

MINUTES OF DEVAUDEN COMMUNITY COUNCIL

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

Councillors Present: J Williams (Chair)

M Powell

P Kenington

L Hazell-Smart

J Lucas

In Attendance: County Councillor R Buckler

I Cavill

A Briley – (Clerk to the Council)

Debbie Walker

Jeremy Horton

Richard Francis

1. Apologies

Cllr A Kitson-Smith and Cllr A Williams.

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 27th February 2023

Minutes of the previous meeting held on 27th February 2023 were approved by all then signed by the chair. To be posted on website.

4. 15 minutes public participation

Richard Francis from Wesley Way attended the meeting to follow on from his email about the lack of ability to cross the road especially with a buggy, he is finding the only way to get to the hall is by going on the main road. It's not

necessarily the speed but that no one is looking forward when they are coming up towards Churchfields and the shop he is finding there is no awareness from drivers of people trying to cross the road. Richard is really concerned for the safety of children and disabled people being able to cross the road on that side of the village. **Action RB.**

Debbie Walker attended the meeting to understand the process of decision making within DCC, with regards to the removal of the dog bins. Cllr L Hazell-Smart to respond with follow up email.

Also, to raise her concerns over communication between DCC and the community. DCC accepts that improvements need to be made in keeping the community up to date by having its own website which will enable the council to engage more with the community and get more feedback. Cllr J Williams to research the costs of website design. **Action LHS/JW.**

5. Police Report

Report from Andrew Jones as follows:

There will be no attendance from ourselves at the meeting next week and there is very little relevant crime to report thankfully apart from the following:

4/3/2023 – Report of a delivery van damaging a wall at a property in Wesley Gardens and driving off. Enquiries are ongoing.

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

Cllr J Williams expressed disappointment that again there was no attendance from the police.

Debbie Walker said that last month her husband had reported to the police a car parked by the hall which was transporting goods to another car late at night, but this hasn't appeared on the monthly police report. Clerk to chase with the Police. **Action AB.**

6. Matters Arising

- a) **Defibrillators** – Cllr J Williams wanted to apologise for not carrying through with the action from the last meeting as she has been unwell. Action carried forward to this month to contact Peter Richards to arrange a drive around the parish to advise on suitable locations in terms of distance for new defibrillators. Cllr P Kenington put together a map with the location of defibrillators in the area which will help in determining with Peter Richards where there is a shortfall of defibrillators. Cllr J Lucas has also requested Llanfihangel Tor-y-Mynydd be

included when decisions are made about where defibrillators should be placed.

Action JW/PK.

- b) **Clerk vacancy** – There is one applicant that has applied, clerk to arrange for an interview for later in the week. Consideration to be given to the salary pay scale.

Action AB.

- c) **Allotments car parking area** – Twomlows Solicitors based in Chepstow have been instructed to act on DCC's behalf in the transfer of the land, Duncan Mitchell has been notified. **Action AB** to chase.

- d) **Hood Memorial Hall committee** – The constitution of the hall requires the hall committee to take a representative from the community council assuming the community council offers a representative. We are not aware that the community council is under any obligation to provide one as a democratically elected body. Cllr J Williams said it was something DCC could have a think about as it's a big commitment but asked if Cllr L Hazell-Smart could attend a meeting when available as a representative to DCC. **Action LHS.**

- e) **Wye Valley project** – Cllr A Williams emailed an update on the project (see ward report).

Discussions took place about the complaints received concerning the new signs and the fact that they don't reflect light when you point headlights at them. DCC would also like to understand what the costs of the signs were. Cllr R Buckler to raise at the next Wye Valley project meeting. **Action RB.**

7. Clerks Report

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.

A reply from Georgina Edwards (Traffic & Road Safety Technician from MCC) was received. (Email below)

The road in question (B4293) is rural in character and is within an environment with interspersed properties so it would not meet the criteria for an extension of

the 40mph speed limit. The provision of a lower statutory speed limit in this countryside environment would likely result in the matter falling into disrepute and becoming ignored, this would reduce the effectiveness of the section of 40mph being used as a buffer zone for speeds to be reduced before entering into the 20mph speed limit coming into Devauden.

This being said, the authority would support the introduction of ARAF/SLOW Road Markings and Diagram 506.1 Side Road ahead signs either side of the junction.

I understand that this isn't the exact answer you were looking for, however I hope that it clarifies the council's position on the matter.

Cllr A Kitson-Smith is disappointed in the response from MCC regarding the 40mph extension but would gladly accept the proposed road markings.

Cllr A Williams said this is a stock response and we ought not to accept it at face value. Note that there is 40mph limit on the B4235 - Usk to Chepstow - stretching for several miles, on a road of equally rural character.

Cllr R Buckler will flag up with MCC to see if we can shift their thinking on this.
Action RB.

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.

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 L Hazell-Smart met with a contractor and is awaiting a quote. Decision to go ahead with Oliver Field quote if the quote we are waiting for doesn't come through. **Action LHS/AB.**

8. Finance

- a. Clerk to check online banking rules for handing over to a new clerk. **Action AB.**
- b. Contact Beverley and Williams about adding Cllr J Lucas and Cllr M Powell to payroll to receive their allowance for work as a local councillor. **Action AB.**
- c. Balances as of 27/3/2023: Current Account: £2,403.94 and Deposit Account: £6,832.82.
- d. BACs payments were approved for March 2023.

March 2023

Payee	Reason for expenditure	Amount	Vat	Total (£)	Payment method
Anita Briley	Clerk salary March 2023	639.17	0.00	639.17	BACs
Anita Briley	Clerk expenses March 2023	41.28	0.00	41.28	BACs
Andrew Williams	MS Business 365 licence – March 2023	36.00	7.20	43.20	BACs
The Hood Memorial Hall	Hall hire (June – December 2022)	120.00	0.00	120.00	BACs
Beverley & Williams	Payroll Jan- Mar 2023 and RTI submissions 22/23	74.49	14.90	89.39	BACs

Greenbarnes Ltd.	Notice board for The Cot	1087.40	217.48	1304.88	BACs
Monmouthshire CC	Removal of dog bins	289.51	57.90	347.41	BACs
			TOTAL	£2,585.33	

9. Correspondence

Nothing to report.

10. Planning

Nothing to report.

11. One Voice Wales

Cllr L Hazell-Smart questioned the value we get from membership with OVW. DCC to monitor how much we use them. Also costs and the relevance of training offered by OVW were discussed. **Action AB.**

12. County Councillor Report – Rachel Buckler

1. Rachel reported that a site meeting has been arranged with MCC for Wednesday 29th March with Graham Kinsella and Mark Davies to look at the dropped kerbs issue/dangerous crossings, the bus stop and how dangerous it is. Then also to look at Well Lane being closed at the beginning of April with the view of Well Lane still being marked instead of Cwm Fagor Road. **Action RB.**
2. The removal of dog bins has been mentioned by residents in Itton.

13. Ward Reports

Cllr A Kitson-Smith (ward report sent by email ahead of the meeting)

1. I have noted the resolution of the Cled-y-tan farm issue and have passed that on to the folks who raised the issue.
2. Disappointed in the response from MCC regarding the 40mph extension but would gladly accept the proposed road markings.
Hope to be back with you again next month. Sorry again for the short notice.

Cllr A Williams (ward report sent by email ahead of the meeting)

There was a meeting of the Wye Valley Villages steering group on Wednesday 22nd March. I'll forward the official notes when they arrive.

There was a useful discussion about a more unified approach to signposting, encouraging and enforcing 20mph speed limits through the Wye Valley Villages - pertinent to the point above. I shared the Devauden speed data, as an example of how signage alone is unlikely to modify behaviour.

I also raised the issues of the new village signs and their visibility at night - an issue that Mark Hands has previously said his team will evaluate and reach a decision on. There was no update in time for this particular meeting.

Project priorities - On 28th March (tomorrow) the chair and vice chair (me) are getting together with MCC to work out a scoring matrix for the various projects adopted by the WVV group. The aim is to help prioritise a long list of things for delivery. I'll update the team after this meeting because...

Priorities workshop: ... on 24th April there is an extra, face-to-face meeting with the steering group to determine those priorities. We'll need to do some homework as a Council before then. For instance, we will almost certainly want to prioritise road safety as one of ours. Maybe Anita could try and organise a date and place. **Action AB.**

That's it for now. Apologies once again for having to miss this one.

Cllr M Powell

Raised complaints again from Dr Chamberlain about the oak tree in front of his house requiring pollarding. Clerk to write to Dr Chamberlain to finalise that we have actioned his complaint and he must take it up with MCC direct. **Action AB.**

Cllr J Lucas

1. Requested that we report to MCC that roads 60.7 and 60.8 (Llanfihangel-Tor-y-Mynydd) should have a 'dead end' sign and a notice 'unsuitable for HGV'. **Action AB.**
2. Request that DCC contribute to a new notice board at The Star.

Cllr L Hazell-Smart

1. Note to Highways that the verge is encroaching on the pavement on the way out of the village. Cllr R Buckler to raise this on the site visit on Wednesday 29th March. **Action RB.**
2. Speeding in the village, still not received a breakdown on the statistics obtained in the week of monitoring speed back in February. Clerk to chase. **Action AB.**

Cllr J Williams

1. Reported that the first garden refuse collection down Well Lane had been missed with residents contacting MCC to be told that there would be no refunds. Cllr Williams wants to monitor this situation.
2. Cllr Williams is going to investigate the costs of setting up a website for DCC. **Action JW.**

I Cavill

Ivor reported that footpath 357/40/1 is blocked by a pad-locked gate at Lanes End Farm, Coed Llifos, Itton. Clerk to report to MCC. **Action AB.**

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

Future meeting dates at The Hood Memorial Hall:

Monday 24th April 2023 at 19:15

Monday 31st May 2023 at 18:00