

**MINUTES OF DEVAUDEN COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MONDAY 30 SEPTEMBER 2013 AT ITTON VILLAGE HALL**

COUNCILLORS PRESENT: J Williams (chair), J Rowlands, M Powell, K McElroy, A Williams, N Knowland, A Cooke
IN ATTENDANCE: C Martin (clerk). Public (see list at end of minutes), PCSO Sally Parker
APOLOGIES: CC Bob Greenland, PC Thorpe,

1) OPEN SESSION

Cllr J Williams introduced the open session and explained DCC's finances for year ending 31 March 2013 and the role of the community councillor. Opened up the discussion for ideas from the community regarding what the council should do in the next financial year. The following suggestions were made:

1. Bus shelters are deteriorating and need repair.
2. Some interest in instigating no calling zone. DCC agreed to look into obtaining no calling stickers.
3. Overgrown hedges obstructing the footpath – 1 The Smithy highlighted.
4. Returning the village green back to nature – there were differing views on this at the meeting
5. Suggestion of procuring land on the edge of the village to have a community meadow and orchard. AC/KM and AW will look into this.
6. Footpath from Itton Common to the village hall to make it accessible on foot.
7. Suggested that the donation towards the Itton fireworks be increased above the current £150.
8. Request for DCC to write to MCC to make the date for hedge cutting to 1st August rather than 1 September.
9. Request for P.O van to be sited at the seniors bungalows on a weekly basis as well as at the green
10. View expressed that there should not be over development of the village green – 20 paving slabs and interpretation board seems too much. Cllr Rowlands wished it to be noted that there were 2 Open Meetings, advertised via a flyer hand delivered to every home in Devauden, to which the individual did not attend.
11. Request that the racecourse removes its outdated signs from around the community.

PCSO Parker had to leave for another meeting but left her report for JW to read out. The report is at the end of the minutes.

Cllr J Williams read out the results of the Best Kept Village competition for Devauden and Itton. Everyone was thanked for their attendance and ideas and the open session was brought to a close.

Public left the meeting.

2) CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The minutes of 19 August agreed with amendments and signed by JW and CM.

3) MATTERS ARISING

- 3.1 Reply to DCC letter Minister re: ambulance service. File
- 3.2 Co-option of councillor for Itton – Meeting agreed the process for co-option as follows: leaflet drop to all households requesting written applications to the clerk by 25 October. Selection process will be decided at next meeting when number of applicants known. JW to produce the leaflet for the other councillors to deliver in their area. JR will cover the cost of copying and printing.
- 3.3 Highways form sent following last meeting (sent 5/9/13) – reply not yet received.

4) FINANCE

Balances at 29/9/13 Current; £ 3357.43 Notice: £ 275.54

- 4.1 Agreed for payment by JW and NK
Clerk's expenses for September, £12.60 cheque no.101276
Mazars LLP – audit fee for 2012/13 £156, cheque no. 101277
F Richards, refurbishment of Itton telephone box labour, £110, cheque no.101278
- 4.2 Clerk's Salary £261.13 received from MCC payroll for September and £261.13 for August plus £10.40 pack pay.
- 4.3 Receipt - £265.48 – VAT reclaim for 2012/13
- 4.4 Annual return received, signed by auditors. JW to put copy on notice board for inspection period.

5) CORRESPONDENCE

- 5.1 Royal Welsh Advisory Committee – Gwent featured county 2015 – request for funding. File.
- 5.2 GAVO – AGM 16 October 2013. No action.

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5.3 Raglan Community Council – planning training. Clerk to respond expressing interest from 2 or 3 councillors.

6) PLANNING

6.1 The following plans approved by MCC:

6.1.1 DC/2013/ 00315 - Proposed rear extension with storage area and porch alterations. The Knap, Itton

6.2 The following plan was refused by MCC:

6.2.1 DC/DC/2013/00359 - Proposed new sewage treatment plant, proposed extension to the bull pen and proposed change of use of the bull pen from holiday let unit to permanent dwelling. Tor-Y-Mynydd, Devauden

6.3 New enforcement case - E13/197 Cleddy y Tan Farm, Earlswood, Devauden - Alleged unauthorised works

6.4 DC/2013/00696 Construction of detached bat house to improve mitigation features at site of Old Shop Cottage, Old Shop Cottage, Star Hill, Llanishen. Recommend approval.

6.5 DC/2013/00785 – Retention of drive and parking area, Fox and Hounds, Itton. Recommend refusal as the entrance does not provide adequate visibility on the highway. Also with reference to plan DC2011/00068 the access was to remain unchanged. Also the field is agricultural land and has been incorporated into the gardens, which we believe requires permission for change of use.

6.6 Enquiry from Mrs Crawford at 1 Tredean Cottages and Ms Lesser regarding The Wenallt. The conifers on the shared drive and are very high. They have affected the BT lines, fallen down and blocked the access and one recently hit a bus. MRs Crawford reports that highways have said there is nothing they can do as not blocking the highway.

MS Lesser has informed us that she did not receive notification regarding the recent planning permission at the Wenallt (DC/2013/0001) which Mrs Crawford agreed with. Agreed that clerk would write to BT asking if they had concerns re. the trees and planning regarding the lack of notification. JR will speak to the owner of the Wenallt. JR to visit Mrs Lesser and Mrs Crawford to give feed back from DCC discussions

7) COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT

County councillor not present

8) ONE VOICE WALES (OVW)

Nothing received

9) WARD REPORTS

Actions following on from Open session suggestions:

1. JW will look at the height of hedges at the Smithy to assess if action required
2. Permissive footpath at Itton – MP to contact landowner. Clerk to write to planning to see if it is possible to put a path in on B4293 on the right hand side travelling south between Itton village and the village hall.
3. Clerk to write a letter re. P.O van and send to JW.
4. JW to contact neighbourhood watch regarding no calling stickers.
5. NK will look into cost of repairing bus shelter
6. Clerk to contact racecourse about old notices.
7. Firework donation – JR to find out costs of insurance for the fireworks in 2013

JR:

Currently electors are given verbal feedback on points raised. Feels that written feedback be given.

Follow up is required to the overgrown hedges at 15 Churchfield and particularly 14 Wesley Way. No.15 has been cut back professionally but still encroaches on the pavement. A token trimming has been made on No.14 and is still approx. 3/4 meter too wide.

Suggested that MCC be invited to attend our next meeting to discuss verge /hedgerow cutting.

AC: No-one has contacted her from MCC regarding Kilgwrrwg Crossroads.

AW: A meeting was held on the 6 Sept with Nigel Leeworth plus others. Discussed whether there is a better way to cut the verges. There are several statutory requirements as outlined by Paul Matthews. Roads are classed as A/B or C or R roads. Different classifications mean different cutting schedules. Pollination action plan was launched at the Royal Welsh Show. It sets policies on the preservation of flowers and pollen. During 2014 the management of roadside verges in Monmouthshire is set to be improved, benefitting flowering plants, insect pollinators (especially bees) and hopefully most people. The new management practises should, over time, increase the richness and diversity

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of roadside verges without compromising safety or amenity. The changes are the direct result of an intervention by Devauden Community Council, and have been formulated with advice from Gwent Wildlife Trust.

At present, all roadside verges receive their first mowing of the year sometime between 1 June and 15th July, as part of a schedule that begins with A roads and progresses through to R roads (unclassified). For most flowering plants, this mowing happens before they have reached their peak and set seed. This has a number of negative effects, including depriving bees and other insects of an important early season food supply, and limiting the opportunities for many wild flowers to spread and prosper. In fact, it tends to favour nuisance species such as nettle and thistle, which either spread via their roots, or flower much later in the season. Not good news for anyone!

Instead, on A and B roads, it is proposed that the comprehensive early mowing would be replaced with a much more targeted cut. This cut will prioritise access points at road junctions, intersections and driveways, plus sight lines on the approach and through bends, so that road safety is promoted. The approaches to bus shelters are another example where targeted cutting would continue to ensure safety and amenity. Likewise, verges within the curtilage of villages (typically between the 30mph speed limit signs) would be cut as normal. Long stretches of verge would, as a result, be left to flower and set seed undisturbed.

The current practise is to carry out a second mowing on all verges, on a schedule that begins in the middle of July. The new management process won't change this. The full length of all verges will be mown. By then, most flowers will be over and their seeds ripened. By autumn, all verges will have been mown and will look pretty much exactly as they always have done.

It's worth re-stating that these changes are proposed only for A and B roads at present. This is because the typical width of C and R roads requires more regular cutting to maintain access. In future years, following careful surveying, it might be possible to change the management regime for wider, straighter stretches on some of these classes of roads.

Of course, with any change comes the risk of errors and other issues. Devauden Community Council will be monitoring the situation closely, as will Monmouthshire County Council, and we invite the community to report back with any information that might help inform the process.

The changes have been endorsed by Paul Matthews (chief exec) Roger Hoggins (head of operations) at Monmouthshire County Council, and enthusiastically supported by Nigel Leaworthy, operations manager responsible for roadside cutting and ecology. The proposals will go before the full MCC council shortly. Details will be available on the MCC website.

KM: Gave an update on the state of donations towards the defibrillator. The most suitable model is likely to cost about £2950. There are two more fundraisers to be held. Item will be discussed again after those events. It is important that the topics raised in the open session do not get lost. Feedback on progress will be required at a later date as a separate report from the minutes.

MP: Flashing sign on the approach to Itton from Devauden is still not working properly. This has been raised before but nothing appears to have been done. It is a road safety issue. Refer to Bob Greenland.

NK: Also raised the lack of action by MCC on the flashing 30mph sign on the approach to Itton. Outstanding issues should be listed until they have been actioned. The sign at Itton is a good example of this as it was raised back in June with MCC and is still outstanding.

Apologies for the next meeting were given by MP,

Date of next meeting 28 October 2013.

Meeting closed 9.40 pm.

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25 Nov, 30 Dec – All Hood Memorial Hall Devauden

Police Report for the Devauden, Itton and Kilgwrrwg area.

27/8/13 – Report of several gunshots heard in Chepstow Park Wood, an extensive search was carried out in the area but no one was found.

12/9/13 – A report of a green Landover discovery in the ditch between Colechips farm and the Steps farm, the driver had apparently lost control on the bend.

13/9/13 – Report of a jaguar car in the ditch between Itton and Devauden, the vehicle had earlier caught fire and the fire brigade attended and pushed the vehicle off the road.

21/9/13 – Report of a RTC in Itton, where a vehicle had left the road and caused damage to 3 gardens. Thankfully no one was hurt but a male was arrested at the scene.

Members of the Public present for open meeting

Lindsay Futchter
Peter Kirby
Elizabeth Hall
Lesley Crawford
Jeff Miles
Ivor Cavill
Hywel Williams
Jeff Harris

DRAFT

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