

MINUTES OF CAERWENT COMMUNITY COUNCIL
THURSDAY 22nd SEPTEMBER 2022

Present: (via video conferencing)

Councillors:
K Evans (Chair)
P Dalton
G Foxall
J Guscott
M John
K Swift

In attendance: L McKeon, retiring Clerk to the Council
AM Spooner, Clerk to the Council

M3944 APOLOGIES

Received from Councillor Murphy.

M3945 ONE MINUTE SILENCE TO MOURN AND REFLECT ON THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF QUEEN ELIZABETH II

Council marked one minute silence in memory of Queen Elizabeth II.

M3946 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

M3947 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

Welcome to new Clerk

The Chair welcomed Anne-Marie as the new Clerk to the Council and very much hoped that she enjoyed her new role.

Council thanked the retiring Clerk, Laraine McKeon, for her support over many years and wished her a very happy retirement.

The Chair advised the Council that he had received a request from the Baptist Chapel to hold their annual Fireworks Display on the Caerwent Playing Fields this year with possibly food supplied by the Caerwent Playing Fields Association. As we own the Playing Fields we have to ensure that all rules and regulations are adhered to, risk assessments must be carried out, consideration given to neighbouring properties, parking provision investigated, public liability insurance checked, any Fields in Trust conditions checked, possible fees payable and the use of silent fireworks considered. The Clerk had circulated Firework Display guidelines from our insurance company and also Title Deed restrictive covenant information. The Chair proposed that this decision go to the next meeting but in the meantime asked Councillors to send their views to him and the Clerk to collate for the next agenda. Councillor John advised that MCC can be very helpful in advising on event regulations and he will send the appropriate links to the Chair.

M3948 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 14TH JULY 2022
Council to note that these have been approved remotely and posted on the website.

Council noted.

M3949 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

Councillor K Evans	Caerwent Historic Trust	Trustee
Councillor K Evans	Caerwent Village Hall	Booking Clerk

M3950 COUNCILLOR VACANCY – CAERWENT WARD**To consider co-opting to this vacancy**

Council agreed to co-opt Jay Guscott onto the Council as Councillor for the Caerwent ward. He signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office form. The Chair welcomed him onto the Council and hoped that he enjoyed his new role.

M3951 MONTHLY POLICE REPORT**To note**

The Clerk reported that we had again received no report. Council agreed that the Clerk write to the Chief Constable expressing concern that we have raised this issue locally and with the Police Commissioner with no successful outcome. Agreed to ask Councillor Murphy in his capacity of County Councillor to also raise this with the Chief Constable.

M3952 PLANNING**To consider planning applications received:****2022/01279 The Old School, Caerwent****Removal of Condition 2 for planning decision 2021/01245**

*This Council recommends **Refusal***

Current conditions should be retained until an archaeological survey is carried out.

To note planning applications considered during August:**2022/01225 The Courtyard, Carrow Hill****Modification or Removal of Condition 1 relating to 2017/00766: Extend approval for another 5 years**

*This Council recommended **Approval***

2022/00797, The Mill, St Brides Netherwent, The erection of a stable block consisting of 3 stables and ancillary storage (reconsultation)

*This Council recommended **Approval***

Note that this will require SUDS approval.

Query if Natural Resources Wales are happy with the response re the disposal of animal waste.

2022/00423 Loft conversion with two storey rear extension, following removal of existing extension, Ifton Crest, Quarry Road, Dewstow – (reconsultation)

*This Council recommended **Approval***

2022/00926, 2 Vernon Grove, Caerwent, Second Storey Side Extension

This Council recommended **Approval**

There was however a recent approved extension to the rear only approved in June 2020. The new application relates to a second storey addition above the garage which will again increase the size of the property but not address the concerns over the retained flat roof at the back of the property.

2022/00696 Arosfa, Llanvair Discoed – Single Storey Front Extension

*This Council recommended **Refusal*** on this due to rulings from Welsh Government and from within the Local Development Plan H6 – (Extensions & Rural Dwellings) and also H4 (part d and f) which mentions that extensions should be modest or subordinate to the existing dwelling. This proposal does not conform to these as the

development allowance has already been exceeded. There are no other extensions attached to the front elevation of any other dwellings in the local area. This does not conform to the vernacular of the area and is totally out of keeping.

2022/00696 - Proposed single storey front extension, Arosfa, Llanvair Discoed (reconsultation)

*This Council again recommended **Refusal***

Our existing objections still stand. This extension would not be allowed as a permitted development. This is a sound argument for opposing this application and breaches policy H6 and H4 as it is not a modest extension. This does not conform to the vernacular of the area and is totally out of keeping.

(Councillor John informed the Council that he had attended and spoken at the Planning Committee meeting on behalf of the Community Council where the Committee decided on Refusal).

2022/010506 13 Merton Green, Caerwent – installation of solar panels

*This Council recommended **Approval***

Council noted all of above.

To consider any planning applications received after despatch of agenda

There were no further applications to consider.

To note monthly enforcement list from MCC

Council noted.

Councillor Swift reported that four static caravans without permission are now situated at a property on the A48 in Crick. Agreed to check the latest situation.

M3953 POLLINATOR POLICY

To consider MCC example with a view to drawing up and adopting a Community Council policy

Councillor Swift proposed that parts of the MCC policy be adopted by this Council, ie reduction in mowing, introduction of native plants and control of pesticides.

Councillor Dalton proposed that the MCC Policy approach 4.2 covers this. Agreed that we formulate this for the next mowing season commencing in March 2023.

Councillor Swift advised that the Welsh Government are in the process of producing relevant documents which she will share once they are available. She also proposed that youngsters and play groups could be involved. The Clerk agreed to circulate the grasscutting regime of our current contractors.

M3954 TRAINING PLAN

To consider draft plan drawn up by Clerk

Council agreed to adopt this Training Plan and post on the website.

Councillor Swift advised that Planning Aid Wales will provide training for groups of up to 20 people at a low cost. The Clerk advised that there are also One Voice Wales basic online training modules available on their website.

Council agreed that continual professional development should take place due to regular changes in governance.

Agreed that the Clerk keep a record of any future training attended.

M3955 PROPOSED NEW WOODEN WASTE BIN, SLADE WOODS ENTRANCE

To consider proposal from resident regarding a contribution towards the materials

The Chair advised that this area is not within Community Council jurisdiction and is NRW owned. Council agreed that we cannot therefore commit to funds on someone else's land. Agreed to suggest that the resident contact NRW regarding permission and contribution, albeit that their suggestion was made with good intentions.

M3956 CAERWENT PLAYING FIELDS

To consider proposal that permanent railings/barrier be erected at the entrance to the fields in order to improve security, to be funded by the Caerwent Playing Fields Association

Councillor Guscott gave a presentation outlining the issue. At present there is uncontrolled access to any vehicle wishing to access the playing field from the village hall car park. This uncontrolled access has already led to a multitude of safety concerns for residents and the general public. Proposal to erect a fit for purpose barrier/fence (approx. 50m) around the car parking area, and a 3m wide lockable gate to control vehicular access onto the playing fields. Provisional considerations are:

- Fire access: invite fire department to carry out risk assessment if required.
- Pedestrian/cyclists: openings are to be wide enough for bikes etc.
- Access for approved events: keys are to be cut and distributed.
- Access for grass cutting: ensure pedestrian access is wide enough for mower to pass through at any time.
- Aesthetically pleasing: hold a working group with locals.
- Safe and secure: cannot pose a risk i.e. falling down or trapping of limbs.
- Must be low maintenance i.e. concrete or galvanised steel

Two options were displayed with provisional general quotes for information. Clerk advised that for any works over £2,000 three quotes would be required.

Follow on actions:

1. Obtain approval to go ahead with works from the Community Council
2. Receive fix prices for each option and source reliable/professional company to provide and fit.
3. Hold an open discussion within the community to establish what option would best suit the majority.
4. Award contract and oversee works as required.

Councillor Guscott stated that he is happy to project manage this. Queries were addressed regarding keys with combination locks preferred and a booking system, disability access – no access will be blocked, keys to be held by locals only.

Council agreed in principle to installing some kind of barrier pending further enquiries. The Chair agreed to carry out community engagement via the newsletter and social media informing residents that we are making improvements to the Playing Fields to make them more secure for children/football teams and we may then hopefully also get offers of help from the community. Also agreed that Councillor Guscott contact the CPFA to discuss what contribution they are able to make towards the overall cost and also carry out more research on different bollard options. Council agreed to contact MCC regarding their expertise in this area via County Councillor Murphy.

M3957 TO RECEIVE REPORTS

CLERK'S REPORT

Highmoor Hill Phone Box

Group have compared prices of materials with different companies but undecided as yet as to which to go with. Hopefully will be able to spend some time late September looking at this project.

Time Capsule plaques, War Memorial

No progress.

Crick Bus Stop

No progress.

Football Club proposed alterations to Village Hall

Awaiting amended plans from Football Club.

A complaint had been received regarding four areas of damage to the Caerwent Playing Fields where re-seeding and erection of temporary fencing supported by sharp steel poles had appeared in order to repair the pitch. The unintended consequences are that the pitch is now unusable due to numerous stones being present. Councillor Murphy has asked MCC to inspect for safety hazards and report back. Agreed that once we receive these reports to write to The Football Club expressing concern that as owners of the field we were not consulted and the works were carried out without permission. The Chair will also mention in his newsletter access generally onto the field by work vehicles entering the rear of properties and damaging the wooden borders and will reinforce that permission is essential.

Community Survey

Councillor Evans to report on this next month.

Uneven Pavement, Llanvair Discoed

No works completed here yet.

Audit 2021/22

All documents signed and posted to external audit.

Handyman Reports

He had attended all bus stops - tidied and removed rubbish from bus shelters and stands. A48 Crick, cleared around benches (x 2) and around dog waste bin. Cleared graffiti at bus shelter. Painted bus shelters.

Archives

Clerk had visited Archives in Ebbw Vale to deposit historical information.

Broken Gate at Southgate

Reported to Cadw.

Dog Bin Contract

The dog waste bin contract has been advertised for a month - bids closed on 14th September. The three companies that have expressed an interest will be contacted to let them know.

Graffiti

Large amount of graffiti in bus shelter next to toilets on 16th August – Handyman removed the same day. Informed the police. Advised by cleaning contractor later that graffiti also in toilets.

Remembrance Service – Sunday 13th November

New Vicar at Caerwent church will liaise with the Pastor at the Baptist Chapel regarding who does what service wise.

Bugler – Phillipe Schartz not available this year. Clerk has contacted Gwent Music regarding a replacement. Alex Linton will perform the duty.

The Clerk (AMS) will ask if ex Councillor Counsell would be happy to read out the names on the cenotaph.

Councillor Guscott may be able to get the Cadets involved.

The Clerk (AMS) will arrange for the service sheets to be reprinted to reflect God Save the King.

Christmas Lights

City Illuminations have confirmed that they can provide blue lights this year.

Tree Issues

Concern had been expressed by a resident that two trees on the Caerwent Playing Fields need crown lifting and also the two groups of walnut trees on the Roman Road (nr the Barns and opposite Eastgate Crescent) need attention due to overgrown ivy and condition of the trunks. Clerk had reminded MCC to carry out our tree inspection.

SOCIAL MEDIA REPORT

Ancestry queries.

Information exchange.

Councillor John requested that any articles on cost of living and energy saving costs be posted.

The Chair reported that he is never sent any information for the Llanvair Discoed website. Councillor John will make some enquiries.

PLAY AREA INSPECTION REPORT

Agreed to seek quotes from MCC regarding the moderate risk items.

M3958 FINANCE

To consider balances/payments approval as per Finance schedule dated September 2022

Balances as at 31st August:

Charitable Bank Account	£24,549.59
Business Money Manager	£10,124.88
Petty Cash	£191.72
Salary, Allowances & Mileage (128)	as per NALC scales
Inland Revenue	£233.42
Torfaen Pension Fund	(employee) £61.18
	(employer) £205.80
Clerk's final Salary payment (L McKeon), Allowances & Mileage (9 th Sept – 30 th Sept)	as per NALC scales
Inland Revenue	£364.11
Torfaen Pension Fund	£158.31
British Gas	£18.97

K Evans (Caerwent website – GoDaddy)	£20.54
K Evans (Llanvair website)	£20.54
K Evans (website – Wix.com – 2 year plan)	£230.40
Aardvarc Cleaning	£387.00
Merlin Environmental Services	£436.80
Llanvair Landscapes (grass cutting)	£1152.00
MCC (annual rent for CWEP field)	£15.00
S Roderick (play inspections)	£51.52
S Roderick (bus shelter work)	£90.71

Annual Donations:

Caerwent Community Centre	£2000.00
Caerwent Playing Fields Association	£1500.00
Community Newsletter	£500.00
Crick Wildlife & Environment Project	£200.00
Caerwent Meadows	£200.00
Mons County Citizens Advice Bureau	£2500.00
Caldicot Junior Football Club	£500.00
Churchyard maintenance:	
Caerwent Parish Church	£280.00
Caerwent Parish Church (floodlighting)	£150.00
Caerwent Baptist Chapel	£240.00
Llanfair Church	£240.00

Council agreed payment of above invoices.

To note payments made during August 2022

Balances as at 30th July:

Charitable Bank Account	£8,740.48
Business Money Manager	£10,124.88
Petty Cash	£232.20

Clerk's Salary, Allowances & Mileage (20)	as per NALC scales
Inland Revenue	£233.42
Torfaen Pension Fund	(employee) £61.18
	(employer) £205.80
British Gas	£18.23
Aardvarc Cleaning	£228.00
Merlin Environmental Services	£455.00
S Roderick (maintenance work)	£52.97
S Roderick (graffiti removal)	£31.72
SJ Roofing Services (Trewen bus shelter)	£30.00

Council noted.

To approve the appointment of an Internal Auditor and consider appropriate fee to be paid.

Council agreed to appoint to this for the financial year 2022-23 at a cost of £500 plus VAT.

M3959 LOCAL GOVERNMENT PENSION SCHEME

Council to approve that the new Clerk be offered membership

Council agreed. The new Clerk declined this offer.

M3960 CORRESPONDENCE

- Monmouthshire Meadows newsletter**
- MCC – update on B4245 speed limit**
- Association for Public Service Excellence – dog bin usage consultation**
- Caerwent Meadows newsletter**
- One Voice Wales training courses**
- MCC – Cabinet minutes**
- Natural Resources Wales – Nature Resource Fund**
- Cadw Historic Buildings Maintenance And Repair Grants**
- Welsh Government – information on cost of living support**
- Welsh Government – mourning guidance**
- MCC – recycling and waste update regarding bank holiday 19th September**
- MCC – Meet Your Council**
- Home Start Cymru**
- MCC – The Cross signage**
- MCC – walkway and station at Magor**
- Car Rally – Army Base**
- One Voice Wales - Biodiversity Conference – Councillor Swift attending.**
- Channel Four – Great British Bake Off**

M3961 HIGHWAYS/RIGHTS OF WAY

To report any issues

Councillors were asked to continue to send photos of large lorries travelling through the village. The Chair will mention this in the newsletter again.

Crick speed limit is still at 50 mph in spite of the proposed 30 mph. Clerk to check.

Court House Road in Llanvair Discoed is recorded wrong on the local authority gazetteer. There are concerns that emergency vehicles are not able to locate this.

To note resurfacing works within the area

Council noted.

To agree to write to Mark Hand, Head of Highways, concerning traffic issues

Council agreed.

M3962 REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS

To receive verbal reports

There were no reports.

To consider Councillor Representative list and appoint as required.

Councillor Guscott was added to the Caerwent Playing Fields Association, Environment Working Group, Playing Fields Working Group and Play Areas Working Group.

M3963 ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

- Remembrance Service
- Barrier/Fencing for Caerwent Playing Fields
- Pollinator Policy

Chair Date