllr. C. Davies seconded by Cllr. H. Lewis resolved, a decision on which charities would be made at next AGM, it was resolved by all to accept this proposal.

Election costs, no specific accruals had been made year on years to cover election costs, Clerk had established that the elections costs for May could be as much as £1600. Going forward it was tabled that an accrual of £350 per annum would be set aside as an earmarked reserve for election costs each financial year and this would also cover any interim elections if they arose.

Village Hall grant – At this point Cllr. J. Davies declared an interest as Chair of the Village Hall Committee and took no further part in the discussion. The matter of the Village Hall grant was discussed at length particularly in view of the diminishing financial support from Powys CC. It was resolved by all to keep the grant (Section 137 expenditure) at its current level of £400 until discussions took place at AGM.

Clerk salary, at the November meeting there had been a discussion on the Clerks' salary versus additional hours being claimed, Council had considered the options during the recess with a view to finalising for 2017/2018 budget.

At this juncture the Clerk left the Meeting and took no further part in the discussions.

Once a unanimous decision had been reached by Council the Clerk was invited back into the meeting and asked to recommence the minutes and the following proposal was put to the Clerk:

Utilising the recognised industry standard (SLCC/NJC) for pay structure for Clerks, Council recommended a change to the contract and structure using the recommended pay spine.

With regard to hours worked the SLCC recommendations are 26 hours per month based on the current basis of the Clerks function and a minimum of 17.5 hours. Council proposed an offer to cover the next 5 years only rising by the SCP factor if it changes during that period. The decision of the Council members present was to base the revision on SLCC/NJC recommendations, SCP 19 at rate of £9.743 per hour and at 20 hours per month x 12 months, if any excessive hours were anticipated for specifically requested projects/additional meetings etc. this would be agreed with Council in advance and no additional hours would be claimed unless approved in advance.

The Clerk accepted these proposals and therefore it was unanimously agreed by all present and so resolved that this change would be implemented with effect from 1st April 2017 and the Clerk's contract of employment would be amended accordingly.

The final budget revisions were proposed by Cllr. C. Davies seconded by Cllr. H. Lewis and it was resolved by all to accept the budget for 2017/2018 financial year. Below is draft and finalised budget, the areas in green on approved budget show the final changes made.

Proposed / Draft budget			
Predicted Expenditure 2017/2018	Forecast expenditure excl. VAT 31/3/2017	Draft Budget items excl. VAT 2017/18	Remarks
Advertising	£120.00	£150.00	contingency, and if any vacancies arise
Assets	£0.00	£0.00	
Audit fee - External	£186.00	£186.00	could be higher maybe set at £200
Audit fee - Internal	£30.00	£50.00	poss. add checking to be done
Donations to charities / events - incl British Legion Poppy Appeal	£220.00	£250.00	subject to discussion Jan amount, AGM for dissemination
Election costs	£0.00	£1,600.00	increased per Nov meeting
Election costs - accruals	£0.00	£350.00	accruals
Clerk office expenses L Stanton	£100.00	£100.00	
Insurance	£295.08	£310.00	tax increases to 12% for June 2017
Domain name - Fasthosts Domain	£0.00	£15.00	Bi-annual fee
Website development/support	£0.00	£50.00	
Bullguard Antivirus	£0.00	£50.00	Bi-annual fee
One Voice Wales membership	£43.00	£43.00	
Postage	£20.00	£20.00	? Do we separate from election costs?
Clerk L Stanton payments add meetings/hours	£600.00	£600.00	see salary proposals
Clerk Salary L Stanton	£1,500.00	£1,500.00	see salary proposals
SLCC membership	£66.00	£68.00	was £67 Dec 2016 renewal
Stationery/Printer Cartridges	£55.80	£75.00	increased slightly
CPALC reimbursement	£25.00	£25.00	if continued
Sundry/Contingency (includes CPALC reimbursement)	£25.00	£250.00	have increased it
Clerk L Stanton travel expenses	£84.00	£85.00	based on 2 x SLCC meetings and 2 x training
Cllr travel expenses	£100.00	£100.00	subject to discussion on training
Clerk L Stanton training/conference	£165.00	£100.00	
Cllr training/conferences	£0.00	£200.00	subject to discussion
Village Hall Grant	£400.00	£400.00	subject to discussion if any increase
Village Hall Hire	£195.00	£195.00	
Total Expenditure draft	£4,229.88	£6,772.00	

Approved Budget			
Predicted Expenditure 2017/2018	Draft Budget items excl. VAT 2017/18	Revised Budget excl. VAT 2017/18	Remarks
Advertising	£150.00	£150.00	
Assets	£0.00	£0.00	
Audit fee - External	£186.00	£200.00	
Audit fee - Internal	£50.00	£50.00	
Donations to charities / events - incl British Legion Poppy Appeal	£250.00	£100.00	
Election costs	£1,600.00	£1,600.00	
Election costs - accruals	£350.00	£0.00	£400 per annum for 4 years
Clerk office expenses L Stanton	£100.00	£100.00	
Insurance	£310.00	£310.00	
Domain name - Fasthosts Domain Renewal	£15.00	£15.00	
Website development/support	£50.00	£50.00	
Bullguard Antivirus	£50.00	£50.00	
One Voice Wales membership	£43.00	£43.00	
Postage	£20.00	£20.00	
Clerk L Stanton payments add meetings/hours	£600.00	£0.00	SCP19 @ £9.743 x 20 x 12
Clerk Salary L Stanton	£1,500.00	£2,338.32	
SLCC membership	£68.00	£68.00	
Stationery/Printer Cartridges	£75.00	£75.00	
CPALC reimbursement	£25.00	£0.00	
Sundry/Contingency	£250.00	£25.00	
Clerk L Stanton travel expenses	£85.00	£85.00	
Cllr travel expenses	£100.00	£100.00	
Clerk L Stanton training/conference	£100.00	£100.00	
Cllr training/conferences	£200.00	£200.00	
Village Hall Grant	£400.00	£400.00	
Village Hall Hire	£195.00	£195.00	
Total Expenditure approved budget	£6,772.00	£6,274.32	

113. Precept 2017/2018

Based on the approved budget the precept amount required for 2017/2018 financial year was discussed in some detail, it was unanimously agreed to set the precept at £6,000 and make up shortfall from reserves.

The precept revisions were proposed by Cllr. C. Davies seconded by Cllr. H. Lewis and it was resolved by all for the Clerk to submit the precept for 2017/2018 financial year at £6,000.

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

Clerk provided Council with the YTD expenditure sheet and bank reconciliation, final payment of the 2016/2017 precept due in bank account early January; total expenditure YTD £1256.87, outstanding of earmarked accruals £2182.13 however, total expenditure still outstanding for the year is forecast to be £4260.86 as explained in the budget forecast.

Clerk was to risk assess the forecasted reserves fund and report to Council at next meeting.

Payments requiring authorisation, to Clerk reimbursement of £26.99 x 2 for Planning Training Newtown, £186 to Audit Office Wales for 2015/2016 audit fees, to Clerk reimbursement of travel expenses for SLCC meeting 24/11/2016 @ £29.60.

It was resolved by all to authorise said payments, cheques duly signed by Cllr. C. Davies, in the absence of a second signatory at the meeting Clerk to obtain second cheques signatory after the meeting.

PAYE position Manafon CC, Clerk is responsible for own PAYE however, to prove no tax liability to Manafon CC Clerk had received recent tax statement and shared this with Council.

Pension, Clerk confirmed that she was in receipt of the confirmation from the Pensions Regulator that Manafon CC had completed and submitted the declaration of compliance and no further action was needed, compliance has to be renewed every 3 years but Pensions Regulator will inform Clerk accordingly.

Clerk informed Council that the Section 137 expenditure cap for 2017/2018 financial year had been set by the Welsh Government Finance Policy Division at £7.57 per elector, up from £7.42. Powys CC recently issued the latest Electoral Roll showing Manafon Parish with 254 Electors and the 2017/18 tax base and Band D figures (181.40), the figure for the tax base is £179.98 up £0.91 on last year.

HMRC benefits in kind/P11D's, Clerk had received notification that HMRC were changing the way this was handled, Manafon CC have never raised P11D's and do not pay benefits in kind so Clerk could not see any reason to register.

115. Agenda items next meeting

Apologies for absence

Declaration of interest

Minutes of the last meeting

Matters arising from minutes

Correspondence Updates / General updates from Clerk

Planning Applications / Updates

Highways matters

Reports from meetings / training attended

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

Agenda items next meeting

Confirmation of date of next meeting/s:

Confirmation of date of next meeting/s:

Manafon CC – 1st February, 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 - 24th January; 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 2205 and Chairman thanked everyone for their attendance