COLWINSTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD IN THE SYCAMORE TREE PUBLIC HOUSE ON TUESDAY SEPTEMBER 11TH 2012

1. ATTENDANCE

COUNCILLORS: G.W.BATES-CHAIRMAN

 E.H.LEWIS-DEPUTY CHAIRMAN

 A.J.AUSTIN-TREASURER

 B.KENNARD

 MRS J. HORTON

 W.BELLIN

APOLOGIES: MRS H MACLEHOSE

 COUNCILLOR R.THOMAS

CLERK: JANE CORWIN

VISITING SPEAKER: JANE WILLIAMS FROM CREATIVE RURAL COMMUNITIES

 There were no members of the public present.

1. The meeting began with a presentation by Jane Williams from Creative Rural Communities, following their presence at the Village Fete earlier in the summer. She began by explaining the role of her organisation and the part it can play in helping small rural villages like Colwinston to identify projects to improve their area and the possible sources of funding for such projects. Information about CRC is contained in the leaflet she distributed and the Clerk has kept copies for future reference. It is worth noting that one of their resources is that they have a stock of equipment that village organisations can borrow for events –such as gazebos, PA systems etc.

Any projects for which funding is sought must have been identified by a consultation process within the village and JW reminded the Council of the exercise undertaken at the Fete, where people were invited to say what they thought would most improve the village.

The most popular suggestion was the provision of a Multi Use Games Area (MUGA) on the playing fields. This is something that could attract match funding, either for the Community Council or the Village Hall if either body was interested in taking this forward. MUGAs are expensive projects and it might be necessary to look at how much money could be raised within the Village and work out what could be done with that –plus match funding- rather than setting an unrealistic target for a large scale, expensive project.

The next most popular request was for some form of village shop but this is not something that the licensees of The Sycamore Tree feel would be viable for them to take on at this time.

There was a brief discussion of the cinema project that Llancarfan are running at the moment, which has had some funding from CRC. Equipment can be hired for the showings but the actual hire of the film (£150 or so) has to be covered by ticket sales and this is proving difficult to do.

JW was aware of the footpath plan from the Village Hall to the school and said that CRC could be asked for funding for kerbing.

JW was keen to stress that their funding comes in 2/3 year cycles and the current round will end at Christmas 2014, so any potential projects should be submitted as soon as possible so that they could be completed by that date. CRC can give advice and assistance with applications and the paperwork involved. It is not known at this stage whether further funding will be available after Dec 2014 – this is dependent on European funding.

The Chair thanked Jane Williams for her visit and the valuable information she had provided.

1. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON JULY 10TH

 It was proposed by Councillor A Austin and seconded by Councillor EH Lewis that the Minutes of the Meeting held on July 10th be accepted as a true record. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

1. MATTERS ARISING

The planning application concerning Newlands Fawr farm is proceeding and has been accepted by the planners.

The Treasurer stated that the accounts for the previous year can now be signed and sent back.

3.4: The website is now up and running. The first annual fee of £24.95 should be reimbursed to Councillor Lewis. This was proposed and accepted unanimously

3.4a: Best Kept Village competition: Councillor Lewis stated that he had tried to obtain some feedback about this but had not yet managed to do this.

3.4.2: During a visit from Phil Beaman, it was stated that the trees in the school grounds are the responsibility of the school itself, not of the Vale.

3.4.5: Planting boxes: Councillor Lewis suggested that a new box be placed by the village signpost on the road from Crack Hill and one to the right of the Church gates would be both attractive and improve the possible danger from the culvert by the churchyard gate. The original boxes were gifts from Cowbridge Rotary Club, which were then adopted by villagers. It was suggested that we ask the Rotary Club to contribute a couple more boxes. The Clerk will write to the Club

3.4.6: The Chair has followed this up and the bench will be made in due course.

4.1: Councillor Bellin attended the reception at the Eisteddfod, where he raised the question of the Local Development Plan with a number of people but received no positive information about the possible revision of the Plan following the elections earlier in the year.

4.2: Councillor Kennard said the course he attended on Standards was useful to him as a new Councillor.

4.3: The Clerk attended the AGM of One Voice Wales local group in Cowbridge which provided a useful introduction to the work of the organisation.

5.1: The Treasurer is making enquiries about the possibility of investing surplus funds in a Bond as the interest rates offered by the Bank are so low.

6.1: The Play area: the roundabout has been repaired and the weeds etc removed from around the site.

1. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON AUGUST 21ST

There is a minor amendment needed to the minutes: the tree referred to on page 2 is a sycamore, not an oak.

Subject to this amendment, it was proposed by Councillor Kennard and seconded by Councillor Lewis that the Minutes of the meeting held on August 21st be accepted as a true record. CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

1. MATTERS ARISING

It was agreed that sending details of planning applications around to Councillors by email was valuable and should continue.

Highways: Mr Peter Graham Woolard has received quotes from the DSO at The Vale and one other contractor for the work to extend the footpath opposite the Village Hall to the school. Councillor Austin said he could suggest another contractor to approach so that 3 quotes would be available. The total cost of the scheme, including the footpath and the bollards will be approximately £8000, of which the Community Council will contribute up to £4000. The other 50% will come from the Highways Initiative programme. It was agreed to ask Jane Williams from Creative Rural Communities if they might be prepared to fund part of this project.

Wetland Area: The Chair circulated papers from earlier plans for this area and explained the history of those proposals, made in 2003. Approval was obtained from the Environment agency for the work, which would have cost around £12000, including the civil works and the planting. The real issue was not the capital cost but the cost of ongoing maintenance, which would need a significant rise in the Precept to fund this., of the order of 4-5p per household. It was felt that this was still not the moment to pursue this project in view of the strains on family budgets during the recession. It was agreed that the current owner of the land surrounding the wetland area be asked if he would allow the bridge and hedge to be cleared of undergrowth – the Community Council would pay for this. Mr Allman may then agree to keep it clear in future. The Chairman said that he will approach him.

The ownership of the wetland area itself is not known, other than that it probably not The Vale and Councillor Lewis is pursuing this.

Church Yew tree: The Chair raised the issue of the damage caused a few years ago to the church gate arch when a large branch fell off the yew tree. It was suggested that the Community Council should arrange to have the gate arch repaired and rehung and have a proper, electric basket lantern installed in the gate. This was felt to be a small project that would improve the area considerably and would be welcomed by the Vicar. The Chair will get quotes for the electrical work and for having a trench dug to install the cabling. The Council would then seek funding towards the project.

The Chair asked Councillors to consider the need to determine a reserves Policy that will meet with approval from Auditors. This will be discussed further when the budget process is under way at the end of the year.

1. CLERK’S REPORT:

One Voice Wales: The Clerk will be one representative from the Community Council and Councillor Maclehose will be the second one, subject to agreement.

Training: The Clerk will circulate details of courses being held during the autumn and will herself attend both the one on Ethical Issues being held by The Vale and the OVW course on the Conduct of Meetings.

Police Report: The Clerk reported that there had been no crimes in the area in the previous 2 months. It was agreed that there was no need for the Police to attend the Council meetings in person, as long as they continued to email a brief report.

The Clerk reported that she had received information and requests for financial contributions from the following organisations: Macmillan Cancer Support, Goldies Cymru, Shelter, and Alun Cairns on behalf of the RAF Association. It was agreed to let these requests lie.

During the last month, The Clerk circulated information on the following topics to Members:

The Gambling Act – Statement of Principles

Consultation about the development of Hinckley Point Nuclear Power Station

Consultation concerning the possible widening of the M4

These were noted.

1. PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

Planning applications in connection with the following properties were received in the last month:

Newland Fawr Farm

Ty Maen Farm

Pwll y Wrach Farm

Holly Cottage, The Vines

Claypits

Hen Cartref

Councillors had no observations to make on any of the applications, with the exception of that relating to land off Hen Cartref.

The Clerk reported that the application been refused by The Vale Planning Department, citing reasons reflecting the discussions at the Community Council meeting on August 21st.

1. TREASURER’S REPORT

The Treasurer reported that the next instalment of the precept had not yet been received from The Vale.

Balances in the Council’s bank accounts as at 7/9/2012 were as follows:

Current Account: £ 521.74

Deposit Account: £9194.86

1. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Little Hill: The Clerk and Councillor Lewis reported on the visit to the village by Phil Beaman from The Vale, who provided useful information about the extent of the Vale’s responsibility for various verges and hedges around the village. During his visit, he commented on the state of one of the trees on Little Hill and this has now been assessed by two tree surgeons. They have both declared it to be dangerous and in need of immediate work. The pathway has been cordoned off as a precaution until the work has been carried out.

It was agreed to accept the quote for the work from Colin Anstee of £600, plus VAT and to ask him to survey the remaining trees on Little Hill while he is doing the work, at a cost of £75.00. plus VAT, which will be deducted from any further work carried out as a result of the survey.

As Little Hill is within the Village conservation area, permission will be necessary to carry out the work. The Clerk reported that she had spoken to the relevant department at the Vale about this and that an application pack is being sent out. Permission will be a formality in view of the dangerous state of the tree. Advice on replanting will be sought from the Tree Officer at The Vale.

Footpaths: Councillor Lewis reported on the overgrown and inaccessible state of the following footpaths:

Church Lane to Spinney Bank, by Kirkbrae House

Little Hill to Twyn yr Eglwys

The Clerk was instructed to write to the Vale about both these paths and to request that they are maintained in a proper state. Councillor Lewis will investigate the ownership of the section of path leading to the car park near Ton yr Eglwys – it may be the responsibility of the Housing Association.

Drains: Councillor Austin expressed concern at the state of blocked drains at Heol Waen. It was agreed to monitor this.

Fly Tipping: rubbish has been tipped inside a field gate off Crack Hill. The Clerk will contact Visible Services at The Vale.

Parking: The Chair expressed concern at careless parking by Brynfield on the High Street and opposite Colwinston House at the junction of Yew Tree Close, which had caused a serious obstruction to the bus and could have endangered emergency vehicles. The Clerk will ask Parking Services at the Vale to monitor these areas.

1. The next meeting will take place at 7.30pm on Tuesday October 9th at The Sycamore Tree Inn.

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CHAIRMAN COLWINSTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

DATE: ........................................................................

SIGNED............................................................................................................

CLERK COLWINSTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

DATE: ........................................................................

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