

BURTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the monthly meeting held at the Mission Hall, Hill Mountain, on Wednesday 6th November, 2019

Present: Cllrs Nia Phillips, Laurence Price, Paddy McNamara, Derek Jones, Robin Howells, Michael Pettit, Alun Williams, John Mathias, Iain Wood, Scott Sinclair (vice-Chair); Peter Horton (Clerk).

Apologies: C’lir John Evans.

Declarations of known interests

C’lir Alun Williams declared a personal but non-prejudicial interest in correspondence item 8 (pre-application consultation on proposed development at Nolton Croft, Houghton), due to a tenuous employment connection.

C’lir John Mathias declared a personal and prejudicial interest in correspondence item 8 (pre-application consultation on proposed development at Nolton Croft, Houghton) due to a commercial connection with the applicants.

Minutes of October 2019 monthly meeting

The minutes were agreed as an accurate record, and signed by the Chairman (proposer C’lir Alun Williams, seconder C’lir Scott Sinclair).

Matters Arising

Sardis bus shelter bollards / footpath repairs. Matter still in hand with C’lir Iain Wood, who was still awaiting a written quotation for the work. He hoped that this would be available for the December meeting.

Footpath to Jubilee Hall. C’lir Iain Wood reported that some detailed aspects connected with crossing of private driveways were still under consideration. It was hoped that detailed plans and costings would be available by the December meeting. Matter to be tabled as an agenda item for next month.

Ditches, New Wells Road. Clerk to chase up, as C’lir Robin Howells reported that nothing had been done to resolve the problem. Clerk to ask P.C.C. if the pipes have yet been cleared out.

Plans

Applications

19/0753/PA - Proposed Single Detached House and garage - Land at Houghton Nursery, Houghton, SA73 1NW – no objections.

Correspondence

- 01) O.V.W. – Welsh Government consultations on planning guidance relating to Housing, compulsory purchase, and flooding erosion – noted.
- 02) Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales – consultation on draft 2020 report – to be placed on agenda for December, to discuss / approve Members’ allowances for 2020/21.
- 03) S.S.A.F.A. (Armed Forces Charity) – promotion of events to commemorate the 75th anniversary of V.E. Day over the weekend of 8th – 10th May 2020 – to be placed on agenda for January.
- 04) P.C.C. – Pembrokeshire County Council Charter with town and community councils – C’lir Scott Sinclair commented that he had read the document, which seemed rather vague, and lacking in detail. C’lir Alun Williams mentioned that a forthcoming meeting was apparently planned for sometime in the New Year to consider the future relationship between P.C.C. and town and community councils in more depth. Clerk to look out for notification of this.
- 05) Dyfed Powys Police and Crime Commissioner – newsletter – noted.

- 06) O.V.W. – advice on biodiversity – discussed in agenda item below.
- 07) O.V.W. – newsletter – noted.
- 08) J.C.R. Planning – pre-application consultation on proposed development at Nolton Croft Farm, Houghton – there was no substantive discussion on this item, as a result of which it was not necessary for C’lir John Mathias to leave the room. Members had no comment to make on the proposals.
- 09) B.T. – consultation on proposed payphone removal – Members had no objection to the proposed removal of the kiosk at Foxhall, which had apparently not been used to make any calls within the last twelve months.
- 10) Nicola Lund – speeding / traffic-related issues – discussed in agenda item below.
- 11) Gail Smith – speeding / traffic-related issues – discussed in agenda item below.
- 12) Ben Blake, P.C.C. – speeding / traffic-related issues – discussed in agenda item below.

Accounts

Payments

One Stop Property Development : £1371-00

Members were concerned at the delay in receiving an invoice for work carried out almost two years ago. It was felt important to deal pre-emptively with this when issuing future contracts to One Stop. It was confirmed by the Clerk that grass-cutting had been suspended for the season by One Stop.

The above items were approved by Members (proposer C’lir Laurence Price, seconder C’lir Robin Howells).

Discussion of any necessary actions at common land, Sardis, including arrangements for placing boulders across site frontage

C’lir Alun Williams suggested that an area in the back corner of the land could be used to place the boulders temporarily.

C’lir Iain Wood confirmed that he could arrange to be on site to receive the boulders. Clerk to make the order of 12 x 1 tonne boulders. Delivery to be requested for earlyish in the day, and a request to be made for the quarry to liaise directly with C’lir Iain Wood regarding the delivery.

Any necessary discussion of Environment Wales Act 2016 requirements to prepare a plan on biodiversity

Members noted that there was no specific deadline for the preparation of a Plan, and guidance was still awaited from the Welsh Government. C’lir Alun Williams commented that many of the aspects seemed more relevant to primary authorities.

C’lir Scott Sinclair commented that the underlying principles of the legislation seemed clear enough, but felt that there was not much in the way of specific actions that could currently be identified, apart from maybe leaving edges of areas of land uncut, etc.

The Clerk confirmed that, although there was no deadline for preparation of a Plan, the first annual report on progress towards this was due by the end of the year. It was also confirmed that this related to land in ownership or direct control of the Community Council, but not to other publicly-accessible land in the Community area.

It was agreed that a start could usefully be made by preparing a schedule of the land owned / controlled by B.C.C. C’lir Scott Sinclair undertook to do this.

Discussion of needed maintenance at the pond area, Church Road

C’lir Paddy McNamara mentioned that he had looked into this, and it would appear that the baptism pond belongs to the church. He mentioned that the Church officers have claimed that the rest of the area belongs to the Community Council. C’lir Nia Phillips thought that this was correct.

C’lir Alun Williams had researched a report prepared for C.A.D.W., in which holy wells had been surveyed in Pembrokeshire, including the one at Burton Church. It was mentioned that this had been restored by Preseli District Council. On that basis, C’lir Alun Williams thought it likely that the whole pond was originally in the same area of control as the well. He also made reference to a relatively new pipe under the adjacent road, and from which water entered the pond. He thought that this pipe was causing the silting in the pond, and suggested that the owners of the pipe should be identified.

C’lir John Mathias mentioned that he had previously put up a fence around the pond to stop the cows going into it. The posts had rotted over time, and were in need of replacement, which he might be able to undertake.

C’lir Derek Jones suggested that the area just needs maintaining and cleaning, but needs doing properly and professionally.

C’lir Alun Williams felt that it was important first to look at the inflow pipe to see exactly what is there. It was agreed that C’llrs Alun Williams and John Mathias would meet down there and look at this. Matter to be placed on December agenda for further discussion in the light of this information.

Discussion of possible request for ‘SLOW / ARAF’ road markings at locations across the Community area

C’lir Scott Sinclair referred to the speed surveys currently under way. Contrary to comments made in correspondence received, he confirmed that B.C.C. had not requested the traffic survey currently under way, but rather this had been pro-actively proposed by P.C.C. themselves. He also pointed out that the survey was primarily to assess traffic volumes, with traffic speeds as a secondary consideration. This meant that exact location of the survey equipment was not critical, and that there would be no case for requesting a second survey site.

C’lir Paddy McNamara commented that there would be benefits to approaching the matter viewing Burton and Burton Ferry together, rather than seeking to separate them out, as doing so could lead to problems in dealing with officers in P.C.C. in a constructive way, and possibly undermine the current positive relationship.

The Clerk confirmed that no substantive responses had yet been received from P.C.C. on the matters raised, or in respect of traffic survey results. C’lir Scott Sinclair mentioned that the traffic-monitoring exercise had been interrupted by problems of water ingress into the pipes, thus delaying the survey.

Members agreed that it would be best to await feedback from P.C.C. before considering the matter in further detail.

Consideration of possible provision of speed-activated signage at locations across the Community area

C’lir Paddy McNamara asked if any Members had suggestions / comments to make regarding the possible case for signage in their particular areas of the Community.

C’lir Laurence Price referred to the posts that had been installed previously in Houghton / Hill Mountain / Sardis, and which were still presumably available for re-use. He felt that re-using some of these could be a good idea. He also commented that when these were installed, sites had been explored around Burton / Burton Ferry, but no suitable ones could be identified at that time. However, it was thought that it might well be possible to identify suitable sites now.

C’lir Scott Sinclair commented that there might well be posts at various locations across the Community area that could potentially be re-used for speed-activated signage. He also felt that this area was one that could be examined in some detail without needing to wait for traffic survey results from P.C.C.

C’lir Scott Sinclair proceeded to outline some suggestions for a possible way forward, as follows :

- Agreeing in principle to work towards installing signage in a phased manner over several years, as installing 7 or 8 in one go would be unaffordable.
- Suggestion to initially prioritise Burton / Burton Ferry, due to the acknowledged problem there.
- Suggestion to consider increasing the precept to part-fund the signage, and link this to a Community Council-sponsored fund-raising initiative in the Community, possibly on a match-funding basis.

C’lr Scott Sinclair cited a likely cost of around £3000 for signs similar to those recently installed in Neyland, not including the cost of installation. Running costs would also need to be considered, but should be fairly low (mainly battery renewal every two – three years). The signs would normally come with a standard 2 year warranty, which could be extended if required. He suggested that raising the precept to £30/household/year would gain sufficient funds for the purpose, while maintaining precept at a comparable level with neighbouring communities.

Members were generally in agreement that a sign of the type used in Neyland would be better than one like that currently in use at Houghton, though C’lr Alun Williams was unsure if the signage would make much difference in practice.

It was agreed that the matter should be tabled for further discussion in December, with particular consideration to possible arrangements for a fund-raising initiative. In the meantime, C’lr Scott Sinclair undertook to discuss possibilities for this with Gail Smith / Nicola Lund. As an ancillary point, C’lr Scott Sinclair mentioned that signage such as that used in Neyland records data on vehicle speeds (collectively, not individually).

Any other business

Ambulance service. C’lr Iain Wood mentioned a recent occurrence when a local resident had called an ambulance during an emergency at 10-30am, and one had not arrived until 8pm. This was felt by Members to be totally unacceptable. Matter to be tabled for discussion in December. C’lr Alun Williams mentioned that on the day of a recent O.V.W. Hywel Dda supporting group meeting, it was noted that all the hospitals in the Hywel Dda area were at full capacity, with no beds available anywhere.

Slow broadband in Burton. At C’lr John Mathias’ request, matter to be tabled for discussion in December.

January 2020 meeting. Members in agreement that the meeting should be held on 8th January, to avoid a clash with New Year’s Day.

Fly-tipping. C’lr Laurence Price had noticed fly-tipped rubbish at the sewage station in Houghton. The Clerk had reported this, but undertook to chase it up again.

Rubbish collection arrangements. At C’lr Michael Pettit’s request, matter to be tabled for discussion in December.

Public Forum

Members of the public present were very supportive of the fund-raising suggestions made during the meeting. They were also in agreement that Burton / Burton Ferry should be approached as a single entity, to strengthen the effect of representations made. They were supportive of the decision in principle to use signage similar to that in use at Neyland. One resident commented on the particular problems in Burton / Burton Ferry when compared with other villages in the Community, due to the very sharp bends in the villages.

Residents asked who would fund any other measures agreed, such as replacement standard signage, ‘SLOW’ signs, etc. C’lr Scott Sinclair commented that it was understood that P.C.C. would fund any such measures agreed.

The meeting ended at 8-35pm. Next meeting, Wednesday 4th December 2019.