

COSHESTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL
Minutes of the meeting held in the Village Hall
At 7.30pm on Tuesday 2nd January 2024

Present: Cllr N James (Chair); Cllr T Wilson; Cllr S Myatt; Cllr G Mills; Cllr N Gullam,
Cllr N Burgess, Cllr M Fielding

In attendance: PCC Cllr T. Hodgson, S Scourfield (Clerk), 9 residents

2456 Apologies

Cllr S Gibson.

2457 Declarations of interest

None

2458 Approval of Minutes 7th November 2023

Minutes of the meeting were approved – Proposed by Cllr S Myatt
Seconded by Cllr T Wilson

2459 Matters Arising from those minutes.

2459a (2450a) It was confirmed there had been no update from PCC's Neil McCarthy with regards to the litter bins. The dog bin had been received and would be sited in the near future.

2459b (2450b) The chair commented that he had spoken with Sue Richards from the Cosh Callout and she confirmed that she agreed with the funding agreement, and also that she would be contacting PAVS.

2459c (2450d) It was confirmed that the Council had been advised that it would be better to apply for the Enhancing Pembrokeshire Fund. It was agreed to include the funding for the Cosh Callout in the application.

2459d (2454e) Salt bin on Batemans Hill – The chair confirmed he would advise Pembrokeshire County Council of a suitable location to position a salt bin.

2459e (2455c) Village Hall Wi-Fi – It was noted that the security box was now unlocked to allow physical access to the router. The council will arrange for a new SIM card to be installed and would then assess if this is the best option or if the Wi-Fi router should be replaced with a better system.

2460 Finance Report

2460a Account Debits

Date	Description	Amount
	Owen & Owen – Land rent for overflow car park	£63.37

	PCC – Election Charges	£255.00
	SSE – Pavilion Electricity	£27.00
	DWR Cymru – Pavilion Water	£17.00

2460b **Account Credits**

Date	Description	Amount
	PCC – Precept	£2,441.00

2460c **Account Balances**

Date	Description	Amount
04.12.2023	Main Account	£5,479.56
04.12.2023	Deposit Account	£7,020.14
	Total	£12,499.70

2461 2024/2025 Budget and Precept request

The chair informed members that the estimated spend for 23/24 was approximately £7,835 with a precept of £6,725. It was commented that there was an income of £3,500 per annum from the solar panels but there was likely to be an increase in grass cutting costs along with increases in water and electricity costs.

It was **Resolved** – Precept submitted would be £7,725 for the 24/25 Financial year.

Proposed by Cllr M Fielding

Seconded by Cllr S Myatt

2462 Planning Applications

23/0701/PA – Major Development – Solar Farm, West Farm, Cosheston – There were no objections noted from Councillors although it was commented that traffic management would be welcomed. The Council had received an email from a resident with regards to the incorrect date on the public notice which had been forwarded to the planning authority.

2463 Green Apple Cross

An email of complaint had been received from Spencer Smith with regards to Green Apple Cross and parts of the site being used for holiday lets. He states within his email that he has also raised the issue to the planning authority.

A representative of Green Apple Cross was present at the meeting and offered the following information:

National Parks had visited the site and they were fully up to speed with the activities on the site. He commented that there were no holiday lets on the site. He stated that before COVID there was the opportunity to stay in a gypsy

caravan through Airbnb but, as the kitchen facilities had now been removed, it is no longer rented out. He commented that there is predominately camping on the site with composting toilets and woodfire showers, with the site offering educational resources which includes tree pruning, growing vegetables, and managing a meadow. He welcomed everyone to attend the site to see the setup.

Members commented that, as the Community Council had no powers over planning and can only make representation, they would leave it to the Planning Authority to assess.

2464 Cosheston Strikers Juniors Contract and outstanding rent

The Chair stated that he had been in contact with Gareth Williams of the Cosheston Strikers with regards to payments for the 22/23 season and renewal of the contract. He commented that Cosheston Strikers had tried to make payments via bank transfer but, due to issues with the details provided, they were unable to complete the payments. The Chair stated he had been informed that Cosheston Strikers do not use the field for training purposes, only use the changing rooms to provide toilet facilities, and will almost certainly cease to exist after the end of this season.

It was confirmed that there was an outstanding balance of £780 for the 22/23 season and an amount needed to be agreed for the 23/24 season. It was questioned if the current contract had start and end dates, as if not, then the last signed contract would remain valid. The Clerk confirmed that, unless there had been a written termination for that contract from either party, it would still be valid.

It was noted that, as the Cosheston Strikers only have 8 teams in their league, there would not have been much use of the field and facilities. It was agreed that there should be a reduced fee for the 23/24 season and that the outstanding payment due would be £1,000 for the 2 seasons.

2465 Correspondence

2465a An email had been received from residents in relation to the financial status of the Community Council. Residents would like further information on the unexplained reduction of council funds.

The chair provided the following statement:

“There is an ongoing investigation with Dyfed Powys Police where councillors have been advised that they are not to discuss the details of the investigation until it has concluded.

With respect to the conduct of Councillors in this matter, once the police investigation is concluded, the Community Council will issue a full statement based on the evidential facts. To comment further at this stage could impact the investigation being undertaken by Dyfed Powys Police.

To reassure members of the community, actions have been taken to secure the financial activities of the Council and a new appointment of an experienced Clerk has been put in place.”

Following further comments from residents present, the chair confirmed that there was no question of any wrongdoing with regards to the conduct of any past or present member of Cosheston Community Council. A resident commented that the Council’s deposit account total was £20,145.50 for the last 10 months and it was questioned if this should have increased even if by pence. It was noted that, in general, some deposit accounts paid little or no interest depending on the level of charges and fees. This will be investigated.

All present were informed that there is a process to be followed but if anyone was not happy with the outcome of the investigation and still had any questions then, once the police investigation is complete, the Ombudsman could be contacted to raise any concerns. It was stated that the Audit Office of Wales could also be contacted.

2465b Bike Shelter in Village Hall car park – It was confirmed this was being arranged and the application would be submitted shortly. The flooding in the carpark was raised and it was agreed that this would be discussed at the next meeting of the Community Council.

2466 Matters for information and discussion at the Chairs discretion

2466a Cllr N Gullam questioned if the condition of the container at the pavilion had been addressed. Cllr N James commented that it was being dealt with.

2466b Cllr M Fielding asked if the PCC gulley suckers could attend the village to address the drains, specifically the one near to the pub. Cllr T Hodgson commented that she would speak with PCC.

2466c Cllr G Mills questioned when the Cosheston sign would be erected. Members commented that it had been installed but that it was a lot smaller than the original and has been moved closer to the pub.

2466d Cllr N James informed members he would find a suitable location for the salt bin on Batemans Hill. He also stated that he had received quotations for speed signs and would pass them to Cllr G Mills for the funding application.

The meeting closed at 8.22pm