

## **MINUTES FOR 13<sup>th</sup> November 2023**

### **1. Councillors Present -:**

- a. Mathern: Cllr David Harris, Cllr J Harris, Cllr M Sidwell
- b. County Councillor: -County Cllr L Brown
- c. Mounton: -
- d. Pwllmeyric: -. Cllr S Stevens
- e. Clerk: - Mrs. Jane Kelley

### **2. Councillors Apologies-:**

- a. Mathern: - None
- b. Mounton: - One Vacancy
- c. Pwllmeyric- Cllr G Page – One Vacancy

### **3. Members of the Public: -**

- a. None

### **4. Member of Police**

- a. None

## **50/23 PROCEDURAL ITEMS**

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

- A. None

### **2. To receive police report: -**

There will be no attendance from ourselves at the meeting next week.

Here is the police report for the Mathern, Pwllmeyric and Mounton area for between the above dates:

15/10/23 – Report of a mobile phone left in the toilets area at Chepstow Garden centre. When the caller realised and returned for the phone it had gone

16/10/23 – 2 separate reports of damage to boundary fences at properties on Baileys Hay.

16/10/23 – Report of an attempted online fraud from a resident on Badgers Meadow. The caller was using their laptop when a micro-soft helpline number 020-8144-5427 started flashing up stating that the device had been hacked. The caller rang the number and was asked to pay £149 to get this put right. Thankfully they realised it was a scam and hung up with no money or details were exchanged.

20/10/23 – Report of a 3 vehicle RTC (road traffic collision) on Pwllmeyric hill. The 1st vehicle was having engine trouble and stopped, the vehicle behind stopped in time but the 3<sup>rd</sup> vehicle went into the back of the 2<sup>nd</sup> unfortunately. No injuries and details between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> vehicle exchanged at the scene.

30/10/23 – Regarding the large police presence on this day in the St Pierre area. Officers were looking for a male that was possibly in the area but after an extensive search was found not to be.

Please remain vigilant and report any suspicious activity/crime at the time via 101 or 999 if you deem it an emergency. If it is low level, you can also report via email on [contact@gwent.police.uk](mailto:contact@gwent.police.uk) . For other ways of reporting incidents to us please see The Gwent Police Website.

### 3. Apologies: -

- a. Cllr G Page

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

None

### 5. Minutes of the previous meeting: -

- a. **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meeting 9<sup>th</sup> October 2023 as true and accurate records. These were to be signed by Cllr D Harris. To be placed on the Website.

### 51/23 Finance

- a) To consider approval of payments as per below. All approved.
- b) Monthly Bank Reconciliation authorisation – Cllr M Sidwell
- c) HSBC Update of Mandate for bank signatures
  - a. Forms delivered to HSBC confirmation received 14<sup>th</sup> November that the change had been carried out. Signatures updated to Cllr J Harris Cllr M Sidwell and Clerk J Kelley.
- d) Still awaiting invoice for 2021/22 – 2022/23 from Wales Audit office

**e) Payments / Receipts October**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Amount</b>
<b>12 10 2023</b>	<b>Smart Pensions</b>	<b>112.98</b>
<b>21 10 2023</b>	<b>Charges HSBC</b>	<b>5.00</b>
<b>22 10 2023</b>	<b>HMRC</b>	<b>121.60</b>
<b>26 10 2023</b>	<b>First Stationery</b>	<b>23.50</b>
<b>26 10 2023</b>	<b>Viking</b>	<b>69.20</b>
<b>30 10 2023</b>	<b>J Kelley Home working fee</b>	<b>26.00</b>
<b>30 10 2023</b>	<b>Salary</b>	<b>655.56</b>
<b>05 11 2023</b>	<b>Stock It</b>	<b>90.00</b>
<b>10 11 2023</b>	<b>Royal British Legion (Wreath)</b>	<b>35.00</b>
<b>10 11 2023</b>	<b>J Kelley Telephone/internet</b>	<b>64.05</b>

**52/23 PROGRESS REPORT ON ACTIONS FROM LAST MEETING**

**A. Any update MCC RE: Palace Farm activities**

- a. Matter still ongoing with MCC and NRW (National Resources Wales).
- b. Delegated Planning meeting arranged for 16<sup>th</sup> November 2023

**B. Update Welsh Water Meeting**

- a. Work still ongoing with the lining of the pipes in Pwllmeyric.
- b. Next Teams meeting arranged for 9<sup>th</sup> January 2024

**53/23 HIGHWAYS/FOOTPATHS**

- I. Maintenance /Drain clearance Pwllmeyric Village
  - a. Clerk awaiting reply from MCC re schedule for this work to be completed.
- II. Foliage needs cutting back around Lampposts.
- III. Clerk to Ask MCC about the lighting in the village being less effective. And ask for the system to be checked.
- IV. Surface Mathern Lane on the double bends breaking up.
- V. Leaves in Mathern Lane/Mathern Village/Pwllmeyric needs a sweeper
- VI. Bollards at St Tewdrics House need reflector dangerous in the dark.
- VII. Clerk to feedback to My Hand RE: My Monmouthshire issues.

## **54/23 COUNCILLORS REPORTS/CLERK REPORTS**

### **a. OVW– No updates.**

Minutes to be circulated when available.

### **b. Defibrillator checks**

All checked and working.

Slab still broken under defibrillator.

### **c. County Councillor Brown advised:**

## **COUNCILLORS REPORTS/CLERK REPORTS**

### **Special Place Committee on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of October 2023**

The Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Cabinet sites decision was called in and as a result the intended consultation on these sites has been delayed. The Special Place Committee on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of October decided to refer to the matter to full council on the 26<sup>th</sup> of October. This has postponed any consultation on the 3 sites at the following locations:

- Bradbury Farm, Crick, Caldicot
- Oak Green Farm, Crick, Caldicot
- Langley Close, Magor

The meeting also went into a private session so that existing private sites could be discussed. The council is looking for a total of 11 pitches based on its Gypsy, Roma and Travellers need assessments.

The link to the Special Place Committee can be found here:

<https://democracy.monmouthshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=303&MIId=5969>

### **County Council on the 26<sup>th</sup> of October 2023**

The County Council meeting considered the Gwent Regional Partnership Board Area Plan, MCC Self-assessment and a long report with appendices on the RLDP Strategic Sites plan. The main change on the RLDP for this area is the change of strategic site from Bayfield to Mounton Road which is even nearer the High Beech roundabout. The proposal is to have a hotel, care home and 145 houses in that location.

Please see the following article in the South Wales Argus on the scrutiny committee where I raised these concerns, but this still went to this full council meeting on the 26<sup>th</sup> of October regardless.

<https://www.southwalesargus.co.uk/news/23828868.new-chepstow-housing-move-closer-highbeech-roundabout/#>

The following article in the South Wales argus is indicative of the Council's view on this Mounton Road site:

<https://www.southwalesargus.co.uk/news/23870051.new-chepstow-site-monmouthshire-development-plan/>

This change of site will be consulted upon at the Deposit Stage of the plan which is likely to be in Spring 2024 together with the smaller candidate sites.

In addition, there were motions opposing the cutting of the overnight provision of minor injuries at Neville Hall Hospital, on Vaping and opposing the single transferable vote (STV).

Under STV, residents would no longer have one or two councillors to represent them because wards would be amalgamated so residents would elect around six to nine councillors to represent them and would rank candidates in order of preference. It would lose the democratic link between a local area and a local councillor. Local Authorities are free to accept or reject the idea.

There were also a number of questions asked as well as a consideration on the call in of the Gypsy, Roma and Traveller sites, the vote on which accepted the Cabinet decision based on a close vote.

The link to the County Council meeting, where it can be watched, can be found here:

<https://democracy.monmouthshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=143&MIId=5410>

### **Cabinet Report of the 8<sup>th</sup> of November 2023**

The Cabinet report of the 8<sup>th</sup> of November considered the 5<sup>th</sup> month budget report showing a budget shortfall and the need for a budget recovery plan. The reports can be found at the following link:

<https://democracy.monmouthshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=144&MIId=5403>

### **RLDP Consultations**

It is recommended that residents should register on the County Council's RLDP database, so that you will be alerted when that next phase of public consultation starts. You can do that by emailing [planningpolicy@monmouthshire.gov.uk](mailto:planningpolicy@monmouthshire.gov.uk)

If you know people living in the other Chepstow or surrounding wards, please encourage them to register to the RLDP database so they too will get the notification about the next phase of consultation.

### **Gypsy and Traveller Site Consultation**

#### **Drop-in consultation events**

Two public drop-in events have been organised to provide more information about the proposals:

- **Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> November, 4-7pm:** Portskewett Church Hall, Crick Rd, Portskewett, Caldicot NP26 5UL
- **Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> November, 4-7pm:** Magor and Undy Hub, 15 Main Road, Undy, Caldicot, NP26 3EH

The Consultation started on the 9<sup>th</sup> of November and finishes on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of December. The following is a link if you would like to take part:

<https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/gypsy-and-traveller-sites-consultation/>

**d. Review - Model Standing Orders – first draft circulated**

Draft completed – Proposal that we adopt this at the next meeting – Clerk to circulate for all to read through before the next meeting.

**55/23 PLANNING APPLICATIONS – Plus any applications received after Agenda is issued.**

a. New applications –

a) New applications – DM/2023/01499

Up the Steps Cottage – Construction of an outbuilding office room – No Comments

b) Mod or removal of condition – DM/2019/00564 – Treffgarne, Chapel Lane – No Comments

b. Decisions and Appeals -

c. Enforcement -

d. Clerk to request a monthly enforcement list for our area.

**56/23 CORRESPONDENCE AND FORTHCOMING MEETINGS**

10/10/2023	List of names on War Memorial – J Charters
10/10/2023	MCC email re hedgerows Chapel Lane
10/10/2023	OVW Training List
10/10/2023	Confirmation Website update J Anderson
10/10/2023	Invoice Village Hall Rent – 17.00
10/10/2023	Signed declaration – Vice Chairman – Cllr M Sidwell
10/10/2023	MCC Updated Highways issues
11/10/2023	Quote leaflets for remembrance service 23.50
12/10/2023	Minutes OVW Meeting
12/10/2023	Viking invoice £69.20
16/10/2023	OVW Training November
16/10/2023	Consultation re Railways
17/10/2023	Confirmation booking Cllr M Sidwell – OVW Charing skills 24 10 2023 6.30 – 8.00
17/10/2023	Wales invoice advise that invoices will be issued shortly
23/10/2023	Solar Farm project details required
24/10/2023	OVW apologies wrong details issued for training Cllr M Sidwell
25/10/2023	Rearranged course M Sidwell 22/11/ 6.30
25/10/2023	Invoice to leaflets paid 23.50
27 10 2023	Rhewl Farm – details required of projects supported
27 10 2023	IRP – Update of Cllrs Allowance – inland revenue
30 10 2023	OVW Training list
30 10 2023	MCC Planning DM/2023/01499
01 11 2023	SLCC Bulletin
01 11 2023	Stock It Invoice - £90.00 hosting website
01 11 2023	SLCC Pay awards agreed – council to back date to 01 04 2023 once NALC scales issued
03 11 2023	MCC Emergency list

05 11 2023 Invoice Merlin Waste 91.00

## I. Discussions from Correspondence.

- The SLCC advised that the Local Government Association that the National joint Council for Local Government Services has reached agreement on rates of pay applicable from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024 pay award confirmation was received on 8<sup>th</sup> November 2023.

NALC continues to be disappointed that the annual settlement has been delayed for reasons outside the Associations control.

Chairman to amend the timesheet to calculate the new rate for Spinal point 23 – from £15.67 to £16.67

Back pay and new rate to be paid to the Clerk with her November Salary. This to be paid in 2 instalments on 29<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> November due to online amount restrictions

Council to seek confirmation from One Voice Wales regarding the maximum spinal point the Clerk can achieve. The Clerk's contract states that her salary would increase by a spinal point for each financial year.

- 27<sup>th</sup> October Independent remuneration Panel for Wales advised that following guidance from the HMRC regarding tax on Cllrs allowances

*Section 316A of the income Tax (earnings and Pensions) Act 2003 states no liability to income tax arises in respect of a payment an employer makes to an employee in respect of reasonable additional household expenses which the employee incurs in carrying out duties of the employment at home under home working arrangements.*

*The exemption only applies to the £156.00 payment made under the determination of the independent remuneration panel. It does not exempt any additional household expenses that a Councillor may seek to claim.*

Clerk to write to all Cllrs to seek if they wish to receive the annual allowance of £156.00 tax free. This payment would be paid by bank transfer in January.

Cllrs unanimously agreed that the flat £52.00 a year would not be paid to each Cllr on top of the above fee. Cllrs can request any stationery requirements from the Clerk up to a value of £52.00 for the year (paper, ink cartridges etc.).

Clerk to obtain guidance on how the Cllrs allowances are to be reported.

- Clerk to contact MCC for 40 free dog bag dispensers for distribution at local events.

## **57/23 OTHER MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION**

### **1. Community Resilience - Climate Emergency –**

Drain lining works being completed in Pwllmeyric.  
Road sweeper to be requested to lift leaves from kerbs and clear footpaths.  
Cllrs to continue to monitor the drain issues within the three villages and report back to the monthly Council meetings.

### **2. Remembrance Service**

This was well attended service sheets to be re printed and laminated for next year.  
Councillors thanked Ros Downs and all that helped and assisted in making the Service a fitting memorial.

### **3. Three dates required by Welsh Ambulance to Arrange a date for CPR Training**

Clerk to check dates with Cllr M Sidwell and contact Welsh Ambulance  
No Reply to our request.

### **4. Pwllmeyric Co-Opt Vacancy – Re advertised as no applications received 30 11 2023**

### **5. Mounton Co-opt Vacancy – Advertised 30 11 2023**

## **58/23PROJECTS AWAITING COMPLETION**

- I. Coronation Garden Planting – Planned for next spring – remove from Agenda
- II. New plants for Mathern War Memorial – Ongoing
- III. Brocken Slab Mounton Brook Lodge (near Defib)

## **59/23 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**Next meeting: Finance Meeting**

**Meeting ended at 9.15**

**Signed**

**Dated**