

MINUTES OF CAERWENT COMMUNITY COUNCIL HELD 13TH JANUARY 2011

Present: P Murphy (Chairman) P Kidger
B Counsell P Lewis
G Cousins K Swift
K Evans D Vosloo
D Hedley

In attendance: L McKeon, Clerk to the Council
Pc A Turner
B Greenland, Cabinet Member, Modernisation, Enterprise
& Communication, MCC
K Beirne, Chief Officer, Regeneration & Culture, MCC

Members of the Public: 14 members of the public were in attendance

M3523 APOLOGIES

The Chairman announced that Councillor Nettleship would not be attending as he was unfortunately in hospital. The Council wished him well and hoped for a speedy recovery.

M3524 15 MINUTES PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Mrs Edwards queried why not everyone had been sent a letter from MCC re the consultation on the Closure of School Lane. She was of the opinion that villagers were not aware of the proposal. Councillor Counsell informed the public that this issue has been talked about for several years and mentioned many times recently in the newsletter. The Clerk confirmed that notices had appeared on all nine community noticeboards and also on lampposts in the area. Mr Bob Smith handed over a 4 page petition listing residents who do not want the Lane closed and a copy of this will be sent to MCC by the petitioners. The Chairman agreed to talk to Mr Davies in Highways re the consultation process.

Mrs Slater congratulated the Merton Green Action Group on their achievements so far. Mrs Thomas informed the meeting that the issue will now be heard in the High Court on Tuesday 18th January where Barratts will say that the Group have held them up in the selling of their houses. The Chairman informed the meeting that the legal advice is that it would be unwise to discuss this matter at this meeting as it is now up to the courts to decide. The matter will go to the Licensing Committee of MCC in February.

Mr Spooner asked if the Community Council could consider making a donation to the Merton Green Action Group for their legal costs. The Chairman agreed that we check the legal position on this.

M3525 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 9TH DECEMBER 2010

These were approved as a true record.

M3526 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor G Cousins
Councillor P Kidger
Councillor P Murphy

Merton Green Action Group
Village Hall/Playing Fields Association
Caerwent Community Centre Committee

M3527 MONTHLY POLICE REPORT

Pc Turner reported on thefts from local farms and the Village Hall. There had been another laser beam incident

M3528 KELLIE BEIRNE, CHIEF OFFICER, REGENERATION & CULTURE, M.C.C. - CONSULTATION ON FUTURE OF TOURIST INFORMATION CENTRES

Mr Greenland introduced Kellie Beirne who is one of three new Chief Officers at MCC. Kellie Beirne explained that this consultation is not about closing the Tourist Information Centres but about providing up-to-date current information for today's tourists. She explained that there had been a drop in numbers to the 3 Tourist Offices in Monmouth, Abergavenny and Chepstow – figures were 2008/09 133,000, 2009/10 124,000 - Monmouth was worst hit. There had however been 2.8m online visitors in 2009/10. They are making significant advances in technology, digital developments across the board and web development. They are proposing digital portals, a new integrated website and mobile phone text alerts as you enter Monmouthshire.

Mr Greenland added that the cost of providing leaflets in the Tourist Offices during the winter is too high. He felt that local shops and businesses could provide the same information. It was agreed that the new owner of the Coach would be more than happy to provide same.

Councillor Vosloo queried how many staff were employed by the Tourist Office Department. There are 3 Tourist Officers based at County Hall, 5/6 administrative staff plus temporary summer staff.

The Clerk was asked to check with ex Councillor Fox re the copy of the Heritage Lottery Fund report which was given to him so that this can be sent to Kellie Beirne.

Councillor Evans felt that Caerwent is not marketing itself as much as it could be and that the profile of the village should be enhanced. Educational trips to the sites should be encouraged.

Councillor Swift suggested that local groups could be linked in. Kellie Beirne agreed that there would be one umbrella group signposting all others. Councillor Swift suggested that the local filming here should be capitalized. Councillor Cousins queried if people would actually google "Monmouthshire" rather than "Wales". Kellie confirmed that search engines could be tweaked to remedy this. It was agreed that there is also Monmouthshire/Gwent differences confusion.

Councillor Counsell queried if Kellie Beirne could meet to discuss his proposed south walk – she agreed to this.

M3529 MATTERS ARISING

Bicca Common

No progress.

Merton Green

The Chairman advised that due to legal proceedings at the High Court on Tuesday 18th January this matter not be discussed.

Proposed Closure of School Lane

Consultation now gone out. Any comments by 31st January. This had been discussed under Public Participation.

Section 106

Chairman has arranged for us to have access to Section 106 Working Group minutes (they will be online shortly). The Chairman advised that the Area Committee will have to be repaid their £10,000 loan so there could be a problem here in view of the Inquiry result.

Old Gym

Andrew Pullen-Jones of the MoD has now sent to Debra Hill Howells and to us a copy of the Land Quality Assessment (copy circulated to all Councillors). He hopes that matters can now proceed quickly this financial year.

Bradbury Farm, Crick (Play Area/Allotments)

Reply from Debra Hill Howells, Head of Asset Management:

“As you are aware the land that we had identified as a possible location forms part of Bradbury Farm. Whilst Rebecca has agreed terms with the tenant, we have yet to receive confirmation if the tenant wishes to proceed and if so the timescale of his departure. Until this is resolved it is unlikely that we will be able to satisfy the communities’ requirements for an allotment. We are however always prepared to consider any suggestions that the community wishes to make.”

Provision of Allotments

Councillor Counsell reported that he had had a very fruitful site meeting with Mr de Winton of the MoD at the land on the A48 opposite eastgate junction. It is one and a half acres, somewhat overgrown with trees, it would take some effort to get it back to planting ground but if an Allotment Society was formed he was sure this was achievable. Councillors Swift and Counsell will liaise about this issue. Clerk to confirm to MoD that we are interested. The Clerk pointed out possible access issues – she was asked to check with Christian Lowe in Highways.

Councillor Cousins suggested that the old allotment ground on Merton Green could be a possibility for a site. If possible this was felt to be an excellent idea and will be considered alongside other sites.

Cas Troggy Road Land/The Cwm/Bridleway around MoD Site

Councillor Counsell had also suggested to the MoD that they transfer to us the land on the left along the stream (for approximately a mile) to be used by walkers and also The Cwm corner for a possible picnic site. Mr de Winton was happy with these suggestions. Clerk was asked to write to the MoD to confirm our interest. Councillor Counsell suggested that his walk incorporates The Hill Fort, Dinham Castle and Runston Abbey. Councillor Counsell did point out that there could be problems with funding now due to the Inquiry result. It was agreed that Councillors Counsell/Swift/Kidger and Lewis meet on site.

Caerwent House

No further progress.

Steps Cottage

No progress.

Village Enhancement Scheme

Bulbs will be planted soon.

Footpath/Land Attached to Great House Farm

Kellie Beirne understands that the Community Council desires a permissive right of way to become a public right of way. She has asked each department to give a statement and there has been no decision as yet. There has also been close consideration regarding our request to retain the land. It will have an impact on MCC capital receipts but she understands the historical importance of the site. Councillor Counsell pointed out that if the land was taken out of public ownership this would be asset stripping and the land would no longer be available to future historians and archaeologists. Kellie Beirne reconfirmed that she is sympathetic to our arguments and as soon as she has more information she will let us know.

Cwrt Morgan Adoption

Chairman will report on this next month.

Provision of Public Conveniences in Monmouthshire

Letter received from Roger Hoggins, Head of Infrastructure & Sustainability, confirming that the ownership of the site be offered to us for a nominal sum. In the event of us seeking to sell or lease the asset MCC will be entitled to half of the sale or

lease value. Confirmation that we will receive £1200 per annum which is subject to review after three years. Also legal costs arising from the transfer incurred by each party would be paid by each party. Clerk written back to Mr Hoggins stating that in our original letter we did not agree to pay for any legal costs – awaiting reply.

Play Area, Lawrence Crescent

Clerk had spoken to Tim Bradfield who is responsible for this Play Area - there is no money for any repairs unless some Section 106 monies comes from Merton Green. He confirmed that he would have no problem in the Community Council providing a seat for the area.

Dog Waste Bins (Roman Wall)

No further progress.

Welcome to Caerwent booklet

Councillor Lewis confirmed that the Church are awaiting a response from the Chapel on this.

Crick east Bus Stop

Clerk had written to the Transport Passenger Unit Manager at MCC enquiring if any improvements are likely at this bus stop – awaiting reply.

Crick lighting

Clerk written to Street Lighting Manager – awaiting reply. Councillor Swift is preparing information for the Street Lighting Manager along with a petition. She asked for this Council's support with this – this was agreed.

West Entrance into Caerwent (lack of lighting)

Written to Highways Manager – awaiting reply.

Queens Elizabeth II Playing Fields Challenge

This Council confirmed that they are happy to nominate the Playing Fields.

M3530 PLANNING

**2010/01115 Extension & Alterations with Associated Works,
Romanesque, Caerwent**
This Council recommends Approval

M3531 COUNCIL TO CONSIDER EXPENDITURE RE FROSTBITE CONTRIBUTION OF £2,000

It was agreed to discuss this at the next meeting and in the meantime to seek legal advice as to whether we can provide monies to the Merton Green Action Group. Councillor Kidger pointed out that he had definite proposals for the spending of this money. Councillors were asked to send their proposals to the Clerk which she can list and these can then be properly discussed.

M3532 FINANCE

Council agreed the following payments/receipts as per Finance Schedule for January 2011:

Payment:	£1,103.23
Receipts:	£11,833.00

M3533 CORRESPONDENCE

1. **MCC**
Invitation to Drop-in Meeting at The Woodlands Tavern, Llanfair Discoed on Tuesday 11th January between 3.00 p.m. – 6.00 p.m. to discuss public rights of way improvements in Wentwood. Placed on boards.
2. **NICK JONES**
Invitation to Poetry Evening at 8.00 p.m. on Friday 21st January in the Westgate Barns, Caerwent. Placed on boards.
3. **DAVID SWANSON, DEVELOPMENT CONTROL MANAGER, MCC**
Invitation to a Planning Training Session 17th March 10.00 a.m. – 3.00 p.m. at County Hall. Councillors to let Clerk know if they are interested.
4. **MINUTES/PUBLICATIONS**
The Monmouthshire Network – GAVO Newsletter
Open Spaces newsletter
Countryside newsletter, MCC
Severn Area Committee Minutes, MCC
The Voice Newsletter, One Voice Wales

M3534 HIGHWAYS/RIGHTS OF WAY

Potholes on lane to Llanfair Discoed. Slurry runs off from fields. Gullies blocked. Lighting needed at end of Cas Troggy – Chairman reported that this issue had been investigated many times previously but to no avail - this is due to the fact that it is a trunk road and needs Welsh Assembly jurisdiction.

Councillor Evans reported that some lights at the bottom of Cwrt Morgan had been disconnected and it is now quite dangerous. The Chairman agreed to look into this.

Potholes throughout main street in Caerwent.

Councillor Cousins stated that all green lights on Ash Tree Road had been disconnected. The Chairman stated that he had previously contacted Barratts about this but will do so again.

Councillor Cousins reported that the rubbish situation at Severn View block on Lawrence Crescent is unacceptable. It appears that occupiers are not aware of when to put their rubbish out and so consequently it is piling up and is a health and safety issue. There are no recycling bags left out at all. There was apparently only one information leaflet for the whole block - they need confirmation of when to put their rubbish out. The area is also not big enough – it is the same size as when there were only 4 flats (now 16). Clerk asked to contact Glyn Edmunds.

Councillor Counsell reported digging again in the Triangle Field at eastgate. The Chairman agreed to find out what is happening here.

Councillor Cousins had been approached by Mr O Jones requesting a newsletter article from 2004 re wildlife sites. The Clerk confirmed that she had written to Mr Jones stating that said article was unavailable but she had sent him a copy of the minutes of the relevant meeting. It was suggested that with Mr Jones' interest in wildlife sites he also set up a group for Caerwent similar to the one set up by Councillor Swift in Crick.

M3535 REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS

The Chairman agreed to send to Councillors a copy of The Charter which has been received recently in MCC.

Councillor Kidger reported that the Village Hall had been subject to serious flooding and burglary. He is in the process of obtaining quotes for insurance purposes.

Chairman Date