



GRAIG COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held remotely via Zoom Video Conferencing on 28th October 2020 at 6pm

1. To receive apologies for absence: Cllrs D Evans, W Haigh, L Fry.

Present: Cllrs R Caston (via phone), A Whitfield, M Smart, K Sayer, P Gregory, J Harris (from 7.10pm), P Appleton, J Bailey, K Thomas, N Tarr (via audio), J Taylor, D Williams, S Davies (Clerk).
Chaired by Cllr Gregory.

This meeting was held remotely via Zoom due to Covid-19 restrictions. Those unable to join due to lack of technology received the agenda for the meeting as normal, were aware that the meeting was taking place and did not object to it being held. Each were given the opportunity to make comments which were logged by the Clerk, relayed if requested and considered by the participants of the meeting.

The meeting began at 6pm in order to firstly discuss a proposal to expand Bassaleg School and to approve Council's response to the pre-application consultation. A draft response had been circulated by the Clerk to encompass comments given by Cllrs via email and phone and was discussed at this meeting.

The group discussed the contents of the draft and submissions by local residents. It agreed on all the points and it was expanded even further. Of particular concern were the issues surrounding the residents of Court Crescent and The Griffin and the conditions they currently experience at school start and end times. The traffic congestion through the villages and the pollution issues especially along Caerphilly Road was also of great concern. It was agreed that the 6th form student parking issues along with the abovementioned problems had not been addressed at all, and Council noted only a desktop traffic survey had been performed. There had been no proper consultation with local residents as would be usual when a proposal such as this with such an enormous impact on the local population and infrastructure is being considered.

Council agreed to offer the use of Graig Hall so some form of Covid-19 safe consultations could take place either on an individual or small group basis. Cllr Williams was asked to do all he could to have the consultation period extended so this could take place. It was also felt that other options had not been explored, such as working with surrounding schools to take some pupils if they had capacity. This would substantially ease the load on Bassaleg School. It was agreed that the school desperately needed upgrading as it had been left behind other schools in Newport, but some felt it was wrong that the upgrade was being proposed only if the community accepted the school being expanded to such a degree.

It was agreed that the draft response be amended to include the comments made in the meeting and should be circulated not only to the consultancy firm overseeing the project, but as widely as possible. Discussions on this topic ended at 7.05pm and Cllr Williams left the meeting. **Action: Clerk to make the necessary amendments to the draft response and forward to the consultancy firm, NCC and anyone in office who could possibly be of assistance.**

2. To receive declarations of interest: None.

3. To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 30th September 2020: The minutes of the meeting held 30th September 2020 previously circulated were read and subject approved. Proposed Cllr Bailey, seconded Cllr Caston. There were no matters arising from the minutes that needed attention. **Action: None necessary.**

4. Accounts for Payment: Proposed Cllr Caston, seconded Cllr Thomas.

Clerk salary and office allowance for October 2020	£2102.32
Newport City Homes – Grass cutting at Fort View Sep 2020	£212.04
Griffiths Signs – Fixings for notices	£60.00
TSOHOST – Webmail charge Nov 2020 (taken by DD)	£5.00
Welsh Water – Water costs for Bassaleg allotment site	£103.55
R Northfield – Reimbursement for vermin boxes & bait for Bassaleg allotment site	£100.14
SSE – Gas costs for Graig Hall Sept 2020 – carried forward to next bill	£23.33 cr

SSE – Electricity costs for Graig Hall Jul-Sep 20	£113.01
SSE – Electricity costs to Rhiwderin CC Jun-Sep 20	£324.45
Royal British Legion – Annual donation including wreath cost	£100.00
Total to date:	£3084.04
Receipts:	
SSE – FITS refund from Graig Hall solar panels Jun-Sep 20	£522.40
Newport City Council – 2 nd Precept payment	£38378.21
Total to date:	£38900.61

5. Planning:

- 20/0843 – Proposal: Works to hedge protected under TPO 1/79. Site: 66 Cwm Cwddy Drive, Bassaleg, Newport, NP10 8JB. Type: Tree Preservation Orders. **Comment: Council happy to support the decision of NCC's Tree Officer.**
- 20/869 – Proposal: Change of use to Class A1 (shops) and A3 (food & drink) including internal and external repairs for use as a delicatessen. Site: The Coach House, Caerphilly Road, Bassaleg, Newport, NP10 8LE. Application Type: Full. **Comment: Council has major concerns regarding parking but supports the proposal in principle.**
- Pre-Application - Invitation to comment on draft planning application being made by IRM Planning. Site: Bassaleg High School, Forge Road, Bassaleg, Newport. Also, Consultation with NCC regarding plans for the expansion of the school. **Comment: Discussed in detail above.**
- Planning Appeal – Appeal Reference APP/G6935/A/20/3260451. Site: Land adjacent to The Burrows, Caerphilly Road, Bassaleg, Newport. Appeal Subject: Erection of detached dwelling. **Comment: Council reiterates its former objections to this and previous applications for this site. Clerk to inform the Planning Inspectorate.**

6. Items for Discussion/Action:

- Council Committees – The Clerk had not received notification from all Cllrs on who would like to sit on which committees. It was agreed that the AGM would be set for the meeting being held on 25th November 2020. Cllrs contributions were discussed. It was agreed all Cllrs would submit their preferences to the Clerk along with an explanation of why they wanted to sit on the committees they chose. **Action: All Cllrs to inform the Clerk which committees they wished to sit on as a basis for final approval to be discussed at the AGM.**
- Update on chapel at Pentre-Tai Road – Cllr Sayer explained to the group that he had attempted to speak with the local resident he thought could give some information about the ownership of the chapel, but unfortunately the lady was now in a residential home. However, he had spoken to her Daughter who would try to get some information for him which he would bring to Council when received. In the meantime, the Clerk agreed to explore the names on the Land Registry document she had obtained. **Action: Clerk and Cllr Sayer to update Council at the next meeting.**
- Finance & Administration meeting update – Council were informed that a finance meeting had been held but the group had not yet discussed the budget for 2021/22. A further meeting was scheduled, and a suggested Precept figure would be submitted to Council for approval at the AGM. **Action: Finance Committee to meet to agree the proposed Precept figure for Council approval at the next meeting.**
- Ffos-y-Fran signage update – It was agreed that the proposed costs for replacement of the 2 signs being researched by one of the residents of the estate were prohibitive and Council would not be able to contribute enough to assist with paying for them at this time. However, Cllr Taylor agreed to look at the remaining sign and hopefully assist the residents with a suitable solution at a lower cost. **Action: Clerk to advise the resident, Cllr Taylor to see if he could be of assistance.**
- Request for donation from 1st Bassaleg Guides update – Council agreed a donation of £50 be made towards costs for the group. This was proposed by Cllr Smart, seconded by Cllr Taylor, approved by majority. **Action: Clerk to inform the group and arrange for payment at the next meeting.**
- Kerbside bins update – This item was deferred until the November meeting. **Action: Clerk to add to the November meeting agenda.**
- NCC replacement LDP review – This was agenda'd for information only. No date has yet been given for any consultation. **Action: Clerk to inform Council as soon as any update on this item is received.**
- Request for assistance with creating a dedicated car park at 46-64 Laurel Road – Council discussed the request to reconsider financial assistance for the residents to create off road parking on the green outside their homes. Council agreed that the costs of such a project would be well beyond any help Council could offer and their position had not changed since this was last discussed unfortunately. **Action: Clerk to respond and offer some advice on steps the residents could consider.**

- i. Request to use Community Centre's car parks for pop-up stall – A request to use Graig Hall car park for an occasional pop up stall to supply local residents with eco-friendly refill products was discussed. Council was agreeable to this in principle, but permission would be needed from NCC to allow use of the car park. Cllr Whitfield offered to take on this task. **Action: Cllr Whitfield to make enquiries with NCC.**
- j. Update on The Paddock – The Clerk reiterated that Council were aware that it owned the lease for the ground but that she had never seen a copy of it. Cllr Harris offered to look into if it was archived with Gwent Archives, but at present due to Covid-19 restrictions this was not possible. The Clerk had obtained information from Land Registry, but this did not include the full details of the lease. Further exploration with residents of Court Crescent would be needed to discover if members of the Paddock Committee held a copy or the search would need to wait until Gwent Archives could be accessed. **Action: Clerk to contact a member of the Paddock Committee if possible.**
- k. Remembrance Day – Arrangements were discussed. Cllr Sayer agreed to put up the lamp post poppies, Cllr Smart suggested it would take a small group so Cllrs Sayer, Harris, Smart and Taylor offered to complete the task. Cllr Harris was asked to retrieve the poppies from Graig Hall and work with the group to erect them. The Remembrance Day service could not be held as usual so the Clerk informed Council that she had agreed only a maximum of 2 Cllrs would attend the very short wreath laying ceremony at St Basil's Church lychgate on the day. It was agreed that only the wreath layer should attend, Cllr Gregory agreed to perform this duty. **Action: Cllrs Sayer, Smart, Taylor and Harris to retrieve and erect the lamp post poppies, Cllr Gregory to perform the wreath laying, Clerk to pass on Council's regular cheque for the wreath payment and remainder as a donation to Cllr Gregory to be handed to the British Legion representative at the ceremony.**

7. Reports:

- a. Newport City Councillors – Cllr Williams had left the meeting earlier and not returned - NTR. **Action: None necessary.**

Sub Committees:

- b. Graig Community Centre – The Clerk informed Council about insurance issues around the Hall remaining closed. It was noted that although there were signs of litter and bottles around the open space, there had been no further complaints regarding youths hanging out around the Hall. The Police were continuing to carry out patrols in the area. **Action: Issues with youths to be monitored by all.**
- c. Rhiwderin Community Centre & Fundraising Group – Cllr Whitfield reported that she and Cllr Gregory had met with another contractor with regards to the work needed to complete the Centre's refurbishment, but another quote was needed to satisfy requirements. It was noted that the ladies who run the Meithrin are to retire next year and there had been a number of enquiries for take over the space which ranged from continuing as a Meithrin/nursery of some kind to a coffee shop and post office. Any proposals would need to be put to NCC to ask permission under the terms of Council's lease. **Action: Cllr Whitfield to progress finding an extra quote and Cllr Gregory to look at permissions for the proposals received.**
- d. Allotments – Council discussed the position on bonfires, the Clerk informed the group that initial contact with a local resident who complained previously about bonfires had been encouraging and that she had turned it over to the Allotment Association to discuss coming to a suitable arrangement and agree a procedure for the limited use of bonfires in the future. Council agreed that some of the previously offered sum of £300 offered by Council to assist the Association with rubbish removal could be used to refund the cost of bait boxes and bait to help control a pest issue at the site. As one issue was about to be briefly discussed Cllr Tarr expressed an interest and did not take part in the item which was an update to Council from the Clerk regarding a plot holder issue being dealt with. **Action: Clerk to work with the Association regarding the plot holder issue and bonfires if necessary.**
- e. Burial Board – Cllr Gregory had attended a Zoom meeting of the Committee following Council's vote at the previous meeting when it was agreed that GCC would not be willing for NCC to take over the cemetery. However, they would be willing to work with RCC on running the Committee jointly if equal representation could be achieved and would be content to have the current interim Clerk administer on a permanent basis. However, when the same options were put to RCC they only agreed that they wanted NCC to take over the cemetery, so they did not discuss the other proposals as agreed. Council were dismayed at this response. Cllr Gregory reported that he was the only member of GCC to attend the meeting and as a visitor, did not have any voting rights. He was disappointed that no other GCC members had attended and was asked by RCC following the meeting that if equal representation was so important to Graig, why did no committee members attend? He felt this was difficult to defend. The Committee had decided it would not make any further decisions until the Employment Tribunal had been settled. **Action: Clerk to advise RCC when the tribunal progresses. Evidence from the complainant is awaited but must be submitted by them by 20th November 2020.**

Working Groups:

- f. Play Areas Group – Cllr Appleton reported that she had met with the NCC Officer in charge of the playground maintenance at Cowshed Lane to inspect the latest repair to the wet pour surface, but felt this was still not up to standard. The officer agreed and the repair will be completed again. Payment for the work will be held until the repair is satisfactory. She asked about the missing apparatus on the rotating armed swing which was thought to be a chair of some sort. The officer said this just disappeared, and he would cost a replacement and advise the Clerk. The Clerk reported that there had been some kind of misunderstanding as she had been told by another officer it had been removed as per Covid-19 regulations in March/April and that it was being stored to be returned when allowed. **Action: Cllr Appleton to progress the wet pour repair, Clerk to hold payment until satisfactory and take any quote for the chair replacement to Council for approval.**
- g. Horticultural Group/Best Kept Villages Group – Cllr Smart reported that the group had held a Zoom meeting. The planting scheme at St Basil's Shops roundabout had been agreed and plants were being ordered. Thanks to Cllr Taylor, the area had been weeded and Cllr Sayer was to provide manure to help fertilise the soil. It was noted that local residents had been making favourable comments. **Action: Group to progress.**
- h. Technology Group – Cllr Appleton reported that the new website could go live soon. Training would be needed, and she would look into if it could be carried out via Zoom. **Action: Cllr Appleton to progress.**
- i. Events and Social Group – NTR. **Action: None necessary.**
- j. Consultation Group – NTR **Action: None necessary.**

8. Items for forthcoming agendas:

- a. AGM – 25th November 2020.

9 Urgent Business not discussed above:

- a. Cllr Appleton advised the group she had received a nice email regarding grass cutting on the roundabout and the open space, and that it would be cut soon.

10. Dates of next meetings:

Full Council Meeting & AGM – Wednesday 25th November 2020 at 7pm held remotely via Zoom

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was closed at 9.10pm

Signed (Chair) – 25.11.20

Compiled 19.11.20

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