

ROGERSTONE COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE COUNCILS MEETING
TYDU COMMUNITY HALL 4TH SEPTEMBER 2024

Members present:

Chairperson: Councillor S. Bowen
Councillors: S. Jones, Y. Forsey, C Larcombe, B. Davies, J. Reynolds, D. Mlewa
S. Meek, R. Lloyd, N. Upham, G. Foley, J. Gibbons

Apologies:

Councillors: A. Hobbs, K. Hopkins, N. Ireland

Members stood for two minutes silence in memory of D Day veteran Trefor Bray, who sadly passed away on the 22nd of August.

It was agreed to take item 4, Police Matters, prior to other agenda items.

4. POLICE MATTERS

Members welcomed the officer to the meeting and the following was discussed:-

- Off road vehicles.
- Police reports and contents.
- Police Surgeries – 25.9.24 & 15.10.24 - 2-3pm - Fourteen Locks Canal Centre.
- Speeding vehicles and speed camera vans.
- Police involvement with school visits.
- Cybercrime.
- Social media.
- Ward priorities.
- Drug issues in Rogerstone.
- Parking issues.
- Police contacts.

The Chairperson thanked the officer for his attendance.

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at this point in the meeting.

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held 7th August 2024 were approved.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

3.1 Defibrillators

The Clerk advised that the telephone kiosks have been checked by an electrician and there is an electricity supply. Talks with BT are promising (they may pay for the electricity supply), so it is anticipated that the Greenfield Road kiosk will be suitable for a defibrillator to be installed.

3.2 Japanese Knotweed

Members discussed the Japanese Knotweed removal programme, and the Clerk reiterated the areas covered and the monitoring process.

3.3 Police & Crime Commissioner

Members were advised that the Police & Crime Commissioners office have not yet responded to requests to attend a meeting.

3.4 Van/Pickup Truck

Members discussed the prices, and pros and cons of purchasing or leasing an electric truck.

Members agreed that it would be more cost effective to purchase the vehicle rather than lease one, based on the costs provided by the Clerk. The special offers included in the price (£26,500, after the discount and excluding VAT), and include an 8 year battery life, 5 years free servicing.

The current diesel truck will be retained for grounds work.

3.5 Riverbank

Signage

At the last meeting members agreed to:-

- *Contact Newport City Council regarding adequate signage and a safety barrier to prevent anyone accessing the former footpath area, as there is a real concern for the safety of members of the public.*
- *Councillor J. Reynolds agreed to speak with the City Council and ascertain their plans for new signage and barriers, including signage being placed in several areas further along the riverbank to warn people well in advance of the dangerous area.*

This will be discussed further at the next meeting.

Reinstatement of Riverbank to Protect Flood Wall Defences

A section of the Public Right Of Way between Jubilee Park and the Welfare Grounds has been lost through storms causing riverbank erosion. Newport City Council, who are responsible for Public Rights of Way in Newport have diverted the footpath away from the riverbank in this location, therefore there are currently no plans to reinstate it, (that anyone is aware of).

The right of way also served to protect the flood defences from river erosion and whilst the riverbank has been significantly reduced in width, the existing protection is still currently effective. However, the scale of the protection has been significantly reduced, so Jubilee Park (Rogerstone) Management Company Limited are planning to reinstate this protection and have appointed a project team to begin the process of the necessary applications for consent and subsequent construction. This will not be a quick process as it involves legal processes, several surveys, licence applications, planning consent and a restricted construction window due to environmental constraints.

To protect the flood defence wall it is not necessary to have sufficient width at the top of the proposed revetment to provide for a footpath. However to provide for future options should Newport City Council wish to reconsider the diversion of the PROW that is currently in place, the company are going to consult with residents via the website, noticeboard and Jubilee Park Residents social media forum to increase the width of the top of the revetment to 3.5m, which will be funded from the Flood Protection Wall Contingency Fund.

This will not reinstate the path (which is on unregistered land) or make it accessible to the public, the barriers and signage discussed at the last meeting will still be required to ensure no one enters the area. The footpath will however remain diverted, unless Newport City Council reconsider.

3.6 Allotments

Members were updated on the allotment allocation, remarking/numbering process.

The following was discussed:-

- Draft allotment agreement.
- Flowers on plots (percentages)
- Knotweed.
- Newport City Councils allotment handbook.
- Water on site and the management and costs.
- Having an allotment secretary/committee (made up of allotment tenants).
- Dogs on plots.
- Dog excrement.
- Gwent Bee Keepers Association.
- Setting up a working group.

It was agreed to:-

- Set up a working group to discuss the agreement and a tenants committee etc.
- Look at the plots when they have all been remarked and allocated.

3.7 Wales Audit

Wales Audit have still been unable to provide a contact for Xero to conduct the audit as the person dealing with the allocation of personnel is now on leave.

The Clerk advised of recent correspondence requesting payment for bills for previous audits. These vary greatly in amounts with no explanation for the differences. Members had already agreed not to pay these bills until the complaint has been dealt with, and this was reaffirmed.

4. POLICE MATTERS - Discussed earlier.

5. CLERKS REPORT

Members acknowledged the Clerks Report and the correspondence received prior to the meeting.

The following was discussed:-

FOI Request/Correspondence

Members discussed emails from a resident, which have been sent to the Community Council, the Clerk, Rogerstone Community Council members, Newport City Council members, Newport City Council, the ICO, the Ombudsman, the Ramblers Association etc. It was agreed that many of the complaints have insufficient grounds for investigation, are on a variety of topics, with some being contradictory. Members felt that it is detracting the Community Council from its service to residents.

Having relented from the previous position of the Council in October 2023, members had agreed to give access to the information requested, however, the resident's interaction with the Community Council and others has again become unsustainable, for example, over 30 emails were received in a relatively short period of time.

At the October 2023 meeting, it was agreed to consider the resident a vexatious complainant and no longer engage with the person as a Community Council, or as individual members, when the correspondence is viewed as unreasonable, inaccurate, repetitive or for information not held.

Members noted that the residents name was not in the public minutes as suggested.

The following was agreed:-

- To reinforce the original decision; this resident will not be engaged with, unless the request is considered relevant and reasonable.
- As members have already agreed to an appointment for the resident to view documents held at the hall on the 12th of September, it was agreed to honour that appointment. The two members supervising this will now be Councillors Jones and Meek.
- The complaints made by the resident regarding a member of the Council will be investigated and the resident advised of the outcome.
- Members agreed that the scale of the recent SAR email along with other requests for information will take well in excess of what is considered to be a reasonable allocation of hours to research and compile.
- The resident will be advised of the Councils decisions.

6. NEW CORRESPONDENCE

Wild Rogerstone

Members were pleased to hear of Wild Rogerstone's Welsh Government funding for the Bethesda allotment project .

Members considered the Section 137 application from the group and agreed that they will consider this further once the project scope of the grant is complete. Members would also like the group to discuss the planting proposals for the Glade Community Garden with the Head Groundsman. There may be a benefit for the group if the Head Groundsman purchases plant supplies with those for the

Community Council. The Clerk will report back to members when there is further information to consider.

Community Orchard Proposal

Correspondence from Beccy Williams a Local Places for Nature Officer, sitting in the Biodiversity Team in Newport City Council was received. Newport City Council has Local Places for Nature funding from the Welsh Government and Beccy would like to come along to a Community Council meeting to discuss projects, such as a Community Orchard at High Cross Open Space. Members discussed other areas that may be suitable for projects, such as the field next to the Cefn Road car park and allotment site, and the pond area at the Welfare Grounds. It was noted that the field near the car park would require a lot of work, though the Knotweed can be fenced off while undergoing eradication treatment. It was agreed to invite Beccy to the next meeting so that all views and ideas can be shared.

Members discussed the Section 106 monies from the building of the flats at Ruskin Avenue, which has yet to be received. It was suggested that the money hasn't been released as 11 flats are not yet occupied (as part of the agreement); some members disputed this. Members were originally hoping to develop the field near the car park with some of this funding.

7. ACCOUNTS

Accounts RCC

Fuelgenie	
Van & machinery	£361.34
D. Evans	
Cleaning hall & outside toilet blocks July	£448.00
Cleaning hall & outside toilet blocks August	£496.00
L. Davies	
Telephone boxes electrical testing	£ 60.00
Vodafone	
Broadband	£ 41.97
Octopus	
Gas – hall & electric café, grounds buildings, hall	£502.64
Morgan Signs	
Plaque & board updating	£220.56
Moonpig	
Competition cards	£ 35.91
S. Bowen	

Competition prize money	£240.00
eBay	
Keyboard (CA)	£ 83.99
Bitdefender	
Anti virus & password protector	£ 61.63
Vision ICT	
Website hosting	£210.00
ICO	
Annual fee	£ 35.00
Accounts JP	
Martyn Jones Gardening	
Grass cutting	£3500.00

8. PLANNING

Members on the interim planning committee are emailed plans when received.

Following discussion, it was agreed that the Planning Committee will form a consensus on any comments to be submitted for applications and the Chairperson, will then pass on the agreed form of words to the Assistant Clerk to be forwarded to the Planning Department.

Members briefly discussed the developments at St Johns Crescent and Oak Road being undertaken by Newport City Homes. It was suggested that building may start January 2025 and be finished by spring 2026.

9. CONSIDERATION OF MATTERS

9.1 Remembrance Sunday

Members discussed the progress made by the working group:-

- Unfortunately, the working group have been unable meet and agree on firm proposals.
- Councillor Reynolds advised that he has made a number of enquiries and is awaiting information.
- The working group will report to the next meeting, when it is hoped that the Vicar will be in attendance.

9.2 Gwent Archives

Following discussion, members agreed to pass all the minutes (pre digital) and old deeds to Gwent Archives to preserve them. Anyone wishing to view them will then be able to make an appointment with them.

10. URGENT MATTERS

Jubilee Park

A member highlighted an issue with an area under the management of Jubilee Park Management Company. The area is near Mandrake House and the Bowls Club, and due to poor fencing there has been fly tipping and issues with antisocial behaviour. The Clerk advised that the Management Company are aware of the issue and a contractor has already been appointed to fence off the area securely; the Bowls Club are also getting a new gate.

Members discussed some vandalism to a noticeboard at Jubilee Park, which has been resolved.

Kindness Day – 13.11.24 St Annes Church 1-3pm

Following discussion, members approved a budget of up to £300 to purchase refreshments for the above event to be organised by Rogerstone Community Council's Chairperson.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be at 7pm 2nd October 2024.

The Clerk gave his apologies for the meeting.