

OLD ST MELLONS COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held in the Village Hall, Newport Rd,
Old St Mellons at 7.00pm on Thursday 14th June 2012

Present:

Chair: Mrs D Rees

Councillors: Mr R Blackmore	Mr L Phillips
Mrs A Davies	Mrs J Rogers
Mrs R James	Mr D Stroud
Mrs S Johns	Mrs S Williams

Clerk to the Council:

1 Apologies for absence.

None.

2 Declaration of interests.

Forms were issued to each councillor for them to complete regarding declaration of interests.

2.1

3 Minutes – to approve as a correct record of the minutes of the Meeting held on the 24th May 2012

3.1 The Minutes of the last meeting were approved unanimously and signed as such.

4 Matters arising from the minutes of the 24th May 2012

8.2.1 PC Tracy Elliott was invited to give the police report to the meeting.

Between 1st May and 14th June 2012 there had been one burglary, no reports of criminal damage and six reports of antisocial behaviour.

Operation Perception had been run in the area and was a police initiative to knock on doors and speak to residents about matters that concerned them.

Feedback would be provided at the next meeting. Initial feedback related to antisocial behaviour in Wern Fawr Lane and parking near St John's College. One warning had been issued relating to cannabis use in Parkstone Road.

A councillor noted that underage youths had caused a problem in the playing fields. PC Elliot responded that regular patrols were undertaken in the field and the surrounding area. The Chair suggested that the police contact the Youth Service to ask for their assistance with underage drinking in the area.

A councillor stated that youths on mopeds had been causing a nuisance. She queried whether the local Texaco garage still enforced their policy to not serve fuel to off road bikes. PC Elliot stated that she would remind the garage about this matter.

The Chair thanked PC Elliot for attending the meeting and presenting her report.

8.2.1 Cllr Stroud – hall agreement all signed and sums paid.

8.4.1 Chair – see agenda item 12

8.4.3 Chair -Trees: limbs cut down

Cllr Rees declared an interest re playing fields

Cllr Davies declared an interest re playing fields

Lawnmower gone for service.

DS-football users have cut grass, H&S issue

Chair – flexible approach: will speak to Mr Ghuman: if insured re public liability, can he continue to do this?

12.2 Police surgeries started. PACT notices have been taken down from noticeboards and the website.

Open Awareness Day? DS: no, no further updates.

7.3 Chair: positive meeting with Cardiff Planning dept. Large no. of objections' substantial press coverage. Application to be heard in August or September 2012.

DS: Cost of additional copies of 'Voice' subscription. Agreed for two copies to be shared/fed back to CC. Meeting agrees with approach.

Job Spec – clerk and caretaker – Chair: 3 people interested in clerk role. N Winstanley to continue in finance role. The Chair stated that interviews would take place and councillors were asked if they wanted to be included on the interview panel. Panel confirmed as Chair, Cllr James and Cllr Rogers.

12 Playgroup –Chair: no to sand and water in village hall. Letter to be sent re responsibilities and the termination of their contract.

12.2 St Ederyns Churchyard

DR declared an interest

RJ declared an interest

AD declared an interest

Burial fees: Dennis of Summers Funeral Directors has expressed an interest in Summers administering the graveyard. Further details to be obtained for the next meeting re. what this would entail and whether there would be a charge for the service. Meeting agrees that Chair write to him.

Chair: Request to inter the ashes of the late mother at the churchyard. Strong family connections with St Edeyrns as in-laws have been interred there. Wants to buy a plot for late mother. Meeting expresses sympathy but stated that she does not meet the relevant criteria: to be living in OSM or worshipping within the Monmouth Archdiocese. Unanimous decision: no to approach/proposal.

5 Local Residents

Under Standing Order 84 the meeting was for a public session. Issues raised to be considered by Council.

6 Highways and Planning

There were no new planning applications.

7 Finance

7.1 The Chair read out the Finance Report for the period ending 14th June 2012.

7.2 The Chair stated that various cheques needed to be signed by the councillors.

7.3 The Chair raised the request by Nicola Winstanley for back payment of the clerk's allowance from November 2011, the total sum of £70.00. It was agreed that, as this was stated in the clerk's contract, the payment would be made.

7.4 The meeting agreed that the allowance would now be split between the Clerk and the finance clerk at a rate of £5.00 each per month.

7.5 The Chair read out the Annual Return to the meeting. This included details of receipts, payments, cash, investments and balances brought forward as at 31 March 2011 and 31 March 2012.

7.6 The Chair read out each section of the Annual Governance Statement for the councillors to vote upon. The meeting agreed unanimously to Sections 1 through to 8 (Section 9 was not applicable as the councillors were not trustees.)

7.7 The meeting approved the accounts under 9/3 of the regulations within item 7 of the agenda. The Form would be signed by the Chair and the finance clerk and then be sent to the external auditor.

7.8 Cllr Stroud asked why the council received such a large rates bill. The Chair replied that she had checked this issue with the County Council in the past. Their rules stated that community councils were not entitled to a reduction as they were not vested in the community such as a village association. However, she agreed to ask about it again.

8 County Councillor Reports

8.1 The Chair invited Cllr G Phillips to provide her report but she was not present. Cllr Len Phillips stated that Cllr Georgina Phillips should have been invited but was not. The Chair stated that this was very difficult time as the council did not have a clerk. Cllr L Phillips responded that Cllr G Phillips was already attending another meeting in any event.

8.2 The Chairman reported that she had attended a meeting the previous Thursday regarding the Gypsy, Traveller planning application on Druidstone Road.

8.3 Cllr Rees reported that a large beech tree had fallen in high winds at Beechtree Park. It was around 130 years old and may have been affected by a fungal infection. Cllr Rees added that it was planned to keep some of the trunk of the tree to be used as a plaque to show where the last beech tree had stood in that area.

8.4 Cllr Rees stated that four trees remained at the Hendre Gadno site. She noted that Bellway Developers had made a request to remove these remaining trees and added that she had already received a complaint from a neighbour regarding loss of privacy.

9 Working Party Reports

9.1 Cllr Stroud reported that no meeting had yet taken place but that a meeting would be called shortly and would report back to the council meeting. Cllrs Stroud, James, Johns and Blackmore would attend the meeting.

9.2 Cllr Stroud drew the meeting's attention to ventilation issues in the village hall. It was thought that this issue was caused by a lack of proper ventilation. Cllr Phillips asked whether existing ventilation ducting could be utilised. Cllr Stroud stated that it was originally used for gas central heating but that it was both inefficient and very expensive to run. The Chair asked about obtaining a pole to open the slats in the high windows from the original window manufacturer.

9.3 Cllr Davies raised the matter of the growth of the bushes around the tennis court. Cllr Phillips replied that this work was listed within the grounds-man's job description and that there were specific instructions in this regard. The Chair noted that recent poor weather may have hampered these works and agreed to speak to the grounds-man about the matter.

9.4 The Chair raised the matter of a raised manhole cover at the playing fields. Cllr Johns added that she had to reseal the cover recently as it had become loose and was a hazard due to the surrounding grass obscuring its location. It was agreed that the Chair would write to the neighbour Mrs Thomas and ask her to make it safe. The Chair would also agreed to contact Welsh Water by phone and letter regarding this matter. The meeting agreed that the grounds-man be instructed to cone off the affected area to alert users to the hazard and that the manhole cover area be turfed subsequently.

10 Appoint Working Parties for Finance and Media

10.1 The Chair stated that both Finance and Media were discussed openly in council meetings and questioned whether the council required separate working parties for these matters.

10.2 The Chair asked that the council website be kept as up to date as possible. Cllr Davies noted that more information was needed for this to take place.

10.3 The Chair stated that the photograph of the councillors taken that evening would be placed together with contact details into the notice-boards and also on the website.

10.4 The Chair proposed that Rhys Gregory be approached to act as webmaster and keep the website up to date. The meeting agreed to this proposal.

11 Appoint Representatives for One Voice Wales and the Village Association

11.1 The Chair stated that one person was needed for One Voice Wales. They would attend meetings and receive training. Cllr James was appointed to this role. The meeting was informed that a Code of Conduct training course was being run by Cardiff Council and was taking place on 11th July 2012 between 4pm and 7pm.

11.2 The Chair stated that one person was needed to represent the council at the Village Association. Cllr Stroud was appointed to this role.

11.3 The matter of managing hall bookings was raised. It was agreed that Cllr Johns would undertake this role for a period of two weeks in the absence of an appointed clerk.

12 QEII Fields in Trust Celebrations

Cllr Davies left the meeting at this point.

Cllr Davies was then invited by her fellow councillors to remain in order to observe proceedings.

12.1 The Chair noted that the council needed to sign documents in connection to this matter at some point in the future

12.2 It was noted that Rhodri Edwards had agreed to attend the 12th July meeting. Mr Edwards had explored the possibility of holding these celebrations at the same time as the summer fete but stated that it was too close to that date to finalise arrangements.

12.3 The Chair stated that she had made a request for a member of the royal family to open the playing fields.

12.4 Lyn Davies had been approached but was busy with the Paralympic team in the autumn.

13 Freedom of Information

13.1 Cllr James provided the councillors with a draft copy of the community council FOI document. This had been drawn up by a previous clerk with direct reference to Cardiff Council guidelines. Cllr James ran through the document's contents and the items that would be required in the final document.

13.2 Cllr Davies stated that the allowance for the Chair is noted in the document. She noted that it was not actually taken/used in reality. It was noted that councillors could receive expenses if they submitted a claim.

13.3 Cllr Rogers stated that the community council village plan had been updated via existing records of what had been achieved e.g. minutes of previous meetings. Cllr Davies asked for a copy of the updated plan to be forwarded to the councillors.

13.4 Cllr James asked whether Standing Orders could be discussed during the meeting. The Chair replied that this was a huge job and that it might need to be spread out over future meetings.

13.5 Cllr James discussed items that would be included in an FOI request. These included financial policies, Standing Orders, the services offered by the council and income/expenditure.

13.6 The Chair thanked Cllr James for her work on this agenda item.

14 Job specifications and conditions of the Finance Officer

Item 14 was moved to the end of the meeting after agenda item 17. The public were excluded from the discussions at that point (9.15pm).

14.1 The Chair discussed the newly created role of Finance Officer and their duties. A job specification was required for the role of responsible financial officer. Discussion took place regarding whether the clerk to the council or the finance clerk would be the responsible officer.

14.2 The Chair agreed to contact the Monitoring Officer at Cardiff Council to seek advice regarding who would be in charge of the line management of employees and would obtain a written response.

14.3 Discussion took place concerning the separation of the roles of the clerk and the finance officer.

14.4 The Chair informed the meeting that the clerk would retain the use of the mobile phone and laptop and that the finance officer would use their own PC.

14.5 Discussion took place regarding the workload of the finance officer and whether the hours worked would reduce once the role settled in alongside the clerk's role.

14.6 It was agreed that the role of finance officer be remunerated at £3,999 per annum for 30 hours' work per month. A new contract of employment would be drawn up to include terms and conditions. It should state that the contract is subject to review of contracted hours in six months' time.

14.7 Cllr Davies noted that the official date for the change of role was 1st June 2012.

14.8 The Chair stated that contracts of employment for both the minutes clerk and the finance clerk were to be drawn up by the date of the next meeting.

14.9 Cllr Stroud agreed to pass a copy of the clerk's contract of employment to the Chair.

14.10 The Chair informed the meeting that responses had been received following the placing of an advertisement for the job of minutes clerk. An application and CV had been received and it was hoped that further firm applications would be received over the next two weeks.

15 Notice board at Bluebell Drive

15.1 The Chair noted that the previous noticeboard had been vandalised and subsequently removed.

15.2 Cllr Davies stated that she would support this but that a different location was needed.

15.3 The Chair stated that the Village Association be approached to see if funding was available for the new noticeboard. Subject to this funding being available, the relevant planning permission could be lodged regarding its siting.

15.4 Cllr Davies declared in interest re. the Village Association and agreed to follow up the grant application with the Village association.

15.5 Cllr James noted that a dispensation request could be made to the County Council solicitor to allow members of the Village Association to discuss matters at community council meetings. The Chair suggested that this matter could be raised at the Council's Code of Conduct training meeting on 11th July 2012. councillors to contact Cardiff council to arrange attendance.

16 Correspondence

16.1 Cllr Davies queried the procedure re. correspondence received i.e. who responds and how. The Chair replied that all correspondence is discussed at community council meetings and a decision is taken by the meeting re. responses where appropriate.

16.2 It was noted that councillors were able to view the Correspondence file.

17 Items for next meeting

QEII Fields in Trust
St Edeyrn's burial ground administration
Standing Orders-amendment
FOI policy -progress update

It was agreed that the proposed local government measures would be brought as an item in the September 2012 meeting.

18 Date of next meeting

The next meeting will take place on Thursday 12th July 2012 at 7.00pm

The meeting closed at 9.45pm