

Cyngor Cymuned Carreghofa Community Council

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 27 April 2021 at Llanymynech Village Hall

Present:

Cllr M Connell (Chairman)

Cllr C. Backshall

Cllr R Dover

Cllr C Jones

Cllr R McCluskey

In attendance:

County Cllr Arwel Jones

Mr M Donkin – Clerk to the Council

1. Apologies for absence

Cllr F James

R Pownall

2. To record Declarations of Interest in items on the agenda

None

3. Notes of decisions taken arising from the papers sent out in lieu of a meeting on Tuesday 30 March

Noted

4. Matters arising from the notes

The Clerk reported that Cllr McCluskey had, in had responded to the item on Zurich Insurance and the papers were accordingly amended.

Cllr Backshall had suggested that Duncan Borthwick and Susanne Walker's Covid 19 Support Group should be nominated for the Montgomeryshire Community Awards. Cllr Backshall said that, unfortunately the deadline for nominations was past. The Clerk suggested that The Council could make an award of its own to recognise the work done by the group. The Chairman suggested that councillors consider what form such an award might take and bring suggestions to the next meeting.

ACTION: All

5. Finance Report

5.1. Financial position

Council noted the financial position as set out in the papers for the meeting.

5.2. End of Year Financial Statement

The Clerk reported that two councillors had pointed out some inaccuracies in the statement. The Clerk said that these were due to adding errors in compiling the statement but that the cash book for the year was accurate. He said that he would re cast the financial statement and circulate it prior to the next meeting. This was agreed.

ACTION: Clerk

In the notes to the statement the Clerk had The Council has not used the contingency budget for some years. However, it does have a budget heading for Miscellaneous items to which no figure is allocated. He recommended that these two heads are merged in future years. This was agreed.

5.3. Payment for approval

There were no payments for approval this month

6. Planning

6.1 Application Reference: 21/0457/HH Grid Reference: E:326620 N: 320850
Proposal: Single storey extensions to front and side of bungalow
Site Address: 3 Ashfield Drive, Llanymynech, Powys, SY22 6ET

The Chairman said that he had looked at the property. The owners had clearly done a lot of work and the only comment that he felt should be made is that the neighbours must have access to their property during the construction. Cllr Jones said that she was not aware of any objections from residents.

6.2. Application Reference: 21/0537/HH Grid Reference: E:326430 N: 320863
Proposal: Removal of fence at the front of the property and replace with 6 ft brick wall together with a single walkway entrance and gates to the entrance of the property
Site Address: Elm Tree Farm House, Llanymynech, SY22 6PA,

The Chairman reported that he had spoken with the owners who want to build the wall for both safety and security reasons. The safety aspect is to keep their young children from accessing the main road. The Chairman noted that an electronically activated gate would be put in place across the entrance way and as this entrance is also used by the immediate neighbours they would need free access to their property. He informed Council that the owners will give the neighbours a fob with which to activate the gate. In the light of this Council decided to support the application.

ACTION: Clerk to inform the planning authority

7. Other matters

7.1 RoSPA Inspection

The Clerk advised Council that RoSPA has notified us that its annual inspection will be carried out in June. He had received information from Powys County Council and a private company who also undertake inspections but both were more expensive than RoSPA so he recommended remaining with RoSPA. This was agreed.

RoSPA pointed out that the Inspectors plan their own diaries, so it is not able to provide dates from the office; however, if Council wished to meet or accompany the inspector during the inspection then there is an additional fee of £42.00 + VAT for an appointment. This was not considered necessary.

RoSPA is now offering a routine checklist specifically tailored to the Council's site. The cost for this is £30 plus VAT per area. This will provide the Council with a template to help when inspecting equipment. This was not considered necessary.

The Chairman pointed out that although he had carried out a number of repairs to the children's playground equipment there was still more damage and he expected that, as is usual, this would be reflected in the inspection.

7.2 Memorial Benches

7.2.1. Walls Bridge

The Clerk read out a note from Cllr Pownall informing Council that he had been unable to remove the bench at walls Bridge as his vehicle had been in an accident and, as a consequence, off the road for some time. He asked if the removal is still required. Council felt that this is still required and asked Cllr Pownall (through these minutes) to go ahead.

ACTION: Cllr Pownall

7.2.2. Llanymynech Rocks

The Chairman said that he had been up to the Rocks after the refitting and all looked well then. Cllr Backshall stated that she had been up that afternoon and someone has moved the bench to its original location but that it needs securing with metal straps and bolts. She and her husband offered to undertake the work and Council gratefully accepted the offer.

ACTION: Cllr Backshall

7.3 Printer / Scanner

Following a recent malfunction of the scanner on the Council's printer Cllr Backshall has suggested that Council get a new machine. The Clerk said that Council had purchased its current machine in 2016 at a price of £70. He said that this would have to be written off and removed from the Asset Register. He had looked at new machines and felt that the Council's needs could be covered by a printer / scanner costing in the region of £100 - £150.

Cllr Dover asked if Council needed a colour printer. This was not felt necessary. He then recommended that Council spend more to purchase a laser printer / scanner. He had recently seen such a machine at a cost of £250. This was agreed. Cllr Dover said that he would send a link to the Clerk.

ACTION: Cllr Dover then the Clerk

7.4 Website Compliance

In preparation for the item the Clerk had recirculated the papers presented to Council by Cllr Backshall in February 2021.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Backshall for the time and work that she had put into the project to date. Cllr Backshall said that Council was a little behind time as councils should have been compliant by September 2020. She said that there is a need to assess the website for compliance and that Gloversure had offered to do this at a cost of £3500 but this would simply be the cost of the report, no actions to make the website compliant would be included in this cost. The Chairman said that he felt that the offer from Gloversure was not a good use of resources as we already know that we are not compliant.

Cllr Backshall felt that Council could undertake its own basic checking process and then publish an accessibility statement. Cllr McCluskey said that this made sense and is in line with the Council's action plan.

Cllr Backshall informed Council that her research to date has identified three 'off the shelf' compliant packages available at a cost ranging from £700 - £1500. If Council bought such a package we would have to populate it. She had contacted parish/community council referees for all three packages, and each had expressed satisfaction for the package and supplier that they had opted for.

Cllr Backshall offered to undertake the basic check of the existing website and obtain firm prices for each of the three packages; this could take up to two months to do.

The Chairman asked, if we know that we can purchase an 'off the shelf' package, do we need to do the basic checks.

Cllr Backshall said that it is necessary for community councils to go through the assessment process and show how and why they are not compliant. She also felt that we owe it to ourselves and our community to get the solution which serves the community best.

Cllr Dover asked about reconfiguring the whole website. Cllr Backshall said that this would effectively be a redesign that would bring the Council's website into the 21st Century. Cllr Dover said that this sounded excellent but asked how this would affect the relationship with Gloversure.

Cllr Backshall said that if a new package was purchased the relationship with Gloversure would come to an end and the new hosting company would undertake the negotiations with Gloversure for the transfer of the Domain name.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Backshall for offering to undertake the task and she, in return, asked councillors to "put their thinking caps on" and decide what they felt should be added or removed from the current website.

The subject of the Council's access to social media was raised. Cllr McCluskey felt that the Council did not need to have its own social media sites but that it should try to ensure that suitable sites pointed interested parties to the Council's website.

The Chairman asked if any grants are likely to be available for the work and/or the purchase of the new package. Cllr Backshall said that there are no grants from Powys County Council. County Cllr Arwel Jones said that he did not think that there was anything available from the Welsh Government but that he would check this.

ACTION: Cllr Backshall for the project

County Cllr Arwel Jones to check funding possibilities from the Welsh Government.

8. Amenities

8.1 Walls Bridge Playground and Football Field

Matters regarding Walls Bridge had been covered earlier in the agenda.

Regarding the Football Field, the Chairman reported that the fence that had been replaced last year has been damaged by children climbing over. It was decided that the damage was not sufficient to take action at present but County Cllr Arwel Jones said that he would have a look at it before the next meeting.

ACTION: County Cllr Arwel Jones

County Cllr Arwel Jones queried whether Lewis Brothers account is in arrears for this year. The Clerk agreed to check this and report back to Cllr Arwel Jones.

ACTION: Clerk

9. Highways and Byways

9.1 Fence to New Bridge

The Clerk reported that Cllr Pownall had left a note stating that a "member of the parish" had asked when the fence from "prior to the measuring stick to New Bridge" is being replaced. County Cllr Arwel Jones said that the repairs or replacement of fences is the responsibility of the landowner. Powys County Council would do the work if requested but would charge the landowner for it.

9.2 Drains

The Chairman referred to the state of the surrounds of the roads and drains from Carreghofa Lane to the crossroads with the A483 including the junctions at Orchard Green, Cae Haidd and Tan-y-Foel. He felt that the tarmac had not been sufficiently sealed so that as soon as there was any amount of wet weather the tarmac collapsed. The Chairman said that he had written to Matt Perry (including Pen-y-Foel subsidence) at Powys County Council but had not received any feedback or even an acknowledgement. County Cllr Arwel Jones said he would look into this.

ACTION: County Cllr Arwel Jones

9.3 Speeding cars

The Chairman mentioned that at the recent Town and Community Councils meeting it was suggested that someone be invited to attend from Powys County Council to discuss traffic calming because the road from New Bridge to the crossroad had “become a racetrack” However, he did not know who should be contacted about this. County Cllr Arwel Jones suggested either Chris Lloyd or Tony Caine and said that he would contact them.

ACTION: County Cllr Arwel Jones

The Chairman said that the police had done one speed check on the A483 but their vehicle had been in full sight and everybody had slowed down.

9.4 Dolphin Car Park

There has been no progress with this matter. County Cllr Arwel Jones said that the offer from the County Council still stands and they are waiting for an approach from the landlord or owners. Cllr Jones said that there had been a water leak at the Dolphin and Severn Trent had attended.

The Chairman said that he may go to see the landlord but he did not think that any further progress was likely.

ACTION: Chairman

10. To receive reports on Meetings from Outside Bodies

10.1 Burial Board

No meeting has been held since the last report

10.2 Powys CC and Town and Community Councils meeting

Notes of this meeting had been circulated by the Chairman.

10.3 Village Hall

There has been no meeting since the last meeting of the Council

10.4 CHC meeting

There has been no meeting since the last meeting of the Council

11. Correspondence

11.1 Correspondence for Decision

There was no correspondence for decision

11.2 Correspondence to note

Council noted the correspondence sent out by the Clerk since the last meeting and itemised in the papers for the meeting.

12. Any Other Business

Education Review

Cllr Dover said that there was still no certainty about how schools would be reorganised. There is to be a new strategy but the consultation process has been moved to the end of the year.

County Cllr Arwel Jones said that the County Council was considering an area primary school of c350 pupils. This could mean that 4 schools may be faced with closure. Cllr Backshall asked if there is a definite plan and County Cllr Arwel Jones said that there is nothing definite as yet. He expected the timescale to have an implementation date of 2023 / 24.

Cllr Jones asked whether Carreghofa Primary School might be considered as the site for the new school if the Lewis Field was taken in to account. Cllr McCluskey said that, as a teacher, he could see that the small schools were not viable economically and felt that an area two to three times the size of the Lewis field would be required to make the Carreghofa site a viable contender.

Cllr Backshall asked how the School felt and Cllr Dover said that an Action Group may be formed. County Cllr Arwel Jones said that the problem was that pupil numbers are falling and the cost of education is rising. The cost per pupil locally is in the region of £7000 per annum compared with an average of £3500 in Powys as a whole. Cllr McCluskey acknowledging the economic argument said that a local school remains a valuable resource and Cllr Backshall said that it is natural to want to defend the local school but questioned whether it was the right thing to do.

County Cllr Arwel Jones said that 'freedom of choice' meant that parents could send their children to schools outside the local area which also put pressure on the local school to maintain pupil numbers.

13. Date of next meeting

Tuesday 29 May 2018 at 7.00pm at Llanymynech Village Hall - AGM to be immediately followed by the Council meeting.

ACTION: All to note.

Approved by Council as a correct record:-

Proposed: _____

Seconded: _____

Signed: _____ Chairman

Date: _____