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Llanhennock Community Council Meeting Held on Mon 12th April 2021 7 pm

The Llanhennock Community Council meetings resumed as face-to-face meetings in Llanhennock village hall

Present: Chairman Thomas, Vice Chairman Heath, Cllr Williams, Cllr Morgan, Cllr Chivers, Cllr McCleod, Cllr Young, Cllr Waters, County Cllr Clarke and Clerk Davies

Apologies: None

Declarations of interest: None

Members of the public present: None

Minutes of the last meeting:

Approved by : Cllr Chivers

Seconded by : Cllr Morgan

Matters Arising:

1594/21 Newbridge bridge: Clerk has had no reply from MCC to her emails on 28/2 and 29/3 regarding the current issues. Cllrs were rather concerned and pointed out that the problems with the bridge have been ongoing for several years (this latest issue was raised in 2019 and was supposed to have been listed in the 2019/20 financial budget) and MCC have not addressed the issues; the bridge is listed and showing more serious signs of decay, including larger cracks and loosened stonework. C.Cllr Clarke suggested emailing Jane Pratt, a senior officer at MCC.

1595/21 Speed signs in Llanhennock and Tredunnoch: Cllr Chivers apologised for not having written a draft email to send to MCC, but he was waiting on advice from another colleague. He also explained that he did not attend the online demonstration of the safe speed system, as on further inspection this private company would work out too costly in the long run. Clerk will ask MCC on an update for the Llanhennock speed signs, which were scheduled to be completed in this current financial year.

1596/21 Tredunnoch kerbstones: Clerk to follow up on this issue again now, as it was promised that it would be completed in the financial year 2020/21

1597/21 Candwr Brook Footbridge: Mark Paniers from Torfaen was emailed on 7th and 29th March as walkers are continuing to use this broken footbridge. He has now said it will be installed over the next two weeks and he will arrange for rangers to secure the broken bridge in the meantime.

1598/21 White line painting: This work has now been completed at the Ty Isaf junction, but not yet at the Tredunnoch or Llanhennock hill locations as requested.

1599/21 Blocked drains: Clerk had emailed for an update on the many service requests submitted for blocked drains in the wards and was told there is an *“extremely long list of queries and will be addressed as soon as we possibly can.”* In particular, for the Usk road drain, which had apparently been unblocked in Dec but still floods, MCC have now opened a new service request.

1600/21 Cheshire Homes exit splays: Clerk emailed the Cheshire Home Wales office again for a response regarding this issue raised last August and received a reply from the Llanhennock Lodge manager "the hedges and plants have been cut right back enabling a better view of oncoming traffic when vehicles are pulling out of the grounds. This was carried out last year. I would agree that parking on site can be an issue which Leonard Cheshire as an organisation is reviewing but unfortunately due to the pandemic the progress of this review has slowed down." Cllrs noted that cars do still park on the road even when there are spaces on the site free.

1601/21 Roman Road soil tipping: Clerk had emailed Guy Delamare 7/3; he had served an order on the owners in February; they reported they had permission from NRW for "works by the brook" so he was checking the details of this. Clerk emailed him again 29/3 for an update and to explain that there was no "brook" in the field in question, although there was on the Leat Farm. Guy had done a site visit 26/3 and expressed concerns about trees that have TPO's on them; he will contact a tree officer and NRW to check if they want to visit site/take action. Cllrs noted that he had not commented on the content of the soil that had had been tipped, nor on whether the owner had permission to fill in the gully, which is an old roman pathway. Cllr Chivers also pointed out that the neighbours had complained that their soakaways were now less effective and drainage of rainwater is affected as a result of the infill. Clerk will email Guy again.

1602/21 Candwr lane water leak: Clerk had spoken to Welsh Water engineers who promised to deal with this issue, after previous engineers had said they couldn't find the leak. Clerk gave the WW engineer Cllr Williams number, who then gave them an exact location. Cllr Williams reported that they have completed a site visit and also found other leaks; the water is leaking at 3000 litres per hour, but the issue has still not been resolved.

1603/21 Tankers in Roughton Lane: Clerk emailed Highways dept 7/3. Phaedra replied to say that the position of the proposed sign (to advise tankers not to access Water works via Roughton Lane) was in Torfaen, so he could not authorise it. Clerk emailed on 18/3 and again on 29/3 to ask for suggested contact details and finally emailed Craig Williams at Torfaen on 1/4 with the information, but not had any response yet.

1604/21 Broken No-HGV sign: This sign at the junction of Croes Llywarch lane and Usk road has now been repaired.

1605/21 Collapsed culvert under road at Great House Farm: No work has been started on this yet. Clerk to chase up Highways to explain the inconvenience of the road closure.

1606/21 Damaged culvert on Garn hill: Clerk had emailed MCC for an update and was told the request is "with the Area Engineer for investigation."

1607/21 Blocked ditch near Candwr Lane: Cllr Williams reported that no work has been undertaken as yet, despite the engineer saying that it was urgent.

1608/21 Scrap cars at Leat Farm: Guy Delamare visited the site 26/3 and noted many cars were still on site, despite being told to remove them and site is in unacceptable condition. He told the owner to move cars by after Easter holidays, otherwise he would draft a report to take

enforcement action. Clerk emailed Guy 11/4 to report that there was no change to the situation at the site.

1609/21 Dog waste bins: Chairman Cllr Thomas suggested in last months meeting that Dog Waste bins might be useful on Llanhennock top road to prevent people hanging up their dog waste bags on hedges, as he had received complaints from residents. Chairman asked the clerk to enquire about costs etc. (Apologies from the clerk for omitting this item in the last minutes!) Clerk had emailed the clerk of Usk Council and she had sent the following information: *“MCC will order bins for councils.... They presently cost £189 + VAT.All T&CCs use a company called Merlin Waste in Lydney to empty the bins...they charge £3.90 per bin. They empty ours once a fortnight. I understand 95% of the dog waste, I'm afraid to say, goes in to landfill....There is a Dog Fouling Action group run by MCC....”*

Cllrs all agreed that this was too costly and probably not appropriate on our country lanes, where the National Trust advice to “flick with a stick” is probably more appropriate. Cllr Heath pointed out that dog foul is actually dangerous and infectious to sheep, so should be picked up when crossing fields.

1610/21 Moving Tredunnoch Phone box : Cllr Morgan completed a survey among residents in Tredunnoch regarding the plan to move the phone box next to the bus stop and use it as a library. She reported much enthusiasm from everyone and collected 75 signatures on a petition. Cllr Chivers commended her on her hard work visiting every household. Cllr Morgan reported that there were volunteers who would be happy to maintain the library once installed. Cllr Chivers also noted that the current position of the valuable phone box makes it more vulnerable to theft (he had spotted a hi-ab lorry lurking nearby when out cycling). Cllr Chivers proposed that we move forward with the Listed building consent and planning application; the vote was unanimously in favour. Cllr Williams offered to organise the relevant planning and listed building forms and put forward the application on behalf of the community council.

1611/21 Broadband issues: Chairman Cllr Thomas had made enquiries with Country Connect, who said that 30 households would need to collaborate in order to be eligible for any community fibre scheme. Cllr Waters reported that he now has excellent data speeds after having changed from BT to EE. Cllr Williams reported that Openreach had previously put the wrong cable into the ducting up Candwr lane, which has now been replaced and they may be getting connected this month hopefully.

Correspondence:

1612/21 Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 for the C&TC sector: Clerk displayed the letter received from OVW with a summary of key provisions in this new act. The main points that may affect LCC are quoted below:

*“From April 2022 community and town councils will have a duty to prepare and publish a report about the council’s priorities, activities and achievements.
The power to exercise the general power of competence for eligible community councils will come into force on 5 May 2022. Ahead of this, there will be consultation on guidance and the regulations specifying a ‘relevant professional qualification’ for a clerk. It is envisaged that this will be a sector specific qualification such as the Certificate in Local Council Administration (CiLCA)....
The electronic publication of documents extends to include making available key information as soon as reasonably practicable, and within seven working days of the community council meeting taking place, and must include: the names of members who attended; apologies for absence; declarations of interest; any decisions taken and the outcome of any votes.*

From 5 May 2022 people presiding over community and town council meetings that are open to the public must give members of the public in attendance reasonable opportunity to make representation about any business being discussed at the meeting, unless this is likely to prejudice the effective conduct of the meeting.....

Community and town councils will have a duty to consider training from 5 May 2022 for councillors and community council staff, and publish the first training plans by November 2022. It is not the intention to ensure that each and every councillor necessarily receives training on the same subjects but to seek to bring about a situation where the councillors as a group, and the staff collectively, possess the knowledge and awareness they need to operate effectively. This takes into account that some community councils have only one member of staff, the clerk, and some smaller community councils actually share their clerk with one or more other community councils.... “

Reports:

1613/21 Gwent Police: This month's report was displayed on screen to Cllrs. No major concerns noted.

Finance:

1614/21 Accounts: Balance in the account is **£4909.90**

1615/21 Cheques raised: Chairman and Councillors reviewed and approved paperwork for the following cheques to be raised: accountants fees £232.91; One Voice Wales membership fees £66. It was agreed that OVW were effective and gave useful advice as needed.

1616/21 Internal audit: Clerk has now received the annual statement forms and has completed them for submission to internal auditor Rachel Bundy. Clerk displayed the accounts spreadsheet for 2020/21 (which was also emailed prior to the meeting for scrutiny) as well as a new spreadsheet made detailing every transaction made at Monmouthshire Building Society, which should make it easier for auditing procedures. The clerk keeps a photocopy of every signed withdrawal slip, cheque paid and invoice received; this relates directly with the transactions list. The asset register was also made available to Cllrs prior to the meeting; accounts were approved by all.

Planning: None

Local Matters:

1617/21 Potholes : Clerk had emailed MCC Highways regarding some potholes she had noticed on the steep lane between Croes Llywarch and Tredunnoch, which were very dangerous to cyclists descending the hill. MCC have already filled these in within a week of her request.

1618/21 Fallen trees: Chairman Cllr Thomas had noticed a fallen tree on the lane by Madam Rogers Wood and had asked Morgan Davies to remove it from the road, which he did without charge. There are several other trees which are falling and leaning on each other; a high sided vehicle may hit them and could cause damage. These trees are not in the wood but grow on the verge, so are the responsibility of the Highways dept; clerk will email to ask for them to be cut back.

1619/21 Postbox Candwr lane: The stolen postbox had been replaced, but Cllr Williams reported that the Royal Mail had since decided they would move the postbox on 23rd March to the other side of the road next to a farm gateway. Local residents have complained to Royal Mail as the new position would be on a muddy verge rather than on the tarmac area in its current spot; the removal has not actually taken place yet.

Any Other Business :

1620/21 Caeryder oak: Cllr Young commented on the article from last month's meeting regarding this famous tree. He read a passage from *Bradley's History of Monmouthshire*, which mentions the oak. He said that many historians had included this oak tree in their writings and felt that it is a part of our local history which should be commemorated; he suggested that LCC pay for an information sign to be erected (with the owners permission) near the gateway next to the tree , so that walkers could read about its history. All voted in favour. Clerk will get some prices for signage and speak to the Owen Evans who owns the land.

1621/21 Potholes: Cllr Waters reported that there are many potholes on Gatlas lane which need to be filled and that those on Ty Isaf lane had been filled in very badly. Clerk to email MCC.

1622/21 Tredunnoch Crossroads sign: Cllr Chivers reported that this sign needs re-painting. Clerk to ask Jason Griffiths for a quote, Cllr Chivers will get two other quotes.

1623/21 Usk Prison Report: Cllr Young reported that he had attended a meeting via phone messaging . It was a short meeting just to report that the number of inmates was now lower and staff had been cut; also, that one prisoner and one member of staff had died of covid.

Date of next meeting : Monday 10th May 2021 to be held after the AGM at 7pm

(this is one week later than usual due to Bank Holiday)