

M03/16

The following are the **Minutes** of the monthly meeting of Johnston Community Council held on **14 March 2016** in Johnston Institute.

Present: Cllr N James, (Chairman), Cllr J Jeffries, (Vice-Chair), Cllrs K Rowlands, G Grey, T Young, A Harvey, F James, E Warlow, R Pratt, C Wilkins.

Also: Chris Angel and Ed Payne, representing Conenergy West Sussex Ltd and David Thomas and Desme Utting representing Freystrop Community Council.

Apologies for absence: Cllr B Morgan.

8008. At this point the Chairman invited Mr Angel and Mr Payne to summarise the position regarding the planned **solar farm adjacent to Pope Hill**. They explained that the scheme had been designed by 3C Energy Ltd but after that company went into receivership, Conenergy had taken over. This had delayed the scheme but they were now meeting with the landowners and communities affected by the plans. The details were as proposed by the previous company and it was hoped to start work in November ready for completion by March 2017.

Cllr Thomas queried how the drop in the feed-in tariffs had affected the amounts of benefits provided to communities from such schemes. Cllr Rowlands said that some proposals had promised benefits which had not in the end been forthcoming. Such promises could be construed by some as influencing the attitude of Community Councils to Planning Applications. He had suggested this meeting in order to clarify the position. The Community Benefit received by Tiers Cross Community was quoted but Cllr N James said that since the subsidy had been reduced, the Council was not expecting a similar level of support. Mr Payne said that definite figures could not yet be provided but the benefits would not be on the scale seen elsewhere in the past. However, he said that the project would certainly go ahead and the company had provided community benefits in all its other schemes. The company would propose one-off payments rather than annual grants. They wanted to give areas the help they wanted, for example, by installing solar panels. Cllr Thomas commented that the hall in Freystrop would not be

suitable for solar panels. It was agreed that both Community Councils would work together to produce ideas that might be supported by Conenergy and Cllr Rowlands suggested that all correspondence should go to both councils.

In answer to Cllr Rowlands, Mr Payne said that the company would not be able to support new projects such as plans for the area of land purchased in recent years by Johnston Council.

It was stated that cabling for the project would be mainly underground apart from close to the grid connection. Cllr Thomas said that there could be difficulties if this crossed the common land area in Freystrop.

The only other possible problem was access from the A4076 which would need to be agreed with the Trunk Road Agency.

The representatives of Conenergy then left the meeting after being thanked by the Chairman for attending and explaining the position.

Cllr Rowlands also mentioned that he was due to have discussions with the company behind the Lawrence Landfill wind turbine scheme about the Community Benefit that had been promised.

8009. Minutes of the February 2016 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

8010. Langford Road development – Exception site for Affordable Housing. (Planning Application 15/0464/PA). Cllr Rowlands referred to the meeting held by residents and said that he was arranging for their representatives to meet with the Chief Planning Officer at Pembrokeshire County Council (PCC). If possible, he would also attend. Cllr N James said that the residents had booked the Institute for another meeting on 16 March 2016. The Clerk referred to the letter from PCC dated 10 March 2016 regarding the Planning and Public Rights of Way meeting to be held on 22 March 2016 at which the application would be discussed. It was thought that Mr & Mrs Brown would represent the residents of Langford Road and it was agreed that Cllr Rowlands would also speak if necessary.

8011. Church Road car-park. Nothing new to report – still working with Council’s solicitors and the Land Registry.

8012. Narrow pavements near Johnston Farm. The letter of 2 March 2016 from Edwina Hart, Welsh Government minister saying that the promised works had now been discounted due to cost was very disappointing to Members. It was agreed that the Clerk should write again emphasising the problem and asking what “alternative options” were being considered.

8013. Skateboard Park. Cllr Rowlands said that PCC had made a generous offer to share the costs of repairing the noise barrier etc. but unfortunately there had now been further vandalism of the Multi Use Games Area (MUGA). Cllr Harvey suggested that anti-vandal paint should be used on the equipment and Cllr Rowlands said that CCTV cameras were being considered.

The Clerk read out the email received from a local resident concerning the play facilities in the Close Field. It was agreed that a response should be sent, sympathising with the request but explaining the costs involved in repairs and upkeep due to vandalism

8014. Bus shelter – Glebelands. Response from PCC awaited.

8015. Cash point at Nisa shop. The letter dated 2 March 2016 from Edwina Hart, Welsh Government minister stated *“We are aware of the problems regarding drivers parking on the footway to access the Nisa shop. My officials are currently confirming land ownership which will enable us to consider what works could be undertaken to rectify the situation.”* Members were unhappy with this response and it was agreed that the Clerk should write again explaining the urgency of the matter. A young girl had recently been hit by a car outside the shop and it was currently the greatest safety concern in the village. It would be raised once more at the forthcoming Police Forum though members were disappointed with the lack of action so far by the Police against inconsiderate drivers parking on the pavement.

8016. New School. It was reported that work was progressing and that Langford Road was fully open once more.

8017. Playground Inspections. This matter is still under enquiry with PCC by Cllr Rowlands.

8018. Road and Pavement problems. These are being discussed with PCC by Cllr Rowlands. It was stated that it was unlikely that the remaining section Brickhurst Park would be adopted by PCC unless the residents could first bring it up to an acceptable standard.

8019. Flower borders. No response received from PCC despite the reminder sent 11/3/16. On a connected issue, it was reported that the new cycle track from the Mormon Church to around Hayston corner had resulted in the destruction of the daffodils that used to flourish there. It was agreed that the Clerk should write to PCC to query this and Cllr Rowlands would also raise the matter. Cllr Grey commented that the flower borders could be created cheaply by using seeds, especially wild flowers.

8020. Sunshine Club. The Chairman and Cllr Rowlands will discuss the matter.

8021. Remembrance Day. Cllr Rowlands said he was pursuing the question of the temporary closure of Church Road during the service.

8022. Parking bays at Glebelands. Cllr Rowlands is still dealing with this matter.

8023. Sign for Hall Court. Cllr Rowlands is pursuing this with PCC though it should have been provided by the developer of the estate.

8024. Japanese knotweed. Clerk to write to the owners – name and address to be supplied to him by Cllr Rowlands.

8025. Rats, Church Road. Nothing further heard about this matter.

8026. Draft Charter between Community Councils and PCC. The Clerk read out the response from the Pembrokeshire Association of Local Councils (PALC) indicating that further discussions are to be held and a document issued next year for consideration by councils.

8027. Defibrillators. As instructed the Clerk had made some enquiries about costs. These appeared to vary from £978 to £2295. The British Heart Foundation normally asked for a contribution of £400+ and further funding should be available after 31/3/16. It was agreed that Cllr Wilkins will speak to the manager of the Nisa shop to see if a machine could be placed on the wall

there and Cllr Rowlands will ask PCC if one could be sited on the Council-owned shops at Glebelands.

8028. Tree-planting, Bulford Road. This is on-going.

8029. Vacant Council seat. The Clerk reported that the vacancy had been advertised in the usual way and that the only applicant was **Martyn Spilsbury**, a local resident who frequently attended council meetings. It was proposed by Cllr Rowlands and seconded by Cllr Jeffries that he should be co-opted onto the Council and this was agreed..

8030. Dog-mess and rubbish, Glebelands field. The Chairman said that a member of the Sports Association had volunteered to empty the dog-waste bins which are to be provided as part of the Shared-Use Path scheme.

8031. Governing Body of Mary Immaculate School. Cllr Harvey said that she was awaiting confirmation of her appointment to this post.

8032. Appointment of replacement Clerk. As agreed at the February meeting, the first applicant for the post was interviewed at length by the Chairman, Vice-Chair, County Councillor and the Clerk on 22 February. The applications from the other two candidates who had submitted CVs were considered but whilst they both had impressive work records and qualifications, it was felt that neither had the experience or knowledge most suited to the Clerk's job. **Mr Peter Horton**, however, met all the criteria which the sub-committee had agreed on and in particular:

- He has many years of experience as Clerk for both Burton and Rosemarket Community Councils.
- He is fully up to date with the demands of the job and with Community Council websites.
- He has no training needs.
- He has experience of PCC and its workings.
- He has useful links with the PCC Planning Department through his work as a part-time Enforcement Officer.
- He is happy to accept the same pay and conditions as the retiring Clerk.
- There are no conflicts of interest involved with the other Councils or PCC.

It was therefore proposed by Cllr Rowlands and seconded by Cllr Jeffries that Mr Horton should be appointed and this was agreed by all. Arrangements will be made regarding the hand-over and Mr Horton will take the April meeting with the former Clerk in attendance to help resolve any difficulties.

8033. Traffic lights at Merlins Bridge roundabout. The Members noted the reply dated 2 March 2016 from Edwina Hart, Welsh Government minister which stated that

“As a result of development growth and increased traffic in the area, the traffic signals at Merlins Bridge roundabout now operate above capacity. My officials are currently planning schemes for funding in 2016/17 and improvement options will be considered as part of this process.”

8034. Street light, 30/32 Church Road. It was reported that this had not yet been replaced.

8035. Joint meeting of Johnston and Tiers Cross Community Councils with the Bolton Hill Quarry management. Cllr Rowlands said that he was reluctant to hold a meeting where only one person's problems would be discussed. However, the Sports Association were now concerned about the height of the spoil heaps from the quarry. These were supposed to be no higher than the railway line but currently the lorries were visible above the tree-line and the noise from machinery was becoming a problem for Glebelands residents. Cllr Rowlands agreed to arrange a meeting. Cllr Grey asked if a site-visit for interested Councillors could be arranged and Cllr Rowlands agreed to request this.

8036. Rubbish from The Meadows Care-Home. The Clerk confirmed that he had asked the manager to deal with this problem and presumed that this had been done.

8037. Wind Turbines at Lawrence Landfill. Cllr Wilkins said that she felt that the illustrations provided with the planning documents had misrepresented the height of the turbines. Cllr Rowlands said that Mr Popplewell of PCC was looking into the matter.

CORRESPONDENCE

8038. Planning;

- **15/1205/PA** – two storey garage, Ashleigh, 30 Church Road. After discussion it was agreed that this should be supported.

8039. Letter from The Planning Inspectorate - new requirement for a developer to consult the Community Council in future before an application for a “Development of National Significance” (DNS) is made. Noted.

8040. email from PCC – **Renewable Energy Supplementary Planning Guidance Consultation** 24/2/16 to 11/4/16. This had been copied to Members who were encouraged to respond.

8041. February **newsletter from Police and Crime Commissioner.** (Copied to all.) Noted.

8042. Letter from PCC – offer of **training for Members on Code of Conduct.** It was agreed that the Clerk should respond querying the length of the course – is a separate meeting needed or could it be included in the usual monthly meeting?

8043. email from PCC – Statutory Consultation – **secondary school reorganisation in Haverfordwest.** (Copied to all.) Members were advised to go to the relevant website if they wished to take part as individuals:

<http://www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk/content.asp?>

The Chairman referred to an email he had received from Jon Coles, Deputy Editor of the Pembrokeshire Herald newspaper regarding the Council’s views on the subject. This was discussed in detail and some felt that the opinions of children should be considered e.g. would they prefer to go to Haverfordwest or to Milford Haven secondary school? It was mentioned that teachers were also concerned about the catchment areas for pupils in the future and also that it appears that the new junior school will not have sufficient places for all Johnston children. After discussion it was agreed that the Clerk should respond to Mr Coles stating that Members did not feel that they had sufficient information yet to make a decision but that the subject would be included on the April meeting agenda.

8044. Pembrokeshire Citizen Advice Bureau – details re **“Pension Wise Service”**. Posters displayed on noticeboards.

8045. Details of **“Sing for Sartori”** events. (Sunday 10th April 3-4.15pm in Johnston Institute). Posters displayed on noticeboards.

8046. email from PCC – **Surface Dressing of Roads**. Only one small section from Ratford bridge affected. Noted.

8047. Letter offering medals to commemorate the **Queen’s 90th birthday**. Noted but not taken up.

8048. email received by the Chairman from Jon Coles, Pembrokeshire Herald. This claimed that the **village sports clubs had not been consulted over the possible changes to sports facilities** mentioned in the last village newsletter. The Sports Association had been approached and did not support this claim. They had been surprised by the suggestion made by Mr Coles. They were keen to continue to work with Johnston Community Council (JCC). it was pointed out that the proposals were at a very early stage. A suitable response had been made to Mr Coles by the Chairman indicating the close ties that had existed over many years between JCC and the sports clubs and encouraging village organisations to become involved in discussions about enhancing facilities.

8049. Play for Wales magazine. Passed to Cllr Young to review.

FINANCE

8050. Accounts for payment. It was proposed by Cllr Rowlands and seconded by Cllr Grey that the following amounts should be paid:

- £509.37 to the Clerk, March 2016 salary plus back-pay for additional hours over recent months.
- £127.20 to HMRC, PAYE. March 2016
- £60.00 to Mr Banfield, bus shelter cleaning.
- £3.43 to SWALEC, Christmas lighting.
- £456.00 to West Wales Pest Control Ltd – mole eradication.
- £2400.00 to Messrs Price & Kelway, solicitors, interim professional charges.
- £864.00 to Sylvan Landscapes Ltd – Close Field skate-park.

8051. The Clerk said that the external auditors had pointed out that the **“Gratuity Account”** held by the council was no longer valid as gratuities could no longer be paid. He suggested therefore that the account should be closed and the balance transferred to the Council’s **“Leisure Account”** and this was agreed.

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

8052. The Chairman said that there were **problems with the drainage of the Glebelands playing field**. PCC were responsible for the culvert but not for the ditch carrying the water away. He suggested therefore that Dai James – local contractor – should be employed to dig out the ditch. The estimated cost was between £250 and £300. This was seconded by Cllr Pratt and agreed by all.

8053. The Chairman said he had received a request for some help in purchasing a new **flag for the village Brownie Pack**. This was the first ever request made and they always attended the Remembrance Day services. It was proposed by Cllr Jeffries and seconded by Cllr Rowlands that JCC would fund the whole cost of the flag - £120 – and this was agreed.

8054. Cllr Grey suggested that following criticism in the Pembrokeshire Herald of Mr Chris Overton – **spokesman for the Save Withybush Hospital Campaign** – that a letter of support should be sent to him but Members felt that individual letters would be more appropriate.

8055. Cllr F James asked if an additional post box could be sited in Glebelands to avoid elderly or infirm residents having to cross the main road to the old Post Office site. It was agreed that the Clerk should make a request to Royal Mail.

8056. Cllr Warlow reported **damage to the fence on the cycle track** between the school and the village. It was agreed that the Clerk would contact the Access Officer at PCC about this.

8057. Cllr Warlow said that the **new footpath near Orchard Court** had a dangerous manhole cover set in the middle of the path. After discussion it was

agreed that the work had not yet been completed and that therefore the problem would probably be remedied in due course.

8058. Cllr Jeffries reported that **Bronwen Parratt** had received a **Local Hero Award for Contribution to the Arts** as a result of her work with local school musicians. It was agreed that the Clerk should write to her to congratulate her on behalf of the Council.

The meeting closed at 9.40pm.

Signed.....Chairman

Date.....