

# *Michaelston-y-Fedw Community Council*

Minutes of meeting held on Wednesday 1<sup>st</sup> March 2023 at Michaelston Village Hall

## **Members Present:**

Councillor Mr C Rowlands

Councillor Mr D. Schofield

Councillor Mr L. Meringolo

Councillor Mr N. Hallett

Councillor Mrs L Cohen

Councillor Mr C. Walford

Newport City Councillor Mr A Screen

Machen Community Councillor Lee Cecil

## **Apologies for absence**

Mr Gareth Davies

## **03/23/01 – Minutes of the previous meeting**

- The minutes of the January meeting with proposed as correct by Councillor Cohen and seconded by Councillor Rowlands.

## **03/23/02 – Matters arising**

- Declaration of interest to be acknowledged at the beginning of future meetings.
- Potholes – following on from February's meeting it was asked if there were any updates from Councillor Howells on this matter. Councillor Screen agreed to follow this up.
- 20 mph speed limit – despite this coming into force in September 2023 the road through Michaelston-Y-Fedw is excluded. A document has been circulated from the Clerk outlining the plans. It is felt that the village meets the criteria set out in that it has a church, village hall and a pub as well as being a residential area. Councillor Screen will look into this again for the Community Council and added that this is a Welsh Government decision and not NCC.

## **03/23/03 – Police Matters**

- There were no Police in attendance at the meeting this evening and no Police report has been received.

## **03/23/04 – Planning**

- No new planning applications at present.

- Email received with a Teams meeting invite for 07/03/23 regarding the Local Development Plan. Members have already attended meetings in person so there is no need to attend.
- The resident's application for a judicial review into Newport's decision process will not proceed. It was agreed unanimously that there are however grounds for a complaint to be lodged with NCC as the Community Council had requested that this matter be called into committee as some 120 residents had lodged their objections to the original planning request. Should this matter not be resolved to a satisfactory position then the 2nd stage would be to take the matter to the Ombudsman.
- Councillor Walford advised that a planning application had been submitted for the property known as Flat Holme which is situated just beyond the Michaelston-y-Fedw boundary, and it was felt that the Community Council should have been consulted given the close proximity. It was agreed that the Community Council would draft a letter of support for the application.
- Concern was expressed about work being carried out at the old showground field by the owner of the farm park. A complaint has been made to Caerphilly Council who promise a response within 84 days. Traffic is heavy around the farm park and during half term Farm Park staff were in the lane directing traffic with walkie talkies. It was agreed by all that the Community Council should have been consulted on this matter given the proximity of the work which is located within Caerphilly Council.

#### **03/23/05 – Roads, Hedges & Rights of Way**

- Potholes were raised in Matters Arising.

#### **03/23/06 – Correspondence**

- The matter of the Biodiversity Diversity Report was raised, and it was agreed that this would be added to the agenda of a future meeting. Chair, Councillor Hallett agreed to review the original report and provide a highlight summary of action points for consideration. Councillor Screen advised that he had recently attended a meeting at the Riverfront regarding the Road to Nature in Coed Kernew which has been cleared to create an area of biodiversity for educational use and local residents' use and also referenced the site off Barrack Road.

#### **03/23/07 – Finance**

- Metro bank account is now up and running and in light of the change of Clerk for the Community Council from Mr Lawrence Russell to Mrs Kirsty Best it was agreed unanimously that Kirsty Best is to be added to the online banking and to have a debit card. Documents confirming this request were signed by Chair, Councillor Hallett and Councillor Walford.
- One Voice Wales – Invoice received for £47.00 – payment approved.
- Kaspersky internet security - £34.99 to review for the year, discussions surrounding this and other options considered following which it was agreed that Norton 360 Deluxe would be purchased for the coming year.
- HMRC credit – There had been a previous fine, made in error, which has resulted in a credit on the council's tax account. At HMRC's request this has been cleared by withholding tax on

the Clerk's salary, this has now come to an end. Future Clerk's salary will now be subject to tax being paid in the normal way.

- Budget Review – The following are currently unpaid.
  - Community Hall Rent – invoice has been requested.
  - £750.00 Cemetery Maintenance – invoice to be requested from Jennifer.
  - £500.00 Maintenance for Community Hall - invoice to be requested.
  - £1050.00 Councillor Wages – all councillors have declined in writing to take this.
- The charging point for electric vehicles has still not been installed, agreement for this still to be undertaken and to note that the Community Council is putting money aside for this.
- The current underspend is to take into account.

£350.00 - New gate on the car park.

£360.00 - Councillor training.

£3000.00 – ANPR Cameras – invoice to be raised by MiFi (Declaration of interests from Councillor Schofield & Mr Lawrence Russell) – request approved by remaining 5 Counsellors in attendance.

### **03/23/08 - Other**

- Email correspondence has been received regarding merchandise for the Coronation from the Royal British Legion and this will be forwarded to Councillor Cohen.
- The purchase of a mobile phone for Community Council as currently Mr Lawrence Russell's private number appears on the website, it was agreed that a Smartie contract at approximately £4.00 per month would be purchased.
- Councillor Screen advised that the NCC Budget had been passed yesterday, 28.02.23, with 12 voting against it. There is underfunding of £3 million from Welsh Government but some money has been found to prevent the loss of some services including the charity Growing Spaces based at Tredegar House. There is however the proposal of the reduction of black bag waste collections from every 2 weeks to every 3 and statistics were given regarding the percentage of the contents of the average black bag with 25% being food waste and 15% being miscellaneous items including small electrical items. There was recognition and agreement that recycling needs to be promoted and an example of where Caerphilly Council give cash prizes to households who actively recycle. Councillor Screen advised he would take this back as a recommendation. All agreed that the proposed reduction in black bag collections would increase the problem of fly tipping which is a constant problem within the area and yet despite good evidence NCC and local Police have failed to prosecute offenders despite fly tipping being a criminal offence.
- Councillor Screen also advised that there would be an increase of 8.5% for Council Tax which was an improvement on the 9.5% which had been proposed, he also advised that Newport has one of the lowest rates in Wales.
- Councillor Screen advised that he is planning to hold a Surgery in April and Councillor Gareth Davies was confirmed as the point of contact to arrange this.
- Defibrillator - it has been recorded that the battery in this is running low and that it is to be repurposed. A further defibrillator is located up at The Farm and enquiries will be made as to whether this is accessible to the public.

### **03/23/09 – Chairs Report**

- The issue of the burden of the Community Council Clerk's role had been raised with NCC in light of Mr Russell's resignation from the role, it was also acknowledged that a number of Community Council's find themselves without a Clerk due to the increasing burden and Welsh Government bureaucracy.
- The resignation of the local Councillor in Peterston was also raised and that their replacement may incur similar problems. A meeting has been requested, date to follow.
- A meeting was attended by 3 of the Councillors recently which was seeking views on the future development plans for Newport.
- Mr Lawrence Russell's last meeting as Clerk was recognised with thanks from all for his thoroughness and reliability throughout his years of service in the role.

**02/23/10** The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2023