

DRAFT

MINUTES OF DEVAUDEN COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Held on Monday 24th February at Devauden Village Hall

Councillors present

N Knowland (Chairman)
I Cavill
J Williams
M Powell
A Williams
A Cooke
J Rowlands

In attendance:

CC B Greenland
N James (Clerk)
E Farnworth

1. Open Session

The police report for this period is at the back of these minutes. A local resident asked to be advised about the process for co-opting a new councillor given K McElroy's resignation. The Clerk explained that, as there had been no formal applications to MCC for election, DCC would now issue a note inviting applications for co-option by 10th March. This note would be published on the website and placed in Devauden shop and on notice boards. **Action: NJ.**

2. Apologies

There were no apologies.

3. Matters Arising from the Open Session

There were no matters arising.

4. Minutes of Previous Meeting

The minutes were approved, and signed by the Chairman.

5. Matters Arising

- a. Minute 5c – MCC had forwarded an acknowledgement of our request regarding mobility scooters but no formal response had yet been received.

BG asked for the correspondence to be sent to him and he would chase a response. **Action: NJ/BG.**

b. Minute 5e – The Enforcement Officer had deemed it not expedient to take action regarding the wall/track at Church Farm.

c. Minute 5f - the Clerk still awaited advice from MCC regarding the waste issue. AC had spoken to the Flytipping department and the waste had been removed. However, following the weekend, a number of bags reappeared. The Clerk would contact MCC again to explain what was thought to be happening to see how best to stop it. **Action: NJ.**

d. Minute 6 - KM had not yet forwarded the final version of the Speeding paper to MCC and the Clerk was asked to arrange for its final circulation. **Action: NJ.**

e. Minute 7b – AW had confirmed that the cheque had not been encashed and it was agreed to issue another one as the original had now expired.

f. Minute 7c – the Clerk had obtained a quote for grounds maintenance from a firm in Newbridge, Grounds and Graves, who had the contracts for other councils. Their quotation was £5460 per annum which was significantly higher than the quote from MCC. AC had obtained a quote from a local individual to just cut Howells Green for £25 per cut. It was agreed to ask the individual to formally forward a quote for the work, confirming his insurance cover. When this was received, and if satisfactory, the Clerk would request a revised quote from MCC excluding the need for Howells Green. **Action: AC/NJ.**

g. Minute 12a1 – MCC confirmed that councils did require confirmation from their collector that they were correctly licensed to transport waste. All local community councils used the same collector. This was a subject that would be further discussed at a meeting hosted by MCC at the beginning of March.

h. Minute 12c – the owner of the Masons Arms had advised that the property was currently subject to a planning application. As no application had yet been received it was agreed to review this issue at the next meeting. **Action: NJ.**

6. Finance

a. Balances for 31st January 2020 were: £4413.16 and £6799.44.

b. Cheques were signed as follows: Clerk's pay for January for £227.92 - cheque number 101687; Clerk's expenses for January for £17.80-cheque number 101688; Merlin Waste for January for £52.50– cheque number 101689; OVW for annual subscription for £154 – cheque number 101690; St Thomas a Becket church for £100 (see above) – cheque number 101692. (Cheque 101691 had already been drawn up but, as the work has not yet been completed, was held until the work was completed).

7. Correspondence

- a. Welsh Hearts monthly newsletter.
- b. Information about consultation events beyond recycling.
- c. A document Strategic Equality Plan 2020 submitted for the agenda for MCC Strong Communities Select Committee meeting.
- d. Details about The Power of Community event on the 4th March at Cwrt Bleddyn.
- e. Communication from St Arvans Council regarding a bring and buy Church fundraiser.
- f. Notice of Planning Aid Wales seminar on Introduction to Planning Enforcement.
- g. Notice from MCC about BT'S intention to close/remove all existing phone boxes. It was noted that the Clerk had responded to this correspondence advising that DCC had already purchased all three boxes in their area – the ones at Devauden, Itton Common and Cobblers Plain.
- h. Information from WG on minimum pricing for alcohol.
- i. Report from the WAO regarding last year's councils' audits.
- j. An invitation to protect parks and green spaces from Fields in trust Cymru.
- k. Notice from Public Health Wales regarding the coronavirus outbreak.
- l. Details of the MCC Chairman's Charity Ball for 2020.
- m. Request for support from the Wales Air Ambulance charity.
- n. Invitation to charity music occasion hosted by Chairman of MCC.
- o. IRW's Annual report February 2020.

p. Information about financial packages for local places for nature.

8. Planning

a. DM/2019/01835 – retention of stone yard area for agricultural storage and turning area at Windy Ridge, Devauden - recommended for approval.

b. DM/2020/00194 – relocation of front door, new two storey extension, roof replacement with solar panels, installation of ground source heating at Mynyddbach Farm, Newchurch – recommended for approval.

b. New and completed enforcement cases for January.

9. County Councillor's Report

CC Greenland advised that the budget considerations for 20/21 were even more difficult than previous years and, despite significant cuts to various budgets, there was still a deficit that needed to be addressed. MCC had asked the WG to increase its allocation so that further drastic cuts would not have to be made but this had not been agreed. A council tax rise of 4.95% was being considered but that would not in itself produce a neutral budget. MCC had also asked WG for a review of the funding formula for councils which seemed to disadvantage MCC each year but it was unlikely that such a review would be forthcoming. And, with a median age of 48 in the county - higher than most other council areas - there was an increased impact on budgets like the social care budget.

The new strategy for the replacement LDP would be published within the next week, looking at further ways to influence the desperate need for more social housing in Monmouthshire and reducing the current waiting list of 2000. MCC was looking at various options for further development.

There were ongoing discussions with the WG regarding the proposed metro system and where it would reach.

CC Greenland summarised the impact and effects of the recent flooding in the county, with over 100 homes flooded, a few landslides and significant clear-up costs which had involved the need for various road closures.

Finally, he was optimistic that funds had been found for county-wide traffic calming measures and, to this end, he would be pushing for an extension to the 30mph limit on the northern side of Devauden.

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

- a. OVW's Bulletin for February.
- b. Details about the OVW Innovative Practice Awards for 2020.

11. **Ward Reports**

a. IC advised that a group of local individuals was planning to honour the memory of Martha Gellhorn who had once lived in the area. The aim was to use the recognised system in Wales of erecting a purple plaque. It was hoped that sufficient funds would have been raised to complete this by the autumn.

b. MP advised that there was still a drainage problem near Pond Cottage. NK advised that there was a large pothole on the bend of the B4293 near the entrance to Howick Farm. Other potholes were notified at Devauden – between the garage and Churchfields on the B4293 and on the R82 outside Devauden Court. **Action: NJ.**

c. JW advised that Devauden Teas would be organising a display for the 7th May – just before formal VE Day – consisting of memorabilia and other historical items. She would welcome contributions. Further, she advised that the junction sign for the R82 on the left-hand side of the B4293 had been broken. **Action: NJ.**

d. AC advised that the finger post on the R82/B4293 junction was facing the wrong way. **Action: NJ.**

e. AW advised that the drains on the Cobblers Plain/Wolvesnewton road, reported last month, were still blocked. The Clerk would chase MCC. **Action: NJ.** He was concerned also that the hedges along Well Lane had been cut recently but the road had been left with significant amounts of debris. He would try to identify the local landowners and pass details to the Clerk so that letters could be written. **Action: AW.**

f. NK advised that he had been approached by a local Devauden resident regarding localised flooding along the B4293 and his driveway. The cause of this was blocked pipework running from the sumps behind the bus shelter into the field. **Action: NJ.**

12. **Date of next meeting**

The next meeting will be held in Devauden Village Hall on Monday 30th March.

POLICE REPORT 27/1/2020- 18/2/2020

31/1/2020 – Report of a shed broken into overnight at a property on the Uplands to Newchurch road. The bolt on the door was forced to gain entry but nothing seems to have been taken. There was also a report on the same date of outbuildings broken into on Bluebell Road which comes under the Shirenewton ward but is not far from this address.

3/2/2020 – Report of an off road bike accessing private land in Itton. The individual has been identified and will be dealt with appropriately.

4/2/2020 – Report of a barn broken into overnight at a property in the Great House to Cobblers Plain area. A padlock was forced off the door and a chainsaw and strimmer were taken from inside.

8/2/2020 – Report of the attempted theft of a quad bike from property in the Wolvesnewton area. The quad had a noisy exhaust which alerted the residents to the theft. The thieves left empty handed in what we believe was a red Mitsubishi truck.

10/2/2020 – Report of an outbuilding/metal storage container broken into at a property on the Uplands to Newchurch area. Nothing seems to have been taken but a search of the container was made.