**Amroth Community Council**

**Cyngor Cymuned Llanrhath**

**Draft Minutes** of meeting held by Amroth Community Council on Thursday 18th February 2021 online via Zoom.

**Councillors present:**  T Baron; A Cormack; P Davies; A Evans; F Evans; R Harries; M Harvey; J James; B Mills; M Morris; S Phillips (Chair); R Tippett- Maudsley.

**In attendance:** Mrs Kathryn Bradbury (Clerk); Robert Lake; Vicki Connop;

**Apologies**:

**Declaration of Interest. Alec Cormack declared an interest in Heritage Park 19/1340/PA update under item 4 Planning.**

Prior to the meeting, Cllr Stephen Phillips welcomed Katie Macro, Fundraising Coordinator for Wales Air Ambulance for Carmarthenshire and Pembrokeshire. Katie gave a short presentation on the work of Wales Air Ambulance.

After the presentation, Stephen informed Katie that ACC had agreed to donate a sum of £500 to the Charity.

**Chair’s Welcome**

The Chair welcomed all Councillors to the meeting.

**Minutes** of the meeting held on Thursday 21st January 2021 were agreed as a true record.

Proposed by Cllr. Roger Harries

Seconded by Cllr. Pauline Davies

Cllr. Phillips printed off a copy of the January Minutes and signed them on completion of the meeting.

1. **Matter Arising**
* Llanteg Gardening group have responded outlining the maintenance work they can carry out on ACC land, assuming it is agreed at the next Gardening Club meeting.

They request that ACC pay for any equipment needed to purchase or hire in order to carry out the work. **Agreed**; Councillors agreed to this request

They have also requested new seating at the OSG and at the Mountain Chapel, since the three seats at the OSG are unsafe and currently there is no seating at the Chapel**. Agreed;** ACC have recently ordered seats. 1 will be placed at Mountain Chapel and 3 will be placed in the Old School Gardens. Cllr. Harries will obtain costs and organise to have the work carried out.

* The Play Area, Summerhill. The Playground subgroup met with an officer from PCC to discuss a Service Level Agreement (SLA) to carry out safety inspections throughout the year. The cost of the service will be £615 for 2021-22. ACC also proposed a significant extension to the lease for the ground. This will be pursued. **Agreed;** Councillors agreed to sign the SLA with PCC and pay £615 costs.
* The PCC waste collection team have been reminded about emptying the bins in Summerhill.
* A request to power wash the bus shelter in Summerhill has been forwarded to PCC Transport Department who oversee bus shelters. Councillors requested that work also be carried out to clean the toilet block in front of Amroth Castle Caravan Park. **Agreed;** Clerk to ask PCC.
* Maintenance of Land in Summerhill Park Close. This land is owned by the National Trust who have plans to introduce new species to make a wildflower meadow. The land will be mowed for hay towards the end of the growing season.
* A defibrillator has been ordered for the Wanderers Rest in Llanteglos.
* PCC have surveyed the drains along the sea wall close to the New Inn and will arrange for them to be cleared.
* Natural Resources Wales cleared stones blocking the river’s exit to the sea and placed them at the end of the Sea wall. They also relocated large rocks in front of the concrete by the bridge to protect this area from the sea. Recent tides have already blocked the rivers exit with pebbles and the river is pushing under the pebbles to exit closer to the New Inn. The Clerk has written to NRW, copied to PCC, with photographs showing this and NRW have responded to say the maintenance team have been informed.
* Election charges. Cllrs Phillips and Baron and the Clerk met with the PCC Election Officer to clarify likely Election costs for 2022. These can only be estimated as are subject to any increase in postage or printing costs. An opposed election could cost more than £12,000 for the two wards of Amroth and Crunwere. Cllr Phillips queried why there are two wards as the Community Council operates as one entity. The Election Officer stated that PCC may carry out a review of wards across Pembrokeshire before the Election in 2022, but if this does not happen ACC can request a review of the Amroth wards. **Agreed;** ACC will request a review of the Amroth wards if one is not carried out across the county.
1. **Co option of Councillor**

Following a successful interview, Cllr. Phillips proposed the co-option of Beverley Mills as Community Councillor for the Amroth Ward to Amroth Community Council. Beverley, who lives in Stepaside, brings a number of skills from her years working in the NHS and has an interest in the environment and community welfare.

Seconded, Cllr. Alan Evans

Beverly Mills was voted in and welcomed to the Community Council.

1. **County Councillors Report**

**Council Tax 2021-22**

The PCC Cabinet meeting on 15 February approved the final draft Budget for 2021-2022. Following the Budget Seminar for Council Members on 11 February and earlier meetings of the Councils various Overview and Scrutiny Committees as well as the Audit Committee, it had become apparent that the original Cabinet proposal for a 5% Council Tax increase would not be passed by Council Members at the Full Council meeting to be held on 4 March. Cabinet has therefore approved a proposal to increase Band D Council Tax by 3.75% in 2021-2022.

Given the stress on the local economy created by the pandemic and repeated lockdowns, many Members are in favour of a smaller Council Tax increase of perhaps 3%. Pembrokeshire is much more dependent on the tourism and hospitality sectors than most other counties and these are likely to be amongst the last sectors to be re-opened. Also, a large proportion of our population is over retirement age (25%), living on modest pensions. While the speed of the vaccine rollout gives hope of a gradual return of economic activity, I would argue that the economy, particularly in Pembrokeshire, is likely to suffer the equivalent of long Covid. Businesses will need a long period of convalescence to rebuild trade, their working capital and employment. I strongly believe that now is not the time to increase the tax burden on families but equally I understand the enormous financial pressures on schools and social services. I therefore think that it is justifiable, during a once in a century pandemic, to use reserves to fund services without increasing taxes. Certainly, the reserves would have to be rebuilt and the PCC’s finances put on a firm footing post pandemic. I believe that by the end of 2022 the local economy will be showing signs of strong recovery and that would be the time to look at raising Council Tax to rebuild reserves

It is to be noted that there was a poor response to the public consultation on the Budget for 2021-2022. This is being blamed on the lockdown, but I think the difficulty of logging on to the online consultation and the fact that the paper version had the wrong closing date on it was a major cause of the limited public response. Both Cllr. Stephen Phillips and I drew the attention of the Cabinet Member for Finance to the problems of accessing the consultation forms. I do not believe that the general public has become apathetic to the level of Council Tax and public services in the County and I will argue strongly for better organized consultation in the future.

**Second Homes Council Tax Charge**

A Notice of Motion has been lodged for discussion at the Council meeting on 4 March calling on PCC to increase the Second Homes Council Tax surcharge from 50% to 100%. I believe that there is a majority of Members in favour of increasing the charge. However, the Notice of Motion will be taken after the vote on the 2021-2022 Budget and there is advice that the proposal to increase the charge should be the subject of a public consultation. I therefore think that it is probable that any increase in the Second Homes Charge will take place in 2022-2023 rather than 2021-2022. There is little doubt that money raised from the Second Homes Charge has been beneficial in mitigating the adverse impact of second homes on communities.

**Firework Controls**

The Cabinet meeting on 15 February voted to support a Notice of Motion to improve controls on the promotion and management of public firework displays and agreed to lobby both Welsh and UK Governments for stronger regulation of fireworks. There is little doubt that the careless discharge of fireworks has a harmful impact on domestic and farm animals, as well as on wildlife.

Councillors queried a rise in Council tax for Second Homeowners when they had been unable to use them for much of 2020. Cllr Baron stated that this was being considered but felt any increase should be delayed until Covid regulations allowed owners full access to their properties. He added that empty houses still had an impact on the local community and local schools.

Cllr. Harvey asked if any communication had been made by PCC on the new smoking legislation that will come into force in March. This will prohibit smoking in in such places as Children’s play parks. Signage will need changing to reflect this, so visitors do not unknowingly break the law. Cllr. Baron was not aware of any communication on this subject and will, query this.

1. **Planning**

**20/0382/PA Yard at Band of Hope, Kilgetty Lane, Stepaside. SA67 8JZ.** This application has been conditionally approved

**Cllr. Cormack declared an interest in the following application.**

**19/1340/PA Heritage Park** – Cllr. Philips reported that he and Cllr. Baron had spoken against this application at the Rights of Ways and Planning Committee meeting on Tuesday 16th February 2021. The application was approved.

**Correspondence**

* The Welsh Government has published a Digital Media Communications Guide which has been circulated to all councillors.
* Temporary Road Closure Notice for Class 111(C3070 Kilanow to Ludchurch road, from its junction with the class 111 (C3185) road towards Summerhill, north to its junction with the A477(T)Stepaside to Llanteg road from Monday 1st March 2021 for 3 weeks. This is to renew the carriageway drainage system.

**Also,** Class 111(C3014) Summerhill to Amroth Road- from its junction with Cliffe Road, south to a point near the public conveniences on Monday 22nd February 2021 for 5 days between 8 am and 5 pm. This is to carry out tree felling.

* Changes to bus timetables including the 349 (Haverfordwest - Kilgetty, via Neyland, Pembroke Dock and Tenby) has moved to a two-hourly service instead of hourly. For further information see

 [https://www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk/bus-routes-and-timetables/bus-routes-list-all-buses](https://emea01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.pembrokeshire.gov.uk%2Fbus-routes-and-timetables%2Fbus-routes-list-all-buses&data=04%7C01%7C%7Ce0bd1681ebc84a16c94908d8c2d1794c%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C637473552967739090%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=dVlIyM%2BpCji%2FpgSjMejwlf7jlQ619Y5AXCMWgnY2jYM%3D&reserved=0)

* Chris Taylor, Ranger for PCNPA has responded regarding a query about planting wildflowers in the wards. He is happy to advise by telephone or meet up after lockdown, to discuss plants to attract pollinators and also habitat log piles/exposed earth banks**. Agreed** Cllr Mills will contact Chris Taylor to discuss plans.
* Donation request from Cruz Bereavement Care**. Agreed;** Councillors requested the Clerk to politely decline
* A resident has brought road maintenance needs to the attention of ACC, on the road between Tavernspite and Llanteg Park, crossing the A477. These have been reported to PCC
* Following the Town and Community Council seminar, the next ‘How Do we Work Better Together’ meeting will be on 25th Feb, 18:30 - 20:00 via Zoom. Book via the Clerk.
* New Draft Guidance on Code of Conduct for community Councillors has been published by the Ombudsman. This has been forwarded to all Councillors.
* A representative of ACC has been invited to the AGM of Friends of Narberth Library on 24th February at 7.00pm via zoom. **Cllr. Alan Evans agreed to represent ACC.**
* A resident has queried the overgrown piece of land next to the Parish Hall and ask if it could be used for community allotments? **Agreed;** ACC do not wish to take on more land at this time but would support an initiative by a Community Group.
* ACC have been informed that road surface dressings will take place during the year at C3014 Summerhill Cross to Amroth and U6380 Duncow Hill, Wisemans Bridge. Exact dates are not given.
* The Welsh Government has published a Digital Media Communications Guide for Town and Community Councils. This has been forwarded to all councillors.
1. **Finance as of 29th January 2021**

Account 70121649 – £2,787.33

Account 40736856 – £15,193.14

David Rees £810.58

**Payments;**

**Clerks Wages**

Donation to Wales Air Ambulance £500 – already been agreed

Grit Bin for Clos Yr Ysgol £144 inc vat

Half the cost of a Defib for Wanderers rest Llanteglos £600- already agreed

Code of Conduct Training £30

SLA for Summerhill Play area £615

Donation to Tinkers Hill Trust £250 (See under item 9 Donations)

Donation to Stepaside school £250 (see under item 9 Donations)

**All Payments were agreed**

1. **To recruit an additional volunteer Trustee for the Educational Charity of David Rees**

Cllr. Roger Harries proposed Cllr. Martin Morris. This was Seconded by Cllr. Pauline Davies.

Cllr. Morris accepted.

1. **To agree a nomination for Community Governor at Stepaside School**

Pauline Davies has served for the last three years and her term of office finishes on 21st May 2021. ACC have been informed and asked to nominate again. This nomination will be considered along with any others received at the next full Governing Body meeting due to take place on 18 May 2021.  However, if only one nomination is received, the nominee will be appointed as Additional Community governor at the earliest opportunity, following consultation with the Headteacher/Chair of Governors.

Cllr. Harries proposed that Cllr Pauline Davies be re nominated. This was seconded by Cllr. Tippett Maudsley. Cllr Davies agreed to be put forward.

1. **To discuss the recruitment of two volunteer youth representatives to ACC via the CWBR project**

Six Councillors and the Clerk met by zoom with Laura Lloyd from PLANED to discuss this project. Cllr. Phillips presented the project aims to Councillors. It is open to young people between the ages of 15 and 25 who live in or within 3 miles of the Community Council area. They will serve for a 12-month period with the option of extending this if both parties agree. It would count as community service qualifications for awards such as the Welsh Baccalaureate or Duke of Edinburgh Award. A Councillor will be appointed to mentor each volunteer. **Agreed;** Councillors agreed to take part in this pilot project.

 Any young person interested can contact Laura.Lloyd@planed.org.uk

or amrothclerk@outlook.com for more information or to express an interest. Volunteers under 18 will require parental consent.

1. **To Discuss the NHS, Social Care and Frontline workers Day proposed for 5th July 20201**

 **(Bruno Peek)**

**Cllr Phillips proposed to move this discussion to the next meeting due to time constraints. All Councillors agreed.**

Local councils, communities and others throughout Wales are being encouraged to play a leading role in NHS, Social Care & Frontline Workers Day on 5th July 2021, a unique day of celebration and commemoration of those that work twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week without any thought of their own safety.

They are asked to do this by agreeing to raise a unique flag at 10am; participate in the Two-Minute Silence at 11am, the Nation's Toast at 1pm, Afternoon Tea at 4pm, the ringing of church bells 73 times with each ring representing a year in the 73 years of the NHS at 8pm, from within their local communities, as a 'tribute' to the Heroes of the NHS, Social Care and those that work so tirelessly on the frontline.

This special day is also being used to raise valuable funds for NHS Charities Together, the official organisation set up to support over 230 hospitals and their charitable trusts, with the money being equally divided to support the health and wellbeing of staff.

The other charity to benefit is the National Care Association who wish to use this opportunity to raise £200,000.00 for the work they undertake in their care homes.

The activities for the day, along with the organisations and others supporting this unique initiative  to date can be viewed at – [**www.nhsfrontlineday.org**](https://emea01.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.nhsfrontlineday.org%2F&data=04%7C01%7C%7C1adde99ccedd485f396c08d8b0b013a5%7C84df9e7fe9f640afb435aaaaaaaaaaaa%7C1%7C0%7C637453617600912883%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=pSCpLrkle8WVceZT7sjnjAe6P9qMgl1w1yHtBopOd7Y%3D&reserved=0)

1. **To discuss and agree charitable donations**
* Wild Bird and Swan Centre, Tinkers Hill, Amroth. Cllrs. Davies and Morris both proposed ACC donate to this local charity. Cllr Davies outlined its operation and financial situation to Councillors. **Agreed;** Cllr Harries seconded the proposal and suggested a sum of £250. All Councillors agreed.
* Cllr Tippett-Maudsley proposed that ACC support Stepaside school, to purchase a Chrome book to aid children of the parish to learn remotely during the pandemic. It would continue to be of benefit in future years in helping year six children from the parish in preparation for transfer to secondary education. **Agreed;** Cllr Harris proposed that £250 be donated. This was seconded by Cllr. A. Evans. All Councillors agreed.
1. **Report By Amroth and District Community Association**

The hall is closed for the duration of lockdown. Cllr. Tippett Maudsley reported that the hall had been subject to a health and safety inspection by PCC ready for the elections in 2022 and been classified as Excellent.

1. **Report by Llanteg Village Hall Committee**

The hall has been cleaned and sanitised but remains closed at this time. The Hall Committee AGM will take place by zoom on Monday 22nd February 2021 at 7.00 pm

1. **Project Updates**

There were no updates this month. ACC are awaiting formal notification of grant applications.

1. **Other Matters/ Urgent Business not on the Agenda and to determine matters Councillors wish to be added for discussion at the next meeting**
* The Clerk was made aware of a Keep Wales Tidy initiative and has applied for equipment from them on behalf of ACC. Cllr. Tippett Maudsley has reported lots of litter on the road from A477 to Stepaside. This has been reported to PCC.
* Cllr. Harvey gave a presentation to Councillors on the Pembrokeshire Scheme to upgrade broadband speeds across the county. The aim is to increase speeds from an average of 30 megabits to one gigabyte for all properties. The scheme has had little interest locally probably because it is still relatively unknown. Currently only 1% of Amroth CC area residents had expressed an interest. An increase in broadband speed will bring great benefit to the community both now and especially in the future. The infrastructure costs will be covered by Welsh Government but for an area to be considered for upgrade a minimum of 25 – 30 % of properties must submit an expression of interest. Cllr. Harvey has carried out research and in many cases an upgrade to superfast fibre broadband will cost about the same as many current slower services do now. He proposed that ACC take action to actively promote this scheme and encourage residents to register. Submitting an expression of interest to the scheme will not oblige residents to sign up to a contract or take any further action unless they choose to but will help the two areas in Amroth secure Welsh Government funding for the infrastructure. More information can be found here

<https://www.pembrokeshire.gov.uk/broadband>

**Agreed;** Councillors agreed to a publicity campaign via social media, posters and flyers to all properties. A project team was set up to include Cllrs. Harvey, Davies and Cormac. A meeting to further the project will be held via zoom on March 4th.

* Cllr. Davies queried the next steps for the Memorial Garden in Amroth following a site meeting earlier in the month. Cllr Phillips stated that the trustees must hold a meeting and pass a resolution that the land is no longer required as a Memorial garden.
* Cllr A Evans asked when the Grit Bin for Clos Yr Ysgol, Stepaside will be delivered and reported that the grit bin on Staggers Hill needs a refill. The Clerk has contacted PCC.

**Date of next Meeting is Thursday 18th March 2021 at 7 pm.**

This will be via Zoom unless informed otherwise.

Anyone wishing to observe online, please send your email address to amrothclerk@outlook.com

**The meeting closed at 21.19 pm**

If you would like to be kept informed as to information regarding matters affecting the parish, road closures, public consultations, sea defences etc please email the clerk and you will be put on our secure mailing list (GDPR compliant).