

MINUTES OF DEVAUDEN COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Held Monday 24th February 2025 7.15pm, Hood Memorial Hall, Devauden

Councilor's Present:

Cllr J Williams - Chair
Cllr H Turner – Online
Cllr A Williams – Online
Cllr P Kenington
Cllr Malcom Powell – Arrived 19.26pm
Cllr A Kitson Online – joined 19.42pm

In Attendance: J McLagan (Clerk) Cllr R Buckler, Gareth Freeman, Mr & Mrs Piling

1. Apologies: Cllr J Lucas

2. Declarations of interest in items on the agenda: Cllr J Williams expressed an interest in items referring to Well Lane.

3. Confirmation of minutes from previous meeting - Resolved - Minutes January 24th, 2025 Monthly meeting confirmed and signed.

4. Public Participation: Mr T Piling & Mr G Freeman (MCC)

- I. Mr Piling presented a detailed report around issues of reinstatement of the second, Chepstow bound, bus stop and provision of a safe crossing point in the village. It is felt the situation has become more dangerous now due to an increase in traffic through the village and that speed limits are ignored. The new development at Cwm Fagor/Well Lane has increased the pedestrian traffic to the village green and hall.
- II. Mr Piling also reported the need for traffic calming on the junction of A466 and B4293
Gareth Freeman – Monmouthshire County Council
 - I. Confirmed he would chase the report from 2 years ago, that has not been passed to the Council regarding the 2 hour walk around, discussing safety issues in the Village.
 - II. Discussed issues around road safety and what can and can't be done. The village does not have clear line of sight for many options. The village does not have the 'feel of 20 mph limit' hence drivers don't slow down as they would in city, town or area with lots of cars, etc. Discussed using less expensive measures to create an ambiance of needing to slow down, so taking the centre line away, road markings that give the impression the road is narrower than it is, and other types.
 - III. Explained costs are a mitigating factor, the council has very little money. Need is the requirement, and this has not been flagged for the village. Data collection looks at significant collision clusters, such areas are then funded by Welsh government. Devauden does not show these clusters.
 - IV. Discussed road safety measures in Llansoy, lower cost measures that are working.
 - V. Would be happy to attend a road safety meeting with St Arvan's and Devauden CC.
 - VI. Would be happy to attend a meeting with Cllr Kenington regarding the Y Fedw junction.
 - VII. Flashing signs - stated all villages would like one, but there is no budget for this.
 - VIII. Near misses are difficult to collate, and not aware MCC has a method to record this.
 - IX. Was not sure the priority change proposed for Devauden would achieve the MCC desired outcome.

Cllrs responded to Mr Piling:

Cllr Buckler confirmed that the issues with the Bus stop had been reported to MCC many times and acknowledged Mr Piling's report and concerns, sharing those same concerns too.

Cllr Williams also confirmed that DCC had reported the issues of Bus stop safety, to MCC, many times with the last response from MCC ***"The footway anyway is too narrow, and I have passed this problem to our Highways***

team previously to restore pavement width and consider traffic calming works, increasing footway width towards the bus shelters' received 10th Oct 2024.

Cllrs responded to Mr Freeman:

Cllr Buckler confirmed that the issues with road safety had been reported to MCC, and her frustration for the safety of the village. Also confirmed finance was a huge constraint with MCC currently having large financial shortfalls. Suggested a system of reporting speeding by locals to DCC new website.

Cllr J Williams expressed frustration and concerns over lack of progression and reiterated the need to see the original report. The issue has always been road safety and avoidance of serious injury or fatality. Reported the problems previously with receiving information on road traffic studies in the village. It was finally reported that over 50% of cars were travelling at over 40mph.

Cllr P Kennington asked how much is too much? with regard to funding the necessary traffic calming measures. Requested the cost be shared with DCC so that it can look at possible financing/grants etc. Querying if the Devauden Community Council could put in place simple road narrowing measures each end of the village.

Cllr A Williams requested Mr Freeman attend a planned walk about with both St Arvan's and Devauden community councils who are trying to fund measures to help with road safety.

Cllr A Kitson is concerned that MCC is not doing enough, and asked if near misses are recorded? this is a relevant figure used in other areas of transport, and risk measurement.

Mr Piling asked if the data was enough to instigate a safety response.

Cllrs confirmed that they did not feel the "**proposed priority change for Devauden**" would be effective and are not liked generally. Cllr Kenington and Mr Freeman to look at Y Fedw junction.

Cllrs thanked Mr & Mrs Piling for attending and sharing their concerns, and to Mr Freeman for attending and answering questions.

5. Police Report – The Police report was shared and taken as read. **Clerk** to affirm a definite date with E Park.

There was one log around DEVAUDEN from 01/01/25 – 31/01/25, this involves different types of incidents. These were dealt with by NPT and Response officers from the Monmouthshire south area. There are two incidents, we cannot disclose with the community council as they are too personal to discuss.

1) The incident involved two vehicles parked in the woods, possibly a drug deal going the caller taker told the RP to note the number plate. NPT have been made aware of the incident.

What we plan to do in February:

- Active patrols the area.*
- Still conduct speed monitoring in the village.*
- Attend the next council meeting (If possible)*

6. Matters Arising

- i. **Play Equipment**– Cllr J Williams reported from the Playgroup Action Group, 3-week installation, costs increased, since last quote. Group will be reporting on how the grant was achieved, reporting back to Wye valley and sharing experiences. Concerns that MCC have come back with less than originally offered. Originally £2,700 community benefit was offered but now that amount has dropped to £1,467.00, which significantly affects the fund.
- ii. **Community Orchard** : Cllr Buckler has been informed by planning that there is an application in progress, and will feed back, on what that is.
- iii. **Land at Allotments : Resolved** – The deed transfer was signed by Cllr J Williams and Cllr P Kenington witnessed by the Clerk. **Clerk to post documents back to Solicitors. P**
- iv. **Meetings attended & (forthcoming meetings) : none**

- v. **Noticeboard at Llanfihangel Tory & Mynydd** – Noticeboard has been ordered, Llansoy local group have confirmed installation and insurance.
- vi. **Website** – Nearly ready to launch, Cllrs Williams listed areas that need populating to finalise. **Cllrs & Clerk to send suggestion's.**
- vii. **Meeting with Itton Landowner.** Cllr Powell expressed his concern that he was not at the meeting with H Dibble. **Cllr Powell to contact adjacent landowner, to establish if the workaround is possible for local walkers.**
- viii. **Keep Britain Tidy** - National pick up planned 21 March - 6 April.
- ix. **Bumblebee monitoring project collaboration:** Discussed if anyone was interested
- x. **Road safety meeting** – Report written Cllr A Williams was shared with the council, after a successful meeting with St Arvan's, ongoing progress with a future meeting to be arranged for a walk-about of the areas of concern. Costings to be sought for preferred equipment/measures. Method of recording speeding and near misses in Devauden. **Ongoing & Cllr A Williams**
- xi. **Coal Lane 53-18 and 53-11.** Cllr Turner shared her report expressing her frustration after emailing MCC regarding concerns from local users of 53 -11 that the status may have changed permitting motorcycles. Cllr Turner and Cllr Buckler to pursue.
- xii. **Itton Telephone Box** – Discussed quote for £2,205.24 to replace telephone box with new door and refurbish telephone box and external area and dispose of door. **Clerk to look at 2nd hand doors. Cllr Powell to seek additional quote to repair.**

7. Clerks Report – as circulated. Reported relevant updates and taken as read.

8. Finance January 25

| PAYEE | REASON FOR EXPENDITURE | AMOUNT £ | VAT £ | TOTAL £ | PAYMENT METHOD |
|------------------|--------------------------------------|----------|--------|---------|----------------|
| Clerk | Salary Feb 25 | 760.35 | | 760.35 | BACS |
| A Williams | Microsoft Jan | 49.00 | 9.80 | 58.80 | BACS |
| Clerk | Expenses Jan 25 | 49.18 | | 49.18 | BACS |
| Beverly Williams | Pension set up | 50.00 | 10.00 | 60.00 | BACS |
| Greenbarnes | Noticeboard | 1284.89 | 256.98 | 1541.87 | BACS |
| Torfaen LGP | Pension payments Employee & employer | 230.24 | | 230.24 | BACS |
| Twomlows | Deed transfers costs | 402.00 | 70.00 | 472.00 | BACS |
| Transfer | Transfer from SA/Ac – Cu/Ac | 3100.00 | | | TRANF |
| HSBC | Bank charges 26/01/25-25/02/25 | 5.00 | 0 | 5.00 | |

Bank Balance as 24/02/25 - £ 2093.99 & £29,876.57

Liabilities as circulated, read discussed and approved.

9. Correspondence: Emails: Correspondence list for February as circulated. Report was taken as read.

10. Planning: Consultee Letter for Listed Building Consent Heritage DM/2025/00101

Cllrs voted **No Objection**

11. County Councilor's Report – Cllr Buckler reported

- Concerns still about the ability of MCC to pass a balanced budget due to a shortfall of around £1.5 million. A funding floor has been agreed with Welsh Government, but it still leaves this shortfall.
- Concerns about vital services being cut, but very little time for members to consider or discuss.
- Monmouthshire County Council meet on 6th March, and an extra Full Council meeting has been added on the 7th March at extremely short notice.
- Plans such as moving the location of the Monmouth Library and reducing its capacity and role, and possible reduction in MCC Hubs across Monmouthshire so that residents can access help and support are still unclear.

12. My Mon APP Outstanding Reports: No new reports.

13. One Voice Wales – Not attended

14. Ward Reports

Cllr H Turner – Had to leave meeting early.

Cllr P Kenington - No new issues to report. Meeting planned for Y Fedw junction regarding visibility issues.

Cllr A Kitson Smith – No new issues, confirmed previous concerns from residents on lack of proper speed limits around the junction of B4273 and the Kilgwrrwg/Newchurch T junction, are still ongoing.

Cllr J Williams: – As Discussed previously Coal Lane issues and trees belonging to Natural Resource Wales in need to cutting back. **Clerk** to make contact with NRW

Cllr A Williams : - No new issues to report

Cllr J Lucas: – Not present

Cllr M Powell: Requested some archive space for items belonging to the council, Cllr Kitson offered to collect and store. Clerk to seek out permanent archive space via MCC and establish which items can be stored digitally.

15. Items and date for next meeting 31st March 2025 at 7.15pm at Hood Hall .

Meeting closed by Cllr J Williams @ 9.40pm.