

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of St Arvans Community Council held on Tuesday 14th November 2023 in the Meeting Rooms, St Arvans and online via Webex at 7.00pm

- 2311.01 ATTENDANCE:** Cllrs R Edwards (Chair), P Farley (Vice Chair), A Clay, B Howells, I Costello, Cllr T Houghton  
**Apologies:** None  
**Also in attendance:** Ms C Baker (Clerk), County Cllr Ann Webb, PCSO A Jones, 3 members of public
- 2311.02 PUBLIC FORUM**  
 Representative of St Arvans Church presented to Council about the biodiversity of the churchyard, and the maintenance needs.
- 2311.03 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** Cllr Farley Min. 2312.12e
- 2311.04 APPROVAL OF MINUTES**  
**Resolved:** To approve the minutes of:  
 ORDINARY MEETING held on 10<sup>th</sup> October 2023  
 FINANCE MEETING held on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2023
- 2311.05 REPORTS RECEIVED:**
- a **Neighbourhood Police Crime and Traffic:** The police report was read. Of note was a report of fraudulent workmen attending an address in Laurel Park for gutter clearance, and the removal of roundels from the 20mph sign on Grange Road. – [copy of report attached here](#)
  - b **Monmouthshire County Cllr A Webb:**
  - c **Wye Valley Villages Delivery Group** held 19/10/2023 – [click here for meeting notes](#) Four Priority Groups have been established – Broadband; Traffic & Road Safety; Sustainable/Public Transport; River Wye- Cllr Howells was appointed Lead for Traffic & Road Safety.
  - d **One Voice Wales Area Committee meeting** held 26/10/2023 – [click here for minutes](#). Cllr Edwards attended the remote meeting and reported this was barely quorate, with no Chair or Vice Chair elected once again. The OVW Chief Executive, Lyn Cadwallader, attended to explain his ruling not to permit hybrid meetings, although he will now allow face-to-face in summer months. Justin Howell, newly-appointed OVW Digital Project Manager, gave a presentation.
  - e **St Arvans Road Safety Project Community Presentation** held 28/10/2023 (see 2311.11)
- 2311.06 PERSONNEL**  
 Council received NALC 2023-24 Pay Scales which were recently published, and are to be backdated to 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023. Council was reminded that the current staff contracts are linked to the NALC pay scales.  
**Resolved:** To endorse new rates of pay, backdated to 1<sup>st</sup> April 2023, in line with pay scales and contracts of employments.
- 2311.07 FINANCE (compiled by RFO)**

**a** Reconciled balances at bank & building society at 31.10.23:

HSBC	£16,874.07
MBS	£10,063.96
Unity Trust	£ 496.67
<b>Balance to Bank Reconciliation 31.10.23</b>	<b>£27,434.70</b>

**b** To note payments made between 1.10.23 – 31.10.23

Date	Payment Ref	Payee	Description	Amount
01/10/2023		Unity Trust	Monthly fee pro rata	3.33
02/10/2023	P60	Merlin Environmental Services	Dog waste- September	127.40
02/10/2023	P61	Monmouthshire County Council	Dog Waste Bags	53.70
12/10/2023	P62	One Voice Wales	Annual Membership	126.00
12/10/2012	P63	H3G	Clerks' mobile	14.00
13/10/2023	P64	Jamf	ipad security	13.15
13/10/2023	P65	Jamf	ipad security	0.36
16/10/2023	P66	Cisco webex	Hybrid meeting platform	14.86
22/10/2023	P67	HSBC	Bank Charge	5.00
23/10/2023	P68	St Arvans Village Trust	Meeting room hire September	19.00
23/10/2023	P69	Honeycomb Print Services	KGFP Playground sign	50.40
23/10/2023	P69	Honeycomb Print Services	KGFP Maintenance	84.00
23/10/2023	P70	St Arvans PCC	Fiveways subscription	10.00
25/10/2023		£500 transfer to Unity Trust		
30/10/2023	P71	Merlin Environmental Services Ltd	Dog Waste collection October	127.40
30/10/2023	P59	Payroll	HMRC/Salaries/Allowance	569.28

**c Resolved: To approve the additional payments for approval and payment in November:**

- i. Merlin Environmental Services Ltd – dog waste collection November- £127.40  
(Litter Act 1983, s5,6)
- ii. First Aid kits for Litter Pickers- approx. £85.00 (8 x £8.40 + £5.94 postage)  
(Litter Act 1983, s5,6)
- iii. Hand sanitisers x 8 to be purchased from Boots – approximately £25.00  
(Litter Act 1983, s5,6)
- iv. To approve purchase of replacement defibrillator pads £48.00 + VAT  
(Public Health Act 1936, s234)

**d Internal Audit Services**

**Resolved:** To sign the [Letter of Engagement from Microshade VSM](#) to undertake internal Audit Services for the financial year ending 31.3.24 at a cost of £165. This follows the decision made under minute reference F2310.08.

**e Audit Wales – Annual Return year ending 31.3.23.**

Noted: the [conclusion of the Annual Return for the financial year ending 31st March 2023](#) from the Auditor General for Wales that:

*“On the basis of my review, in my opinion no matters have come to my attention giving cause for concern that in any material respect, the information reported in this Annual Return:*

- has not been prepared in accordance with proper practices.*
- that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.*
- is not consistent with the Council’s governance arrangements; and*
- that the Council does not have proper arrangements in place to secure economy, efficiency and effectiveness in its use and that there are no further matters that I wish to draw to the Council’s attention”.*

**2311.08 PROPERTIES**

**A King George’s Field Playground:**

- a. Update on maintenance/repairs received:
  - i Information board has been installed at entrance.
  - ii Coronation Bench has been installed, awaiting signage.
- iii Application to be made to Keep Wales Tidy for an appropriate diversity package for Car Park verge.
  - b. Tree Inspection report from MCC has been received which needs to be separated from Park Sports Field report. No problems identified.

**B The Park Sports Field:**

- a. Update on progress of maintenance/repairs received:
  - i Sign has been installed on main gate
  - ii Three quotations have been received for a single junior rugby post to replace the unsafe one removed earlier. Resident with specialist knowledge kindly advised on the appropriate specification. New quotation for installation required based on the two different types of post that could be purchased – one that was a one-piece post, and the other being multiple pieces that are fitted on site. It was noted that the multiple piece post would reduce delivery costs by several hundred pounds.

**Resolved:** to approve expenditure to a maximum of £1,300, decision delegated to the RFO at the next Finance Committee meeting

- b. Tree Inspection report from MCC has been received which needs to be separated from KGF Playground report. One problem detected with a tree along boundary with main road which is responsibility of MCC.
- c. Noted that the Clerk has submitted a request to include Park Sports Field as exclusion zone to the consultation on Public Spaces Protection Order (see Environment and Recreation 2311.12)

## 2311.09 PLANNING

- A New planning applications: received by publication of agenda on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2023.
  - a DM/2023/01530 Longstone Barn, Rogerstone Grange The introduction of two traditional catslide roof dormers to the fire-damaged first floor of Longstone Barn.  
**Resolved:** No reason to object, Council considered this is an acceptable solution.
  - b DM/2023/01573\* 22 Laurel Park, St Arvans Single-storey side extension to existing bungalow to provide an open-plan kitchen-living space and study. (*\*A consultation request has not been received by SACC, but this item appears on the MCC Planning Portal.*) **Noted**
- B Tree applications:
  - i DM/2023/01449\* Firbank House, Devauden Road, St Arvans Removal of large Horse Chestnut tree. (*\*A consultation request has not been received by SACC, but this item appears on the MCC Planning Portal*) **Noted**
  - ii Noted that there is an MCC referral re proposed tree felling in garden of Piercefield Pub.

## 2311.10 COMMUNICATIONS

- a To discuss and agree monthly surgery for residents and businesses.  
**Resolved:** To hold a surgery for 1 hour in January 2024 at The Meeting Rooms (date to be confirmed,) Gwent Police to be invited to provide information on SmartWater and Safer Neighbourhoods; County Cllr Webb agreed to provide contact details and would also like to attend this.  
**Further resolved:** To produce a 'Seasons Greetings' card by way of informing residents of the upcoming surgery and other useful information. Printing costs in current budget to be utilised, with quote to be available for Finance Meeting on 28th November.
- b It was suggested that it might be useful for SACC to purchase a projector for future community events. Cllr Houghton to look into this, but did warn that bulbs are often very expensive to replace, and Cllr Clay highlighted that Council would need to be sure it would have good use of such an item before making such a purchase.  
  
Cllr Houghton and Clerk to rearrange initial consultation with IT consultant regarding IT needs of the Council.

## 2311.11 HIGHWAYS & MAINTENANCE

- a St Arvans Road Safety Community Presentation  
This lively session was attended by 20 residents who expressed a variety views and asked searching questions. The Council was thanked for arranging the presentation. As stated, the PEP Technical Notes are now on the website and residents are invited to express their views to the Community Council by 8<sup>th</sup> December 2023, which SACC will present in future discussions with MCC. Chair thanked Cllrs Clay, Costello and Howells who worked hard in both setting up the presentation and attended on the day. The Clerk has received several emails from interested residents, and others have spoken with Councillors directly.

- b Noted that date for St Arvans street clean and gully washing will be confirmed for end November/ beginning December.
- c Update on 20MPH rollout road signage - see WVV Delivery Group report (see 2311.05c)
- d Noted that two signs opposite Livox Cottages (no littering/toileting/parking) have been installed, thanks to Cllr Clay.
- e Noted that the Clerk and RFO have both completed the Traffic Management for Community Events course delivered by Lantra, which gives five years certification for organisation of temporary road closure for community events such as street parties, litter picks etc.
- f Noted that Welsh Government consultation on Road Safety Strategy is now open (end date 31<sup>st</sup> January 2024) – [click here for consultation website](#)

#### 2311.12 ENVIRONMENT & RECREATION

- A **Litter picking:** Report received from Co-ordinator, Mrs D Parnell - 9 bags collected at a recent session. Thanks to all involved.
- b **Defibrillators:**
  - i Monthly inspection report received.
  - ii CPR and defibrillator training course on 24<sup>th</sup> October was attended by six residents. There has been interest in holding another session, and this will be organised for early 2024.
- c **Dog fouling:**

Note that the Clerk has submitted a response to Monmouthshire County Council's Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) Consultation to request inclusion of The Park Sports Field.

  - d Protection for grass verge outside The Vicarage in Wyndcliffe View was discussed and it was agreed to provide a suitable flower/herb barrel, to be maintained by local volunteers.
  - e A written request was received from St Arvans Local Churchwarden for funding toward grass-and-hedge cutting of both churchyards; further details of previous expenditure to be requested from Church Treasurer.

#### 2311.13 CORRESPONDENCE

Correspondence noted: Of particular note and interest to the local community was the MCC press release regarding identification/allocation of Gypsy and Traveller sites in Monmouthshire.

#### 2311.14 Forthcoming meetings requiring SACC representation noted:

- a Wye Valley Villages Delivery Group, Itton Village Hall, 10<sup>th</sup> January, 2pm: Cllrs Edwards & Howells
- St Arvans Memorial Hall Committee, 18<sup>th</sup> January, 7.45pm: Cll Clay
- St Arvans Community Council Surgery for Residents, Meeting Rooms 20<sup>th</sup> January 2024
- Give Dog Fouling the Red Card, County Hall, 22<sup>nd</sup> February, 10.30am: Cllr Edwards

#### 2311.15 DATE OF NEXT MEETING(S): 12<sup>th</sup> December 2023, 7pm at The Meeting Rooms, St Arvans

**2024:** 9<sup>th</sup> January, 13<sup>th</sup> February, 12<sup>th</sup> March, 9<sup>th</sup> April, 14<sup>th</sup> May (Annual Meeting and Ordinary Meeting).

The meeting closed at 8:50pm.

Chair's signature: .....

Date: .....