

## **MINUTES**

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### **Attendance**

Chairman Colin Deakins, Cllr Jenny Carpenter, Cllr Ann Bowyer, Cllr Julian Bowen-Sargent, Cllr Jan Clarke

Members of public: Judith Hopkins, Kerrie Grosvenor, County Councillor Meirion Howells

### **1. Apologies for absence**

Cllr Jo Storey

Helen May-Moebus (authorised long term leave)

County Councillor Tony Kear

### **2. Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Bowen-Sargent – Little Mill Children's Christmas party

### **3. Chair's Remarks**

The Chair announced that sadly the husband of former County Councillor Val Smith had recently passed away. He suggested a card be sent to her on behalf of The Council. All in favour.

### **4. Comments / Questions from the public**

Judith Hopkins attended to provide Councillors with a Report on the Woodland Group's progress, she reported that:

- Chainsaw training is complete Kieron Fradd can now carry out the chainsaw work required
- Awaiting formal qualification to arrive for record / insurance – this will be forwarded to the Clerk
- 48-50 hours of work carried out so far
  - o Paths have started to be cleared
  - o Chainsaw work to commence to clear last of footpaths
  - o Once work is completed the ground will be prepared for tree planting
- Total of 15 volunteers in the group. Volunteers work on an 'as and when' basis. Groups of 4/5 have been working on the ground so far. They provide their own hand tools.
  - o Paths being cleared, lower footpath, central footpath
- Judith Hopkins will be submitting photos for the website and Facebook page
- Cllr Bowyer asked Judith to provide information that she could submit to the Usk & Raglan

**Action: Most recent TfW Agreement to be circulated amongst Councillors.**

Kerrie Grosvenor attended the meeting to explain to the Councillors that an annual children's party is held at Little Mill Village Hall.

She reported that.

- The Christmas party hasn't run for the past couple of years
- They are restarting it for 2022 and looking for donations from community organisations
  - o Cost of hall hire
  - o Food donated
  - o 65 children at £2 per head - £130 in donations (rough calculations)
  - o Asking Llanbadoc CC for support / donation
  - o Decision required reasonably quickly as party is 3<sup>rd</sup> December

*This matter was discussed later in the meeting.*

## **5. Approval of Minutes**

September 2022 motion Cllr Bowyer seconded Cllr Sargent-Bowen

October 2022 motion Cllr Carpenter seconded by Jan Clarke

## **6. Matters arising from Minutes if not on agenda**

The matter of adding current councillors and removing former councillors from the current and savings account were discussed and confirmed.

**Action; Add signatories to accounts**

## **7. Action Points / Clerk Report**

The Clerk took the councillors through the action points and updated them accordingly.

**Action; Refer to Action Points and carry out as per updates**

## **8. County Councillor Participation**

County Councillor Meirion Howells entered the meeting at 19.46.

## **9. Finance & Governance**

- a. Authorise payments to be made (See appendix)
  - i. Regular monthly payments agreed
  - ii. PICUS survey agreed
  - iii. Tree maintenance quotes. More quotes required.
  - iv. MCC maintenance invoice not authorised. Follow up required.
  - v. SLCC OVW conference attendance authorised.
  - vi. Planning Aid Wales Training. Authorised if still required.
  - vii. Mole catcher fee. Authorised awaiting total.
- b. Review last months finances; Current account balance currently at £21,429.11
- c. Budget review. Date set for Finance & Procedure meeting before next ordinary Meeting
- d. Internal audit review to be confirmed at next ordinary meeting.
  - i. Cllr Carpenter explained what the Audit process entails. A standard letter is sent to the internal auditor (check that it is on website). The internal auditor

used by LCC has been found to be competent and issued a Report alongside the audit submitted.

- ii. Councillors agreed the review
- e. IRPW Report to be confirmed at Finance & Procedure meeting
  - i. New Report will allow councillors to be remunerated £156 per year for the 23/24 financial year instead of £150.
- f. Chair's chain of office
  - i. Chair to contact Usk Council to ask for advice on someone to engrave new panels for chain of office Vice Chair to action??
  - ii. Jenny Carpenter and Peter Sutherland to have their names added as past Chairs
- g. Complaints and internal affairs
  - i. The council discussed an ongoing complaint from Peter Sutherland and agreed action on this matter.
  - ii. Cllr Bowyer proposed that the decisions made for Peter Sutherland's allowance are correct and if he wishes to peruse a complaint, he is more than welcome to do so. This was Seconded by Cllr Bowen-Sargent and agreed unanimously
  - iii. **Action; Contact Nigel Leaworthy for a breakdown of Grounds maintenance contract / maintenance agreement. This payment was not authorised.**

The quotation for a sign for the riverbank at Llanbadoc Island was discussed. Cllr Bowyer expressed concern that the council would be engaging a level of liability if they place the sign. It was put forward and agreed that the quote would be forwarded to the Anglers and that the council would grant them permission to fit a sign if they require one.

**Action: Clerk to write to Gwent Anglers and forward the sign quote and approve placement of sign if Anglers wish to fund it.**

The Clerk explained that he now has access to online banking and will put together finance reports to circulate to councillors.

**Action: Put together Finance Reports and send to councillors**

## **10. Community & Entertainment**

- a. King Charles Coronation
  - i. The Chair proposed council to buy 4x seats with placards. To be placed within each ward. The clerk suggested waiting for release of any news on grant funding. No decision was agreed
- b. Usk British Legion – Service of Remembrance
  - i. Chair will attend to represent the Council. 10 o' clock service at St. Mary's Church in Usk and place wreath on the Cenotaph has been ordered at a cost of £20 by Cllr Carpenter
- c. Geology Trail – Llanbadoc Plan
  - i. Council to share information provided by Walking group on website and social media to encourage walkers to use the trail
  - ii. Chair to make a statement/quotation regarding the trail
  - iii. Date to be set regarding the 'opening' of the trail
- d. Council nomination for Little Mill Village Hall committee
  - i. No current nominations

**Action; Clerk to go back to Ollie Wickes (Ramblers) asking them to set a date and saying that Chair will make a statement.**

**Action; Clerk to send out email to all councillors re; Little Mill Village Hall Committee**

#### **11. Maintenance**

- a. Clearance of Llanbadoc Island. Cllr Carpenter suggested that the brush around the wooden parking fences are cleared back.
- b. Chair has quote for 'no entry' and 'one way' signs at Llanbadoc Island totalling £365 these signs would be metal and on galvanised steel. Cllr Bowyer suggested following a discussion that three signs would be adequate. A budget of up to £200 for new signs was proposed by Cllr Carpenter and seconded by Cllr Bowyer. (Signs, posts, and caps)

#### **12. Internal Reports**

- a. Woodland Report – Presented by Judith Hopkins under public participation

#### **13. External Reports**

- a. Llanbadoc Ward Police Report received and noted by councillors
- b. Cyber Resilience Newsletter received and noted by councillors.

**Action; Clerk is going to contact MCC to ask for costings on Llanbadoc Island maintenance.**

**Action: Chair to order new signs**

#### **14. Planning**

- a. Jerusalem Lane – DM/2022/01437 – noted. No objections from Council. Proposer Cllr Carpenter no objections. Seconded by Cllr Bowen-Sargent.
- b. New flats in Little Mill – Chair has forwarded his thoughts on this development. The precedent of rural allocation has not been applied to the new flats being built. They will be allocated to people of the 'greatest need'. Chair has passed his concerns over to Monmouthshire County Council and is awaiting a response.

#### **15. Reports from Advisory Groups**

##### **a. Usk Steering Group**

Cllr Clarke and County Councillor Meirion Howells explained that there is currently no grant funding available for project and that it was being 'book shelved' until the project can move forward. Cllr Howells which (Twyn Square & Bridge Street) £50,000 may be available. £5,000 towards draft plan. (up to £125,000 for a full plan) and with no guarantee of Welsh Government funding to carry out the work.

##### **b. Usk Trail Action Group**

Meeting held on 8/11/2022 – large commitment required. Speculative figures of £3m have been cited for the project. Further discussion is required. There is £27,000 available in S.106 funds which could help towards planning, but it is recognised that this is a small fraction of cost before anything is implemented. Could it be part of the Active Travel route?

## **Little Mill Village Hall Children's Christmas Party**

**Action: Clerk to put together small grant fund form. Upon council approval this will be sent to the organisers of Children's Christmas party Little Mill.**

Chair proposes to buy selection boxes. Cllr Carpenter seconds this motion. Following how many children will be attending. Cllr Bowen-Sargent to find out numbers

The meeting ended at: 2040

**15. Date of Next meeting – Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> December 2022 6:00pm Monmouthshire County Hall (subject to availability)**

*These Minutes have been accepted as a true record of the meeting*

*Signed by The Chair* \_\_\_\_\_ *Date: 14/12/2022*

## Appendix – expenditure list

### November expenses 2022 for authorisation

| company                                   | Amount                    | Date due                         | Reference  |
|---|---------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| Merlin Environmental                      | £101.40                   | 01/11/2022                       | Dog bins   |
| HSBC Charges                              | £5.00                     | Monthly (taken automatically)    |  |
| Clerk Payment                             | £478.83                   | 25/11/2022                       | Anticipated salary (new tax code)                  |
| PAYE                                      | £50 (up to)               | 25/11/2022 (taken automatically) | Subject to change due to tax code change           |
| Monmouthshire County Council              | £2,884.31                 |                                  | Annual Grounds maintenance                         |
| Little Mill November Hall hire            | £20.00                    |                                  | For booking of buffet room for meeting             |
| OVW / SLCC Clerk Training day             | £45                       | 12/11/2022                       | Clerk training day                                 |
| Mole catcher fee                          | £80 + £10 per mole caught | Awaiting total                   | Mole catcher Little Mill playing field             |
| Planning Aid Wales Training (Cllr Bowyer) | £35                       |                                  | Planning Aid Wales training course for Cllr Bowyer |

### Outstanding payments: Wotton Tree Consultancy\_Merlin Environmental

#### Costs for consideration:

|   |                              |
|---|------------------------------|
| Common land tree maintenance (3x quotes required) |                              |
| 1x received so far                                | £3588 DL Corran Tree Felling |
| PICUS Survey of mature oak tree                   | £395+ VAT – Alltree Services |
| Hedge cutting at Little Mill                      | £500 +VAT                    |