

# **BISHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

## **CYNGOR CYMUNED TRESEFJOB**

### **MINUTES OF THE BISHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 6<sup>th</sup> March 2019 at Bishton Village Hall.**

#### **PRESENT**

Councillors Gill Burton (Chair), Keith Boot, John Davies, Rob Hepworth, Anke Hillman, Mike Hillman, Georgina Jennick, Craig Johnson, Ben Rice, Graham Watts and Reg Southall (Clerk).

#### **IN ATTENDANCE**

Councillor Martyn Kellaway (Ward Member, Newport City Council)

#### **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Councillor Ian Long.

#### **DECLARATION OF INTEREST**

Councillor Mike Hillman, declared his interest in Underwood Allotments.

#### **POLICE MATTERS**

As the Llanwern Ward Community Support Officer (CSO) notified the Clerk that she would be unable to attend the Monthly Meeting, Councillors Johnson, Anke Hillman and Mike Hillman met with the CSO at Alway Police Station. The rise in anti-social behaviour and drug-related incidents were discussed and it was agreed that more patrols around the Community Centre and playing fields would be undertaken. It was also emphasized that incidents must be reported via telephone number **101** to ensure the issues were prioritised.

The Meeting agreed that there should be dialogue with the CSO on a quarterly basis and discussed whether this should be at the Monthly Meeting or at Alway Police Station. It was agreed that it would be more appropriate to have a CSO presence at the Monthly Meetings which could be moved to accommodate the CSO's availability if required.

AP1(6/3/19) – Clerk to write to Llanwern Ward CSO the Neighbourhood Policing Team Sergeant to confirm the Council's decision and to provide a list of meeting dates for 2019/20.

#### **ANNOUNCEMENTS**

It was confirmed that in light financial uncertainty resulting from Newport City Council's decision to remove the concurrent grant from Community Councils from 2019/2020 (resulting in £16,050 funding reduction for Bishton CC), there could be no commitment to support additional funding requests to what had already agreed for 2018/19.

AP2(6/3/19) – Clerk to confirm funding restrictions with Kids Cancer Charity.

## **MINUTES AND ACTION POINTS OF THE LAST MEETING**

The minutes of the Monthly Meeting held Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2019 and the Finance Working Group Meeting held Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2019, having been previously circulated to all Councillors and published on the Council website, were approved as a true record and duly signed by the Chair and Chair of Finance Working group respectively.

### **A – PLANNING**

Although there were no planning issues within the Llanwern Ward to discuss, it was noted that a planning application had been made to extend the Magor Brewery. The Clerk thanked Councillor Kellaway for passing on the planning application. The Councillors did express disappointment that this planning issue, which is adjacent to the Community area, was not notified to the Clerk. Some Councillors did express concern over the adverse impact on the skyline of the proposed structure for Underwood and Bishton residents.

AP3(6/3/19) – Clerk to write to Newport Planning Office to ask why the Council was not informed of the planning application and express concern with the impact on the skyline on behalf of some member of the Council.

### **B – FINANCE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

#### **B001/6.3.19 Monthly Financial Statement**

The Clerk explained that there was no monthly financial statement for February as from now on they would be produced a month in arrears. This was due to the bulk of the ancillary spend now through a Council Visa card which meant invoice information would not generally be available for reconciliation until the following month. The Clerk also requested that as we were now close to the financial year end, holders of Visa cards to not make purchases for the last week of March.

#### **B002/6.3.19 Audit 2017/18**

The Clerk informed the Meeting that the 2017/18 audit had now concluded and been signed off by external auditors and copies of the Annual Return and Issues Arising Report had been circulated accordingly.

- Annual Return.

The Clerk presented the Annual Report to the Meeting and it was approved and accepted accordingly.

- Issue Arising Report

The Clerk presented the Issues Arising Report which was discussed in conjunction with the Internal Audit Report. The Clerk went through all of the issues raised and was able to satisfy the Meeting that they are all either being addressed through revised procedures, or will be addressed in the response to the 2018/19 internal and external audit requirements. The Issues Arising Report was approved and accepted accordingly and it was agreed that no Action Plan was required. However, a revised Internal Audit Engagement letter would be required and agreed by Council.

AP4(6/3/19) – Councillors Mike Hillman and Davies to display on public notice boards the Notice of Conclusion of Audit for 14 days.

AP5(6/3/19) – Clerk to draft Internal Audit Engagement Letter for agreement by Council.

### **B003/6.3.19 Internal Audit 2018/19**

The Clerk informed the Meeting that initial preparations for the 2018/19 audit were in progress.

- Internal Auditor.

The Clerk confirmed that the auditor who had undertaken a number of previous internal audits had yet to respond to an initial approach on the matter. In light of this, alternative arrangements had been investigated with the Langstone Community Clerk. The Meeting agreed that the auditor could be re-engaged if he was in agreement. However, it was also agreed that the Clerk could take forward alternative internal audit arrangements under a threshold of £200.00 without need to come back to Council for approval if he was not in agreement.

- Revised Standing Orders / Financial Regulations

The Clerk confirmed that the next external audit round would include a review of Standing Orders and Financial Regulations of Community Councils. The current Standing Orders had been revised but not yet agreed by Council and there were no Financial Regulations in place. This would need to be addressed as a matter of urgency and it was agreed to remit this to the April Finance Working Group.

AP6(6/3/19) – Clerk to finalise draft revised Standing Orders and Financial Regulations for presentation to April Finance Working Group.

### **B004/6.3.19 Removal of Concurrent Contribution Update**

The Clerk confirmed that the legal route regarding objections to the removal of the concurrent contribution had been exhausted. Although it was felt that the Newport City Council response to the legal objections could be challenged, taking forward a Judicial Review of the decision would entail too much financial risk. It had therefore been decided to take up the issue with the Wales Ombudsman.

AP7(6/3/19) – Clerk to liaise with the Langstone Clerk to set up a meeting to forward the issue, inviting representatives from Community Councils which had contributed financially to the legal objection.

AP8(6/3/19) – Clerk to collect agreed financial contributions to the legal bill from Community Councils and settle the solicitor's invoice.

### **B005/6.3.19 One Voice Wales Membership Renewal**

The Meeting discussed whether or not to renew One Voice Wales Membership for 2019/20. The Clerk pointed out that he had received excellent support on the preparation for the 2018/19 audit requirements which was positive. However, it was also recognised that the level of support for the Community Councils fight against the loss of the concurrent contribution fell short of what would reasonably have been expected. Following discussion, the Meeting agreed to renew the subscription for the coming year though the organisation to be made aware of the concerns raised.

AP9(6/3/19) – Councillor Hepworth to draft a letter to accompany the One Voice Wales subscription renewal for 2019/20.

### **B006/6.3.19 Fixed Asset Register re Zurich Insurance Renewal 2019/20**

The Clerk explained that the current insurance categories on the Zurich Insurance renewal documentation were not accurate and/or up to date and this needed to be addressed. In order to achieve this, an accurate Fixed Asset Register of long-life items valued at over £100.00 would need to be developed and aligned with the insurance schedules accordingly.

The Clerk presented a draft Fixed Asset Register to the Meeting and a number of amendments were agreed i.e. the buildings insurance to be increased at Bishton Village Hall (to include new storage facility) and Underwood Changing Room block (to include referee changing room and toilet block) by £5,000.00 and £20,000.00 respectively. Further work was needed to populate the register with replacement values and the following areas of responsibility were agreed and outcomes to be with the Clerk by 20<sup>th</sup> March 2019 -

AP10(6/3/19) – Councillor Davies to provide Clerk with replacement values for Bishton Village Hall fixed assets.

AP11(6/3/19) – Chair to provide Clerk with replacement values for Underwood Community Centre fixed assets and the Council Chain of Office.

AP12(6/3/19) – Councillor Rice to provide Clerk with inventory of equipment at Underwood Community Centre gym with replacement values.

### **B007/6.3.19 Savings Working Group**

During the development of the 2019/20 Precept requirements, it was proposed that a working group be instigated to look to identify running cost savings of 10%. The Meeting agreed for Councillor Boot along with Councillors Anke Hillman and Davies to take the initiative forward with a view to putting forward recommendations to the Council by June 2019.

### **B008/6.3.19 Savings Working Group**

The Clerk explained to the Meeting that all Community Councils must make available to each Councillor a taxable payment of £150.00 per year as a contribution to costs and expenses. The payment is mandated for every Councillor unless they advise the Clerk in writing that they do not wish to receive the payment. It was agreed that payments to Councillors would be made in the March of the financial year in question. Other optional payments were available but the Meeting agreed they were not appropriate.

AP13(6/3/19) – Councillors to inform the Clerk in writing if they do not wish to receive the mandated payment.

## **C – LEISURE AND AMENITIES**

### **C001/6.3.19 Extension to Gymnasium – Project Update**

Councillor Rice provided a brief update on the progress of the project to date. He informed the Meeting that there had been only one response to the Invitation to Tender and this was significantly over the budget allocated to the project and was thus rejected. In order to move the project forward, there would need to be a review of the specification. It was envisaged that the initial tender would then need to be broken down into smaller more clearly defined and described stages and tenders invited for discrete Lots. It was recognised that this would need more resources to support the project but it was the only way forward. He also indicated that professional advice would need to be sought in order to cost more accurately the Lots of work in order to encourage more realistically costed tenders. It was confirmed that the tender information on the Council website should be retained though deadline for response dates removed.

AP14(6/3/19) – Clerk to remove tender response deadline from the Council website.

### **C002/6.2.19 Allotments**

The Meeting discussed the ongoing issue of the car park resurfacing and the revised allotment regulations -

- **Car Park Resurfacing**

Councillor Jennick confirmed that the car park resurfacing had been completed within the £800.00 allocated budget. The Clerk requested that Councillor Jennick ask the contractor to send an invoice for payment including bank account details via the [bishtoncc@live.co.uk](mailto:bishtoncc@live.co.uk) email address and the invoice would be settled immediately by electronic transfer.

- **Revised Allotment Regulations**

The Meeting discussed briefly the latest version of the revised allotment regulations and confirmed agreement for its implementation. The Chair would need to ensure that two copies of the regulations were completed and signed when allotment holders paid their rent for 2019/20. Each party would then retain a signed copy.

AP15(6/3/19) – Clerk to print a number copies of the allotment regulations and forward to the Chair.

AP16(6/3/19) – Chair to forward a list of names and addresses of allotment holders who had already paid their rent to the Clerk.

AP17(6/3/19) – Clerk to send copies of regulations for signature to allotment holders who had already paid their rent for 2019/20.

### **C003/6.3.19 Tree Liabilities**

In light of the fact that the Council was required keep its trees to a safe standard on its leased land through a risk based approach, Councillor Johnson inspected the trees around the Underwood playing fields. A small number of trees in a decayed and potentially dangerous state were identified and which would need to be removed.

AP18(6/3/19) – Councillor Johnson to obtain a quote for removal of decayed trees for Council consideration.

### **C004/6.3.19 Bishton Village Broadband**

Councillor Davies informed the Meeting that disappointingly, it had finally been confirmed that Bishton Village was not included in the Phase 2 tenders for high speed broadband to rural areas covering East Wales. A number of options had been proposed to move the issue forward, including accessing a “Three” 4G mobile network data option (according to Ofcom and “Three” the area is covered) and a Community Fibre Partnership.

AP19(6/2/19) – Councillor Davies to investigate the viability of a Community Fibre Partnership scheme for Bishton Village.

### **C005/6.3.19 Engaging with the Community**

Councillor Johnson raised the issue how the Council could communicate better with residents of the community in order to explain what the Council actually does and achieves for residents. A number of options were discussed and the Meeting agreed that a Working Group comprising Councillors Johnson, Hepworth, Jennick and Watts would be best placed to investigate and implement the most practicable and effective community engagement options.

## **D – HIGHWAYS AND UTILITIES**

**E – FORTHCOMING MEETINGS**

The next Monthly Meeting will be held at 7.45pm on 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2019 at Underwood Community Centre and finish no later than 9.30pm.

The next Finance Working Group Meeting will be held at 6.30pm on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2019 at Bishton Village Hall.

Signed..... Dated.....

Chair of Council