

MINUTES OF DEVAUDEN COMMUNITY COUNCIL

held on Monday 27th February 2023 at Hood Memorial Hall, Devauden.

Councillors Present: J Williams (Chair)
A Kitson-Smith (Vice Chair)
M Powell
A Williams
P Kenington
L Hazell-Smart

In Attendance: A Briley – (Clerk to the Council)
Cath Moss
Alison Balmer
David Maddox
Richard May

1. Apologies

Cllr J Lucas, County Councillor Rachel Buckler and I Cavill.

2. Declarations of interest in items on the agenda

Cllr J Williams on discussions of Well Lane car parking.

3. Confirmation of minutes of meeting held 30th January 2023

Minutes of the previous meeting held on 30th January 2023 were approved by all then signed by the chair. To be posted on website.

4. 15 minutes public participation

Cath Moss and Alison Balmer attended the meeting to talk about the defibrillator at The Cot which they say needs urgently replacing as it's been bleeping since before Christmas.

David Maddock and Richard May attended the meeting to get an update on the allotments and use of them for the Devauden music festival at the end of May.

5. Police Report

Report from Andrew Jones as follows:

4/2/2023 – Report of a 2 vehicle non injury rtc (road traffic collision) on the Tor-y-Mynydd road . The road was blocked whilst officers/fire brigade dealt with the incident.

15/2/2023 – Report of a 2 vehicle non injury rtc on the Itton road due to muddy/slippery conditions. Officers attended to deal with the incident. Highways were informed and asked to attend to clear the mud.

21/2/2023 – Report of a YODEL delivery van taking the wrong turn and ended up down a bridal path and getting stuck in a field causing damage. An area search was conducted with a negative result, but we have the number plate of the said vehicle for insurance purposes.

We have received a report this morning of a residential burglary in the Mounton road area of Chepstow for your information. Sometime between 07.20am and 10.20 am a side pvc door was smashed to gain entry and an untidy search of the house made. With items taken from inside.

Please remain vigilant and report any suspicious activity/crime at the time via either 101 or 999 if you deem it an emergency. If it is low level, you can also report via email on contact@gwent.police.uk.

Report from Glen Walker as follows:

Earlier this month, a covert speed monitor was deployed on the B4293 Devauden, in the 20mph speed limit section at the location requested on lamp post MG24. The monitor recorded the volume and speed of all vehicles in both directions 24/7.

Analysis of the speed data over seven days between 00:01hrs on 13/02/23 and 23:59hrs on 19/02/23, showed a total of 21075 vehicles passed the monitor with an average speed of 27mph and 85th percentile speed of 35mph. (The 85th percentile is the speed at which 85% of vehicles would travel at or below in free-flowing traffic.

The above speed data has now been forwarded to the 'Go Safe' analyst, for consideration of adopting the road as a 'Go Safe' enforcement location. When a decision is made, regarding enforcement, I will update you. To assist with the speed concerns on the road, I have copied the neighbourhood police team for the area into the e-mail for their information and any action they may wish to consider.

An option open to residents who have speed concerns on roads where they live, is community speed watch (CSW). This is a scheme where residents conduct their own speed monitoring with equipment training and support provided by 'Go Safe' and Gwent Police. This scheme has proved successful in other areas of Gwent and previously in Machen. Information regarding CSW, can also be found on the 'Go Safe' website. <https://gosafe.org>
If CSW is of interest to the resident's, please let me know.

Clerk to write back to Glen to request the statistics breakdown from the report above and to request that Cllr R Buckler approaches Highways in support of traffic calming measures along the B4293 with the breakdown of statistics as evidence. **Action AB/RB.**

Cllr A Williams requested that a similar exercise with a covert speed monitor happens in Itton as well, especially the turning from Kilwrrgwng onto the B4293. Cllr M Powell to research a relevant lamppost for the speed monitor. **Action MP.**
If we get a breakdown of the data from the recent speed monitoring, it would be worth tabulating it and sending a letter to David Davis to bring it to his attention.

6. Matters Arising

- a) Defibrillators – Cllr J Williams to contact Peter Richards to arrange a drive around the parish to advise on suitable locations in terms of distance for new defibrillators. Then look at possible available funding to help with the purchase of them. Action to make an early decision on the supply of a defibrillator for The Cot. Meanwhile Peter Richards will be running CPR/defibrillator training course in St Arvans on 8th March. **Action JW.**
- b) Allotments – In discussions about the music festival the biggest issue is whether the pedestrian area at the end of Well Lane will be done by the end of May when the festival is on. This is the final phase of the development, and the road is scheduled to be done in May weather dependent.
As there is a risk that building works will close off the end of Well Lane at the time of the Music Festival then it was agreed to allow an access route through the allotments just for this year for the festival and not for the future until we have a clear plan on what the new piece of land is used for and how it's going to work. This is with the agreement that the allotment holders always have access to their grounds and especially for the 3 days of the festival in May with substantial fencing in place just for this year.
Clerk to write to Duncan Mitchell to make sure that the outer perimeter is secure with a double gate and in the top corner to remove sufficient hedging to allow people to walk through and not to put a double gate in the middle of the hedge. **Action AB.**
- c) EV charging – There are grants available that need to be explored for on street "trickle charging" which could benefit the community as we have a duty to promote sustainability in terms of looking at our environmental impact.

DCC to continue research into possible available funds and companies providing this service.

- d) Notice boards – Cllr A Kitson-Smith proposed that DCC purchased the single notice board with posts and header which the clerk provided costs on for The Cot, which we received funds from Tintern CC when boundaries changed. The proposal was seconded by Cllr M Powell, all agreed. Clerk to contact residents of The Cot for delivery and installation. **Action AB.**

Cllr A Williams suggested creating an identity for DCC, which could then be displayed on the website, letters, notice boards etc.

- e) Grass cutting contract – The cost to have Rhyd y Fedw (The Trout) cut once a year is very high (£234), agreed to remove from the MCC contract. Clarification required as to who owns this piece of land. **Action AB.**
- f) Clerk vacancy – The vacancy has been displayed on 3 notice boards, placed on website and has been circulated with One Voice Wales.
- g) One Voice Wales training needs survey – One Voice Wales and the Society of Local Council Clerks have developed a training needs survey which councils need to complete to plan future training arrangements that reflect current needs of the sector.

Cllr P Kenington made a comment that training in planning law/regulations would be useful, however this is not provided by One Voice Wales. Instead, a commercial organisation advertises this at a high cost per session (too high to justify). Perhaps this could be suggested as an area of training that One Voice Wales could provide at a more affordable cost? Clerk to complete survey and return. **Action AB.**

7. Clerks Report

- Dog bins will be removed from 1st March 2023 due to increased costs in the last year, notice to this effect to be put on website and placed in the village shop. Dog waste can now be put in general litter bins or taken home and placed in ordinary refuse bags.
- DCC meetings at The Hood Hall – We currently have a meeting booked for Monday 29th May, which is a bank holiday, check availability to change this to 30th May or 5th June. **Action AB.**

Email received from Tim Walker regarding the proposed new (reduced) hall hire charges for DCC. Clerk to respond to Tim accepting the reduced fees and the associated refund of charges for this financial year. **Action AB.**

My Mon outstanding reports

14865962 – dropped kerbs by the village hall – setting up an on-site visit. This has been referred again to the area engineer to set a date. Cllr J Williams is very concerned that this is taking so long to arrange a site visit. Clerk escalated with Mark Hand – no response. Cllr Buckler to escalate to MCC.

14498950 – overgrown hedges/trees by the Hood Memorial Hall – open and passed to service area.

15175543/16320561 – Request to extend 40mph on B4293 travelling from Devauden past Kilgwrrwg turning and to add a warning sign, 'blind turning ahead'.

In light of the speed analysis in Devauden and some near misses from residents trying to leave Windy Corner this issue is becoming more pressing. – open, under review.

15465449 – Star Hill potholes and road surface – under review

15614864 – Request that the “16% steep hill” sign to Kilgwrrwg be raised on a high pole, moved to the other side of the road and slightly further down to avoid being obscured by the hedge growth. – open, under review.

16198632 – Wesley Way playground equipment in need of repair – passed to parks and open space in MCC.

15878312 – gravel on Llanfihangel-Tor-y-Mynydd Road – under review.

16321870 – Footpath bridge in Kilgwrrwg on the way to the Church of the Holy Cross in need of repair – complete.

Ash tree in Devauden allotments – quote from Oliver Field (Tree Surgery Contractor LTD) £1,485 + vat to section fell mature ash tree. DCC feel that the quote above is very expensive. David Lucas from MCC, who has previously looked at the tree, is looking into the cost of felling the tree on a joint basis with other trees that need felling in the area as well. Quote from TrunkArb Surgery Limited - £2,364.00. Openreach came out to check if any lines were touching the tree and none were, hence, they will not cut back any branches as they have before.

Cllr A Williams and Cllr L Hazell-Smart to get further quotes from local recommended companies, then agreed to appoint one before the next meeting.

Action AW/LHS/AB.

8. Finance

- a. Balances as of 27/2/2023: Current Account: £3,542.13 and Deposit Account: £6,816.92.
- b. BACs payments were approved for February 2023.

February 2023

Payee	Description	Amount	Vat	Total (£)	Method of payment
Merlin	Emptying dog bins – February 2023	98.58	19.72	118.30	BACs
Anita Briley	Clerk salary February 2023	639.17	0.00	639.17	BACs
Anita Briley	Clerk expenses February 2023	35.52	0.00	35.52	BACs
Andrew Williams	MS Business 365 licence – February 2023	36.00	7.20	43.20	BACs
One Voice Wales	Yearly membership	197.00	0.00	197.00	BACs
			TOTAL	£1,033.19	

9. Correspondence

Nothing to report.

10. Planning

DM/2023/00142 – High Ridge, Lane from B4293 Itton Road to Park House, Itton Common, NP16 6BZ – Extend and alter existing dwelling, garage conversion. Replace flat roof with pitch roof/rear dormer (enlarge bedroom accommodation). Front stair dormer. New rear extension. Extended terraces. DCC commented that

unless the concerns raised by AONB and NRW are met we cannot recommend approval. **Action AB.**

11. One Voice Wales

Nothing to report.

12. County Councillor Report – Rachel Buckler (report sent by email)

Star Pitch

The resurfacing of this road from the Star on the Hill to the junction at the top of the pitch is definitely scheduled for this forthcoming financial year 2023/24. We will need to have a proper schedule of works, and when this will be happening to give the community fair warning.

I have flagged up the unsatisfactory nature of the recent temporary patching that has been undertaken and am chasing the officer involved to express the residents' concerns. I will update when this is progressed further.

Dropped Kerbs in Devauden

This is being pursued, and I have asked for a site visit to further this. I have added the request to drop kerbs in Well Lane, having been informed by Councillor Lucas that this was needed.

13. Ward Reports

Cllr A Kitson-Smith

1. Request for 40mph to be extended beyond Windy Corner and to add a warning sign, 'blind turning ahead' is an ongoing conversation amongst residents.
2. Some Residents in Kilwgrwg have raised an issue relating to large piles of earth type materials that have started to appear at Cledd-Y-Tan farm. There have been a number of lorries and trucks over the last month bringing the material in. One councilor mentioned that the owner has a landscaping business, so this may in part be an explanation, however the piles are high and visible from the road. There is an understanding that the owner has permission to store such materials, but the height of current storage may be exceeding the planning permission. Clerk to contact enforcements to raise concern over the height of piles of sub-soil type material being stored. **Action AB.**

Cllr A Williams

In conversation with Rita Edwards, St Arvans have changed their minds about the defibrillator in Howick, saying that DCC should keep it and we do an asset transfer.

Cllr L Hazell-Smart

More complaints about the new signs not being reflective hence do not fulfil their purpose of signs at night. Action to speak to Cllr Buckler to communicate with Highways. **Action AB.**

14. Items for the agenda and date for the next meeting.

Future meeting dates at The Hood Memorial Hall:

Monday 27th March 2023 at 19:15

Monday 24th April 2023 at 19:15

Wednesday 31st May 2023 at 18:00