

Cyngor Cymuned Basle Hefo Chrugion Bausley with Crigion Community Council

Minutes of the Online Meeting held on Monday 23rd August 2021 starting at 7.15pm

- 076/2021** **PRESENT:** Councillors L Burrowes, T Davies, A Lloyd, F Davies, and D Jones,
APOLOGIES: Cllr Huw Evans and Cllr R Lewis
County Councillor Lucy Roberts in attendance
Chairman D Jones took the meeting.
Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer Steve Eccleshall
- 077/2021** This Community Council meeting was conducted at Bryn Hafren School. Recent legislation – Section 47, Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 - has allowed Community Councils to meet online OR now in person. The Community Council has not met in person since the Pandemic occurred. This matter was further debated in Matters Arising below.
- DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**
- 078/2021** None
- 079/2021** **MINUTES OF AGM AND LAST MEETING HELD 5th July 2021**
Agreed by all present – Copies to be signed by Chairman D Jones
- 080/2021** **Planning**
21/1315/FUL Proposal: Repositioning of an existing access. Site Address: Land adjacent to Belin Mount, Crew Green, Shrewsbury, Powys.
SNN/2021/0220. Powys Street Naming & Numbering at development of 8 dwellings at land adjoining Bear House, Crew Green, Shrewsbury, Powys
Resolution :- No objections raised by any Councillors.
- 081/2021** Councillors discussed this street naming, and although there were no objections to the proposed Admirals View, it was debated whether the new development was in sight of Rodney’s Pillar. Students at Bryn Hafren School had submitted a list of names for a previous development and Councillors decided to revisit the list, to keep a local community feel to the naming. Hafren View was selected, and all Councillors agreed on this naming.
Resolution :- Hafren View selected – Clerk to notify Powys planning.
- MATTERS ARISING**
- 082/2021** - **Requirements of Qualifications for Clerks / Responsible Financial Officer**
Clerk reported on proposals by the Welsh Government that postholders should have a minimum qualification in this field for the Council to be classed as “Competent”. There is a drive by all governments that Clerks / RFO’s should ideally hold qualifications in this field, and this should be supported by the Councils, to “professionalise” the role and ensure Councils were advised properly and effectively.
The Clerk advised that he had enrolled on the “Introduction to Local Councils Administration” course (ILCA), which he was self-funding with 50% of the cost being granted by the Welsh Government as a bursary. He explained the Course aims and that it then led to the “Certificate in Local Councils Administration” course (CILCA) which was a formal qualification and the one intended by the Welsh Government to be a stipulation qualification for Clerks.
CILCA takes approximately 100 hours of coursework, is currently £410 for the course (possibly a Bursary from Welsh Government may be available).
The Clerk explained that he did not feel it right for the Community Council to fund the course in its entirety (fees and study time), however, to undertake 100 hrs of work for a qualification purely to undertake the role he already held was not feasible with other commitments.

Therefore, the Clerk suggested the matter be debated at the next Budget Meeting for 2022 – 2023 and an agreement reached on part self-funding and part Council funding. Funds could then be allocated in the next Financial year and the course commenced at that time.

Resolution : - Councillors all agreed that if there was a drive by the Welsh Government to mandate such qualifications then bursaries and funding would need to be allocated as it was not right for the clerk to bear the entire cost themselves for a qualification relating to their existing role. Councillors agreed to review funding at the next Budget Meeting for the forthcoming year.

083/2021 - Section 47, Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021

Clerk reported that from 1st May 2021, new legislation had come into force regarding how ALL Council meetings – including Community Councils - were to be conducted. This legislation was intended to include more of the community. Meetings can now be a mixture of online and in person meetings. The suggestion is that members of the public should have the ability to join meeting in person OR remotely - and it is the Councils duty to provide those means. One Voice Wales is trying to get the Welsh Government to understand the impact on smaller Community Councils. At present, the suggestions of Community Councils supplying a big screen / monitor to help with online, separate microphones to distinguish who is speaking, recording of meeting, supplying a “Council” mobile phone for callers to call in with, suitable premises, security, storage etc are simply unachievable. There is no additional funding for this – councils are expected to fund it. There has been no account taken of broadband, premises, security, costs, equipment, storage etc but it is law & will be an Audit requirement. This Community Council is within an area of bad broadband coverage, does not own its own premises, and has a small precept of approximately £8000, each year. The costs involved in meeting the obligations would likely bankrupt the Community Council or force requests for a huge increase in precepts. Currently residents pay £24 per year – costs could increase to £100 per residents each year which is clearly unsustainable.

Resolution : - Councillors agreed that this requirement bore no resemblance to a reasonable request and was entirely counterproductive to the Community and the Community Council. It was noted that in the past 3 years only 2 residents had attended any Council meetings with any other requests being in the form of letters or telephone calls to the Community Councils. The Clerk was asked to draw up a policy document to reflect the Councils view in this matter.

084/2021 - Highways

Following continuing pressure from the Community Council and County Councillor Lucy Roberts, Cllr Roberts was able to report that road repairs had finally been undertaken through Crew green and up through Bryn Hafren. The repairs scheduled to Back Lane were being held until nearer the end of the financial year to try and use monies from the next financial year to assist and talks were ongoing between Powys and Hanson’s (Criggion Quarry) regarding assistance with materials and / or costs. One issue facing Powys and apparently nationally is a growing shortage of HGV drivers and fitters, meaning that highways vehicles cannot be driven or repaired in sufficient numbers to assist the road projects. County Councillor Roberts stated she had been asked to meet with residents of Melverley as apparently a recent survey of the bridge across the river from crew Green to Melverley reported it was in poor state of repair and suggestions are that Shropshire will not be undertaking repairs.

Resolution : - All Councillors agreed that the loss of this bridge would have a tremendous impact on the communities, farmers, contractors and suppliers and that this needed to be communicated to Shropshire Council. County Cllr Roberts agreed to pass on concerns in the strongest manner at the meeting.

085/2021 - Broadband improvement

Despite having initially received many complaints regarding the appalling BT Broadband around crew Green and surrounding areas, it has transpired that following the mail shot by Cllr Roberts asking residents if they would be interested in a Community based Broadband project the response had been underwhelming. Funding is in place now by the Welsh Government, but no contractor would commit to the infrastructure without a more positive approach from the wider Community. The decision rests with the Community response.

Resolution : - It was agreed to highlight this matter on the Community Council website to try and gather more support.

086/2021 - Flood Prevention

County Cllr Lucy Roberts stated that the next River Severn partnership Board meeting was on the 25th August, there had been a National Flood Forum meeting but she was not invited and was still awaiting any feedback. It appeared to the Councillors that between the Welsh Government and English Government, Powys and the English Councils, the Environmental Agency and National Rivers Wales etc that there was great confusion, appalling communication and no real connection with the communities they represented. At face value it appears that there is no "official" will, to take into account what residents want and no will for joined up thinking to problem solve.

Resolution : - County Cllr Roberts to report back to next meeting with updates from her meetings.

OTHER MATTERS NOT LISTED ON AGENDA

087/2021 County Cllr reported she had received a complaint from a Crew Green resident complaining about the spraying around the playing field edges as this could cause harm to Hedgehogs. This spraying was unknown to the Community Council and therefore was believed to be by Powys staff. The area sprayed was apparently minimal and confined to the edges of the playing field however those concerns have been passed on to Powys.

Cllr T Davies reported that he had received a complaint that the footpath through upper Crew Green housing to the top of the playing area was overgrown. This is a Powys Housing responsibility however the Clerk offered to assess and report the matter to Powys if necessary.

FINANCES

088/2021 The Clerk / Responsible Financial Officer presented the year end accounts for 2020 / 2021, which had been signed off by the Internal Auditor with no issues raised. Councillors reviewed the Accounts and were satisfied with the submission.

Resolution : - Councillors approved the accounts for 2020 – 2021. Proposed Cllr T Davies and seconded Cllr A Lloyd. Accounts to be passed to the Welsh Audit Office.

089/2021 The Bank reconciliation and Lloyds Bank statement were presented to the Councillors for their information, and the Clerk / RFO reported that the Budget for this period was still on target. Agreed by Councillors – proposed Cllr F Davies and seconded Cllr L Burrowes.

090/2021 Invoice for HMRC PAYE - £200. Proposed by Cllr T Davies, seconded by Cllr L Burrowes.

091/2021 Invoice for Six Ticks Website Hosting - £240. Proposed Cllr A Lloyd and seconded Cllr D Jones.

092/2021 Clerk's timesheet and Wages reviewed for 24th June to 16th August 2021 - £270.00, Proposed Cllr F Davies and seconded Cllr L Burrowes

093/2021 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

A new Planning Application was received after the cut off date for this meeting, therefore in order for the application to be discussed within 21 days the next Community Council meeting is scheduled for 6th September 2021