

# **MATHERN COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

Minutes of Council meeting  
Held at Mathern Village Hall  
Monday 12<sup>th</sup> July 2021 from 19:00hrs

## **Councillors Present -:**

1. Clerk - Mrs J Kelley
2. Mathern - Dave Merrett, Jayne Harris, Matt Sidwell, Christine Morton.
3. Mounton - Carolyn Ovenden (vice Chair).
4. Pwllmeyric - James Anderson, Sylvia Stephens.
5. County Councillor – Louise Brown

## **Councillors Apologies -:**

1. Mathern - David Harris (Chair)
2. Pwllmeyric - Gareth Page.

## **Members of the public-:**

1. None

## **Police representatives-:**

1. None

## **21/21 PROCEDURAL ITEMS**

### **1. Public Comment:**

- a. A number of residents have raised the issue of the state of the front garden area of one of the houses in Mathern Village. Concern has been expressed as, apparently, rats are present thus causing a health and safety risk and meaning that the garden needs to be cleaned up.

Action: Chairman to speak to the resident of the property in the first instance, advises of the matter which has been brought to the Community Council's attention.

Two residents contacted Cllrs regarding the Revised Local Development Plan (RDLP) consultation as follows:

"I would be grateful if a note could be made at your next meeting about the implications for Mathern on the submission of site CS0152 Land at Wyelands 100 Hectares in the Revised Local Development Plan.

To date the council have acknowledged that the site is currently part of a "green wedge" which could influence the suitability of the site. However the legal implications which actually prevent housing development on a green wedge is unclear. The Welsh Government's proposal that there should be a Green Belt on land

north of the M4 is merely noted. The council also has noted the following; - that the land is categorised as having high sensitivity to residential development, that the site includes 1BMV agricultural land, a Conservation area and a Historic Park and Gardens. Notwithstanding all these considerations it should be noted by Mathern Council that a representative believed to be from Hazells who have an interest in this site have already been checking access to the site and are reported to be “confident” in gaining planning permission. The Consultation Responses already show support for development of the proposed sites by such companies as Taylor Wimpey, Redrow and Bovis Homes and Ward Estates Ltd.”

b. Other concerns are as follows:

- Traffic – a number of issues here – increase in traffic; where would it go? Would it have to come through Mathern and the problems this would cause for residents, or onto the A48 and if so where and how this could be done safely? There are already issues with the volume of traffic and housing in this area would exasperate the current problems.
- Environment – there is a hedge boundary that surrounds a protected area – surely this cannot be ignored. There is a lot of wildlife in this conservation and parkland area – woodpeckers, sparrow hawks, buzzards, newts, hedgehogs for example. These are animals whose numbers are declining. Residents who border this area are very lucky to be able to experience and enjoy them. Very concerned on the affect any building would have.
- Flooding – there have been issues with the ream that runs alongside Wyelands View overflowing and several houses in the road have been affected. Some houses are designated as under flood risk. Concerned that new housing would add to this issue.
- Drainage – issues with sewers and drains being blocked. Again, increased housing would put more pressure on these services.
- Local road infrastructure – Larkfield Roundabout already has a problem so introducing more housing in this area would just add to this.
- Other housing developments – particularly Severnside because a lot of traffic will be heading for Bristol – more pressure on A48/Larkfield.
- Social infrastructure – concerned that there is often little thought given to how local schools, doctors etc. Will cope with increased numbers.

Community Councillors thanked the residents for their communication and noted its contents. A lengthy discussion re: the RLDP followed.

See Action RLDP in correspondence.

Cllrs to encourage all residents to register on the County Council RLDP consultation website and have their say in the questionnaire found there: the more comments received in this consultation, the better for the future of the local environment. Both individual and Community Council comments will be included in the review.

**Consultation ends 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021.**

## 2. Report from Community Police.

- a. None received
- b. Clerk has received a reply from the Managing Director of St Pierre confirming that all members there have been written to, asking them to adhere to the new road layout. He confirmed that there have been communications with the County Council over many years. He has asked MCC if any further additions can be made to the road markings at the exit to include a Left Turn Only arrow, in order to make the prohibition of right turns here clearer. Also, following a speed survey, there was apparently an intention this year to implement an extended speed limit whereby the existing 40 mph limit which ends just beyond the petrol station would continue to the Parkwall roundabout. He has not received any update on this proposal.

Action: Clerk to write to Graham Kinsella (Highways, MCC) asking for clearer road markings to be installed.

Note following the meeting Clerk spoke to Managing Director of St Pierre – he advised that MCC have visited the junction and confirm that the markings and signage is adequate and they will not be changing this. Also local police have visited and observed site and issued 8 tickets in one day to vehicles not adhering to the new road lay out.

## 3. Declarations of Personal or Pecuniary Interest:-

- a. None

## 4. Minutes of the previous meeting

- a. **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the Mathern Community Council meeting held on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> June 2021 as a true and accurate record.

## **22/2021 Finance – June – July**

1. Monthly Bank Reconciliation authorisation by Cllr C Morton
2. Spending to Budget review – analysis attached – General Reserves discussed.
  - a. Councillors reviewed budget Insurance Policy for the year - fully paid.
  - b. *Church yards donations - fully paid.*
  - c. Area where a virement may be required is the dog waste collections, the cost of which has been increased by 46% by the contractor.
  - d. We have spent 42% of the budget in 5 months. It was agreed that we could not purchase any more dog waste bins for the community, thus ensuring the cost of collection causes a minimal impact.
  - e. All other areas on target.
  - f. Councillors are satisfied that our Reserves are sufficient to ensure the council could run for at least 6 months if the precept were not paid

- g. Sign Annual Report for final audit following internal audit. Internal Audit review to follow as not received at time of agenda being issued.
- h. Vice Chairman C. Ovenden signed this together with the Clerk

Payments (£) June/July			
Stock IT	56.40	06 06 2021	Via SO
Merlin Waste dog Bins	43.33	06 06 2021	Via SO
Smart Pension	121.95	10 06 2021	Via DD
Zurich	546.21	22 06 2021	Via BACS
ICO	35.00	25 06 2021	Via DD
Viking (Stationary)	13.19	22 06 2021	Invoice 15/21
Salary	663.76	30 06 2021	Invoice 16/21
PAYE - NI	213.71	30 06 2021	Invoice 17/21
Stock IT Ltd	30	12 07 2021	Invoice 18/21
Telephone Internet	56.41	12 07 2021	Invoice 19/21
St-Tewdric's-Church Mathern	400.00	12 07 2021	Cheque number 102072
St Pierre Church	150.00	12 07 2021	Cheque number 102073
Mounton Church	200.00	12 07 2021	Cheque number 102074
M Sidwell Plastic stands for walks leaflets	32.31	16 07 2021	Invoice 20/21
Receipts May – June 2021			
VAT Refund 2020 2021	332.09	11 05 2021	
Notification of Direct Debit for ICO (Information Commissioners Office)- £35.00. 25/6/21			

## **23/21 PROGRESS REPORT ON ACTIONS FROM LAST MEETING**

### **1. Responses to queries raised at previous meetings**

#### **a. Maintenance and drain clearance, all 3 villages.**

Drains in Mounton and Bailey's Hay have now been cleared, leaving the A48, Pwllmeyric, still outstanding. Clerk to chase Highways on this trunk road which Mathern CC agree should be high priority but has not been treated as such.

Cllrs thanked Cllr. Sidwell for obtaining drain clearance quotes. These were very useful in understanding the cost for budget purposes for next year.

#### **b. Representative on Dell School Board of Governors - update of communications.**

- i. St Arvans is currently representing relevant Community Councils on the Board of Governors at the school. Mathern CC's turn on the rota begins on 13th July 2022. St. Arvans CC has agreed to circulate updated papers so that Mathern CC is aware of current issues regarding the school.

**c. Update - Walks Leaflets:-**

- i. Clerk was requested to obtain quotes for reprint of the walks leaflets at the new, more compact size. Agenda for next meeting.

**24/21 Highways/Footpaths**

1. Road wear, Kilcrow Hill to Crick - dangerous and slippery.
2. Mud on road - lower Mathern by St Tewdrics Well.
3. Hayesgate - road signage broke.
4. Update re: untidy land, rear of Birdwood Gardens and corner of Barn Lane.
5. The land corner of Barn Lane work has started to clear the culvert – water course. Birdwood Garden Work still outstanding.

**25/21 COUNCILLOR'S REPORTS/CLERKS REPORT**

**1. One Voice Wales (OVW):-**

- a. No Update

**2. Shop at the Five Lanes Recycling Centre:-**

- a. Open every Thursday from 10 am – 3 pm. Purchases are cash only – profit to be used for tree planting.

**3. Defibrillator monthly checking:-**

- a. Clerk checked Mouton Brook Lodge – all working Cllr C Morton checked Millers Arms – all working.

**4. County Councillors Report – July 2021:-**

- a. County Councillor Brown advised:

**RLDP- Revised Local Development Plan**

The County Council meeting included a report on the Preferred Strategy, as well as reports by the Chief Education Officer and on Climate Change. The report on the RLDP on the preferred strategy can be found at item 5d in the following link:

<https://democracy.monmouthshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=143&Mid=4725>

The preferred strategy is for 8,366 new houses across Monmouthshire with an extra 10% allowance on the original figure of 7,605 new houses in case there is a shortfall. The growth and spatial strategy underwent a non-statutory consultation but this is followed by a statutory consultation on the growth and spatial strategy which starts on the 5<sup>th</sup> of July 2021 until midnight on the 31<sup>st</sup> of August 2021 and can be found at the following links:

<https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/plan-preparation/preferred-strategy/>

<https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/planning-policy/news-and-consultations/>

**b. Cabinet on the 7 July 2021:-**

There are various reports to Cabinet on this day, with some Leisure Centre upgrades including for Chepstow Leisure Centre at item 3c in the following link:

<https://democracy.monmouthshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=144&MId=4667>

**26/21 PLANNING MATTERS**

1. To include any received after Agenda is circulated
  - a. New applications – :
    - i. Pre Planning consultation Cellnex 235483, Willis Hill:-  
No Comments
    - ii. Decisions and appeals :-  
None
    - iii. Enforcement:-  
Nothing to report

**27/21 CORRESPONDENCE AND FORTHCOMING MEETINGS**

1. 20 06 21 Increase in cost of dog bin collection to £6.50 per bin, collected fortnightly.  
Circulated
  - a. Clerk updated:-
    - i. Councillors on a virtual meeting about this which she attended. MCC is very concerned with the collection increase of 46% per bin. All Community and Town Councils have no alternative but to accept the increase as no other contractor works in this area. Mathern CC supports the number one approach whereby a small group of MCC Community Clerks/Clrs meet with Merlin Waste to establish a uniformed approach with a guarantee of no further price increase for an agreed period. This will assist councils with budgeting.
    - ii. Should Merlin Waste refuse to collect or withdraw from the business, MCC would temporarily take it over. However there is no facility for this at the present time and MCC would not wish to provide a service in the long term.
2. 21 06 Response from M Hands (MCC) re. Community Council's letter about congestion on Pwllmeyric Hill and Larkfield roundabout. Circulated.
3. Clerk to chase a response to this holding email received 21<sup>st</sup> June 2021.
4. 22 06 Notification. Temporary road closure Hayesgate 19 07 – 21 07 – 9.30 to 15.30.  
Circulated. Noted
5. 23 06 Response from Francis Newcombe, Managing Director, St Pierre re. New road layout.  
Circulated "*See Police report*"
6. 28 06 *Eligible Community Councils (General Power of Competence) (Qualifications of Clerks) (Wales) Regulations 2021'*

7. The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 ("the 2021 Act"), sets out the intention of Welsh Ministers to specify, in regulations, the qualifications or description of qualifications that the clerk to a community council must hold in order for the community council to meet the second of the three eligibility conditions to become an "eligible community council."
8. The consultation will be open between 28 June 2021 and 24 September 2021.
9. Councillor D Harris to consult – Cllrs feel that the cost of this is far too high for a small council with limited precept and hours of contract.
10. 05 07 MCC request re: management and maintenance of rural bus shelters. – Circulated.  
 Response to MCC – "all our bus shelters are regularly used. We have 4 on A48 and one in Mathern Village.  
 Construction of Mathern Village shelter is block with tiled roof and double glazed side – Pwllmeyric - two block and tiled enclosed shelters, one plastic construction and one built into the wall at top of Pwllmeyric Hill."
11. 06 07 Monmouthshire Replacement Preferred strategy LDP 2018 – 2033 – Circulated  
 Councillors were keen to encourage villagers to register on the MCC website (see County councillor's report for link) and have their say on the current consultation which closes on 31<sup>st</sup> August 2021  
 Councillor D Harris to send correspondence on behalf of the Council including comments received from the two members of the public.
12. Meeting 06 07
  - a. Clerk - Zoom meeting with MCC re dog waste changes.

## **28/21 OTHER MATTERS FOR**

1. Consideration for Platinum Jubilee commemorations – 2022:-
2. A street party was suggested – Matter to be agenda-ed and discussed at the next meeting. Also the possibility of planting a tree and a small gift for school children.
3. Mr. T. Edward is 100 on 7<sup>th</sup> August – Clerk to send a card on behalf of the Council.

## **19/21 PROJECTS AWAITING COMPLETION**

1. Archive to Ebbw Vale when possible.
2. Archive records of school to be input on Website – this is ongoing .The site has now been amended so that it is easier to read on mobile phones.

## **20/21 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

1. No meeting in August
2. Next Meeting–Monday 13<sup>th</sup> September 2021, small room, Village Hall. There being no further business to discuss, the meeting closed at 9.00pm.

Signed ..... CHAIRMAN

Date.....