

**LANGSTONE COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

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

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

**ON THE 30TH OCTOBER 2023 AT 7:00 P.M.**

**In attendance:**

 **Councillors: Apologies received:**

C Bryant (Chair) K Wilson

 L Humphries

 J Humphries **Absent:**

 J Bryant J Harring-Burn

 M Oliver-Mardon M Harring-Burn

Mrs A Jarman

 Miss A Jarman Mr R Wade, Acting Clerk

 12 members of the public

 **Newport City Councillors**: Ray Mogford (Will Routley sent apologies)

1. **Apologies for absence**

Apologies received from those named above.

1. **Declarations of interest**

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

1. **To consider the position left by the resignation of the previous Clerk, which took place with immediate effect on the 2nd October 2023**

The Acting Clerk recited the recent history under which the previous Clerk had resigned without notice on the 2nd October, which had clearly caused confusion which he was hoping to resolve. The position of permanent Clerk would be advertised through One Voice, but meanwhile he had been appointed Acting Clerk on the 19th October 2023, and would remain in place until the new Clerk had been appointed. He confirmed his intention to produce Minutes within two days of the meeting, and to submit them to the Chair and Councillor Alison Jarman for confirmation of their agreement. They would then be published on the Web-site within seven days where at all possible. He would be changing the previous system, under which members of the public had to submit questions three clear days before the meeting, and also the previous practice under which Minutes were often not published until several weeks after the meeting at which they were approved.

**4**. **15 minutes set aside for Community interaction and members of the community to ask the Chair or elected members questions of local interest.** **Whilst members of the community should feel free to raise matters of importance, it is requested that any questions should be submitted to the Clerk at least 24 hours before the meeting.**

The Acting Clerk said that he had dealt with some enquiries already by e-mail, and that he was not aware of any outstanding questions which were not going to be dealt with in the course of the meeting.

**5.** **To receive and sign Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting on 12th September 2023**

Four amendments were agreed:

(a) 3(b) The spelling of ‘Stewart Voyle’ was noted in place of ‘Stuart Voyle’

(b) 3(b) The spelling of ‘Anthony Halse’ was noted in place of ‘Andrew Halse’

(c) 3(d) the Minutes were amended so as to say that there was no facility for children ‘under 7 years old’ and not ‘over 7 years old’

(d) 3(g) It was noted that the information regarding the sealed bids had come from the Chair

Subject to these amendments, the Minutes were approved

**6.** **Matters arising from the Ordinary Meeting on the 12th September 2023**

(a) 3(b) - The Acting Clerk confirmed that there were two vacant seats. There were 8 Councillors for Lanstone and 4 for Llanmartin. There had been correspondence with Elizabeth Bryant, and it was noted that the only notice of election, for one seat only, had been on a hard copy on the Council notice-board, which was clearly insufficient. There had to be notice on the web-site. The process would need to commence again. A notice would be placed that invited candidates for co-option. If, within 14 days of that notice being placed, at least 10 electors wrote in to request an election, such election would need to be held. It was hoped that that could be avoided, in view of the expense, but the issue would be confronted if required. There was a query as to whether electors from Llanmartin were entitled to request an election in Langstone, and *vice versa*, but that would be resolved by the time any such letters were dealt with. City Councillor Ray Mogford asked if there was any issue of rejecting a candidate. The Clerk said there might be circumstances in which a candidate might be rejected – the qualifications were clearly set out on the web-site – but in principle that should not happen to an otherwise qualified applicant. City Councillor Mogford said that that had happened previously, but members of the Council disagreed.

(b) 3 (c)The request for a grant by 1st Llanmartin Scout Group was raised, and considered. The Scout-master, Martin Curwood, was in attendance on the floor of the meeting, and explained that they were looking for £280.79 to pay for t-shirts which would identify the children concerned as scouts and also enable him to readily identify their presence in a larger gathering. In previous years, a Scout post office at Christmas had raised £1200, but Covid had stopped that from happening, and it had not been revived. It was proposed by Councillor Oliver-Mardon and seconded by the Chair that the Council should fund the entire amount. The voting was five in favour, with one against and one dissenter.

(c) 3(d) – it was agreed that the issue of provision of play equipment for under seven-year-olds would be placed on the agenda for November.

(d) 3(e) - It was definitely confirmed that the Poppy Park was not the responsibility of the Council, and that any sign to the contrary should be removed. .

3(g) Storage container - The Chair confirmed that the container had been sold. The Acting Clerk said he had written to Elizabeth Bryant to ask for details of the Community Asset policy, as requested by a member of the community.

9(d) – reference was made to the BMX Pump Track – it seems that WM had been instructed to deal with it, and had said that “new pads have to be produced.” Councillor Oliver-Mardon questioned whether this had been specifically authorised, or whether they should just have given a quote, and whether other quotes should have been requested. Similar considerations applied to the Zip-line. Councillor Alison Jarman commented that the Council had to be concerned about the possibility of claims by those using these facilities if there were injuries, so that speedy action had to be taken. She proposed (Councillor Jackie Humpries seconding) that authorisation should be given for any repairs, where necessary retrospectively, and, this was agreed.

**7. To receive and sign Minutes of the** **Extraordinary Meeting on the 19th October 2023**

This was proposed by the Chair and seconded by Councillor Alison Jarman, and agreed

**8. Matters arising from the Extraordinary Meeting on the 19th October 2023**

No issues arose under this heading

**9. To consider any verbal or written reports from Clerk or Councillors**

No issues arose under this heading

**10. To matters to report**

No issues arose under this heading

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

No reports had been received. City Councillor Ray Mogford pointed out that there was a new police sergeant, and suggested that he might be invited to meet everybody. The Clerk confirmed that police presence would be requested at the next meeting.

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

(a) 23/0853 - Hillcroft, Llandevaud Lane - erection of a replacement dwelling

(b) 23/0875 - The Cottage, Llandevaud Farm - this concerns biodiversity and related to bird boxes

(c) 23/0882 - 3 The Glen - 2 storey extension

(d) 23/0881 - Dog-walking field at Priory Farm

Councillor Olive-Mardon said that this should be objected to because there was one narrow road in and out, and there was clear danger from traffic. It was agreed that representations should be made to Newport City Council concerning that aspect of the application.

(e) 23/0933 - Hollytree Cottage, Penhow - retrospective permission for relocation of front wall

(f) 23/0943 - Former Hilton Hotel (Coldra Court) - variation of fume extraction

All applications were agreed save (d) above, with the objections as noted.

The Acting Clerk agreed that, where possible, notification of planning applications should be in the agenda and on the web-site prior to the meeting. He also agreed that there were problems with the web-site and e-mail which would be resolved.

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

The following payments were agreed:

Risk Assessment for Remembrance Sunday £420

Payment to Chair for her expenses including the cost of obtaining the papers from the former Clerk and securing a lock-up in which to place all the Council papers and equipment £134.60

Payment to Councillor J Bryant for his expenses including the cost of remedying problems with the computers £112.55

The Acting Clerk’s salary to date £412.50

Payment to HMRC for the Acting Clerk’s salary £82.50

The Acting Clerk’s travel expenses £66.15

**15. To consider the Remembrance Day service, and especially the risk assessment and deciding whether or not the service should go ahead**

The Risk Assessment was duly considered. It was agreed that in principle the event should go ahead. The main issue related to barrier to protect those attending from traffic. Councillor Oliver-Mardon agreed to make himself responsible for the delivery and return of the barriers, and the expenditure of £91.25 was agreed, proposed by Councillor John Bryant and seconded by the Chair. There was discussion as to how the barriers were to be taken to and from the memorial, and it was agreed (Councillor Jackie Humphries proposing and Councillor Angharad Jaman seconding) that the Clerk should check up with the Council’s insurers as to whether this would be covered if the Councillors did it themselves. Subject to their response, the expense of this (which had been quoted at £250) could be avoided. The Chair said she would acquire 30 more crosses for members of the public, including the scouts, many of whom Mark Curwood said would very likely be in attendance. The cost of this could not be predicted, but general agreement was given to this proposal, which could be reviewed at the next meeting with a view to considering reimbursement.

16. **To note any miscellaneous items of correspondence received and distributed since the last meeting**

No matters were raised under this heading

17. **To consider the issue of co-option by Councillors to fill any empty seat s on the Council**

This item had already been considered

**18. To consider and decide upon the location and date of the Seniors Christmas meal**

It was noted that the meeting in July had voted specifically to hold this at the Coldra Court. Technically, the Clerk advised that the decision could not be rescinded. However, that hotel had since then been given a poor rating for hygiene, as had been widely publicised, and it was agreed that the risk to the health of those attending meant that the event simply could not go ahead. Accordingly, it was agreed (the Chair proposing and Councillor Alison Jarman seconding) that the event should be held at the Old Barn at Llanmartin, and that one free drink should be given to each attender. There was some discussion, initiated by members of the public, as to whether the expense of this could be justified, but the general view was that it was a gift from the Council to the community at a special time of the year, and important for those people who would otherwise be alone at Christmas to get some social interaction. A form of notification would be put on the notice-boards and web-site for people to apply, with a maximum of 60 attenders. It was confirmed that they must live in the Langstone and Llanmartin areas, and would need to prove this.

**19.To consider and decide upon the issue of quotations for and ordering of Christmas Trees**

The Chair said she had asked some suppliers, who had said they would provide the trees but would not maintain them – for example, making sure that the lights were kept lit if batteries failed. She proposed that Sam Kellaway be given the task, as he had said he would both supply the trees and make sure they were maintained over the entire Christmas period. He had quoted £2,100. Reservations were expressed that a possible alternative business had not been approached, and the Chair was given plenary powers (proposed by the Chair and seconded by Councillor Alison Jarman) to make a final decision up to a maximum of £2,100. Councillor Olive-Mardon wished it to be recorded that he had objected to that proposal in view of the expense.

**20 Reports from members on outside bodies**

No issues arose under this heading

**21 Any Other business**

A request was made from the floor that there should be an Annual Report and a 3 Year Plan. The Clerk confirmed that this would be checked.

**22 Date of the Next Meeting.**

It was agreed that, in view of the short period of time which would otherwise expire before the normal next date - the 14th November – the date of the meeting should be advanced to the 21st November

**The Meeting was closed at 8.50 pm**.