

MINUTES OF CAERWENT COMMUNITY COUNCIL
THURSDAY 14TH APRIL 2022

Present: via video conferencing
Councillors:
K Evans (Chair)
P Dalton
K Haddow
M John
AM Spooner

In attendance: L McKeon, Clerk to the Council

The Vice Chairman took the Chair for this meeting as per our Standing Orders due to apologies received from the Chairman (P Murphy).

M3884 APOLOGIES

Councillor P Murphy
Councillor M Beattie
Councillor B Counsell
Councillor G Foxall
Councillor K Swift

M3885 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

Councillor K Evans	Trustee	Caerwent Historic Trust
Councillor K Evans	Booking Clerk	Caerwent Village Hall
Councillor P Dalton	Football Coach	Caerwent Football Club
Councillor AM Spooner	Director/Committee Member	Caerwent Playing Fields Association

M3886 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair announced that all of our ward seats were uncontested for the May 5th election. He thanked all of the Councillors who had decided not to stand this time and for their hard work and contributions over the years. The Clerk advised that these Councillors will relinquish their positions on election day. We do have one vacancy in the Caerwent ward and we will be able to discuss this process at our AGM in May.

M3887 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 10th MARCH 2022

To note that these had been agreed remotely for accuracy and posted on the Council website

Council noted.

M3888 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation

M3889 POLICE REPORT

The Clerk read out the report which listed three crimes and no arrests, the police had carried out a lot of engagement with youths in the tunnel on the border of Caldicot to reduce anti-social behaviour, and also regular patrols had occurred in the Wentwood area to engage with offroad bike users to ensure that they are following the rules.

The Chair felt that as usual there was no clarity or explanation in the report on the crimes and no mention of the recent road traffic accident on the A48 between Caerwent and Crick when the road was closed for four hours. Agreed to pass this concern onto Councillor Murphy to raise again with the police management.

M3890 PLANNING

2022/00374 13 Eastgate Crescent, Caerwent

Proposed 2 storey side and rear extensions to existing 3 bed semi detached dwelling.

*This Council recommends **Approval***

2022/00451 Farndon, A48, Crick

Front boundary wall to property

*This Council recommends **Refusal***

The height of the wall is oppressive and should be reduced in order to be in keeping with neighbouring properties.

The materials are also not in keeping with other walls in the village of Crick which are of stone construction.

Serious road safety issue due to the height and position of this wall. Visibility for neighbours is obscured. Highways to comment on the viewing splays for exiting the neighbouring properties.

2022/00515 16 Merton Green, Caerwent

Convert garage into area for pleasure/leisure/work. To include bi-fold doors to garden side of garage, mezzanine floor area and roof window

Council noted that an application of the same description but with a different number (2022/00938) was approved by this Council in September 2021. The Chair agreed to check the two applications for any significant differences. If there are no differences this Council will recommend **Approval** as before. Otherwise this will be circulated again under our three Councillor planning decision policy.

2021/01200 Appeal against Refusal – Lingfield, Five Lanes, Caerwent

Granny annex and car port

Council noted

To consider any planning applications received following despatch of the agenda.

There were no further planning applications

To note monthly enforcement list from MCC

Council noted.

The Clerk informed Council that more hedgerow has been removed from the highway by the owner of the land at the field on Five Lanes (previous planning application DM/2020/00169 Double driveway gates (10 ft wide x 7ft high) 3 mtrs from road. Erection of a shed to keep tractor safe, (12 ft x 16ft long and 8 ft high), Land At 5 Lanes). Council noted that the large metal gates are still in situ and the previously removed hedgerow has not been reinstated. Planning Enforcement have been informed about this.

M3891 TO CONSIDER INVESTIGATING INSTALLING APPROPRIATE PLAQUES ON BENCHES TO COMBAT LONELINESS/PROMOTE MENTAL HEALTH

The Chair had been approached regarding whether we could obtain benches/plaques via a Netflix campaign which had recently been advertised following their After Life series. The Clerk advised that demand outstripped the availability of this particular product and only 25 benches were made available for the whole of the UK. Agreed that we would consider again if another similar campaign came forward.

M3892 STANDING ORDERS

To consider reducing the quorate number of Councillors for council meetings from four to three given the reduction in Councillor numbers to seven from May 2022

Council agreed. The Clerk will amend Standing Orders which will be ratified at the AGM in May.

M3893 UKRAINE CRISIS

To consider request from resident regarding using our Halls as storage/holding centres

Council noted that they had also received correspondence from Welsh Government requesting information of existing empty residential dwellings/buildings/vacant sites which could accommodate temporary dwellings and be readily converted for residential accommodation or used for other purposes in supporting relocated refugees. Welsh Government officials are already working closely with Directors of Housing at local authorities.

Council agreed that unfortunately we do not have the infrastructure to deal with this effectively, ie lack of doctors, infrequent bus service and both of our halls have commitments every day. Agreed to await any approach from MCC who are co-ordinating all efforts.

M3894 COMMUNITY COUNCIL ELECTIONS 2022

To note Uncontested Election for all wards

This had been covered under the Chair's Announcements.

M3895 COMMUNITY COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT

To consider draft from Chair

Agreed that this was a very comprehensive list but that it could be altered to comprise of headings such as environmental, community, green, health, wellbeing etc and include a celebration of what we are accomplishing. Councillor Spooner agreed to work on this and circulate for approval before it goes on the website in April.

M3896 TO RECEIVE REPORTS

To note

CLERK'S REPORT

Highmoor Hill Phone Box

Awaiting contact from residents.

Time Capsule plaques, War Memorial

These have now been received. Councillor Swift will liaise with the contractor regarding placing them.

Paws on Patrol

Co-ordinator currently setting up a constituted group.

Crick Bus Stop

Councillor Swift will contact the contractor re the loose stones in the wall. MCC had cleared the vegetation and will provide some compost for some pollinator plants to be planted in a pot at one side of the shelter.

Crick School Bus

Councillor Murphy has informed the police of the illegal parking taking place nr the garage.

Football Club proposed alterations to Village Hall

Awaiting amended plans from Football Club

Playing Fields Wooden Edging

Working Group met up in March and removed the damaged edging.

Blue Play Areas Covid Signage

Reminder that this signage is still in situ. Handyman will be asked to remove this.

Community Survey

No progress.

Dog Waste Contract

Bin at eastgate entrance to Roman Road cleaned.

Contractor confirmed that proposed location for new bin in the Northgate Nursery vicinity is suitable.

Defibrillator – Village Hall

Welsh Ambulance Service visited to reset the used defibrillator. Informed The Circuit that it is now back in circulation.

Fields in Trust – Caerwent Playing Fields

Mike Moran of MCC has located the plaque. This can be mounted on a wooden pole. The Chair will be providing to the Clerk a map with the suggested location pinpointed.

Annual Return 2021/22

All documentation received from Wales Audit. Clerk now working on it and will visit Internal Auditor soon.

Roman Road parking in vicinity of Post Office

Parking appears to be by local residents. Council will monitor the situation. Agreed that we appeal in the newsletter to people to park responsibly in the area of the Post Office.

Handyman Report

Has started annual maintenance work – bus shelters and noticeboards. Roof work required at Trewen bus shelter, Caerwent noticeboard will require new backing due to rot, graffiti removed from Crick noticeboard.

SOCIAL MEDIA REPORT

20 mph signage

Dog fouling

Information exchange

PLAY AREAS INSPECTION REPORT

Council noted

M3897 FINANCE

To consider balances/payments and approval as per finance schedule dated April 2022

Balances as at 30th March:

Business Money Manager	£10,123.62
Charitable Bank	£9,936.60
Petty Cash	£33.30
Clerk's Salary, Allowances & Mileage (30)	as per NALC scales
Inland Revenue	£238.42
Torfaen Pension Fund	(employee) £61.18 (employer) £205.80
British Gas	£17.26
Merlin Environmental Services	£405.60
S Roderick (spring clean works)	£38.36
S Roderick (inspection work Feb/March)	£51.52
Audit Wales	£240.00
Signomatic (plaques)	£82.57
MCC (replacement seesaw & grass matting)	£3174.00
Clerks & Councils Direct magazine	£12.00
Aardvarc Cleaning	£248.00
S Roderick (notice board work)	£18.36
Petty Cash	£217.00
BHIB Insurance	£1785.95
S Roderick (inspection works March/April)	£51.52

Council approved payment of the above.

To agree grass cutting contract to £320 per cut

Council agreed to this increase but to also monitor over the year if the frequency of cutting needs reviewing, possibly under the Nature Isn't Neat project.

To note quarterly budget review 2021/2022

Council noted that we had some unexpected one-off expenditure last financial year. The Clerk advised that general guidance is that reserves should be 3 months (minimum) to 6 months expenditure + earmarked reserves. We have £6000 in earmarked reserves for possible drainage works at the Village Hall. Our reserves are around £20k so this is at minimum guidance range. She advised the Council to continue to be mindful this financial year of keeping within the budgeted figures in the precept document. Council agreed to look at the precept figures again at the AGM in May and to keep the budget under control.

M3898 CORRESPONDENCE

To note

Monmouthshire County Citizens Advice – Health & Poverty in Monmouthshire
Monmouthshire Meadows newsletter
Mark Lewis – Community Centre Update
One Voice Wales – Big Meadow Search
MCC – Guidance Information on Local Elections
One Voice Wales – Bumblebee Seminar
MCC – Severnside 20 mph Pilot Zone update
MCC – Nature Isn't Neat 2022
MoD – noisy activity notice for April

Caerwent Meadows – resignation of Secretary/Treasurer
Caerwent Community Centre Committee – approach from Monmouthshire
Housing Association investigating the possibility of purchasing land. The Clerk advised that within the Title Deed there are mentions of restrictive covenants on future sales of the building.

To consider any correspondence received after despatch of the agenda which may require a response

One Voice Wales – NHS defibrillators available for free - check with Councillor Swift if there is a defibrillator at Crick Nursing Home and if not refer them to this correspondence for them to apply.

M3899 REPRESENTATIVES REPORTS

To note any verbal reports

Councillor Foxall had sent a report on Rogiet School Governing Body stating that the school are likely to find a resolution to its budget challenges.

Councillors Spooner/Swift had met up regarding the footpaths project. They will report back at a later date.

The Chair had been approached by the Caerwent Meadows group (previously Embrace Nature). They are proposing to change the constitution to become an Unincorporated Association which will effectively mean that all 25 members of the group will have equal voting rights on every aspect of the project. There will be two Officers – one a Treasurer and one a Lead Officer to ensure that the plans put forward continue and are maintained in the same way. There will be an AGM and the website/social media/newsletter will remain unaffected. Their reports to us will be seasonal now. They now have a licence agreement with Cadw to use The Barns for promotional work and they hope to attract more support from the community. Council agreed that they had no objections to the proposals that they had put forward and felt that it would make it a more inclusive organisation.

The Chair advised that there will be a community archaeological excavation at Llanmelin Hill Fort from 26th April – 15th May and they are looking for volunteers. The Clerk will advertise this on Facebook.

M3900 HIGHWAYS/RIGHTS OF WAY

Councillors to report any issues

A48 will be resurfaced from Crick to Caerwent this financial year.

To consider current situation regarding uneven pavement in Llanvair Discoed which is unsuitable for wheelchair use

MCC have been out to inspect and we are expecting a report back. They had intimated that it could be funded under various budgets.

M3901 ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

Maintenance of planters at War Memorial
Replacement of Clerk

Chair Date