

SHIRENEWTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the remote Council meeting held on Monday 12th April 2021 at 7.00 pm

Present:

Councillors: Mr P Butterworth (Chair), Mrs J McKenna, Mrs L Brown, Mr K Dunn, Mr A Williamson, Mr I Martin, Ms E Nigosian, Mrs E Chapman and Mrs E Wixcey.

Also in attendance:

Mrs H Counsell (Clerk to the Council)

Mrs H Adams –observer (Co-optee applicant for Shirenewton ward vacancy).

The Council held a one minute silence at the start of the meeting in memory of His Royal Highness Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh who died on 9th April 2021, aged 99 years.

The Chair then welcomed all to the meeting and apologised for having to hold another remote meeting because of the Covid-19 pandemic restrictions, he thanked all present for their attendance.

He further advised that because of the number of items for discussion at this meeting, a second meeting will be held on 19th April to discuss agenda items 8, 10, 11 and 12.

1. Apologies for absence were received and accepted from:

There were none.

2. Issues raised by members of the public

- parked cars in Shirenewton village. Following notification of no police interest in cars not being parked illegally and no response as yet from Highways Dept. - further letter received from resident. Members agreed that this is not in the Council's remit, Clerk to advise resident to contact the Chief Constable if not satisfied.

- data request from resident 15.3.21 – FOI responses made 29.3.21, request for further information made 1.4.21 - ongoing.

Councillor McKenna attended the meeting at this point.

- height of hedges at Usk Road – Highways Dept informed that they can only become involved if the hedges cause a safety issue on the highway, not the height. Resident informed.

- the future of the Tredegar Arms pub – Council supportive of keeping the pub as a community asset. Legal advice required on potential difficulties of Councillors offering personal support, conflicts of interest and confidentiality plus the difficulty of the Community Council being seen to be unbiased to residents and other organisations in the community. If the community purchase goes ahead, Council wished to keep links with the group to keep informed of future plans and would welcome a presentation at a future meeting.

- query regarding the Tan House pub – residents concerned about living accommodation being used; shipping containers and construction vehicles on site and general untidiness. Clerk to contact Planning Officer for update on application DC/2019/01495 for two dwellings (currently pending consideration) and request Enforcement visit.

3. To receive the monthly police report.

Council noted that Sergeant Damian Waite had moved on and is replaced by PS 525 Chris Butt.

Operations/Our Work

We have conducted 2 Warrants in the Chepstow area in the last month with an arrest and they are awaiting sentencing. We ask the public to continue to report suspicious activity via

101 or control@gwent.pnn.police.uk so we can continue to targeted this behavior and improve the lives of local residents.

Patrols are still being carried out by Response Officers and Neighbourhood Officers in relation to dwelling/outbuilding breaks in our area. We are still asking residents to be vigilant, use CCTV, Lighting if you have it, ensuring you lock any outbuildings and report anything suspicious to Gwent Police on 101.

We have launched our “We don’t Buy Crime” initiative that was introduced to West Mercia in 2015 and is now being brought to Gwent. We are asking local residents along with local businesses to complete the short survey to help us acquire information from our communities in relation to acquisitive crime and their perceptions of this, surveys were posted online for this last week.

4. Minute 4093 - To disclose personal and pecuniary interests in listed business.
Cllr E Nigosian – Item 6.1.

5. Minute 4094 - To confirm the minutes of the meeting held on the 1st March 2021.
The minutes were confirmed as a true record.

6. Minute 4095 - To consider planning matters.

1) DM/2021/00319 Azalea Cottage, Old School Hill, Mynyddbach

Modification of condition no. 2 of planning consent DC/2017/01122 (to be extended for a further 3 years).

Council recommended approval as outline planning permission had not yet expired. (Voting 7 for/1 abstention).

2) DM/2021/00483 Little Mill Farm Cottage, Bully Hole Road, Earlswood

Proposed agricultural building to store agricultural machinery, animal food and haylage.

Council recommended approval. (Voting: 8 for (Unanimous))

3) DM/2020/00390 Gaerllwyd Farm, Earlswood

Change of use of existing agricultural building to B1 use.

Council acknowledged the amended proposals, however it was further noted that the applicant had not addressed policy RE3 nor concerns that the site is entirely unsuitable to the proposed business use being situated in a deeply rural land character, prominent in the landscape, lacking fibre broadband, locally available labour and poor public transport. Nor did it address the concerns of local inhabitants who had objected because of the highway issues (narrow country lane used by walkers, cyclists and horse riders) and within 100m of the crossroads.

No evidence had been shown that there is a compelling need for this site to be converted to business use nor did it show any evidence of an available local labour force; in any case it is envisaged there would be few employees and thus it would make no significant difference to our jobs market or the local economy. It did not show whether there is any unmet demand for commercial sites nor did it show how any commercial activity would preserve the deeply rural characteristic of the area. The site is poorly served with public transport and has no fibre broadband. No mitigation was proposed for any industrial processes, vehicles supplying materials and removing products, noise, smell or other disturbance to neighbours.

Council recommended refusal of the application, however if Mon CC is minded to approve it, this Council suggests the following condition to limit time and operating restrictions:

The use hereby permitted shall take not place and no machinery shall be operated, no process be carried out and no deliveries taken at or dispatched from the site outside the hours 8am to 6pm nor at any time on Saturdays, Sundays, Bank or public holidays. (Voting: Refusal 6 / abstentions 2).

County Councillor L Brown joined the meeting at this point.

7. Minute 4096 - Finance –

Expenditure (by Standing Order)

Clerk's salary/allowances -	March 2021	£679.17
Clerk's Pension (Council & Clerk's contribution) -	March 2021	£241.79
(Includes £58.33 towards £700 pa LGPS pension deficit)		

Payments

Payee	Reason for expenditure	Amount £	Vat £	Total	Cheque No.
Mrs H Counsell	Expenses – March 2021	50.82		50.82	101627
Merlin Waste Invoice No:	Bin emptying – March	42.25		42.25	101628
One Voice Wales	Annual subscription 2021/22	172.00		172.00	101629
One Voice Wales	Training 2 Councillors (50% bursary received)	30.00		30.00	101630
Toytastic, Chepstow (Cllr Nigogosian)	Vouchers for school road safety competition winners	70.83	14.17	85.00	101631

Council resolved to make all payments as listed.

Council approved the appointment of Mr P Brabon as Internal Auditor for the year 2020/21.

Council noted information received from Mr D Evans, Audit Wales regarding changes to the audit processes for 2020/21.

The Chair moved Agenda Items, 8, 10, 11 and 12 to a further meeting on 19.4.21.

9. Minute 4097 – To receive information on the Senedd Elections, 6 May 2021

It is the policy of the Welsh Government to hold the election on 6th May as intended unless the pandemic presents such a serious threat to public health that it is not safe to hold the election at that time. Electoral administrators have been asked to continue preparing for the election on 6th May. If postponed it will be a date no later than 5th November 2021.

The Recreation Association has confirmed that Mon CC has provisionally booked the hall and that a Risk Assessment, required signage and sanitation units will be in place. The main hall will be used to accommodate one way movement. It has also been agreed that Playgroup will not run on the Thursday or Friday (Friday closure to allow for cleaning).

From 22 March until 6 May 2021 the Council will enter what is known as the pre-election period (PEP) (formerly known as purdah) in respect of the forthcoming Senedd and also the Police and Crime Commissioner Elections. During this period restrictions apply to Council decision making, publicity and the use of Council resources. There are laws and conventions that exist to prevent public bodies from unfairly influencing the electorate, and protect public servants from any accusation of bias and partiality. The PEP rules are not to prevent the Council carrying out its normal business, but to prevent council business being carried out during this period being used to secure electoral advantage for any political party.

Fundamentally, the Council's responsibility is to carry out business as usual, ensuring that no action could be perceived as influencing the electorate or being an improper use of Council resources.

13. Minute 4098 - Update on hard path project

No further progress. The Chair encouraged Councillors to visit the recreation field at Caerwent to look at that path and the new boardwalk installed on the footpath to Shirenewton school. Council agreed that there is a need to gather information from the community regarding their wishes then hold a public meeting (when current restrictions allow). Suggestions were to have an online survey and use the website for responses. Also to have a suggestion box at the recreation hall, or email the Clerk.

14. Minute 4099 - reports from the County Councillor and the Clerk

County Councillor Brown advised:

The County Council meeting in April has been cancelled but the Cabinet meeting in mid-April is still going ahead. Council business is normally quieter during the Purdah period, prior to the Welsh Parliament elections.

Cabinet on the 14 April 2021

The Cabinet report covers:

- The Whole Authority strategic risk assessment;
- The 21 st century schools statutory consultation to establish an all through school (4-19) in Abergavenny;
- Leisure centre upgrades for facilities in Abergavenny, Caldicot and Chepstow Leisure Centres;
- Investment in highways operations for the maintenance drainage network;
- The Welsh Church Funding group.

Leisure Centres

- The Leisure centre recommendations are to support preliminary investigative works and proceed with a feasibility study for minor refurbishments and upgrades to the fitness facilities at Abergavenny, Caldicot and Chepstow Leisure Centres.
- However, the second recommendation is to pause the major scheme "Caldicot Leisure Centre Refurbishment" and place the project on hold until a return to normal operating conditions and there is some resilience built into the market. A further assessment to determine funding levels will be undertaken once customer levels are restored to pre-Covid levels to determine whether the required contribution from additional future memberships can be secured.
- In Caldicot this will involve a refresh of fitness equipment, along with improvements to the layout of the gym and minor improvements of the swimming pool area. In Chepstow this would seek to enhance the café with the food and beverage offer, improve the reception area and an upgrade to the cardiovascular fitness equipment.

Maintenance Drainage Network

Investment is required for:-

- An additional 18t road sweeper machine with operator (these are the large HGV sweepers that Highways use to sweep the carriageways).The cheapest and most effective way to lessen debris, leaf, grass and hedge cuttings, stone, road chippings, dirt or mud etc. from blocking or entering the drainage system.
- 18t MVC combination tanker / chassis with operator and driver (these are the large HGV gulley emptier and jetter machines that Highways use to empty gullies and jet pipes), with latest electronic tracking to support asset monitoring. The only way to remove debris that has entered the drainage system or to investigate blockages and damage.
- Traffic management team (5ton flatbed truck with two operatives), to support MVC and Sweeper. These teams will target the Primary Presalting Network, which tends to be high speed and present the greatest risk to traffic and workers.

Comment: Any extra resources for the stretched maintenance of the drainage network are to be welcomed.

Welsh Water

- A Zoom meeting is being arranged in mid- May 2021 with Welsh Water representatives, the County Councillor, the EHO and a representative/s from both of the community councils. The meeting is due to the concerns about the main sewerage pipe which serves the villages of

Pwllmeyric, Mathern, Mounton and Shirenewton. Available times/ dates will be requested at the community council April meetings.

Clerk's Report:

Hill View Cottage, Shirenewton (DM/2019/01614) – Enforcement case E19/130.

9.4.21 - update from A Jones, Development Manager, Mon CC – one velux roof light to be retained at rear - awaiting amended planning application.

Damaged planter at Blethyn Close - Concrete planter has been repaired and filled with grit. No further action.

Mobile Post Office – mobile service no longer running in current COVID-19 lockdown.

Footpath 320/30 – Earlswood Road to School –Footpath closed for one month from 8th March, Mon CC is replacing the 20m and 70m boardwalks with recycled plastic posts and new timber decks. Welsh Govt. grant to be applied for by Mon CC to resurface path at the Earlswood Road end, if successful will be actioned in 2021/22. Clerk has also requested that the entrance to the recreation field be included in resurfacing. SCC to meet with Mon CC prior to work starting at Earlswood Road end to ensure all requirements are met.

Bus shelter at Earlswood – front of bus shelter partially collapsed on 15.12.20. Reported to R Cook, Mon CC on 16.12.20 and shelter cordoned off with high fencing. Update 15.3.21 – stone mason to start work w/c 15.3.21 – partially completed 7.4.21.

Play area at Shirenewton – bark topped up under the climbing frame on 10.3.21. Metal liner to be ordered for Glasdon litter bin at Recreation Hall.

Reports to My Monmouthshire

8404131 - Chapel Road, Earlswood – potholes and erosion of road edges – done, but need to be revisited.

8403404 – Argoed Road, Earlswood, potholes and erosion of road surface – done, but need to be revisited.

8403192 – Blacksmiths Lane, Shirenewton, blocked road drain

8722853 – Under road drain at 'Montrose'

8722992 – flooding manhole at Mounton Court

8723101 – flooding manhole at The Row, Shirenewton.

Requested update on above 4 reports made Jan/Feb 2021, response on 24.3.21 – currently experiencing high volume of drainage issues, will be dealt with as soon as possible.

9332742 - blocked culvert between Bushes Farm and Cherry Farm, Earlswood

8845210 – damaged Keep Left sign at Shirenewton centre – under review.

9152188 – parked cars in Shirenewton, informed on 19.3.21 that hope to respond within 28 days.

15. Minute 4100 - Items of local concern –

- Speed limit on the Usk Road,
- speeding traffic on Chapel Lane, and elsewhere in Earlswood,
- visibility at Old Cock a Roosting junction,
Clerk to contact police and Highways Dept for increased 'Caution' signage.
- Complaint about the Tan House pub – Clerk to contact Planning Dept.
- Earlswood bus shelter – Mon CC has advised that it had more damage than expected and the rebuild should be completed in three weeks.
- Complaint about scramble bikes and bonfire in Wentwood Forest. Clerk to contact police and NRW.
- Two signs at Tan House Court – one snapped off from base, also Footpath sign damaged and falling over – Clerk to report.

16. Minute 4101 – Meetings attended.

The Chair and Cllr Wixcey attended the Recreation Hall Committee AGM on 18.3.21 – minutes circulated 12.4.21.

17. Minute 4102 - To receive correspondence as per attached schedule.

Council noted receipt of the following correspondence:
(Received during Covid-19 pandemic when Council held remote meetings).

Council noted receipt of the following correspondence:

Covid 19 arrangements during pandemic - Various information and guidelines during the coronavirus outbreak, further Tier 4 lockdown from 21.12.21 and subsequent easing of restrictions from the Welsh Government and One Voice Wales.

Great British Spring Clean Million Mile Mission – 28 May to 13 June 2021.

Monmouthshire County Council

- **Senedd Elections 6 May 2021** - information from the Monitoring Officer at Mon CC on the Pre-Election Period (PEP) from 26.3 – 6.5.21 (Circulated 25.3.21)

One Voice Wales

- Revised Countryside Code 2021
- Improving Social Care Arrangements and Partnership working

WG Consultations

- The Adoption and Fostering (Wales)(Miscellaneous Amendments) (Coronavirus) Regulations 2020
- Litter and Fly Tipping Prevention Plan for Wales

18. Minute 4103 - Appointment of co-opted Councillor for Shirenewton ward vacancy.

Following an informal, socially distanced meeting with two Councillors on 22.3.21 and observation of this meeting, Mrs Adams was co-opted into the vacancy in the Shirenewton ward. Clerk to arrange to visit to sign Declaration of Acceptance of Office, Declaration of Interests and Privacy Notice, also to inform Democratic Services of the appointment.

19. Minute 4104 – date of next meeting – second April meeting, Monday 19 April 2021.

The next full Council meeting will be held on **Monday 10th May 2021 with the Annual Meeting being held at 7.00pm, followed by the ordinary meeting at 7.30pm** at the Recreation Hall, Shirenewton if the lockdown is lifted, if not, the meeting will be by Councillors remote attendance.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.15 pm.