

DRAFT MINUTES OF DEVAUDEN COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Held Monday 29th July 2024 7.15pm, Hood Memorial Hall, Devauden

Councilor's Present:

Cllr H Turner
Cllr M Powell
Cllr J Williams
Cllr P Kenington
Cllr A Williams,
Cllr A Kitson Smith
Cllr J Lucas (arrived 7.36pm)

In Attendance: Cllr Rachel Buckler, J McLagan (Clerk to the Council), Charles Crundwell, David Maddocks, & Chris Knight

1. Apologies: None

2. Declarations of interest in items on the agenda. Cllr J Williams declared an interest in Well Lane

3. Confirmation of minutes from previous meeting and AGM. Resolved - Minutes For June 2024 Monthly meeting confirmed and signed.

4. Public participation 15 minutes – 5 minutes each from 1) Mr C Crundwell, 2) Mr D Maddocks, 3) Mr C Knight.

Mr C Crundwell raised the issue of a locked gate in an area by Whitemill Common.

A) *"The path that runs through the Woodland Trust land at Whitemill Common & Roughets Wood has recently been chained and padlocked closed (as per email attachment). This has apparently been at the request of the adjacent landowner (I spoke to the Woodland Trust). This path has been in use for more than 25 years, it is the obvious route to walk from Mynyddbach and Itton and makes an enjoyable circular walk. Well used by dog walkers and others.*

I therefore seek representation from the Community Council, on options to see this route re-opened. "

Clerk to contact Woodland trust and request who has instructed them to lock the gate, request to landowner if it could be designated as a permissive path, possible suggestion of a sheep gate - if open gates are an issue. **Clerk** to keep Charles informed.

B) Mr D Maddocks raised the issue of the *"grass verges being badly cut"*.

Clerk to Contact Gareth Freeman MCC

C) Mr C Knight raised several issues affecting the Lanvihangel Area.

i) *"Star Hill, traffic speeding, there are 7 junctions including footpaths, very concerned about safety.*

ii) *Church Road, Gate has been closed across the road, meaning drivers must reverse up the road, as too narrow to turn. Recent incidents of drivers getting stuck in hedge. Requesting a sign to say no access or gate moved to allow cars to turn as previously was the case, in addition the public footpath is currently inaccessible.*

iii) *Discussed the Noticeboard being fitted at Hairdressers. Council unaware that this has been offered. Council require exact location so they can look at correct type, fitting and insurance if not on public land.*

iv) There is working group regarding the currently closed pub *The Star*. *The Star* have said they are open to leasing or selling the pub to the community. Chris will keep the council updated, whilst the group look at funding. "

Clerk to contact Matthew Lewis & Gareth Freeman MCC regarding footpath and roads.

5. Police Report - None received, Clerk to chase with Gwent Police Commissioner regarding lack of reports.

6. Matters Arising

- i. **Gareth Freeman** – Unable to attend, Cllrs discussed road imagining, road priorities. Cllrs felt the plan is lovely for St Arvan's issues, however it fails to address the issues in Devauden. **Request** "please can new solution be sought, that works for both wards". **Cllr Buckler** to request a meeting with **Gareth Freeman**.
- ii. **Play Equipment** – Play group committee update– Chair reported group are looking at Lottery funding in addition to other funding, and have an equipment representative visiting in August. Clerk awaiting reply from **Rob Carey MCC**
- iii. **Audited Accounts** : Accounts have been submitted for Audit. **Clerk to look at financial reserves.**
- iv. **Itton sign: Resolved** to go ahead with sign, after local consultation. Cllr A Williams made the following points: The Spelling is correct as listed at the Gazetteer. The logo for wye valley will be switched to Welsh/English. The design/make up will be similar to the other signs, for continuity.
- v. **Tree Sculptor – resolved** to put the design out to local community schools. Cllrs agreed a **Wildlife/Nature theme** would represent an aspect of all of the wards. **Clerk to formulate a plan.**
- vi. **Community Orchard – Deferred:** Fencing recently put up prevents access, and local residents are complaining. **Cllr Buckler to investigate.**
- vii. **Allotment Maintenance – Resolved** - works to be undertaken September onwards after nesting birds. Quote/s to be sought.
- viii. **Allotment Land– Deferred** Clerk had no reply form Solicitors. Chair and Clerk to continue to make contact.
- ix. **Litter Pick – Deferred** - to next meeting. residents currently away,
- x. **Meetings & Training Attended: 2 Items reported:** Cllr Turner confirmed attendance of 1 online training courses with OVW and was very positive.

OVW meeting – attended by Cllrs JW and MP and reported: - Speaker was Angela Jones, founder of the Save the River Usk/Wye campaigns. She is a wild swimmer, environmentalist and campaigner. She has been invited to speak at Westminster, on various BBC programmes including Panorama, Country File, on ITV environmental and public affair programmes. Her objective is to encourage people and businesses to protect and respect the environment of the Rivers Wye and Usk. She has recruited many volunteers to collect water samples and works with the University of South Wales for the analysis. The levels reported and incidents recorded are horrifying. The biggest pollution comes from agriculture (24 million chickens along the Wye) followed by sewerage discharges and then households, e.g. jacuzzi and hot tub emptying. The fifth biggest pollutant is from dogs swimming in the rivers. A spray is used on dogs which is no longer allowed to be used on farm animals that washes off into the water. Once phosphate levels go up the oxygen levels go down leading to deaths of plants/fish and insects. She stressed the importance of reporting incidents so that testing can take place. Also concerned at the lack of action or urgency of NRW when incidents are reported. Volunteers are always welcome.

OVW brought to the delegates attention that Microsoft support for Windows10 will be withdrawn 14/10/25.

A website Parish-on-line was recommended as it maps individual areas with several layers of detail. Apparently, councils can get a free trial.

We were advised that Rita Edwards has resigned as a Community Councillor. A new representative for the Nation Executive Council is required.

Councils are still finding it difficult to recruit and retain Clerks. Maria Mulcahy would welcome any recommendations.

Cllr A Williams confirmed attendance at Hood hall of Wye Walley Villages Delivery Group. Shared information regarding Circuit – Defibrillator logging and checking.

Cllr Turner invited to attend future meetings.

- xi. **Clerks hours** – Discussed increase of clerks' hours from 8 to 12 per week, looked at comparisons of other Community Councils. Cllrs to meet in September to discuss pension contributions.
- xii. **Defibrillators:**
Newchurch Defibrillator Pads – replacement. **Resolved** to purchase replacements. Clerk awaiting item information form individual.
Defibrillators – Agreed a system is required to monitor the defibs.
Resolved : Wye electrical to fit as quoted.
- xiii. **Noticeboard** for Llanfihangel Tor y Mynydd – Agreed as mentioned (item 4 C,iii) more information required regarding exact location of the board, permissions, insurance requirements and correct purchase/fitting.
Deferred whilst exact location supplied.
- xiv. **Policy for remote meetings-** **Resolved** to purchase a microphone, **Clerk** to action.
- xv. Budget Meeting- **Resolved** to Meet in September and agreed all Cllrs should try to attend.
- xvi. Telephone Boxes – **Agreed** that no action is required regarding electricity to Phone boxes and Defibs.
- xvii. **Donations and grants** – discuss formalising grants and donations. **Clerk to formulate a draft**
Cllr Kitson smith informed the council that the churchyard in his ward was seeking a grant for mowing.
Resolved : Ward Churchyards can receive funding £100 - £150 - upon request to Clerk. Church yards to provide banking information. **Clerk** to create general application for Cllr perusal.
- xviii. **Logo** – Clerk **requested** Cllrs to consider a logo for the Council

7. Clerks Report

- (a) Audit information uploaded
- (b) Website update **clerk to resend**
- (c) Clerk Salary and pension report/information - shared.
- (d) Volunteer poster shared
- (e) 1st quarter reconciliation viewed & signed

8. Finance

Resolved to pay finances as per schedule below

PAYEE	REASON FOR EXPENDITURE	AMOUNT £	VAT £	TOTAL £	PAYMENT METHOD
Clerk	Salary July	679.87		679.87	BACS
Clerk Expenses	July Expenses	72.08		72.08	BACS
A Williams	Microsoft July 24	49.00	9.80	58.80	BACS
Hood Hall	Hall Hire	60		60	BACS
Clerk Salary	Salary Aug (guestimate)	756.96		756.96	BACs
Wye Electrical Solutions	Electrical works –	350		420	BACS
One voice Wales	Training Inv	40.00		40.00	BACS
A Williams	Microsoft Aug (guestimate)	49.00	9.80	58.80	BACS
Transfer	Transfer from S/Ac – C/ac	1750			TRSF
HSBC	Bank charges 26/07/24-25/08/24	5.00	0	5.00	HSBC

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Balances Current account **£1,395.45** & saving account **£22,006.33** **Vat refund rec'd £179.11**

Liabilities' as listed approved.

9. Correspondence:

Emails: Correspondence list as circulated . Report was taken as read.

10. Planning: Nothing received.

11. County Councilor's Report - Rachel Buckler County Council Update

Meetings postponed due to Elections, Autumn should see many issues being resolved, and Monmouthshire council still has large deficit.

Cllr Buckler to chase the 30 mph extension road signs, plus the road issues at Star Hill, confirming there had been delays in all areas of the county.

12. My Mon APP Outstanding Reports: No reports,

13. One Voice Wales – As above

14. Ward Reports

Cllr H Turner – No issues to report

Cllr P Kenington – Reiterated his concerns regarding Japanese knotweed in two places on the roadside of the fence by Hood Hall, & near to salt box. When reported to MCC previously they stated "*they would deal with it when it was mature*". **Cllr Buckler to chase.**

Cllr M Powell – Reported issue with hedge on corner of Itton Triangle – **Clerk to report on Mon App.**

Cllr A Kitson Smith – Dangerous roadside hedging obscuring road signs, Tarmacking done but no news on speed signs, **Cllr Buckler made aware.**

Cllr A Williams – No additional items.

Cllr J Lucas – Liasing with Chris Knight regarding road speeds and details for Noticeboard.

Cllr J Williams – raised the following points:

A) **Music festival** - more complaints received. Please note that DCC is reporting views that have been expressed to them not making judgements or drawing conclusions.

- Lack of stewards on the Sunday when the field was closed for car parking. Police had to be contacted because a car was blocking the entrance to a field containing horses in Well Lane. A tractor could not gain entry. Police identified the owner of the vehicle who eventually moved it. The concern was that if a vet had been required, they could not have gained access.
- Sound levels. Noise levels were too high. This occurred after the music licence period of 11pm.
- Alcohol was being sold in the grounds. The licence allows alcohol to be consumed in the grounds, but its sale should only be in the hall.
- Removal of human waste tanks after the event. JW contacted trustees after this was raised at the last meeting. The waste tanks were positioned alongside the B4293 and it was 5 weeks after the festival before the tanks were eventually removed.

Cllr JW expressed her thanks to Richard May who liaised between the Music Festival Organisers and the hirer of the tanks. There was a reluctance to accept responsibility for the removal of the tanks by both the organisers and the hirer.

- **Devauden Community Council is reminding the public** that the council have no affiliation to the festival and all comments or complaints should be made direct to the Devauden Music Festival organisers.
 - B) Mr Malcolm Wigley – received phone call about trees overhanging his garden and that of his neighbour. He felt they were in a dangerous condition. Passed this on to Jane asking her to pass it to David Lucas.
 - C) Letter to resident advising them to cut their hedge. Picture circulated. Resident queries the reasonableness of the request.
 - D) Community orchard - Any response from MCC. Original agreement in planning conditions is that it is for village use. Fencing placed along 'temporary' access path into Dave Maddocks field.
- E) Any response from MHA on the following points? :**
- i. Money promised for playground equipment
 - ii. Road parking on the curve into the estate
 - iii. Status of houses - are the tenants of the low cost rented house available for purchase
 - iv. Non occupation of a shared ownership property

15. Items and date for next meeting Monday September 30th 7.15 pm

Meeting closed at 9.50pm

Clerk, J McLagan **Mobile:** 07410 272079 **Email:** clerk@devaudencc.org.uk