

BURTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the monthly meeting held at the Jubilee Hall, Houghton, on Wednesday 6th March 2019

Present: Cllrs Laurence Price, Nia Phillips, Robin Howells, John Mathias, Alun Williams, Derek Jones, John Evans, Iain Wood, Scott Sinclair (vice-Chair); Peter Horton (Clerk).
Apologies: C'llrs Michael Pettit, Paddy McNamara.

Declarations of known interests

None.

Minutes of February 2019 monthly meeting

The minutes were agreed as an accurate record, and signed by the Chairman (proposer C'lr Derek Jones, seconder C'lr John Mathias).

Matters Arising

Sewage disposal, Houghton. C'lr Alun Williams informed Members that he had not yet been contacted further by Welsh Water regarding the issues raised about Foxhall. This to be kept under review. Note made for Clerk to chase up Welsh Water regarding update on their ongoing actions / investigations if nothing had been heard by July.

Members noted that the only number on the fence at the Houghton Welsh Water site was their contact number. It was agreed that C'llrs Nia Phillips / Laurence Price would organise a laminated sign advertising the N.R.W. Pollution Hotline number to place on the site as well.

Hywel Dda. The Clerk informed Members that a holding response had been received to the letter sent out following the February meeting, but that a substantive response was still awaited.

Summer fete. C'llrs Iain Wood and John Evans informed Members that arrangements were progressing slowly but surely.

Impending toll removal, Cleddau Bridge. Mr. Mike Evans was present as a member of the public. He mentioned the 40mph limit on the bridge, but said it was not enforced sufficiently. He commented that traffic coming from all directions makes it difficult and dangerous to negotiate the junction with the main road coming up from the Burton Ferry direction. He mentioned that he had almost been involved in an accident in recent days when coming out of the junction, due to excessive traffic speeds of vehicles coming from the bridge. He commented that, once the toll booths are removed, traffic speeds of vehicles coming off the bridge are likely to be even higher. The Chairman mentioned that this matter had been extensively discussed, and raised with P.C.C. P.C.C. had said that budget constraints prohibited serious consideration of a roundabout there. C'lr John Mathias commented that he would be in favour of measures to mitigate the difficulties at this junction. He explained that previous comments he had made were more concerned with a potential increase in traffic through Burton Village. After discussion, Members felt that it was still best to await the outcome of the toll removal before agreeing any further actions. Matter to be placed on May agenda to review further.

Plans

Applications

There were no applications for consideration this month.

Decisions

18/1063/PA (Variation of condition 2 of outline planning permission ref. 11/0373/PA to allow a minor amendment to the approved plans (condition 1 of supplemental Reserved Matters Consent ref. 14/0254/PA that defines the approved plans) - 6, Sardis Cross, SARDIS, Milford Haven, Pembrokeshire, SA73 1LX

Correspondence

- 1) Hywel Dda Health Board – Acknowledgement of letter sent after February meeting – noted.
- 2) Welsh Government – Allotment consultation – noted.
- 3) St. Mary’s Church Burton – Request for contribution towards grass-cutting – Matter to be discussed in May. Members disinclined to consider enhanced contribution for 2018, as no request had been received. Clerk to send holding response explaining the proposed timescale for consideration of the request.
- 4) Independent Remuneration Panel – Final report, 2019 – Members were reminded that payments will be made to any Members who have not waived it. Clerk to seek advice on tax liability prior to April meeting. Members agreed that payments would be issued in May.
- 5) Plaid Cymru – Invitation to post-Brexit meeting – noted.
- 6) Woodland Trust – Notification of impending delivery of tree pack – dealt with under agenda item below.
- 7) Jill Evans, M.E.P. – Petition against nuclear dumping – noted.

Accounts

Payments

H.M.R.C. (P.A.Y.E. tax) : £212-29

Johnston C.C. (1/3 cost of scanner & digital safe, ex. VAT) : £ 98-05

The above payments were approved by Members (proposer C’llr Alun Williams, seconder C’llr John Mathias).

Discussion of common land at Sardis, including any necessary discussion of tree-planting arrangements

Tree-planting. C’llr Iain Wood explained that they had not made detailed arrangements for the tree-planting yet, as it was uncertain exactly what size of trees would be supplied. He mentioned that they would need to wait and see exactly what was delivered, and then make arrangements accordingly. He mentioned that it may be necessary to consider barricading off the site, especially if the trees are very small saplings, to prevent damage. C’llr Derek Jones commented that staking the trees would help in this regard. C’llr John Mathias mentioned that he could obtain / supply stakes if necessary, and also supply a post banger to put them in, if needed. The Clerk offered some protective sleeves for the trees, and offered to drop these off at C’llr Alun Williams’ home.

It was left for C’llrs Iain Wood, Alun Williams and John Mathias to co-ordinate detailed arrangements for the tree-planting once they were received. C’llr John Mathias commented that it may possibly be necessary to use a mini-digger, depending on ground conditions. C’llr Iain Wood mentioned that he knew someone who might possibly be willing to lend a mini-digger for the planting session.

Discussion of needed maintenance of flower boxes, Sardis and Hill Mountain

C’llr Laurence Price had spoken further with Mr. Clive Walters regarding provision of new flower boxes. He was still unwell, though improving slowly. It was uncertain when he would be well enough to carry out the work, though he had expressed a willingness to do so. It was left that C’llr Laurence Price would maintain contact with him over the coming month, and situation to be reviewed in April in Matters Arising.

Discussion of annual risk assessment actions required (including possible maintenance work / replacement of noticeboard(s))

The following actions were decided, following the recent risk assessment carried out :

Sardis bus shelter uneven footpath. Clerk to contact P.C.C. to ask for action to improve the footpath, including raising its level.

Pedestrian shelter overhanging tree. C’lIr John Mathias undertook to obtain a quotation for removal of the overhanging tree, and forward this to the Clerk for circulation to all Members.

Redundant metal gates at Playing field. C’lIr John Mathias undertook to remove these, including the posts, if this could be done without too much difficulty.

Unfenced access at Playing Field. It was noted that this gap had now been fenced off by Western Power contractors. It was also understood that the debris left behind following their recent works on the land had been cleared away. Clerk to contact them to thank them for the work undertaken.

Repairs to Playpark boundary fence. Clerk to obtain quotations for replacement of the boundary fence.

Noticeboards. Members discussed possible repair / replacement of the noticeboards. C’lIr Alun Williams mentioned that Marloes C.C. had obtained funding for new noticeboards from the ‘Enhancing Pembrokeshire’ grant initiative. He suggested obtaining quotations, and submitting these to P.C.C. for possible grant assistance under this scheme. It was agreed that C’lIr Alun Williams would look into obtaining suitable quotations and report back to the April meeting. C’lIr Scott Sinclair undertook to look into the detailed requirements of the grant application process. Clerk to obtain forms / guidance on submitting an application. Matter to be placed on agenda for further consideration in April. Members also discussed in some detail the problems with the current siting of the Burton Ferry noticeboard. C’lIr Scott Sinclair undertook to look again into possible alternative locations for this noticeboard.

Discussion of drainage problems, Rhooseferry Lane

Matter deferred for consideration in April, when it was hoped that C’lIr Paddy McNamara would be present to explain the outstanding issues in detail.

Discussion of Wales Audit Office report on internal audit function

Members discussed the report circulated. The Clerk explained that he was intending to action some small recommendations from the report, but that he considered by and large that everything was running pretty well. C’lIr Scott Sinclair expressed the view that Members should take an active interest in things for which they had ultimate responsibility. C’lIr Iain Wood counselled against getting too bogged down in the minutiae of the accounting procedures. The Clerk mentioned that key elements of accounts and auditing are always brought to Members at regular times throughout the year, via arrangements such as the quarterly budget review, precept discussions, Annual Governance Statement, etc.

C’lIr Scott Sinclair requested that the letter outlining the exact terms of reference for the internal auditor should be brought to the April meeting for ratification by Members.

Regarding budgeting, C’lIr Scott Sinclair expressed the view that budgeting should be more detailed. The Clerk expressed the view that realistically, attempting to provide further details on projected budgets would be meaningless, and therefore a waste of time. Some members felt that it was unnecessary to overcomplicate the matter, especially given the small Council budget under consideration. C’lIr Scott Sinclair requested an agenda item in the April meeting to discuss the Council’s budgeting structure.

Discussion of purchase of pdf-editing subscription

Members agreed to a 1/3 contribution towards purchase of a pdf-editing subscription by the Clerk, at a projected cost to B.C.C. of £12/year (proposer C’lIr John Mathias, seconder C’lIr Laurence Price).

Any other business

Footpath, Hill Mountain. C’lr Alun Williams reported that manholes were again blocked on the footpath opposite Gareth Hughes Motors. He mentioned that one gully cover was actually set too high, so that water was bypassing it altogether. Clerk to report matter to P.C.C. as a H&S concern.

Potholes. C’lr Laurence Price had received complaints about breaking up of the carriageway edge on the road edge opposite then old Stable Bar property, causing formation of potholes there. He also mentioned a similar problem at the entrance to Brompton Park. Clerk to report these matters to P.C.C., citing H&S concerns.

Satellite dish. C’lr Derek Jones mentioned that a satellite dish had been placed outside the fence of the property alongside the old Houghton School site, possibly on highway verge.

Matter to be placed April agenda for discussion.

Litter picking. C’lr John Evans had carried out substantial litter with his wife along the main road at Sardis / Hill Mountain, and collected a substantial quantity of rubbish. Members were appreciative of the effort made by C’lr Evans.

Public Forum

Mr. Mike Evans was present, but had commented on the issue of concern to him in ‘Matters Arising’. There were no other members of the public present.

The meeting ended at 8-25pm. Next meeting, Wednesday 3rd April, 2019