

# LLANVACHES COMMUNITY COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF MEETING HELD AT LLANVACHES CHURCH HALL TUESDAY 16 FEBRUARY 2010

Present	Chairman Councillors	Cllr Tony Rex Roger George Lyndon Jones Kay James Samantha McFadzean
In Attendance	Ward Councillor	David Atwell
Apologies for Absence		Cllr Jenny Scully
Public Attendance		5

Cllr Tony Rex announced that Cllr Michelle Hayes had resigned through pressure of business. He said that he had thanked Michelle especially for her work on playing field equipment and organisation of events.

The Chairman followed by passing Council's grateful thanks to the Clerk for providing the excellent mince pies and nibbles after the December Council Meeting.

Cllr Tony Rex then welcomed PC Tony Williams and PCSO Lisa Evans to discuss Police Matters.

PC Williams reported on crime statistics for the Langstone Ward. Cllr Tony Rex asked for a breakdown for Llanvaches. PC Williams said that a breakdown below Ward Level was not produced but he might be able to arrange for this information to be available. PC Williams added that detailed comparative data could be found on the Gwent Police website. He then briefly discussed the PACT Priorities – i) Speeding on Magor Road, Langstone ii) Speeding on Chepstow Road through Langstone and Penhow iii) Parking at the Rock and Fountain.

Cllr Tony Rex said the Rock & Fountain problem was now 'on hold' because the pub was closed, but he would contact Sgt Carlyon to ask for the police to visit the next tenant to explain the parking issue. Council was pleased to hear that speed checks were being made from police cars parked near the quarry entrance. Cllr Tony Rex said that he had received complaints about speeding in the village. PC Williams noted that the National Limit (60 mph) applied in the village but the team would watch for dangerous situations.

Ward Cllr David Atwell enquired about measures to prevent raves in Wentwood Forest. PC Williams said that a lot of effort had been made to counter the rave problem and it now appeared to be under control. He added that off-road motor bikes had been the source of many complaints in recent weeks and action was being taken.

Cllr Roger George asked about action against fly-tipping. PC Williams said that anyone seeing fly-tipping should report it immediately and give detail of those involved.

Cllr Tony Rex thanked the police team and PC Williams and PCSO Evans then left and the formal Council Meeting started at 7.35pm.

### **1948 MINUTES FROM PREVIOUS MEETING**

Cllr Sam McFadzean proposed that the circulated minutes be accepted as a true record. This was seconded by Cllr Kay James and agreed.

### **1949 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

The Chairman asked for any declarations of interests. He added that Council would meet the needs of the Code of Conduct by the inclusion of *Declaration of Interests* on each Agenda, by the minuting in detail of any interest declared and by the Clerk keeping a register of each Councillor's declared interests.

## **1950 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES**

**i) Attendance by Ward Councillors.** Cllr Tony Rex said that he had had correspondence with Ward Councillors about attendance at Community Council Meetings and stated the view that both our Council and the Ward Councillors benefitted from attendance. He said that Council knew that Ward Cllrs had no statutory obligation to attend and recognised that Ward Cllr David Atwell's Cabinet role put extra pressure on his time. Ward Cllr Atwell said that informal Cabinet Meetings are held on Tuesday and therefore clashed with our meetings. He added that he would attend Llanvaches meetings whenever possible but reminded Council that there are 2 Ward Cllrs for Langstone. Cllr Tony Rex reported that Ward Cllr Simon Lane had not attended since April 2009 and had not replied to e-mails for many months.

**ii) Ref 1905 iii – Zig Zag Road Condition.** Ward Cllr David Atwell reported that road works at the top of the Zig Zag had been effective but he had no feed back on problems lower down. Cllr Tony Rex said that the core of the issue was that elderly people now had to drag their bin down to Millbrook Lane and some years ago a small truck serviced the difficult locations. Ward Cllr David Atwell said that Refuse Collection had a tight budget and he had been informed that this special facility no longer existed. Consequently the existing practice would have to continue despite the residents' concerns.

**iii) Ref 1940 – Councillor Training Course.** Cllr Tony Rex had spoken to Ken Burton of *One Voice Wales* who has agreed to cancel the invoice.

**iv) Ref 1939 iii – Gray Hill Patients' Consultative Group.** Monica Randall had attended the February meeting and observed that it lasted only 35 minutes and 9 people were present. Cllr Tony Rex said that there had been better debate and information flow at previous meetings with more people present. In the short term (2-3 months) Council will continue to support the concept but will then re-appraise their position.

## **1951 MATTERS OF LOCAL INTEREST OR CONCERN**

**i) Pavement Maintenance.** Cllr Kay James reported that there was grass coming through the re-surfaced pavements and the work done appeared to be sub-standard. Ward Cllr David Atwell said weed-killer had been used prior to surfacing but European Regulations prevent the use of more effective weed controls. Cllr James enquired whether the weeds coming through would dislodge the slurry coat. Ward Cllr David Atwell said that the extent should be monitored and Highways informed. Cllr James will report on the problem at the next meeting.

**ii) Survey of Local Roads.** Cllr Tony Rex asked Ward Cllr David Atwell about the progress of this. He replied that insufficient money had been budgeted for the survey so it had been abandoned. Attention is being focussed on the hot spots and Gilfach-Whitebrook is not high on the list. Ward Cllr Atwell's statement led to discussion about money being found for new roads and road works (outside Llanvaches) directly related to the Ryder Cup

**iii) Road Water Lower Millbrook.** Cllr Tony Rex said that Ward Cllr Simon Lane was investigating action on the road water problem but despite prompting there had been no response. Cllr Lyndon Jones commented that the road around Millbrook was in a poor state and that tarmac had been put into holes that had water in them. Cllr Roger George observed that filling holes on top of water seemed to be common practice. Ward Cllr David Atwell said that temporary repairs were being made to make sure roads are not dangerous. He added that extra money had been obtained from the Welsh Assembly for the cost of repairs and demands were being prioritised.

**iv) Rectory Road Flooding.** There has been no flooding for several months and routine maintenance on the grids is taking place. It was noted that the Millbrook Stream had flowed frequently with overspill from the reservoir.

**v) Junction of Tabernacle Lane & Rectory Road.** Cllr Tony Rex explained that there had been requests from residents for a safety mirror at the junction and Ward Cllr Simon Lane had been asked to try to overturn the previous negative response from Highways. Ward Cllr David Atwell said Highways refused such requests because experience has shown that there are severe problems at night through drivers being dazzled. Ward Cllr Atwell observed that a way forward would be for Council to buy a mirror after having obtained permission to install it on private land. It was thought unlikely that such action would need planning permission. The general consensus was that we would accept the advice from Highways.

**vi) Road Cleaning.** Highways will be pressed to clean all the village roads in early Spring.

**vii) Community First Report.** Ward Cllr David Atwell told the meeting that the search for a new 'Llanvaches Editor' was continuing.

## **1952 PLAYING FIELD INSPECTIONS**

Council has been under pressure from NCC regarding monthly Playing Field Inspections. Cllr Roger George had received an invoice for work that we contend had not been done. This

invoice has now been cancelled. Allianz (our insurers) informed Cllr Tony Rex that they demanded a professional annual equipment inspection and frequent inspections of the grounds and equipment through the year. Allianz want the 'frequent inspections' to be done weekly but do not require the inspectors to be professionals nor even professionally trained. Allianz state that it is essential that a formal system is established and comprehensive records are kept. After debate it was agreed that NCC will carry out the annual inspection but that the weekly inspections would be done by the Clerk and a small team of Councillors/Residents. The Clerk will report serious defects immediately and brief Council via a regular Agenda item.

Cllr Rex presented a set of Inspection Documents that will be trialled. Following trials a formal procedure will be presented at the next meeting.

A resident reported that dogs were still being walked off their leads in the Playing Field. Cllr Rex said that he would seek advice from the Dog Wardens.

The same resident stated that there were a number of very low branches around the field. Cllr Roger George will investigate and remedy the problem.

### **1953 PLANNING MATTERS**

Cllr Lyndon Jones reported that no applications have been received since the last meeting.

**i) Local Development Plan.** NCC is not yet at the planning stage where we can let them have our formal objections about a candidate site for residential development around the Scout Hut. Cllr Tony Rex said that he had already e-mailed comments.

### **1954 COMMUNITY EVENTS**

**Newport 2010.** Cllr Tony Rex said that he hoped that there would be a 'Summer Event' but the funding available from Newport 2010 would not cover it. However, Council has sufficient funds for such an event. Cllr Roger George said that a fete/sports would be an advantage for the whole community but someone was needed to head a team to drive it. It was suggested that a letter could be published in Community First to test opinion and find a 'manager'.

### **1955 PAYMENT OF ACCOUNTS**

Cllr Roger George presented the following items for payment.

1	Clerk's salary Jan/Feb/March 2010	£ 360.72
2	Tax due Jan/Feb/March 2010	£ 90.18
	Sub Total	£ 450.90
3	Football Field rent for 2010 *	£ 60.00
4	Annual Audit fee (MAZARS)	£ 158.62
5	Purchase of OVW Practitioners Guide	£ 22.00
6	Relocation of Clerk's filing cabinet etc.	£ 20.00
7	Bulbs for Village Green	£ 7.00
	TOTAL	£ 718.52
*	Paid in advance under Standing Order provision	

Cllr Roger George proposed that the above payments be approved. Cllr Sam McFadzean seconded the proposal that was agreed unanimously.

### **1956 CORRESPONDENCE**

The Clerk presented the correspondence list to Council. No issues were raised.

### **1957 AUDIT REPORT**

Cllr Roger George reminded Councillors that Llanvaches had been selected by Mazars for a special detailed audit this year. He had circulated the Auditors Report which said –

The Council should undertake a Risk Assessment, which should consider both Financial and Operational risks. This should be formally reviewed on an annual basis and the results minuted – refer to One Voice Wales Practitioners' Guide for further information.

#### **Other Matters :**

1. The minute of approval of the accounts should refer specifically to the approval of the Annual Return, Section 1 (Statement of Accounts) and Section 2 (Annual Governance Statement) as these constitute the statutory accounts
2. The Council should ensure that it has up-to-date Standing Orders and Financial Regulations in place (refer to latest OVW Model Documents). These should be formally reviewed at least every three years.
3. The Council should review the level of Fidelity guarantee cover to confirm that it is appropriate in relation to the risks faced by the Council.

4. Please ensure that all additions to Assets during the year are recorded in the Register and included in the total value of the assets shown in Section1, box12.

The Chairman gave Councillors a copy of an Example Risk Assessment Schedule provided by OVW. After discussion it was clear that much of the 4 page document was not applicable for us and many of the questions were more suited to Councils with much greater turnover. It was agreed that the document would be revised and a practical schedule produced. When this schedule is approved the Council Meeting that annually reviews the risks will be defined.

A copy of *Governance and Accountability for Local Councils* has been obtained from OVW – delivery is awaited.

The Model Annual Governance Statement provided by Mazars was examined. Councillors concluded that we could answer all questions positively and that each had been considered but not in the formal prescribed manner. It was agreed that the formal statement will be prepared and reviewed and minuted each year when the Final Accounts are approved.

It is many years since the basic and general Standing Orders have been reviewed. A copy of *Standing Orders for Local Councils* will be obtained. Using this booklet and the Governance File, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations specific to, and suitable for, Llanvaches Community Council will be produced. The Chairman said that he would undertake this task with the aim of presenting papers for debate at the AGM in May.

The Fidelity Guarantee has been reviewed annually whenever the proposed Insurance Schedule has been examined. The current level is thought to be well in excess of Council's need but no premium saving can be achieved because the premium is banded and we are in the bottom band. In future the insurance decisions will be detailed in the Minutes.

Council could not understand why the comment had been made about the Asset Register. It will be noted and the Register will be circulated to Councillors after each change.

### **1958 FINANCIAL MATTERS**

The Responsible Finance Officer (Cllr Roger George) presented the Accounts to Date and the Budget for the Financial Year 2009-10. The forecast position for 31 March 2010 is close to the Budget. After detailed explanation of the figures by Cllr George there were no questions.

Cllr Tony Rex said that he had been told by NCC Finance that our Concurrent Grant for 2010-11 will be £1,702 and that a Precept of £20.00 has been agreed which will give an income of £4,660 from the Precept. Council was reminded that the large increase in Precept has been made to build reserves to enable replacement of the Climbing Frame in 3-4 years. The Concurrent and Precept will be confirmed in due course.

### **1959 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

**Clerk's Role – Confirmation in Post.** Cllr Tony Rex reported that on 22 September 2009 the Clerk had been employed in the post for 13 weeks, so confirmation was overdue. Cllr Roger George proposed that Council confirm the Clerk's appointment. The motion was seconded by Cllr Kay James and agreed unanimously by acclaim.

### **1960 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday 20 April 2010

The meeting closed at 9.10 p.m.