

Minutes of the monthly meeting of Johnston Community Council held on 10th February 2020 in Johnston Institute.

Present: Cllrs Neil James, Jeffries, Rowlands, Spilsbury, Young, Jones, Philpott; Peter Horton (Clerk);

Apologies : C’llrs Warlow, Wilkins, Morgan, F. James, Pratt.

0197 – Declarations of known Interests

C’lr Rowlands re-stated his ongoing personal and prejudicial interest in the agenda item about the land opposite the Johnston Institute, due to an ongoing unrelated boundary dispute with the other party.

0198 – To receive the minutes from the January 2020 monthly meeting

The minutes were accepted as an accurate record, and signed by the Chair (proposer C’lr Jeffries, seconder C’lr Rowlands).

Matters arising

0199 - Discussion of potential issues surrounding school transport from Johnston to Milford Haven

Neither C’lr Rowlands nor the Clerk had received copies of the legal opinion promised by P.C.C. in the last meeting. C’lr Rowlands was hopeful that better progress might be forthcoming from the deputy director. C’lr Neil James was clear that P.C.C. was wrong in the stance it was taking. C’lr Rowlands was concerned at the apparent failure to observe proper safeguarding measures, and was convinced from comments he had heard in County Hall that it was a simple case of trying to cut budgets.

C’lr Jones had not received feedback on any of the points promised by P.C.C. following the January meeting. She expressed concern over the intention to use service buses for school transportation, as she felt that these did not provide the same level of security for children.

In accordance with the advice offered in the response letter from the W.G. Minister, Clerk to write to the Monitoring Officer to raise concerns over the apparent intention of P.C.C. to ignore the clear statutory guidance from W.G. Copy of letter to be sent to the P.C.C. Chief Executive, Ian Westley (proposer C’lr Neil James, seconder C’lr Rowlands).

C’lr Jones also raised the matter of free transportation being provided for pupils attending the Welsh medium school in Haverfordwest, and queried whether this could be interpreted as discrimination.

0200 – Bus shelter / seat outside NISA Shop

C’lr Rowlands informed Members that the matter was still in hand with the P.C.C. Transport Manager, and that there had been no further progress to date. He thought it might be helpful to try and arrange a meeting between the landowner and P.C.C. in order to move the matter forward.

C’lr Neil James asked whether there might be mileage in moving the bus shelter to the other side of the bridge, somewhere close to the garage? It was noted that there was now a crossing point close to this location. Matters left with C’lr Rowlands to pursue as possible.

0201- Close Field Skatepark

C'llr Rowlands informed Members that he thought a possible grant funding source had been identified. He was currently awaiting a meeting with Neil McCarthy of P.C.C., who was currently working to progress the matter.

0202 – Overhanging tree, junction of Church Road / Hall Court.

Matter still with C'llr Fran. James to forward photographs to Clerk.

0203 - Discussion of purchase of WW1 commemorative memorial seat

C'llr Spilsbury had been speaking with the fabricator, and was still awaiting a costing. C'llr Neil James commented that care needed to be taken with metal seats, to ensure the level of surface finish was adequate to ensure a long life. He had been looking at possible alternative materials, such as plastic recycled benches, but had not found anything suitable in terms of design. He also mentioned the need to ensure that the bench would be properly secured to its base / into the ground, which would need to feed into the type and design of seat chosen. He mentioned a thermally sprayed aluminium finish used for some industrial applications which has a long-term corrosion protection, and might be suitable.

It was left that C'llr Spilsbury would continue to pursue a costing, and circulate this round for information when available.

0204 - Discussion of action to discourage badger activity on sports field

Matter still in hand with C'llr Pratt, who was due to speak further with Sean Tilling of P.C.C. to seek a quotation for altering the gates.

0205 - Fly tipping, land adjacent to Glebelands Field.

C'llr Spilsbury reported that the fly-tipped rubbish was still there. Clerk to chase up again with P.C.C. to arrange for its removal.

0206 - Car in car park opposite the Institute.

C'llr Rowlands informed Members that he had discussed this with officers in P.C.C., and been told that they were 'looking into' it. He failed to understand the delay, and undertook to chase up the matter again. C'llr Jones mentioned that there was another vehicle behind the bus shelter in Glebelands.

Members to pass details of any dumped vehicles known to them to C'llr Rowlands, for this to be passed to P.C.C.

0207 - Discussion of possible unauthorised scrap merchants in Village

Still in hand with P.C.C. Planning Enforcement.

0208 - Johnston in Bloom.

C'llr Philpott had completed the certificates. It only remained to get the shields done. C'llr Neil James expressed the view that it was unfair for Members to have to undertake this type of work, and it would be good to consider putting it out to a commercial printer in future years. Members in agreement to consider this for next year.

0209 - Discussion of problems due to closure of cycleway boardwalk

Members reported that the barriers at both ends of the boardwalk had been dislodged in the recent stormy weather. Clerk to report this again.

0210 - Discussion of Highway safety issues, Langford Road

C'llr Rowlands commented that the matter had been ongoing for a considerable time. P.C.C. had advised that the process for implementing a 20mph speed limit along Langford Road was under way. C'llr Rowlands said that P.C.C. officers had commented that they would be willing to put traffic calming measures in, but had received objections from residents along Langford Road. C'llr Jones queried the extent of any such survey carried out, as she had not been asked about this, and knew of residents in Langford Road who had not been approached.

C'llr Philpott mentioned the fund-raising group that had recently been set up in Burton to address speeding / traffic problems there. She wondered if J.C.C. could do something similar. The Clerk explained that in Burton, arrangements had been made to set up a working group with P.C.C. / B.C.C. and local residents involved. This was initially to fund and arrange installation of two speed-activated signs, but could extend to further measures in the future.

C'llr Neil James commented that there was a need to look at funding a new speed-activated sign in Langford Road, and wondered if it might be beneficial to ask for a working group similar to that in Burton. It was recognised that any initiatives would need to be done in conjunction with P.C.C. Signage, speed bumps, chicanes, were all discussed as possible measures that could be considered.

C'llr Rowlands reiterated the comment made in previous meetings, that J.C.C. would need to be proactive in pushing for any measures it felt were needed.

Members agreed that C'llr Rowlands should approach P.C.C. to convey the message from J.C.C. that Members wish to look at all possible measures to improve the situation, and ask for their input in progressing this. In response to a query from C'llr Young, C'llr Rowlands also undertook to check if any funding might still be available from the Safe Routes to School government funding source.

0211 - Discussion of problems with cars at end of Brickhurst Park

The Clerk confirmed that the land was currently unregistered.

Various Members had made enquiries regarding ownership of the land, none of which had been conclusive.

C'llr Rowlands suggested that J.C.C. should apply to register the land in its name. However, C'llr Neil James felt that more enquiries should be made before taking on something that could be a potential liability. He commented that, prior to making any such application, it would be necessary to engage a solicitor and get the land surveyed, which would take time and money.

Noting the presence on the land of a sub-station, the Clerk was asked to make enquiries with Western Power to find out if they had any information regarding ownership of the land.

0212 - Discussion of possible request for yellow lines in Hall Court

C'llr Rowlands encouraged Members to pass to him details of any highway-related matters of concern, for him to discuss these with P.C.C.

0213 - Discussion of problems with lighting on footbridge, Langford Road

C'llr Jones reported that the light had now been repaired, but that it was still quite dark and intimidating on the bridge in the hours of darkness. She commented that it could be especially dangerous in wet or icy conditions. Members felt it needed brightening up, possibly by means of an extra light in the middle of the bridge,

replacing the existing orange light with a white one, or by cutting back the nearby bush.

C’Ilr Rowlands undertook to approach P.C.C. to ask about the possibility of putting another light in the middle of the bridge, possibly a solar-powered one.

0214 - Discussion of possible one-way system, Glebelands

The Clerk confirmed that he had passed on the request to P.C.C., and also the photographs that had been supplied by C’Ilr Philpott. No response had been received to date, though it was known that the officer concerned had been off on extended sick leave. Clerk to chase the matter up with P.C.C.

0215 - Discussion of requirement to report on progress towards producing a plan to encourage biodiversity

C’Ilr Rowlands informed Members that an officer had been appointed in P.C.C. to take responsibility for biodiversity enhancement-related issues. He had offered to attend a future meeting to offer advice on this matter. Members asked C’Ilr Rowlands to extend an invitation to him to attend a future meeting. It was also commented that, possibly, this would present an opportunity to ask the officer for advice on the way forward in dealing with the issue of Ash die-back.

Planning

0216 - Applications

19/0954/DC (Discharge of condition 7 (lighting) and conditions 8, 9 and 11 (contamination) of planning permission 19/0048/PA (Proposed residential development of 33 affordable units including parking, open space and associated works); Johnston Cp School, Cranham Park, JOHNSTON, Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire, SA62 3PU- no comments.

0217 - Decisions

None this month.

Correspondence

0218 - P.C.C. – Invitation for nominations to position of Community Governor, Mary Immaculate School – Clerk to respond to re-nominate Mrs. Anne Harvey if she wishes to carry on (proposer C’Ilr Neil James, seconder C’Ilr Jeffries).

0219 - Sustrans – Notification of timetable for replacement of cycle path boardwalk – noted that work is scheduled to be complete by the end of March.

0220 - W.G. – Notification of amendment to Sustainable Drainage (Enforcement) Order 2018 – noted.

0221 - P.C.C. – Notification of expected timescale for cleaning of footpath between St Peter’s Road and The Close – Members noted that work is now complete.

0222 - O.V.W. – Copy of their consultation response to W.G. on Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill – The Clerk informed Members that the consultation carried out had been with certain ‘key stakeholders’ only. This information was to be used to prepare draft statutory guidance, which, it was understood, would then be put out for a full consultation.

0223 - O.V.W. – Notification of Pems. Area Committee meeting scheduled for 7pm, Tuesday 11th February, County Hall Haverfordwest – noted, and C’Ilr Rowlands to attend.

0224 - Milford School – offer of ‘Chat Bench’ for community – Clerk to contact them to ask if the bench can be collected from the school, and let C’Ilr Philpott know if so.

0225 - Keep Britain Tidy – advertisement for forthcoming ‘Great British Spring Clean’ initiative’, 20th March – 13th April 2020 – noted.

0226 - Information Commissioners Office – Notification of need to renew registration – dealt with in ‘Accounts’ below.

0227 - St. Peter’s Church – Request for assistance with grass-cutting costs – deferred for discussion in connection with annual charitable donations in May / June.

0228 - O.V.W. – response to enquiry about pension options – dealt with in agenda item below.

0229 - Wales Audit Office – consultation on proposed audit changes – to be tabled for any necessary discussion in March.

0230 - Zurich – Inspection report for Vine Field – noted. Clerk to check if this inspection is covered by P.C.C. C’lir Rowlands thought it was not.

0231 - W.G. – Information on strategy on minimum pricing for alcohol – noted.

0232 - O.V.W. – Letter inviting renewal of membership for 2020-21 – noted.

0233 - W.G. – Response to letter sent about school transport to Milford Haven – dealt with in agenda item 0199 above.

0234 – P.C.C. – Notification of consultation on emerging L.D.P., which is running until 18th March 2020. Matter to be tabled as an agenda item for discussion in March. C’lir Rowlands informed Members that, due to a conflict of interest, he would not be able to be present for any discussion of the candidate sites off Church Road, and would be represented by another P.C.C. Member instead.

Accounts

0235 - Payments

David Banfield (bus shelter cleaning)	:	£ 60-00
Wales Audit Office (audit fee, 2018/19)	:	£222-75
I.C.O. (annual re-registration fee)	:	£ 40-00

The above items were approved by Members (proposer C’lir Jeffries, seconder C’lir Neil James).

0236 – Discussion of Risk assessment actions required in Community

Matter in hand with C’lir Pratt to obtain a quotation from One Stop.

0237 - Discussion of possible support for purchase of defibrillator cabinet for school

C’lir Jones informed Members that a defibrillator had now been donated to the school. However, they need funding to cover the £525 cost of a cabinet to house it. Members agreed to cover the cost of this, on condition that it would be mounted outside, and available to the public to use (proposer C’lir Jeffries, seconder C’lir Rowlands). C’lir Jones to ask for an invoice to be sent for this sum, made out to J.C.C.

0238 - Discussion of Vine Field play equipment, etc.

C’lir Rowlands had asked for P.C.C. to attend and carry out the necessary work to make the equipment safe. He had been told they would be there the following day. He apologised for not having sought a quotation first, and offered to ask them to hold off pending a quotation being prepared. However, Members were in agreement that the work needed to be done, and as it was for H&S reasons, it was not advisable to delay.

0239 - Discussion of Community Land Trusts

C'llr Rowlands expressed the view that the Community Council was not currently maximising the potential of Community-owned land for the benefit of the community. He felt that this matter should be looked at more pro-actively.

Members commented that there had been no response or enthusiasm from the Sports Association to various initiatives previously suggested.

C'llr James agreed that more could be done, but would need a lot of funding to get it underway and progressed.

Members briefly discussed the possibility of using some land for housing development, to free up funding for other initiatives elsewhere on the land. However, this was not pursued in any detail.

Matter to be discussed with the P.C.C. Biodiversity Officer when he attended a future meeting.

0240 - Discussion of possible litter bin provision at Church Road

Members were in general agreement that there was no particular need for litter bins in Church Road, and that any placed there could generate a fly-tipping problem.

Members made no decision to pursue the matter further.

0241 - Discussion of possible establishment of community vegetable beds

Brief general discussions were had over the possibility of community vegetable beds. One potential location was suggested as the Vine Field, and another at Glebelands Field (though this location was mentioned more in connection with possible allotments, which were recognised as a different matter altogether).

Members left the matter for possible discussion with the Biodiversity Officer.

0242 - Discussion of arrangements to commemorate 75th anniversary of V.E. Day

C'llr Jones informed Members that a meeting of Johnston Community Spirit was scheduled for the following week. They planned to discuss and start co-ordinating arrangements. It was hoped to include various businesses, places of worship, etc. in events over the V.E. Day weekend, and various ideas were being contemplated.

0243 - Discussion of pension arrangements for Clerk

Members agreed to offer the Clerk a 10% increase in salary, to enable him to make his own private pension arrangements (proposer C'llr Rowlands, seconder C'llr Neil James). Clerk to prepare an updated contract of employment for signature in the March meeting.

Any other business

0244 – Rubbish collection arrangements. C'llr Jones had been approached by residents asking if arrangements could be made for them to collect bags, etc., from somewhere in the Village, such as the school or another convenient location.

It was understood that these could be requested from the truck drivers, but they were often coming through too early in the day for this to be a viable option. C'llr Neil James thought that P.C.C. would already drop off bags on request, if they had been telephoned in advance to request this. C'llr Rowlands undertook to check this in P.C.C.

0245 – Footpath between new Hayston View estate and Church Road.

C’lir Neil James expressed concern that this footpath was still not open, despite work having been almost completed. He was particularly concerned at future responsibility for the fences alongside the proposed fence bounding the footpath. Matter to be tabled for discussion in March. In the meantime, the Clerk undertook to find out what the current situation was.

0246 - Discussion of situation regarding land opposite Johnston Institute

There was no discussion this month.

The meeting concluded at 9-20pm.

Next scheduled meeting – Monday 9th March 2020.

Signed.....Chairman

Date.....

