

Shirenewton Community Council

Minutes of the Council Meeting of Shirenewton Community Council held on June 5th 2006 at Shirenewton Recreation Hall.

Present:

Councillors:

Ms B Moore
J Harvey
K Morton
Eickhoff
Mrs S Saysell
J Eede

Apologies:

Councillors:

Mrs J Morgan
C Crundwell
Ms S Bushell

In attendance:

Cllr G Down Monmouthshire County Council
Police Constable Andrew Mason
One Member of the Public
Mrs C Jones Clerk

Minute 1871 To Disclose personal and pecuniary interests in any item of listed business.

Cllr Moreton disclosed an interest in the Planning Application for Oxpool Farm, Argoed Road, Earlswood and took no part in the discussion.

Police Report

PC Mason reported that he had spoken two people who he has seen double parking outside Newton Lodge. At this stage he has advised them but if needs be it can be taken further.

There have been a few crimes in the past month.

1. Theft from Dinwood Cottage. A similar modus operandi to that at Foxes Barn. The occupant had popped out during the middle of the day. Some of the items stolen were a trailer, ride on lawn mower, hedge trimmer and strimmer.
2. There was a theft from an unattended motor vehicle from a car in the Tredegar Arms car park. Some jackets and wire cutters stolen.
3. There was a theft from a garage and shed.
4. A cement mixer was stolen from a property in Clearview.

PC Mason said there have been a few reports of people in vehicles acting suspiciously in the area. Most notably one has the logo 'Wandering Willy' on it's side.

A male person was reported to be acting strangely in the vicinity of the Hunstman and Carpenters Arms. He was arrested under the Mental Health Act.

An arrest was made as a direct result of Neighbourhood Watch. A resident saw a couple of lads behaving suspiciously in a vehicle in Pysgi Bach. She did not want to contact the Police herself but rang her Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator who then rang the Police. One of the people in the car was found to be in possession of drugs. The Neighbourhood Watch AGM will be held at Llanishen on June 6th. Cllr Moore confirmed that she will be attending.

PC Mason said that there will hopefully be a Police presence at the Church Fete on June 10th.

Minute 1872 To approve and sign minutes of the Annual Council Meeting held on May 8th 2006

The minutes of the meeting were agreed and signed as a true record

Minute 1873 To approve and sign the minute of the General meeting held on May 8th 2006

The minutes of the meeting were agreed and signed as a true record

Minute 1874 Standing Orders

The meeting discussed the draft copy of Standing Orders prepared and previously circulated by the Clerk.

It was unanimously resolved to adopt the Standing Orders as set out in the draft copy

COMPLETED

Minute 1875 Financial Regulations

The meeting discussed the draft copy of financial regulations prepared and previously circulated by the Clerk.

It was unanimously resolved to adopt the Financial Regulations as set out in the draft copy.

COMPLETED

Minute 1876 Clerk's report

To consider items C/FWD from previous meetings.

Community Council Website

Cllr Eickhoff had produced a report setting out three options:

1. Use a hosted website company with a shopping list of features e.g VisionICT
2. Use a free starter site which is paid for by advertising
3. Derive own site and develop as required.

Cllr Eickhoff will send out copies of his report to all Cllrs before the next meeting.

The Clerk reported that she had spoken to Paul Jones at MCC. He told her that the Chief Executive has proposed that MCC set up a community website. As MCC already have server in place the charges should not be excessive. Community Councils would have control of their own pages within the Community website. The Chief Executive will be writing to all local Councils to arrange a meeting to find out their requirements. It was agreed to wait to hear from MCC before proceeding any further.

C/FWD

Allotments

The Clerk reported that she had received five letters of interest and one other was on its way to her. She has made a request to Debra Hill-Howells at Asset Management for the land at Blethyn Close Mynyddbach to be used for allotments. She also made enquiries about MCC running the allotments and paying for the clearing, fencing etc that would be required.

Debra Hill-Howells told the Clerk that there is no money in the budget to convert the land to allotments. MCC would not run the allotments. The only reason they run the allotments in Chepstow (as we were informed by Cllr Bushell at the last meeting) is because these are statutory allotments that MCC have a duty to run. There is no record of the site at Blethyn Close ever being used formally as an allotment area.

The Clerk was also told that there has been an application pending for two years for a local resident to purchase the land and Debra-Hill Howells has been asked to progress this. She said this cannot be done until the status of the remainder is decided. There is a thought that the area may be classed as an Owen Glyndwr site, i.e. protected as a playing field, and handed over to the Community Council but she feels this is unlikely.

Debra Hill-Howells said that she had been having difficulty in meeting with her Director to discuss the request for allotments but would try and arrange a meeting. She felt the earliest that she could provide a response would be in two to three weeks.

Cllr Saysell said that she understood that neither the idea of allotments nor the sale of the land to a resident was popular with residents in the area.

Cllr Harvey said that he believed that the suggestion by the interested parties that they could clear the land was a feasible one. He suggested that if MCC were not prepared to allow allotments in the suggested area then the SW corner of the field may be suitable.

It was agreed to wait for Debra-Hill Howells' response.

C/FWD

Rubbish in Lay-by Gaerllwyd

The Clerk reported that the lay-by had at last been cleared of rubbish with only a very small amount of wood cutting left.

COMPLETED

Repairs to Shirenewton Play Area

The Clerk had circulated an estimate from MCC for more repair work at the play area in at Shirenewton. Some of this was a requirement of the Insurance Company and some cosmetic.

Rubbing down and painting all equipment	£840	
Replacement of rotten RSJ on rocking horse	520	
Replacement roof on play house		125
Replacement impact absorbing material under the climbing frame		1500
Cleaning and maintenance of artificial turf	300-400	

It was felt by Members that the quoted figures were high and the Clerk was asked to look into engaging someone on an ad hoc basis at a set hourly rate to carry out some of these items and possibly other work in the future. The grassed area requires cutting and the overhanging hedges require trimming.

It was agreed to ask MCC to carry out the work on the rocking horse immediately. Cllr Harvey will obtain estimates for the replacement material under the climbing frame within the next two weeks.

The Clerk reminded Members that this work needs to be carried out quickly or the Insurance could be void.

C/FWD

Replacement bin in Play area

The Clerk has purchased a new litter bin which now needs to be installed. Cllr Crundwell had previously asked the Clerk to look again into the collection of litter by the Local Authority. Currently Cllr Crundwell and Cllr Mrs Morgan empty the litter bin in the play area. The Clerk reported that she had contacted the refuse department who will not do it. She had contacted Landscapes Dept. who would carry out this service as many times as we required it. For instance that could be every week in the summer months and once monthly in the winter months. They would also carry out a safety inspection at the same time. A weekly safety check of all play equipment is a requirement of the insurance Company and is currently carried out by Cllr Mrs Morgan. Landscapes Dept would make a charge of £8 per visit. The Members felt that the money would be better used locally and it was suggested that the Clerk ask the playgroup who use the Recreation hall if they would empty the rubbish bin and put it for collection with their own. A donation could be made to the playgroup.

C/FWD

War Memorial

The War Memorial has been cleaned and the names re-etched at a cost of £625.75

COMPLETED

Village Plan Questionnaire

The Clerk reported that she had received a number of completed questionnaires but ten questionnaires had not been completed but had been posted back to her. It would appear that this was because recipients thought they had been delivered in error to them as the Clerk's name and address is on the envelope.

Cllr Eickhoff said that they hoped to collect the majority of questionnaires in this week and the final date of collection would be June 18th.

C/FWD

Alleged breach of planning at Shirenewton Golf Club

The Clerk has been told by the Enforcement officer that a retrospective application has been received for the lamp posts that they have erected on the site. A copy of this will be sent to the Council for comments in the next week or two. Also it was noted that the original plan showed one garage being turfed over and the finish being of stone. These had not been carried out. The Clerk will follow up these items with Enforcement

The Clerk will liase with Cllr Crundwell regarding the on-going tipping concerns

C/FWD

Stiles at Shirenewton Golf Club.

The Clerk reported that the Warden has been out again and spoken to the landowner who has agreed to complete the appropriate paperwork that is lawfully required for the installation of the stiles. He has agreed to purchase the stiles from MCC and install

them. The cost is likely to be £1000 plus. He has been given two weeks from 30th May to carry out the work or Enforcement will begin. MCC have agreed to erect appropriate Way markers on the paths. The landowner has said that he intends to keep sheep on the land and so dogs will need to be kept on leads.

C/FWD

Mynyddbach Play Area

The Clerk has made an application to CEDS (Community and Economic Development Scheme) for a grant to cover a replacement picnic table with seats and also a bench. She does not expect a decision until mid - July. **C/FWD**

The Clerk informed the Members that there is another grant that could be applied for if the CEDS application is unsuccessful but this would have to entail improving the environment and be community based. For example if a small garden was made on the site to attract insects, birds butterflies etc and maintained by the community, a grant could be applied for to cover not only this but the picnic table and bench as well

In relation to the erosion, by car parking, of the grassed area the Clerk has been informed by Tim Bradfield that the play area at Mynyddbach is not classed as a recreation area but it is owned by MCC. She has e mailed and left messages for Debra Hill-Howells at Asset Management but to date has not had a response on this matter. Cllr Down will take this matter up.

C/FWD

Mynyddbach Footpaths in Green Wedge Area

Cllr Crundwell had reported to the Clerk that he has had a meeting with the resident who requested the help of the Community Council but she has decided that she will progress this matter with the help of the Rambler's Association instead.

Minute 1877 Action List (arising from previous month's meeting)

Caravan at Bleddyn Close

This has now been removed.

COMPLETED

Rubbish in field near school

Following complaints from two residents of Mynyddbach it was agreed that the Clerk would write to the owner of the field. The name of the owner of the field is known but not his address. The Clerk will make investigations. Cllr Harvey provided some new legislation via Once Voice Wales but it's future use would require training for appointed Councillors.

C/FWD

Best Kept Village

Cllr Harvey said that little progress had been made apart from the leaflets that had been sent out by the Clerk with the Village questionnaires. He has not been able to strim around the Church wall yet as he has been on holiday but intends to do it this week.

C/FWD

The Clerk said she was disappointed that two notices, Best Kept Village and Village

Questionnaire reminder, had not been include in the Parish magazine as she had requested. The Clerk also reminded Members that judging will take place between 5th and 30th June.

New bolt on Notice Board in Mynyddbach

The Clerk has requested that Mr Haines carry out this work

C/FWD

Review of Forestry Commission Rent

The piece of land in question is 5.292 acres and the lease runs from June 1956 until June 2955. The Clerk reported that on checking the Lease it appeared that there was no provision to increase the rent (set at 75p per annum) She had spoken to the Land Agent at the Forestry and he was aware of this. Apparently most of the old leases that they hold are written this way. The Land Agent suggested that to save on administration costs the rent could be paid several years in advance. Alternatively they may be prepared to purchase the freehold interest.

It was suggested by Councillors that as the rent was so low the Forestry Commission could be asked if they would consider putting some amenities on the site for the Community e.g picnic benches. Councillors agreed that they would look at the area first and bring any ideas to the July meeting.

C/FWD

Minute 1878 Procedures.

Clerk's Contract and pension

The meeting discussed the Clerk's salary and pension arrangements.

It was resolved to sign the Contract of Employment setting out the terms and conditions of employment which had been based on the National Agreement on Salaries and Conditions of Service of Local Council Clerks in England and Wales 2004, agreed by One Voice Wales and the Society of Local Council Clerks.

It was further resolved to confirm that the Clerk be included in the Local Government Pension scheme operated by Torfaen Borough Council.

COMPLETED

Minute 1879 Planning

All planning applications were available for inspection by all Councillors between 7.15 and 7.30

The following applications were discussed:-

Oxpool Farm, Argoed Road. Conversion of existing garages into 2 self contained annexe units.

Recommend refusal

The Oaks Farm, Shirenewton. Conversion of traditional farm building to residential, garden together with the use of existing partial framed covered yard for garage/storage purposes.

Recommend approval

Barn near The Cayo, Shirenewton. Conversion of traditional stone barn to residential and garden

Recommend approval providing the footpaths are reinstated

Marls Barn, Usk Road, Shirenewton. Erection of store shed.

Recommend approval but wish to point out that plan provided is not accurate. A large barn structure is missing from the plan.

Minute 1880 Financial Matters

Internal Audit

Bills presented for payment:-	£
Clerk's salary	390.96
Stationery and Expenses	31.48
Glasdon (Litter bin)	182.65
MCC (play area repairs)	141.00
Insurance	1322.93
Blatchleys (War memorial)	625.75

The Clerk reported that she is having some problems with her printer and it was agreed that she obtain an estimate for any work to be carried out. It was observed that it may be cheaper to buy a new printer.

C/FWD

Minute 1880 To consider requests for donations.

The Clerk had circulated requests for donations from SARA (Severn Area Rescue Association) and Open Spaces Society. It was agreed by Members that any money should be spent locally. The Clerk was asked to write to both associations explaining this but offering any other help such as displaying leaflets.

COMPLETED

Minute 1881 Items of Local concern

To consider the way forward regarding Parish Magazine article regarding reporting of Community Council Meetings.

This was discussed by Members who fully realise the importance of a report being written for the Parish Magazine. This is separate from the Minutes which have to be ratified by the Council at the following meeting and are therefore always a month old before they can be posted on the website or on the notice boards. It had been accepted that it should be an independent person writing them and not a Councillor. With this in mind a volunteer had been found in Glynis McDonald. Glynis will begin writing her reports starting with the July meeting. It was agreed that the Chairman would write a report for the next issue of the Parish magazine setting out the reasons for the change.

C/FWD

Condition of roads

There are large potholes on the approach road to Shirenewton and also in Cwm Lane. Also the condition of the road at Upper Tump Farm in Earls wood is very poor
The Clerk will contact Highways

C/FWD

Visibility Of Speed Limit Signs

The 30 mph signs on the approach to the village at the Recreation Hall end are not visible because hedges are covering them. The Clerk will contact Highways.

C/FWD

Minute 1882 Items of local concern -information only

The Chairman reported that Dwr Cymru have been de-commissioning reservoirs in this area because it is easier for them to meet the purification standards required without reservoirs. The reservoir above Minders farm has been de-commissioned. The result of this is that there is no reservoir storage for Earlswood or Shirenewton. All water is pumped up from the Usk Road and previously would have been stored in the reservoir. The outcome of this is that if there is a power cut for even a short time this affects the pumps and the water can be cut off for several hours.

Vacant Council Seat

Notices have been posted in all the wards. If the Returning officer does not have ten electors requesting an election by 15th June then a new Member can be co-opted.

Development Plan

MCC have sent a letter stating their intention to adopt the Unitary Development Plan The Clerk informed Members that she has a copy of the Decisions and Reasons available.

Minute 1883 to confirm the date of the next meeting

The next meeting of the Council was confirmed as being July 3rd 2006

Chairman.....

Date.....