

BRAWDY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the monthly meeting (September) held remotely on Monday October 5th 2020.

2020/12.

1. Present. Cllr M Carter, Cllr J Tierney, Cllr Mrs A Morgan, Cllr Mrs A Loch, Cllr Mrs G Lawrence, Cllr D E Jones, Sean O'Connor (clerk) and Katie Davies (Guest/Observer).

2. Apologies. None.

The Chairman welcomed everybody to the meeting, including Katie Davies from Llanreithan who was present as an observer. He also offered a special welcome to Cllr Mrs A Morgan, who had been unwell and unavailable for recent meetings.

3. The Chairman checked with each councillor in turn, and there were no declarations of interest declared for any item on the agenda for this meeting.

4. The minutes of the additional meeting held on 18/9/2020, had been forwarded to councillors prior to the meeting. It was proposed by Cllr Mrs A Loch and seconded by Cllr M Carter that they be accepted as a true record.

5. Matters arising from the minutes of the monthly meeting in July, and also the additional meetings held in August and September.

5a. The clerk advised that he had received a reply from the Church in Wales regarding the situation at Llanreithan. They are aware what is happening, and they have visited the site and the graveyard, and spoken to the local vicar and the residents. They have also inspected the deeds, and once more information is available, they will keep us informed. At this point the Chairman invited our observer, Llanreithan resident, Katie Davies, for her thoughts. She acknowledged that there was a problem, and confirmed that the Church in Wales and the local Vicar were involved. She thanked the councillors for raising the issue, and was happy with the way the community council had handled proceedings to date.

At this point she left the meeting.

5b. The Chairman advised that he had been in touch with Sinead Heneghan at PCC, and received confirmation that unless the purchase of a defibrillator was part of a community project, it would not qualify under the second homes grant scheme.

The clerk advised that he had received further contact from Lucy Dale at The Welsh Hearts Charity fund, outlining the current offers available to councils to purchase and install defibrillators. After a further discussion it was agreed that the clerk contact Lucy, and invite her to attend our next meeting, and outline our options, before a decision is made.

5c. The clerk confirmed that he had received confirmation from HM Revenue & Customs regarding our claim for the refund of VAT. Although the claim had been approved, it had been sent to a different department for further compliance checks and the issue of a unique number to be used for any future claims. He had chased the response, without success, and promised to chase again.

5d. The clerk confirmed that responses had been sent to and acknowledged by PCC & PCNP for all four planning applications discussed and agreed at the additional meeting in September.

Correspondence.

Pembs County Council.

6. Confirmation was received for the approval of Planning Application No. 19/1280/PA. Extension and alterations at Hendre House Cottages Llandeloy Haverfordwest.

7. The clerk reminded councillors that the closing date for applications for a community councillor to serve on the standards committee was 19/10/20.

The Chairman briefly outlined what the role entailed, but at present there was no interest.

8. The clerk advised that he had received advice from the electoral department at PCC, advising of their canvas project for 2020/21. Each household had received notification, asking them to return it, with up to date information, either by post or preferably digitally. Councillors were asked to encourage residents in their area to respond.

9. The clerk advised of the decision of PCC to increase car parking charges with effect from 9/9/20. The only areas that affected our area were slight increases in short term parking in Newgale and St Davids. The full details were available at the actual sites or on the PCC website. At this point Cllr D E Jones asked whether permits for reduced charges for local residents were still available. The Chairman offered to check this matter, and forward the details to councillors.

10. County Councillors monthly update.

10a. Cllr Carter advised that he has approached both PCC & PCNP to upgrade their current procedures regarding car parking machines. He had suggested updating to include paying via visa and smartphones, rather than just cash, as at present.

10b. Cllr Carter gave an update regarding the situation with the asylum seekers at Penally, and confirmed that nobody locally was aware what was happening. He advised that PCC had arranged an online question session later during the week, where hopefully many of the problems could be addressed. He encouraged councillors to view the session.

10c. Cllr Carter advised that the first budget seminar of PCC for the next financial year was due shortly. He would keep everybody informed.

Other Correspondence.

11. The clerk confirmed that the August issue of the Clerks & Councils direct brochure had been sent to Cllr Mrs A Morgan. She confirmed receipt, and that she had circulated it to other councillors.

12. The clerk advised details of a new lifeline responder scheme that has recently launched. Cllr Tierney was aware of the scheme and elaborated with the details. It was to recruit responders to help vulnerable and elderly people. It also included hiring tablets at minimal cost, to enable people to speak to relatives and friends online. It was unanimously agreed that this was an excellent scheme, and Cllr Tierney encouraged councillors to promote it locally. The clerk would forward the details to Cllr Tierney, who would add it to the BCC page.

13. The clerk advised of details received from One Voice Wales regarding the commencement of councils returning to physical meetings. Before considering this, councils would need to complete a risk assessment, including confirmation from their insurers. It was stressed that the health and safety of all attendees is paramount. It was also advised that over 85% of councils were completing virtual meetings at present, and this was perfectly acceptable to continue until at least March 2021. It was unanimously agreed that the virtual meetings were proving a success with our council, and that we were perfectly happy to continue with these until further notice.

It was unanimously agreed that, in future, the protocol to attend meetings for visitors or guests is that they must agree to be visible before attending the meeting. Once the meeting has started, they must remain visible and muted, and only speak, when invited to do so.

14. The clerk advised that all training courses from One Voice Wales were still available, but only virtually. There was a cost to the council, but with also a bursary available, for part of the cost. The Chairman encouraged councillors to consider taking up these courses. The clerk would forward the list for October and November to councillors for consideration.

15. The clerk had forwarded details of the Pembs Citizens Advice Bureau AGM to councillors prior to the meeting. This had taken place virtually on 30/9/20.

16. The clerk had received a request from Planned to include our contact and location details on their virtual map. After consulting the Chairman, the exact location of our notice boards were provided to Planed.

Report of Responsible Finance Officer.

17. The clerk advised of up to bank account balances as at 5/10/20 as: Current Account £27.47 and Deposit Account £6639.66. Copies of the bank account entries for September confirming these figures had been sent to councillors prior to the meeting. After a short discussion it was requested that the clerk send copies of the actual statement to councillors for future meetings.

18. The clerk confirmed that an invoice had been received for the notice board at Penycwm. He confirmed that this amounted to £228.00, and has been paid. This is confirmed by the above statement, and reflected by the bank balance. It was commented that the notice board was now in place and looked very good.

19. Prior to the meeting the clerk had forwarded a copy of his contract of employment to councillors for inspection and consideration. The new pay scales for clerks for 2020/21 had been agreed by NALC, and forwarded via One Voice Wales.

The hourly rate of pay was to increase from £11.17 to £11.47, and to be back dated to 1/4/2020. It was proposed by Cllr J Tierney and seconded by Cllr Mrs A Morgan that this increase be applied for our clerk. The Chairman inserted the new amount and the relevant dates on the contract, and signed and dated it and returned it to the clerk. The clerk would advise our accountants accordingly. The amount of the increase was £4.80 per month, and the back pay amounted to £35.60. It was proposed by Cllr Tierney and seconded by Cllr Mrs A Morgan that's the sum of £40 be transferred between our accounts, and the monthly transfer to cover the clerk's salary be increased from £180 to £185. This was unanimously agreed.

20. The clerk confirmed receipt of our 2-year fixed contract with SSE as discussed and agreed at our last meeting.
21. The clerk advised that he had received confirmation from our external auditors, that they were dealing with our audit. Due to the pandemic however, its completion was likely to be delayed.
22. The clerk confirmed that his monthly salary and income tax payments for July, August and September received via our accountants, had been paid through our bank accounts. These were for the standard 16 hours each month and were confirmed via the bank statements.

The date and time for the next meeting was set for Monday 26th October remotely at 7.30pm.

At the discretion of the Chairman.

Councillors reported some issues regarding water on the roads within our area. The exact locations were supplied to Cllr Carter, who promised to pass the details on to the relevant department at County Hall.

Cllr Carter also confirmed that the salt bin at Gignog had been located. He offered to move it to a more suitable location that would be more beneficial to the community.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 21.04.