

## **DRAFT**

### **MINUTES OF DEVAUDEN COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**Held on Monday 29<sup>th</sup> January 2018 at Devauden Village Hall**

**Councillors present**

J Rowlands (A/Chairman)  
K McElroy  
M Powell  
A Williams  
J Williams  
I Cavill  
A Cooke

**In attendance:**

CC B Greenland  
N. James (Clerk)

**1. Open Session**

The police report is attached at the back of these minutes.

**2. Apologies**

Apologies were received from N Knowland.

**3. Matters Arising from the Open Session**

There were no matters arising from the Open Session.

**4. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

One of the local residents who attended the December meeting had asked if an amendment could be made to paragraph 1 of the minutes of that meeting; the amendment was to remove “the mast was not located where the original planning application, which still seemingly had not been approved, had submitted but in a nearby field” and replaced with “the third mast had never had planning permission, and planning permission had never been sought. I had been erected on private land adjacent to the Wye Valley AONB.” With this amendment the minutes of the meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> December were approved and signed by the A/Chairman.

**5. Matters Arising**

a. Minutes 1/3 – Councillors and local residents had met with the Enforcement Officer on the site of the third mast before Christmas. Unfortunately, although he considered the mast illegal, he was not in a position to have it taken down. The residents had therefore decided to write formally to the Chief Executive of MCC seeking an urgent meeting. See further comments from CC Greenland- who was not in attendance for this discussion - at paragraph 9a.

b. Minute 5d – the post box in Itton had still not been replaced. The Clerk would chase Royal Mail. **Action: NJ.**

c. Minute 5f- JR had received a quote for new light fittings in the 3 phone boxes for £300. Although not in receipt of two additional quotes the Council felt that this represented good value for money and approved the acceptance of the quote. **Action: JR.**

d. Minute 11d – the Clerk had contacted MCC to find out what they did with data held on individuals; the response advised that MCC adhere to the principles of the Data Protection Act and that information was processed fairly, lawfully and only for limited purposes. Although not answering JW's specific question which had arisen from the telephone survey by the Welsh Audit Office, she would consider what further response to make.

e. Minute 11f – NK had written again to Nick Ramsay and the Welsh Assembly regarding tree planting outside the Glastir scheme, and was still awaiting a reply.

## 6. **Finance**

a. Balances at 31<sup>st</sup> December 2017 were: Current Account £6083.44, Notice £5281.66.

b. JR wished to seek financial support in the region of £250 from the Council for the Music Festival this year, given that in some recent years the Festival had made a loss. In discussion, there were a number of points raised: such expenditure might not comply directly with giving under S137 as it would be for the benefit of many outside the community; there was concern that it might set a precedent for other fund-raising activities; payment for this could be construed as inequitable since other Wards received no such help; the Festival already obtained sponsorship from a few sources. It was however acknowledged the significant work for, and benefit to, the local community by the Hall and it was therefore agreed that next year a grant of £200 would be made to both Devauden and Itton village halls as a contribution towards events/activities for the local community. The Council would hope to be able to make this an annual award.

c. The Clerk had received a letter from MCC advising that from 1 April 18 the cost of providing payroll services would increase from £75 annually to £554 with a further £200 set up cost. Councillors agreed this was unacceptable; the Clerk had obtained two further quotes on advice from other clerks and OVW. These quotes were for £10 per month plus one-off costs for pensions' legislation compliance and £20 per month all inclusive. On balance there was little to choose in terms of costs and the Council decided to place a contract with the local firm of accountants providing the quote of £10 per month. **Action: NJ.**

d. Minute 6b – MCC had confirmed that the Grounds Maintenance contract was for 14 cuts. In discussion it was agreed that a quote with the following amendments would be sought: only one cut not two of Rhyd-y-Fedw Green but that the clippings should be collected; Itton Common should have the 14 cuts designated if feasible

from the middle of July. In addition AC and AW would arrange to meet with a representative of the local wildflower group to consider planting at Howells Green; based on this discussion they would advise before the end of February the number of cuts for this area. **Action: AC/AW.** In addition the Chairman asked the Clerk to obtain a further two quotes. **Action: NJ.**

e. The bank reconciliation and financial forecast at the end of December 2017 had been circulated, and were approved and signed by the A/Chairman.

f. Cheques were signed as follows: MCC for election costs for £197.68 - cheque number 101559; Merlin Waste for Jan for £27.12 – cheque number 101560; Clerk's expenses for Jan for £15 – cheque number 101561.

## 7. **Correspondence**

a. Information about pre-application community consultation for major planning applications.

b. Information sheet on review of the Community and Town Council sector.

c. Request for a nominee for the Lower Wye Area Committee – JW had volunteered.

d. Details about SE Wales HAUC coordination.

e. Information regarding the All Wales Public Service Graduate Programme.

f. Proposals from WG to tackle crime and poor performance in the waste sector.

g. Update from MCC on delivery models for Tourism, Leisure, Culture and Youth Services.

h. Survey into a review of the local council sector.

i. Details of recruitment for the Welsh Revenue Authority and a Government lawyer vacancy at the Welsh Government.

j. Request for volunteers for the local community health council.

k. A list of Welsh Government public appointment vacancies.

l. Consultation document on statutory guidance for local authorities on local toilet strategies.

m. Information regarding the Monmouthshire wellbeing plan consultation.

n. Dates for the diary of the Chairman MCC's charity events.

o. Information about a cycle event in the area on 17<sup>th</sup> March.

p. Information of Monmouthshire's road works for the next six months.

- q. The new Planning code for Wales.
- r. Information about the WG's bee friendly scheme.
- s. Clerks and Councils Direct for Jan 18.
- t. December newsletter for SE Wales RET.
- u. Letter received from local residents requesting an update on the summer 2017 speeding surveys. The police had advised that surveys had taken place between 8/7/17 and 14/7/17 and 15/7/17 and 21/7/17. The average speed during both surveys was 32 mph – based on approximately 25000 vehicles in both surveys. This was not high enough to suggest formal action from them but see the comments from CC Greenland –who was not present for the discussion on this point - at paragraph 9b. The Clerk would write to the local residents. **Action: NJ.**
- v. Summary of the main provisions of the new General Data Protection Regulation.
- x. Request from Tenovus for financial support.
- y. Invitation from the Independent Review Panel to a consultation event.
- z. Letter from MCC advising that routes 53.-16 and 177B were now designated as restricted byways under a new Definitive Map Modification Order.

## 8. **Planning**

- a. DC/2017/01397 –seeking an extension for an old planning permission to lapse on 1 Jan 18 for Well Cottage, Newchurch – recommended for approval.
- b. New and completed enforcement cases for Dec 2017.

## 9. **County Councillor's Report**

CC Greenland wished to raise 4 issues:

- a. the Council had been assured that the mast discussed at paragraph one was a temporary installation and would be taken down as soon as No2 mast had been commissioned. Similar temporary masts had been erected in other parts of the country due to the delayed commissioning of earlier – erected masts. He had been advised that the mast could be in place for up to six months although the company hoped it would only be about three months.
- b. There had been further discussions at MCC regarding speed restrictions which continued to be a problem across the county. Some seemingly popular measures were not in fact very effective and, whilst the community speedwatch was very effective when in operation, the interest in some communities in this measure had waned. He was now seeking to engage with other elected members to bring forward plans to deal with numerous requests for lower speed limits throughout the county and to establish county wide community speed watch schemes as an

effective means of policing the new limits. This would mean identifying a new budget to finance these limits. This would be no easy task under present tight budget constraints.

- c. Unfortunately, the budget setting for the coming year had been worse than ever this year; a reduction in the consequential payment from the UK Government to the WG; a 1% reduction in actual cash from the WG; the first pay increases for staff for four years; more families moving into the area with children requiring special needs – all were putting significant extra pressure on the budget and there was currently a £2.5 million hole that needed to be filled.
- d. Proposals had been put forward to remove from within the Council direct control of tourism, leisure, culture and youth services. Organisations at arms-length would take over these services which, after two years, would start to reduce the current costs incurred by MCC. All the assets however would remain in the ownership of MCC.

#### 10. **One Voice Wales (OVW)**

- a. OVW Bulletins for December and January.
- b. Details of OVW training courses from February to July 2018.

#### 11. **Ward Reports**

a. JW again noted that the white lines on the B4293 at the top of Well Lane had still not been done and AC questioned when the signs at the entrance to Chepstow Park Woods would be erected as had been promised, since she had received an email expressing concern by a local resident who frequently rode a horse in the woods. IC raised another highways issue which had been forwarded to MCC before: the flooding on the road at the foot of the drive to Parc-y Ffynnon. The Clerk would chase these again. **Action: NJ.**

b. MP would like another satnav sign on the third entrance road to the Glyn from the B4293 because, even though there are signs already on two of the entrance roads, large lorries were still going down that road. **Action: NJ.** He also mentioned that at a recent OVW Area meeting comment was passed by the OVW that, following recent legal advice on another matter, it had become apparent that there might be a pensions deficit and it was felt that member councils might be liable. The discussion was somewhat confused at the OVW meeting, DCC agreed to wait further developments.

c. JW and MP reported back on the recent Area Cluster meeting of local councils. There were two main issues discussed: the consultation on proposed changes to older adults' mental health provision in the county and consultation on the local development plan. There was concern over the perceived potential reduction in mental health beds locally that might occur from these changes, and the Council agreed to forward their concern over the geographical location of the proposed specialist sites

which would be detrimental to those living in East Monmouthshire. Action: NJ. As for the LDP there was now a review taking place because of the shortfall in housing that had become available and the lack of affordable housing that was now possible. MCC explained the options they were considering on the review of the current LDP. The options were 1) Do nothing, 2) Have a short revision or 3) A full revision. The current plan was not achieving its objectives. In particular viability issues have reduced affordable housing levels on 3 LDP strategic sites (Deri Farm, Mabey Bridge, Sudbrook Paper Mill).

## **12. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held in Devauden Village Hall on Monday 26<sup>th</sup> February 2018 at 7pm.

### **POLICE REPORT – 18/12/17-28/1/18**

22/12/17 – Report of a 1 vehicle RTC near Cobblers Plain due to road conditions. The vehicle had lost control and hit a property wall. The female driver was obviously in shock but not injured. The road was blocked for a while until it was cleared.

7/1/18 – Report of an electric fence cut in several places by unknown persons at a farm just off Cobblers Plain.

8/1/18 – Report of 2 males acting suspiciously in the vicinity of Devauden Court. The males dressed all in dark clothing were seen looking through a hedge at the property. They left the area quickly when seen by a resident. An area search was made by officers which was negative. No crimes reported.