

M12/2015

The following are the **Minutes** of the monthly meeting of Johnston Community Council held on **14 December 2015** in Johnston Institute.

Present: Cllr N James (Chairman), Cllr J Jeffries, (Vice-Chair), Cllrs B Morgan, A Harvey, K Rowlands, C Wilkins, E Warlow, G Grey, T Young, R Pratt, F James, Mr Paul Davies, (Assembly Member), and two residents of Johnston.

Apologies for absence: Cllr J Ruloff.

7885. At this point, the Chairman invited **Paul Davies** to address the meeting.

Cllr Morgan highlighted the problem of the narrow pavements near Johnston Farm which were a danger to pedestrians, especially those in wheelchairs or with push-chairs. Although the Welsh Government had indicated that work on improvements should begin in the current year – 2015-2016 – it was believed that no approach had yet been made to the owner of Johnston Farm regarding land purchase etc. The new Bulford Road roundabout had resulted in constant traffic through the village as there were now no traffic lights to provide a brief pause and this had made matters worse.

The problems with the junction between St Peters Road and Langford Road were also mentioned. Councillors and residents believe that these are likely to get worse once the new school is in operation especially if the proposed housing development takes place. This had been raised with Pembrokeshire County Council (PCC) and the Welsh Government and purchase of the old church hall to allow building of a new roundabout had been suggested but the idea had not been accepted. It was said that junctions onto the main A4076 were frequently grid-locked at the busiest times of day. It was agreed that the road through the village was probably the busiest in the county and the whole situation needs to be reviewed. It was also mentioned that the Community Council could no longer discuss matters directly with the Trunk Road Agency (TRA), but had to go through the Welsh Government. Cllr Rowlands reported that officers at the recent Police Forum had suggested writing to the Officer in Charge at Milford Haven to report all road problems.

Mr Davies said that he would raise these matters with the Minister.

On a related matter, Cllr Morgan said that a Private Member's Bill was to be discussed in Westminster to ban parking on pavements – a constant problem in Johnston.

Councillors were also concerned about the loss of Sunday bus services and the affect that this had on numerous employees, for example those in the hospital, care-homes etc. Mr Davies said that he would make enquiries about this.

Cllr Grey again highlighted the problems at Withybush Hospital where services were being gradually removed. There seemed to be a lack of organisation and the Health Board was not paying attention to the concerns of residents. It was agreed that the planned replacement of the WRVS café in Withybush by the Costa Coffee chain was a short-sighted move.

Cllr Harvey mentioned the lack of facilities for patients' relatives at Glangwili Hospital. For example, maternity services had been moved from Withybush before any improvements had been made at Glangwili resulting in fathers having to sleep in their cars and even miss births.

Cllr Rowlands mentioned another example of lack of foresight where a large part of the car-park at the Health Centre in Milford Haven had been sold off for building.

Cllr Grey asked why free bus passes were available at 65, free television licenses at 75, but passports were not free until aged 86. Mr Davies promised to make enquiries.

Cllr Grey also mentioned the Marine Policy for Wales. He reported the loss of mussels in St Bride's Bay – possibly due to pollution from tankers? A letter had been sent to the Welsh Government by the Council and a copy of the response was given to Mr Davies.

Cllr Jeffries asked about plans for the road through Newgale. Mr Davies said that the future of the road was still under discussion between PCC and the Welsh Government. It was agreed that the road was vitally important for the county.

Cllr Warlow reported that the trains were much busier lately and there had often been standing room only available. Cllr Morgan said that the problem was that Arriva Trains did not have access to more rolling stock – the company had only the carriages that they currently leased.

Cllr Rowlands mentioned the dispute over the Church Road car-park and the delay in the Land Registry settling the matter. He agreed to provide Mr Davies with a copy of the latest correspondence.

Cllr James referred to Welsh Government plans to reorganise local government in Wales and said that it was vital to retain Pembrokeshire. It was agreed that no one wanted to return to the old Dyfed arrangement. It seemed that reorganisation was for political purposes and not for the benefit of people. Mr Davies pointed out that “Pembrokeshire” was an important brand-name these days. The Clerk said that an email petition opposing the proposals had been set up and he would let Members have details.

Mr Davies said that he would try to address all these issues and report back to the Council in due course. He was thanked for visiting by the Chairman on behalf of the whole Council.

7886. Minutes of the November meeting. It was proposed by Cllr Rowlands and seconded by Cllr Grey that these should be accepted as a true record and this was agreed.

MATTERS ARISING

7887. Langford Road development. No further news on this scheme at present.

7888. Church Road car-park. It was confirmed that the Land Registry was still considering this matter. (See Minute No 7885 above). The Members and the Council’s solicitors cannot understand why this is taking so long to resolve when the matter appears to be so clear-cut. After discussion it was agreed that the Clerk should write to the Land Registry to query the reasons for the delay and to ask what points Mr Bishop’s solicitors had raised. (Copies to be sent to Paul Davies AM, Stephen Crabb MP and Messrs Price & Kelway.)

7889. Narrow pavements near Johnston Farm. See Minute No 7885 above.

7890. Skateboard Park. The Clerk reported that he had discussed insurance cover for the noise-barrier but the company would not cover this until they knew how much the repairs would cost. Amendments to the cover can be made once details are provided.

The question of payment for repairs to damaged play equipment still needed to be settled with PCC. Also, the broken sign on the MUGA needed to be dealt with. Cllr Rowlands will request a meeting with PCC about these matters and about playground inspections.

7891. Bus shelter. As the refurbishment of the Railway Inn had now been completed, the Clerk was instructed to contact PCC again to see if a bus shelter can be erected near there.

7892. Cash-point at the NISA shop. As agreed at the November meeting, the Clerk had written to the Welsh Government and was awaiting a full response.

7893. New School. Cllr Rowlands said that further discussions on the proposed wetlands area were to be held. Cllr James said that he had not yet heard any more about the old Roll of Honour board. Cllr Wilkinson said that there had not been time to get an engraved vase for the retiring head-teacher. After discussion, it was agreed that Cllrs Young and Pratt would try to arrange for something to be produced in time for the Carol Concert on 16th December. Cllr Wilkinson will purchase a bouquet of flowers.

It was proposed by Cllr Rowlands, seconded by Cllr Pratt and agreed by all that the school should be reimbursed £25 for the cost of printing service sheets for the Carol Concert.

It was mentioned that the signs showing that the Langford Road is closed, were too far out into the road at the junction with St Peter's Road. This has been reported to PCC but no action taken. The whole road is accessible at nights and weekends.

7894. Playground Inspections. See Minute No 7890 above.

7895. Road and pavement problems. These are being dealt with on a rolling programme but Cllr Rowlands agreed to ask for the path at the junction of St Peter's Road and the Langford Road to be given priority.

7896. Flower borders. An email had been received from PCC offering to plant flowers in the village "as before" but at a cost. It was proposed by Cllr N James and seconded by Cllr Rowlands that this should be accepted and this was agreed. The Clerk was instructed to ask PCC to clarify exactly where planting would take place and if any additional planters could be provided.

7897. Disabled Access to Close Field. It was reported that the bushes by the steps had now been cut-back though it was unclear who had done this.

7898. Sunshine Club. As before, Cllrs Rowlands and N James to discuss this.

7899. Code of Conduct. The Clerk said that PALC (Pembrokeshire Association of Local Councils) had replied to his request for a simplified document saying that the flow-chart provided was the best help available. Members were asked to look at the Code and to use common sense about what and when to declare interests.

7900. Remembrance Day. The Clerk said that he had written to PCC with a copy to the Police asking in advance for the top end of Church Road to be closed to traffic for the duration of the Remembrance Service in future years. No response had been received and Cllr Rowlands agreed to take this up with PCC.

For convenience, it was agreed that a cheque for £40 should be made out to Bronwen Parratt for her and the trumpeter. The Chairman will pass this on.

The Chairman said that he was having a stainless-steel bar made for the War Memorial in order to hold wreaths in place.

7901. Parking bays at Glebelands. The repainting is still to be done – Cllr Rowlands to query with PCC.

7902. Sign for Hall Court. Cllr Rowlands to query progress.

7903. Millennium Wood. The Clerk was instructed to query the contractor's path-maintenance plans for 2016.

7904. Japanese knotweed. The Clerk said that he had written to the Public Protection Department at PCC but had not received a reply. Cllr Rowlands said that PCC thought it was a matter for Natural Resources Wales. Reminder to be issued to PCC by the Clerk.

7905. Rats, Church Road. The Clerk said that he was also awaiting a reply on this point. It was reported that the resident had now also made a complaint to PCC.

7906. Draft Charter between PCC and Community Councils. The Clerk reported that further discussions are being held between PALC and PCC in order to produce an acceptable agreement.

7907. Defibrillator. Further enquiries to be made by the Chairman.

7908. Remuneration of Council members. The changes proposed by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales were considered. After discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Rowlands and seconded by Cllr Grey that the following determinations should be adopted:

- **Determination 1** – to ensure at least some expenses in representing the community can be met –up to £100pa.
- **Determination 5** – to permit the payment of an allowance for the care of dependents to be met where necessary in order to allow members to attend meetings.

This decision was **formally resolved** by the Council. The Clerk will be responsible for keeping records, making payments and for publishing details each year.

The matter will need to be reconsidered annually.

7909. Christmas lighting. This is now in operation. Some Members commented that the trees were rather spindly. It was agreed that Alun Evans, (The Vine), and Dai James, (Johnston Farm), should receive £20 each for their work in erecting the trees and their eventual removal.

7910. Tree planting, Bulford Road. It was reported that this had now begun.

7911. Wales Marine & Fisheries Department. As instructed, the Clerk had written regarding the points made by Cllr Grey at the November meeting and the response had been passed to him and copied to Members.

CORRESPONDENCE

7912. Planning:

- **15/0785/PA** – extension, 5 Bulford Close. Conditionally approved. Noted.
- **15/0768/PA** - shared use path, Lower Dredgeman Hill Farm .Conditionally approved. Noted.
- **15/0668/DC** – discharge of conditions, land west of Lawrence Landfill. Part refused, part approved. Noted.

Other correspondence:

7913. Resignation of Cllr Ruloff. With great reluctance, this was accepted by the Members. It was agreed that the Clerk should write to thank her for her work on behalf of the Community. The Clerk was authorised to begin the process of finding a replacement Member.

7914. Letter from Police & Crime Commissioner – survey regarding the Precept. Noted.

7915. Letter from PCC – **rubbish collections over Christmas & New Year.** Noted – though this does not affect most of Johnston.

7916. Letter from **PLANED –offer of Action Planning workshops.** Following discussion it was agreed that the Clerk should respond saying that although not necessary now, the Council might like to take up the offer at some time in the future.

7917. email from **PCC – survey on Budget.** It was emphasised that it was important for everyone to complete this. **(Closing date 4 January 2016).**

7918. email from **PCC - temporary closure of footpath,** Glebelands to Water Treatment Works. Noted.

7919. Letter from **Groundwork Wales - grants for green spaces.** Although the current offer has closed, there will be further opportunities and Members were asked to think about possible projects. It was agreed that Community meetings need to be held to decide what use should be made of the additional land acquired next to the Millennium Wood.

7920. Invitation from Pembrokeshire Girl Guides to Annual Review and Awards Presentation. Noted.

7921. Letter from Johnston Football Club regarding dog mess and rubbish. Cllr Rowlands will speak to PCC about this.

7922. Letter from PCC – Precept for 2016-2017. Budget Forum to be held at January meeting. Some additional costs have already been identified: insurance, flowers, solicitors (Church Road car-park) and proposed bus shelter.

7923. Letter from PCC – **Governing Body of Mary Immaculate School.** Nominations for Governor. No nomination made.

7924. Zurich Insurance quotation for 2016. The Clerk said that the premium had increased by £261 to provide cover for the new War Memorial. Members agreed to accept the quotation.

FINANCE

7925. Accounts for payment. It was proposed by Cllr Morgan and seconded by Cllr Jeffries that the following amounts should be paid:

- £213.57 to the Clerk, December 2015 salary.
- £53.40 to HMRC, PAYE, December 2015.
- £60.00 to Mr Banfield, bus shelter cleaning.
- £1786.27 to Zurich Insurance – premium for 2016.
- £283.58 to the Clerk, expenses for the period to 4/11/15.
- £40.00 to Bronwen Parratt – see Minute No 7900 above.
- £20.00 to Alun Evans – see Minute No 7909 above.
- £20.00 to Dai James - see Minute No 7909 above.
- £25 to Johnston School – see Minute No 7893 above.

The following items were admitted at the Chairman's discretion:

7926. Cllr F James reported that the **Christmas trees for sale on the bridge on St Peter's Road** were obstructing pedestrians. Cllr Rowlands said he would follow this up.

7927. Cllr Morgan said that in many areas of Wales, householders were responsible for sorting the **recyclable waste** before it was put out on the pavement. No doubt this will be introduced in Pembrokeshire at some point.

7928. Cllr Rowlands reminded Members about the **Carol Service** to be held in the Baptist Church on 16th December.

7929. Cllr Rowlands also announced that Mr Kersey from K O Carpets had very generously donated **£1000** to the new school and had promised further donations in future years.

The meeting closed at 9.20pm.

Signed.....Chairman

Date.....

NEXT MEETING: MONDAY 11TH JANUARY 2016