



# GRAIG COMMUNITY COUNCIL

## **Minutes of the Mid-Month Meeting held at Graig Community Hall, Bassaleg at 7.10pm on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2020**

Minutes of the meeting held at Graig Community Hall, Bassaleg at 7pm on 11<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

**1. To receive apologies for absence:** Cllrs A Whitfield, J Bailey.

**Present:** Cllrs R Caston, D Evans, M Smart, K Sayer, P Gregory, J Harris, W Haigh, L Fry, P Appleton, K Thomas, N Tarr, J Taylor, S Davies (Clerk), Sergeant Giles & 2 residents local to Graig Community Hall. Chaired by P Gregory.

**2. To welcome Sergeant Giles & 3. To receive public representations:** Sgt Giles and the residents attending were welcomed. The residents were attending to discuss issues in Graig Hall car park and the surrounding area. The residents were concerned about recent activities in Graig Hall car park during the evenings, it seemed to be attracting youths on foot and by car. This usually happened on a Thursday, Friday and Saturday late evenings with around 6 to 8 cars and in excess of 28 youths making a lot of noise, smashing glass, drinking and thought to be taking and dealing drugs. The youths were estimated to be in their late teens to early 20's. The issues were discussed with the Sgt and Council, and an approach was decided. Extra Police patrols would take place and if necessary, further measures would be implemented which would be escalated if and when necessary. It was thought that these occurrences may be linked to problems being experienced outside the Friendly Fox pub. The residents left the meeting at 7.27pm

Sgt Giles discussed various statistics with Council and reassured the group that Graig was a low crime area. The issues at the Friendly Fox were discussed and Cllr Gregory agreed to pass on information to Sgt Giles regarding the amount of litter and broken glass in the banking and at the roadsides close to the pub. Cllr Tarr offered to send a spreadsheet of statistics he had compiled over the past year which detailed reported crimes in Council's monthly report received from the Police. Cllr Gregory pointed out that the monthly Police reports received were not detailed enough to be useful and Council would like more information to be able to report areas of concern for residents to be extra vigilant in the minutes. Reporting improvements were discussed and Sgt Giles was thanked for his time. He left the meeting at 7.43pm.

**Action: Cllr Gregory to forward information on litter and Cllr Tarr to forward his spreadsheet of statistics to Sgt Giles.**

**4. To receive declarations of interest:** Cllr Tarr submitted a declaration form which pertained to planning application 20/0164 on the agenda and agreed to not take part in any decisions made. **Action: Clerk to publicise the declaration form on Council's website and in the noticeboards.**

**5. To welcome new Member Councillor Taylor:** Graig's newest Cllr, Jeff Taylor was welcomed to the group. Cllr Taylor was given the statutory paperwork to sign and return to the Clerk and read aloud and signed the Declaration of Office. Cllr Taylor was congratulated and is expected to become a valuable member of the group. **Action: Clerk to file appropriate paperwork.**

**6. Minutes:** The minutes of the meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> February 2020, previously circulated were read and approved subject to a minor amendment. Proposed Cllr Caston seconded Cllr Harris. The action points of the minutes were briefly discussed. **Action: None necessary.**

**7. Accounts for payment:** Proposed Cllr Tarr, seconded Cllr Caston and approved.

None to date

**Receipts**

Newport City Council – Play area maintenance grant

£9000.00

**8. Planning - Applications to be considered:**

a. 20/0120 – Proposal: Alteration to wall, creation of new pedestrian access and construction of storage building. Site: Land adjacent and west forming part of The Old Post Office, Old Road, Lower Machen, Newport. Application Type: Full. **Comment: Council expressed concern that the proposal could potentially impinge on conservation rules and compromise the integrity of the conservation ethos.**

Cllr Tarr left the room at 8.05pm

b. 20/0164 – Proposal: Single storey extension to side of property. Site: 25 Park View Gardens, Bassaleg, Newport, NP10 8JZ. Application Type: Full. **Comment: No objections.**

Cllr Tarr returned to the room at 8.10pm.

- c. 20/0166 – Proposal: Retention of first floor window, rear extension, raised patio and outbuildings. Site: 3 Highfield Gardens, Bassaleg, Newport, NP10 8LR. **Comment: No objections.**

## 9. Items for discussion:

- a. Delegation – Cllr Sayer raised the issue of the current pressures on the Chairman. He noted that his workload had become larger over time and at present was colossal. He was concerned that this would lead to Cllr Gregory wanting to step down from the role, but that Council would want him to stay in office. He asked if more could be delegated to other Cllrs to help spread the workload as currently it was an unfair burden on himself, and consequently on his family life too. Cllr Gregory agreed that the workload had increased a great deal since he became Chair, and he had the added pressure of being Chair for Rhiwderin Centre too which had recently become more difficult as some very active members of the Centre's committee had left. He appreciated the sentiment but felt the truth was that no-one else was prepared to do any more than they were already committed to. He went on to say that there were issues being dealt with in recent times that were difficult to resolve or improve and once this could be achieved, pressure would be relieved somewhat. **Action: All Cllrs to offer their assistance if able to take on some responsibilities.**
- b. Approval of amended risk assessments – Council's annual risk assessments had been performed by Cllrs Thomas and Haigh and comments returned to the Clerk. **Action: Clerk and Chair to review and agreed recommended changes to be made.**
- c. Fort View – Cllr Fry suggested that the proposed cutting down of the bramble patches in Fort View play area should be delayed at present due to nesting birds. He suggested this task be scheduled for September/October time when this would not be an issue. This was agreed, and Cllr Smart agreed to oversee the project. A quote for the work had been previously submitted at £775 for clearing the brambles and rubble, removal of the bramble roots and the ground prepared and re-seeded with grass. **Action: Cllr Smart to arrange and oversee at the appropriate time.**
- d. Wentworth Lane – Cllr Fry highlighted issues in the Wentworth Lane area, from overgrown verges and builders rubbish from recent storm repairs to discarded household waste and the need for a general clear-up. Council agreed and Cllr Fry was authorised to obtain quotes for making the area good. **Action: Cllr Fry to progress.**
- e. Sorting Rooms Rhiwderin update – additional information regarding the planning application had been logged on the planning portal, and the application was discussed in detail. It was agreed that Council's former planning comments should still stand and that it was not necessary to comment further at this point. Proposed Cllr Caston, seconded Cllr Appleton and agreed by majority. **Action: None at this time.**
- f. Coronavirus: The Clerk advised the group that she was becoming more and more concerned that the virus was escalating, and that soon it would be likely that the UK would be on lockdown as other countries had chosen as a way to depress its impact. She felt it highly likely that Council would be unable to hold a traditional meeting when the next one became due, and that there was a need to find another way to continue to conduct business. She suggested that as not all Cllrs had internet access, and due to the technical, practical and legal complexities it would be difficult to find a solution. She suggested a meeting could be held over a number of days via a combination of email, post and telephone conversations if necessary. It was agreed that Council and the Clerk would keep the issue under review. **Action: Clerk to monitor and if necessary, to make alternative arrangements for a future meeting to be held remotely in some form.**

## 10. Reports:

- a. Police – Discussed under Item 2 **Action: See Item 2.**
- b. City Councillors – No City Cllrs present NTR. **Action: None necessary.**
- c. Rhiwderin CC (architect meeting update) – Cllr Sayer expressed concerns that although a great job had been done on obtaining funding towards the Centre upgrade, things had not gone as well with the company chosen to carry out the work. A further staged payment had been requested by the company, but it was agreed by all that until the problems with the quality of their work had been rectified, no further money should be handed over. It was also agreed that lessons needed to be learned regarding the process and management of the project. **Action: Cllr Gregory to arrange a meeting with the architect and company to progress.**
- d. Burial Board update (including delegated authority request) – The Rogerstone CC's Clerk, who had taken over the temporary running of the BB business, requested that delegated authority be given to himself, the present Chair of the BB and Graig's Clerk to conduct interviews with the candidates applying for the position of Clerk to the Burial Board and to appoint an appropriate person to the post. This was agreed by majority, and it was also felt that the incoming Chair to the BB Graig's Cllr Harris should also be involved as he would be next in line to work with the new Clerk, being the appointed new Chair from May. It was agreed also by majority that Graig CC did not wish to be the employer of the next Clerk. **Action: Clerk to advise**

**Rogerstone's Clerk that the delegated authority request was approved, to ask that Cllr Harris also be invited to sit on the interview panel, but that Graig CC did not wish to be the new BB Clerk's employer.**

**11. Items for next agenda if agreed:**

None to date.

**12. Urgent other business not on the agenda:**

- a. Cllr Taylor informed Council that a clear-up behind St Basil's Church was being arranged. **Action: None necessary, for information only.**
- b. Cllr Smart asked if Council should do something to address the flooding issue in Carnegie Court where a homeowner recently lost their garden when it was completely taken away by flood water from the river. She was aware that the family had been placed in a hotel but were getting no support from Redrow who built the homes, and it was clear the foundations of their house had been undermined and they would not be able to return. **Action: Clerk to write to Redrow advising Council is concerned about the situation and to ask what action is being taken to help the family with this awful turn of events.**
- c. The Clerk submitted information on the cost of submitting an article into the Bassaleg & Rhiwderin Directory as requested. It was agreed that an article should be written for submission. Cllr Smart kindly offered to take on this task. **Action: Cllr Smart to progress.**
- d. It was noted that the Clerk did not have a photograph submitted for the new website being created and was asked to supply one. **Action: Clerk to arrange.**

**13. Correspondence for information**

Planning information.

**14. Dates of next meetings**

Events Meeting – Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March at 6.30pm  
Finance Review – Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> March at 7pm  
Full Council Meeting – Wednesday 25<sup>th</sup> March 2020 at 7pm  
Mid-Month Meeting – Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2020 at 7pm

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 9.55pm.

Approved by the Chairman Cllr Gregory on 8<sup>th</sup> April 2020

Clerk to the Council: Sian Davies

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Email: [clerk@grraigcc.co.uk](mailto:clerk@grraigcc.co.uk) Website: [www.grraigcc.co.uk](http://www.grraigcc.co.uk)

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