**LANGSTONE COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**Chair: Councillor Carol Bryant Clerk: Mr Robert Wade**

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**MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD AT THE LLANDEVAUD VILLAGE HALL**

**ON THE 20TH FEBRUARY 2024 AT 7:00 P.M.**

**In attendance:** Mr R Wade, Clerk

**Councillors: Apologies received:**

C Bryant (Chair) M Oliver-Mardon

L Humphries

J Humphries

J Bryant

A Jarman

Angharad Jarman

Stewart Voyle

Russell Bevan

6 members of the public

**Newport City Councillor**: Will Routley

1. **Apologies for absence**

An apology had been received from Councillor Mark Oliver-Mardon. The two new co-opted Councillors, Stewart Voyle and Russell Bevan, were introduced and congratulated on their appointments.

1. **Declarations of interest**

No declarations were made. The Chair reminded those present about declarations of interest and forms needed to be completed.

**3**. **To consider any verbal or written reports from Gwent Police**

The police report had been circulated. It was noted that there was reference to a children’s home from which occupants had absconded, which occasioned some concern.

4. **To consider** **15 minutes set aside for Community interaction and members of the community to ask the Chair or elected members questions of local interest.**

No particular points were raised at this meeting by members of the public.

Councillor J Humphries said that at this point she was anxious to clarify something that had been concerning previous meetings. That related to the price of Christmas trees. In 2019, the Council had paid £2,782 just for the supply of a tree. In 2020, the figure had been £2,280. In 2021, the then Clerk, Adrian Edwards, had arranged for delivery for £650, and the tree had been erected by her daughter and son-in-law with Sam Kellaway’s help. In 2022, the figure had again been £650. In 2023, Sam himself had quoted £2,100 but had declined to supply the trees following adverse comment from the community. She pointed out that this would have been not only for the supply of the three trees and for their erection but also for their maintenance during the entire Christmas period. There had been some justified criticism of their size, but they were supplied ready wrapped, and it was hard to determine size in that context. Councillor Voyle said that for this year an approach could be made to the garden centre opposite the Cattery, where trees could actually be picked out. It was generally agreed that forward planning – perhaps as early as September – would also be desirable.

**5.** **To receive and sign Minutes of the Full Council Meeting on the 31st January 2024**

Councillor Voyle said that the entry in 4(b) should have concerned a fence rather than kerb-stones, as referred to in the Minutes. With that correction, the Minutes were agreed, Councillor J Humphries proposing and Councillor J Bryant seconding.

6. **Matters arising from the Council Meetings on the 31st January 2024**

No matters were identified that were not going to be dealt with elsewhere in the Agenda.

**7. To consider any verbal or written reports from the Clerk or Councillors. This item was expanded to include reports from Newport City Councillors**

(a) City Councillor Will Routley was congratulated on his performance as singer and auctioneer at the concert given by Russell Jones Junior on the 17th February.

(b) He said he had approached the Highways Department to see if they might be agreeable to the decorative fencing. The person responsible had been away on holiday. He would persevere.

(c) He referred to the flooding which had taken place during the severe weather recently, and acknowledged that there were complaints about the lack of maintenance.

(d) He talked about the Charity “Sparkle” which he said had been brought so much to his attention by the praiseworthy activities of seven-year-old Harper, a pupil at Langstone school, in honour of her sister Olivia. He had been immensely impressed by Harper’s efforts to raise money by (among other things) a 5K walk around Rogerstone Park. The school had organised discos. The Chair said that the Russell Jones Junior concert had raised £254 for Motor Neurone Disease, and she thanked all those who attended what was a hugely enjoyable night for everybody. There was to be a further event at Easter, and it was agreed that more notice should be given for that event. Councillor J Bryant proposed that the Council should contribute another £750, which would bring the sum up to £1,004. This was seconded by Councillor J Humphries and agreed. Furthermore, a grant of £1,000 was agreed, proposed by the Chair and seconded by Councillor Alison Jarman, to Sparkle itself.

**8. To consider matters to report**

No issues arose under this heading

**9. To consider any Planning applications considered or received before the meeting**

24/0119 – Land to the east of Ridegtop, Pencoed Lane, Llanmartin – erection of a new entrance, boundary fence and access gate

It was noted that Newport City Council had already recognised one potential problem, in that the gate opened outwards rather than inwards. Subject to that being dealt with by the proper authority, no objection was put forward to this proposal

**10. To note finance matters, including Income and Expenditure**

(a) Payments were agreed as on a list in the hands of the Clerk. This included a payment to the former Clerk by way of compensation as agreed with ACAS following his claim for Unfair Dismissal. The Clerk said that he would be consulting with One Voice to see how much information regarding payments should be revealed to the public. His information to that point was that the issue of compensation to the former Clerk should not be disclosed, but he was taking advice.

(b) The Clerk reported that he was still having difficulty with the accounts following the meeting with the former Clerk, Adrian Edwards. He hoped to overcome this shortly. It was clearly vital that this should be done because it was clearly vital for any Council that accounts should be kept properly. He expressed his concern at the note given to the Chair by Mr Edwards which was designed to suggest that he had all along told the Chair and new Clerk how to access information relating to the accounts. He said this was clearly incorrect, and had been a feature of the negotiations led by the Council’s solicitor.

**11. To note any miscellaneous items of correspondence received since the last meeting.**

No items arose under this heading

**12. To consider the issue of Defibrillators**

The Chair said that the meeting with Phil Hill of the NHS had taken place, and he had expanded at length on the advantages of having Defibrillators and the procedure to be followed.

**13. To consider any issues relating to the Langstone Memorial**

This had already been touched on earlier in the meeting. Hopefully some drawings could be prepared which would show what could be done. The school could be involved. It was agreed that arrangements could start now, with a target of VJ Day in 2025.

**14.The Valentine’s Spectacular**

This successful event had already been referred to during the meeting.

**15. To consider and decide upon sundry issues:**

(a) flower-boxes – Councillor J Bryant said that he intended to put them out for tender. There was an approximate cost at this stage of £150 per box for 15 boxes, which would be for stripping them completely, putting in new soil and re-planting.

(b) play parks and equipment – it was agreed that the equipment needed to be updated, and that adult equipment could be included. Some concern was expressed at the ingress of water into the Centenary Park, and that needed to be looked into. There were no less than seven springs. There was some discussion as to the responsibility for dealing with drainage as between the Council and Newport City Council.

(c) Notice-Boards – it was noted that the Council had seven notice-boards. Councillor L Humphries suggested that this was too many, and he wondered if it would not be sufficient for there to be three – one for each village. There was some discussion as to the best locations for these, and the degree to which other organisations should be permitted their use. This was a voluntary arrangement at present, and might need to be reviewed.

(d) social media – the work being done by Councillor Angharad Jarman was noted and applauded

(e) D Day celebrations and service – it was noted that the service had already been arranged for 6 p.m. on the 6th June. If the issue of fencing had not been resolved by then, clearly some barriers would need to be procured. There would be a concert and party on the evening of the 8th June, and it was envisaged that fancy dress appropriate to the date of D Day would be worn. This item would go into the Agenda for March.

(f) Plan of events for the year – the Chair confirmed that this was being attended to and would be produced at the March meeting.

**16. Reports from members on outside bodies**

No issues arose under this heading

**17. Any Other business**

No issues arose under this heading

**18. Date of the Next Meeting.**

The date of the next meeting was said to bethe **19th March 2024.**

**The Meeting was closed at 9.15 pm**.