

MINUTES OF CAERWENT COMMUNITY COUNCIL
HELD THURSDAY 10TH DECEMBER 2020

Present: Via Remote Attendance:
Councillors
K Evans (Chair)
M Beattie
P Dalton
A Gittings
K Haddow
M John
P Murphy

In attendance: L McKeon, Clerk to the Council

M3851 APOLOGIES

Councillor B Counsell – Council accepted his apologies due to sickness.
Councillor K Swift

M3852 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

Councillor K Evans	Caerwent Historic Trust	Trustee
Councillor P Dalton	Caerwent Football Club	Football Coach
Councillor P Murphy	All planning applications	Member of MCC Planning Committee
	Caerwent Community Centre	Trustee

M3853 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair welcomed Councillor P Dalton and Councillor M John and looked forward to working with them.

The Chair advised that Councillor B Harris had tendered his resignation due to personal reasons. The Clerk will inform MCC of this vacancy and complete the procedures regarding filling the vacancy.

The Chair advised that a newsletter will be delivered to every household before Christmas just on this one occasion. He is looking for volunteers to deliver them. Councillor Beattie volunteered to help in delivering to the St Brides Netherwent area.

M3854 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 12th NOVEMBER 2020

To note that these had been confirmed remotely

Council noted.

M3855 POLICE REPORT

Council to note

Council noted that there had been a number of Off Road Bike operations in Wentwood – a number of users had been warned and educated.

Council noted that, as per our requests, speed checks on the A48 had been carried out with an average speed of 31.7 mph and a top speed of 45.

Councillor Dalton queried what the Admin incident category related to. The Clerk will make some enquiries.

M3856 PLANNING

To consider any planning applications received after despatch of agenda

2020/01755 Merrils Garage, Penylan Lodge Road, Carrow Hill

Proposed extension to existing garage to accommodate relocated vehicle lift.

Agreed that Councillors Beattie and Dalton liaise with a view to visiting the site and then report back to the Clerk with recommendations.

2020/01443 4 Eastgate Crescent, Caerwent

Demolition of rear single storey annexe and detached prefabricated garage and construction of single storey rear extension containing hallway, shower/WC, utility room and storage. Construction of two storey side extension containing kitchen/dining area at ground floor with two bedrooms at first floor. Construction of new larger porch on front elevation.

Council were minded to recommend Approval but Councillor Haddow agreed to report back to the Clerk with recommendations.

To note monthly enforcement list from MCC

Council noted.

It was noted that permission had been granted for removal of the tree next to Laurel Dene in Caerwent.

To note consultation and engagement on the Replacement Local Development Plan (RLDP) Growth and Spatial Options (Microsoft Teams meeting – 21st January 1800 hours)

Councillor Murphy recommended that as many Councillors as possible join this meeting.

M3857 OAK TREES (K Swift)

Further to the offer from Spitalfields to plant oak trees in our area, Council to consider replacing one oak tree on the Merton Green open space in memory of Glyn Cousins (ex Councillor for the Dinham ward)

Council agreed. Councillor Murphy to make contact with Spitalfields.

M3858 VILLAGE HALL – PROPOSED ALTERATIONS BY THE FOOTBALL CLUB FOR CHANGING ROOMS (K Evans)

Council to consider

Council considered the documents received. The Chair advised that this is a significant change to the original plan, that existing drainage would have to be removed, that the installation of a cooker would need a separate circuit installed and that there could be disability requirements regarding the toilets. He was concerned that modifying the building in this way could be to the detriment of other activities taking place in the Hall. Council agreed to initially set up a meeting with the Caerwent Playing Fields Committee as they are the management committee of the Hall.

M3859 MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL DRAFT BUDGET PROPOSALS 2021/22

Council to note invitation to online session to be held 2nd February 1830 hours

Council noted

M3860 COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETINGS ROOM HIRE (K Evans)

To consider approaching Cadw to enquire if we could hire out the Barns for our monthly council meetings once we are able to hold face to face meetings again.

Council agreed that the Clerk approach Cadw.

M3861 TO RECEIVE REPORTS

CLERK'S REPORT

Councillor Vacancies (Llanvair Discoed and St Brides Netherwent wards)

Interviews had been held.

Post of Councillor for Llanvair Discoed ward offered to Mike John.

Post of Councillor for St Brides Netherwent ward offered to Paul Dalton.

Both had accepted and signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Highmoor Hill Phone Box

Still no reply from Post Office regarding possible relocation of phone box to their land.

Council agreed that the Gaer land at St Stephens church was too boggy. Agreed that

for the time being it stay at Highmoor Hill. Councillor Beattie agreed to investigate turning it 90 degrees.

Embrace Nature Caerwent

Meeting held on 24th November - Councillors Evans and Murphy had attended.

Site meeting held 2nd December – Councillor Murphy had attended.

The Clerk was asked to circulate meeting minutes for these.

Manor Farm Adoption

Councillor Murphy reported that the Officer at MCC has not been to County Hall since March due to Covid but is hoping to confirm definitively that this is adopted as soon as possible.

Trees

Contact had been made with the family of the owners of 2 Vicarage Gardens regarding overhanging branches onto picnic tables at Caerwent Playing Fields. They had instructed a tree surgeon to remove the tree as it had ash die back. He will have to close the play area for a couple of days and close the picnic table area for a day and will provide signage to that effect. He will have a full risk assessment in place. He had offered to spread the chippings where required on the Play Area and Councillors agreed to this.

No. 3 Vicarage Gardens are also removing a large tree which also has ash die back.

Clerk had queried with MCC works carried out following the tree survey recommendations for the Playing Fields. Officer had replied that they had carried out what was recommended. Clerk further queried why one tree had apparently been missed out and sent him a map – he is investigating.

Report by resident of dead trees on School Lane – Councillor Murphy had referred this to MCC.

Dog Waste Bin – Dualcarriageway west A48

Should be in place shortly.

Councillor John agreed to remove the plastic container on the Llanvair Discoed bin once all of the bags had gone.

Recycled Bench A48 east

On order. Chair agreed to investigate the condition of our existing bench on A48 west following comments from our Handyman.

Annual Assets Inspections

Report from Community Centre received:

The Centre has been out of use since March because of Covid-19 restrictions. They have still carried out contractor tests for fire alarms and portable electrical appliances. The committee is working on a Covid Operational Plan which will allow them to reopen. Their outstanding problem is the need to replace the Sports Hall floor, they have not been successful in their application for a grant so far, perhaps because the envisaged cost of £15,000-20,000 rules out many funding sources. They will continue with this challenge.

Report from Village Hall:

The extension has been redecorated during lockdown. The football team are proposing to make a start on obtaining permission for the changing room shell over the next few weeks. The gutters need an empty – Council agreed to ask our Handyman to carry this out.

Clerk had contacted the painter again to request a quote for painting inside the ladies toilets.

Broken mirror removed from gents toilets – contractor seeking a new one.

Play Area Repairs

Reminded MCC of seesaw repair at Caerwent – asked for quote for replacement.

Training Courses booked

Councillors Swift/Harris
Clerk

Responding to Policy Consultations
SLCC/Audit Wales training on new
audit regulations

Place Plan training – awaiting date from Portskewett Community Council but advised them of our Community Council meeting dates and our preference for an evening session.

The Clerk reported on her course where Audit Wales had deemed that the current audit regulations are now not fit for purpose due to fraud cases elsewhere in Wales - currently 20 Councils are being investigated. All 735 town/community councils will now have to be involved in a much more onerous audit.

All audits will now be carried out by Audit Wales. It will be on a transaction tested basis every three years and all original documents will have to be submitted with the Clerk attending. There will be an increase in audit fees.

Audit Wales did confirm that an appropriate amount to keep in reserves would be 50% of budget.

Large lorries travelling through Caerwent

Clerk requested on our Facebook page that residents send in details of large lorries travelling through our area to the new Caldicot housing development. Numerous reports received which were passed to Planning who in turn took this up with Barratts. As this situation is continuing The Clerk will ask again on our Facebook page for evidence of these travelling through Caerwent.

Goal Posts – Caerwent Playing Fields

The Football Club had confirmed that they are the owners of the posts (donated to them by Caldicot School).

Christmas Tree

Tree and lights erected. Numerous positive comments on our Facebook page regarding the coloured lights this year.

A query had been received from a resident regarding lights possibly being linked to the street light at Eastgate Crescent. The Clerk had informed of the new stringent regulations and costs.

SOCIAL MEDIA REPORT DECEMBER 2020

927 members

Issues raised:

Large lorries using the village

Caerwent Living Advent Calendar

Garden Waste Collection

New Sculpture at Black Rock

Xmas tree

Xmas lunch provision on Xmas Eve arranged in conjunction with the church and

The Coach & Horses pub

Royal mail scam

Burglary at Merton Green

Car damage on Roman Road

Information exchange

PLAY AREAS INSPECTION REPORT

Council noted that quotes had been requested for required works.

M3862 FINANCE

To consider balances/payment and approval as per finance schedule dated December 2020

Balances as at 30TH November:

Community Account	£4,580.89
Moneymaster Account	£12,121.85
Petty Cash	£220.78

Clerk's Salary, Allowances, Mileage (24)	as per NALC scales
Inland Revenue	£198.22
Torfaen Pension Fund	(employee) £58.59
	(employer) £197.10
British Gas	£28.21
Planning Aid Wales (training)	£57.00
Aardvarc Cleaning	£216.00
S Roderick (repairs)	£29.28
Information Commissioner's Office (annual data protection fee)	£35.00
City Illuminations (Christmas tree)	£840.00
Merlin Waste (dog bins)	£171.60

Council agreed to payment of the above accounts.

To consider that Council cover the costs of any Covid signage/equipment required for the Village Hall and Community Centre (currently £200 and £240 respectively).

Council agreed.

To consider the amount of £70 for safety surfacing repair at Caerwent Playing Fields and £105 for cleaning the Llanvair Discoed safety surface.

Council agreed.

To consider request from MCC re their Christmas Wishes appeal.

It was noted that this had been very well supported so Council agreed not to donate on this occasion.

To note that the three year fixed price contract with British Gas for electricity in the public toilets has expired. Council to consider new three year contract at 39.03p per day standing charge and 18.7p unit charge as opposed to 66.1p standing charge and 31.8p for their variable plan.

Council agreed.

To note minutes of Finance Committee meeting held 27th November and consider their recommendations for the precept 2021-22 and three year forecast.

Council agreed to the recommendation that there be no increase and that the amount of £50,700 be requested from MCC for the 2021-22 period.

Council agreed that the Clerk's pension payment should be added back into the figures as she cannot claim this until she actually retires from her job as Clerk, as opposed to reaching pension age.

The Clerk advised that the government is intending to bring in 100% relief for rates on public toilets but that legislation has yet to be passed. We will therefore have to continue to pay this in the meantime.

Council agreed to the recommendation that any tree works or provision of village signs be taken from the General Maintenance budget.

Council agreed to the recommendation that £2,000 be earmarked per year for future drainage works on the Caerwent Playing Fields.

Council agreed to the recommendation that no new play equipment be purchased during the next three years. Council noted that the seesaw unit at Caerwent will probably be replaced this financial year.

Council were mindful that the Community Centre are currently applying for grants to replace the hall floor. Although no request has yet been received it was agreed that any shortfall required could come out of our General Maintenance or Halls Repairs budget.

To note that the Annual Return for 2019-20 had been approved by external audit and that the information provided in the Return is in accordance with proper practices and no matters have come to their attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met. Council to approve and accept.

Council approved and accepted.

To note that the appropriate sum for the purposes of section 137(4) (a) of the Local Government Act 1972 for Community and Town Councils in Wales for 2021-22 is £8.41 per elector.

Council noted.

M3863 HIGHWAYS/RIGHTS OF WAY

To note road closure at Five Lanes on 3rd February for BT Openreach poling works to take place in a safe manner at the location.

Council noted.

Councillors to report any issues.

The Clerk advised that our Handyman had reported that the area at the Crick bus shelter east required some new weed prevention sheets and a bag of chippings.

Council agreed.

The Clerk advised that she had reported a blocked footpath north of Caerwent Training Area at the large field adjacent to the base, heading north.

M3864 ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

The Clerk queried the minor authority representation by Councillor Harris who had now resigned. Agreed to put this on the next agenda.

Chair Date