

**Marloes & St Brides Community Council**  
**Minutes of the meeting held at 1930 on 26<sup>th</sup> September 2022 in Marloes Village Hall**

*In attendance:* Louise Beal (LB), Christopher Jessop (CJ) Maren Hamre (MH), Peter Smithies (PS), Cllr Reg Owens (RO)

*By formal invitation:* Dan Shaw PCC

*Community residents:* Brian Johnson, Malcolm Cullen, Emma Truelove, Julie Truelove, Nick Skudder, Sophia (Manager, Lobster Pot PH)

**1**

*Apologies:* Camille Titley (CT), Nicki Meharg (NM)

*Declarations of interest:* None

**2 Minutes of August meeting**

The previously circulated minutes were approved; proposed by LB seconded by CJ

**3 Matters arising**

*Broadway fibre broadband* Nothing reported from St Brides. PS advised that, instead of the run of overhead poles originally proposed by them, Broadway have now agreed that they will mole plough the fibre cable route between Stembridge Cottage and Winterton.

*Highways*

- Potholes on the C3102 between West Hook and Martins Haven car park reported at August meeting.

**Action:** CJ will take up with PCC Highways after September 30<sup>th</sup>, when Skomer boat season ends.

- Speeding in Glebe Lane: complaints from various residents. Could there be extra signage or speed bumps?

**Action:** CJ contact Claire Williams PCC Highways who assisted us over 20 mph speed sign, etc.

- Foxdale entrance: complaints that vehicles leaving the site do not check for traffic before pulling out. Should there be white lines?

**Action:** CJ also raise with Claire Williams (see previous)

- Church Close sign fallen into disrepair.

**Action:** CJ also raise with Claire Williams (see previous)

- Glebe Lane: heights of hedges impairing road user visibility.

**Action:** CJ also raise with Claire Williams (see previous)

**4 Community Issues**

*{Possible suspension of Community Council meetings after October 10<sup>th</sup>}*

*{Possible disbandment of Community Council and disposal of assets}*

Mr Dan Shaw of Pembrokeshire County Council confirmed the following points:

1. Pembrokeshire County Council is not a parent organisation to Community Councils.
2. PCC Democratic Services oversee Community Council elections and can assist with filling Community Council vacancies; they have also in the past tried to resolve issues such as when a split Community Council refused to meet.
3. PCC Standards Committee has a rôle in overseeing the operation of Community Councils as regards individual and joint conduct.
4. The PCC generally has no power to put a Community Council clerk in place; were they to do so as a result of a General Review of Competence (which they would be extremely reluctant to initiate) they would insist on recovering full costs which would be very high.
5. The PCC did conduct a Community Review in 2006, reporting in 2009. The proposal to merge Marloes & St Brides with Dale was rejected by the Boundary Commission on review.

6. In the light of demographic changes, the PCC is minded to initiate another Community Review; but that will take years.

PS noted Dan Shaw's observations that there were all over the county and indeed all over Wales increasing problems with Community Councils finding and keeping clerks; PS pointed out that this was down to the ever increasing bureaucracy which proportionately increased a clerk's workload, and therefore their costs, without benefiting the Community Council in any way. It did not seem at all sustainable to be spending half of a Community Council's precept on paying the Clerk, when a lot of the Clerk's efforts would be time wasted wading through red tape.

RO was very opposed to Community Council mergers. A merger of Herbrandston and St Ishmaels had been proposed; but it had been so obvious that this would never have worked. RO agreed that red tape was a problem; meanwhile, the duties of a clerk called for a professional approach and therefore ideally one should be looking at not the minimum wage but say £15/hour.

CJ asked if, in the light of this Community Council's immediate predicament, there was anything that could be done to allow it to continue to operate legally without a clerk?

Dan Shaw confirmed two important points:

- Community Councils are only required in law to meet once a year: some Pembrokeshire Community Councils held no meetings, face-to-face or online, throughout the pandemic lockdowns. Therefore, this Community Council could continue operating with monthly public meetings suspended until the appointment of a new clerk.
- There is no formal requirement for all correspondence to a Community Council to be logged and reported.

LB thanked Mr Shaw on behalf of all present for these two invaluable pieces of advice; Mr Shaw then withdrew from the meeting.

#### *Marloes Village Stores & Post Office*

The shop will close permanently on Fri 30<sup>th</sup> September. A vote of thanks for the excellent service to the community provided by Mr and Mrs Lucas and family over the last seven years was proposed by CJ, seconded by PS: all in agreement.

Commencing 6<sup>th</sup> October, the Post Office van will be calling weekly, Thursdays 1-2pm. It will park beside the chapel. This is a temporary arrangement which could be reviewed were a new shop to open.

Mr Nick Skudder confirmed that Mr Jason Slater who owns the Lobster Pot was definitely interested in converting part of the pub into a shop; he had not taken the idea any further pending the closure of the existing shop for fear of causing upset. Mr Skudder was asked to reassure Mr Slater that no offence would have been taken.

Sophia who is manager of the Lobster Pot said that Mr Slater had asked her to gather information about the existing operation of the shop; she was advised that the general books and the Post Office accounts should be available for inspection as part of the commercial estate agent's particulars. Via her, Mr Slater was recommended by councillors to pursue funding for setting up a shop in the pub to which he might be eligible, such as small business diversification and community asset grants.

#### *Village Green/Footpaths/Beach*

- *Village Green*

- *Clock tower footpath* No further information from Vicky Sewell of PCNPA.

**Action:** CJ hoping to attend Apple Day at St Brides (8<sup>th</sup> October 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.) where he will hope to have a word.

- *Beach Cleaning*

#### *Recreation Area/Village Hall*

- *Recreation Area*

**Action:** still pending; depends on other outcomes

- *Village Hall* Broadband now fitted.

*National Trust*

Mark Underhill: request to attend October meeting re Marloes Mere plans. Noted.

## 5 Correspondence

Further to advice received from Dan Shaw at the meeting, resolved to cease blanket logging of all incoming communications.

## 6 Planning Matters

*NP/22/0367/FUL Foxdale Guest House & Campsite, Glebe Lane, Marloes, Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire, SA62 3AY Erection of replacement toilet & showers, upgrade of 5 touring pitches to mobile pods, change of use of redundant annexe to linked holiday unit and upgrade/replacement of ancillary static caravan to linked holiday static caravan (12 months operation).*

No further information.

*NP/22/0186/FUL – Musselwick Farm - Creation of new field access with new 4.6 metre wide gate on north side of road between Marloes & Martins Haven to assist agricultural operations.*

No reply to our email pointing out approved plan errors.

**Action:** CJ to chase.

*NP/22/0240/FUL – Lower Ripperston, St. Brides* No notification received.

*NP/22/0314/FUL – Philbeach Farm SA62 3QU Conversion of redundant RAF wireless building, which has been used for agricultural storage but is now in a bad state of repair, into 2 holiday lets.*

No notification received.

*Dale Airfield: Lawrence Landfill lorry movements.*

No further information.

*Planning Applications/Determination List* CJ advised: nothing new as at 16.00, 26<sup>th</sup> September

## 7 Financial Matters

*Audit* LB advised that she had spoken to Wales Audit and that we were one of very many Community Councils which would be late returning their audits. Expected that the revised deadline date would be October 31st.

**Action:** resolved that LB would meet with CT and review what data was already available, before seeking assistance from Mrs Evans.

*Bank* Yvonne Evans advised 25.09.2022 that LTSB account balance is £4,863.55.

*Laptop computer for Clerk* On hold.

*Training for councillors* On hold.

*Councillor reimbursement* Yvonne Evans advised recently that councillors need to sign a declaration that they will not be claiming the statutory basic expenses to which they are entitled.

**Action:** LB to collect necessary signatures and statements for joint forwarding.

#### *Donations/payments*

Resolved that the standard donations/payments due at this time of year should be processed as and when LTSB has processed the signature change paperwork.

**Action:** When he is next in Haverfordwest, CJ will call at LTSB branch and enquire after progress.

### **8 Clock Tower**

New electricity account to be negotiated.

**Action:** LB to work with CT on this; meanwhile, PS would look into the idea of having the clock disconnected from the electricity mains. The chiming could be disabled by the simple expedient of not winding the chiming mechanism weight up; or, it could probably be disabled overnight by means of e.g. a lanyard connected to the appropriate part of the mechanism which would be activated daily by the Clock Attendant; or, Smith's of Derby might advise that the Night Silencing mechanism could be operated using battery power: it is, after all, only dependent on the running of a low power motor for very few seconds. Of course, the internal and external clock lighting would be lost; having said that, the clock as built never had internal and external lighting. The crucial deciding factor is that just for standing charges alone, any energy provider would be billing the Community Council for at least £220 per annum.

Maintenance

**Action:** PS to check with Smith's of Derby re possible dates.

### **9 Clerk's vacancy**

CJ advised that the first expression of interest we received some three weeks previously was withdrawn by the applicant, possibly on travel distance grounds.

Currently we have one expression of interest (received 23.09.2022) and one formal application (received 26.09.2022)

**Action:** resolved that we will invite both applicants to interview as soon as possible; also, that any community member is welcome to assist with publicising the Clerk's vacancy by means of social media.

### **Date of next meeting**

Monday 10<sup>th</sup> October 19.30 Marloes Village Hall

There being no other business, the Chair closed the meeting at 21.10.