

Minutes of the Zoom meeting of Marloes & St Brides Community Council starting at 1930 on Monday January 18<sup>th</sup> 2021.

In attendance: Councillor Peter Smithies (Chairman), together with Councillors Brian Johnson, Christopher Jessop, William Richards and Louise Beal.

Mrs. Yvonne Evans – Council Clerk

County Cllr. Reg Owens

National Trust – Mr. Mark Underhill

Community Residents - Mr. Nick Skudder & Ms. Sue Davenport

Property Owner – Mr. Nigel Mckim

The Chairman, Cllr. Peter Smithies welcomed all present to the first Zoom meeting held by the Community Council, wishing them a Happy New Year. He advised that this Zoom meeting is being hosted by Marloes Village Hall. The Hall Committee following advice from PAVS, has utilised new funding to provide WiFi in the Hall, and have arranged the Zoom Facility for a year, planning to make this available for other local groups.

Code of Conduct - Cllr. Smithies reminded members that it was necessary that they follow the Code in all actions and discussions they undertake in between meetings. If members have any doubts/concerns they should in the first instance contact the Clerk and/or the Chairman, and then proceed under that guidance, or ask the Clerk to refer the issue to the next Community Council meeting. The Clerk can also seek advice from the relevant bodies and from the Council Association as appropriate to then advise members.

1. The minutes of the November 2020 meeting having been circulated beforehand were approved by the meeting, on the proposal of Cllr. Jessop, and seconded by Cllr. Johnson. The December meeting had been cancelled on the day, because three Covid cases had been confirmed that day in the Village.

2. Matters Arising

Marloes Sands car park – The Chairman thanked Mr. Underhill for attending the meeting in response to an e-mail from the Clerk, and invited him to update members on the Marloes Sands Car Park. He advised that the car park surface had been completed in spite of the drought in the Spring of 2020, and work had been undertaken on the track to Runwayskiln. Further snagging faults will be

looked at this week. National Trust had agreed to part fund the car park hut, and this will be built off-site by Hook Construction Partnership, to arrive in April. Signage and interpretation had been delayed. He also advised that Rhian Sula will be managing the local team. Council members advised that the Visitor Experience had been diminished by not having Trust staff present last year. Dog fouling issues had increased, and there were also parking issues. The Community Council wished to maintain a close relationship with the Trust. It was appreciated that the pandemic had greatly affected their operation as well as their income.

(The meeting then considered Planning Matters – see Item 5 before completing the remaining Matters Arising.)

Street Light – Clerk had reported a light in the Glebe Lane, and one opposite Mourne house as out of order. The first had been repaired. Cllr. Johnson will check on the other one and advise the Clerk.

Dog Fouling – No action taken as yet on an extra bin.

Highway Matters – Robert Evans, PCC Highways had responded to the e-mail sent with photographs of damaged road surfaces. Work had been undertaken in St. Brides, but maintenance work in the Marloes area is yet to be undertaken, except for patching with tarmac. Cllr. Smithies expressed concern about the ongoing problem below Gay Lane Terrace. A grit holder may be required to combat the water freezing across the road. He will speak to the nearby landowner to see if the original drain could be re-used. There is also a problem near Philbeach Farm, and he would then e-mail Darren Thomas, PCC about both problems. Cllr. Richards drew attention to the ongoing problems with the road surface from Pearson Crossroads to Fopston Farm. He agreed to forward photographs to the Clerk to pass onto PCC Highways.

Puffin Shuttle – Cllr. Richards has been advised that the County Council are allowing the contract with Richard Bros. to continue, although travel is now restricted. He will find out how many passengers have been carried in recent months.

Footpaths – The Clerk had been advised by Mr. Cullen that work had been completed in Frankies Lane, Marloes. However the Clock Tower path is flooded on the Glebe Lane end at present. Noted.

### 3. Community Issues

COVID 19 – Noted that Tier 4 restrictions had been imposed just before Christmas and are ongoing. The Village Hall is not able to hold meetings. Further cases are understood to be ongoing locally, with Pembrokeshire experiencing much higher case numbers in recent months. Vaccines will be available shortly via the GP surgeries in Milford Haven and Haverfordwest. The meeting was pleased to note that Marloes Village Store and Post Office had remained open, with only a very short break over the Christmas period.

#### Christmas/New Year

No Church/Chapel services had been held since the lockdown started, and none of the usual Christmas Events in the Hall and Community.

However new lights had been purchased for display on the Clock Tower. The ten wooden posts in front of the Tower had been decorated this year by a local group. This together with individual households lighting, and that provided by the church and chapel had helped to celebrate the Christmas Season. Father Christmas visited on the 19<sup>th</sup> December with a small gift of sweets for the children, and light refreshments offered to parents and others – social distancing being observed as required. Cllr. Beal commented that her children had enjoyed the event, but wanted more light by the Tower next Christmas.

#### Sewage Problem – Glebe Lane, Marloes

Cllr. Johnson had reported a breakdown in the system on the 29<sup>th</sup> December when the area from Ashdale to Foxdale was affected by overflowing drains, with the Welsh Water manhole by Glebe House spewing out sewage. Welsh Water responded quickly to the initial problem. Mrs. Evans advised that she had received a complaint that the debris had not been cleared up properly. Cllr. Owens will talk to Highways staff about their drains in the road. The Clerk reminded the meeting that a letter of complaint had been sent earlier this year about similar problems, and a further letter may be required again. Cllr. Johnson was thanked for taking action on this matter. Noted that on the days of heavy rain, surface water drains on the main road C3102 are also not working properly.

### 4. Correspondence

Hywel Dda – Consultation - Help to shape future pharmacy services – issued November 2020 – closing date 13/12/2020 – Noted.

Clerks & Councils Direct – January 2021, Issue 133 received.

The following e-mails were received by the Council:-

Dec. 2020 – Christmas Greetings received from One Voice Wales & PCNPA.

16/12/20 & 08/01/21 – PCC (Dan Shaw) – Advance notice of a Zoom seminar for Councils on 20/01/20.

16/12/20 & 13/01/21 – Nia Davies – Census 2021 to be held on the 21<sup>st</sup> March.

Dec 2020 – Cllr. Reg Owens – circulated details of road closures – none directly affected this community.

22/12/20 – Clerk reported that the emergency phone at Martins Haven was out of order to the County Council officer

23/12/21 – Broadway/PCC – New Fibre optic provision being rolled out. However, now delayed until April as Openreach have to undertake contract work.

30/12/2020 – Cllr. Richards reported excess amounts of discarded fishing gear coming ashore on St. Brides Beach after the northerly winds. Noted that elsewhere Mr. Dave Pomfrey is removing a very large rope from Marloes Sands – in stages. PCC is removing the red rubbish bags promptly when notified. Noted that action by Conservation Groups to tackle problems usually mean clearing the debris not preventing the problems.

14/01/21 – Ray Greenwood /Clare Williams PCC – Re Speed Warning Sign Information awaited from Finance about administering the Fund. No timetable available at present. Covid 19 is affecting work schedules and supplier/working restrictions.

14/01/21 – Scott Findley, PCC – Community Bathing Water Sampling – Advised that sampling at Martins Haven and at St. Brides are to be discontinued. Clerk had sought advice from Mr. Mark Burton who will talk to the relevant officers at PCC. The meeting agreed that this Council would not be willing to pay £200 to continue each of these contracts. Cllr. Owens will also seek further information, and asked for a copy of the letter. Funding cuts mean PCC is not continuing with many services.

## 5. Planning

The Clerk advised that officers are still mainly working from home, with only a few staff slowly returning to work at the main office.

- a) NP/2/0599/FUL – Fopston Farm, St. Brides – Demolition of conservatory & Rebuild. Council members agreed with the action that had been taken between meetings. The application had been circulated, and also the draft response. The Clerk had then circulated the letter sent which proposed that solar panels should be added to the new roof.
- b) NP/20/0481/CLE – Ty Gwyn, Marloes. Certificate of lawfulness existing Use – 2 X C3 units (4 Year rule), and ancillary caravan (10 year rule). Noted that this was not a planning application. A draft response had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting refuting both applications for a Certificate of Lawfulness. Mr. Mckim was permitted to address the meeting by the Chairman. He expressed concern as a neighbour about the caravan, and the building of a 2 metre high concrete wall. He felt that PCNPA were remiss in not undertaking enforcement action. The draft letter was approved without amendment. Cllr. Owens will speak to Ms. Gandy about other matters.
- c) NP/20/0620/FUL – Orlandon Farm House, St. Brides – Conversion of existing agricultural barn to form one bedroom annexe, ancillary to the main dwelling. Members questioned the principal of this property being ancillary to the main dwelling which is 40 metres away with a C class road in between. This would usually be beyond the curtilage. It was noted that there was need for small residential properties in the area. Agreed that the Clerk write asking for guidance on this proposal, and then prepare a response in consultation with Cllrs Smithies and Jessop.
- d) New gateway, C3102 Martins Haven Road – Musselwick Farm – Mr. Skudder, on the invitation of the Chairman, briefed the Council on the process which led up to the opening up of a new gateway by a contractor from a field on the Martins Haven road at the end of December 2020. He had been in contact with a PCNP officer who had referred him to the Permitted Development legislation, but had not advised him that this was not permissible onto a registered county highway. Cllr. Jessop had drawn his attention to the state of the footpath to Musselwick Beach which is crossed by farm vehicles gaining access to this field. He was also under pressure to clear the crop of cauliflowers as quickly as possible. He took the decision to open up the gateway, which resulted in complaints from community residents. The complaints were passed to the Community Council who sought clarification from PCNP. The enforcement

officer then spoke to Mr. Skudder, and it has been agreed that an application for Retrospective Consent will be applied for in due course. Ms. Davenport advised that they thought they had followed due process, and apologised for any inconvenience caused. Cllr. Jessop thanked the owners for their explanations, and acknowledged that the footpath surface had been improved. The Council Chairman acknowledged that some mitigation had been put in place with planting. He advised that the Council aim to be even handed with their handling of planning applications, and can offer advice if asked beforehand.

Mr. Skudder advised he would not be applying for a second gateway, as he had originally intended to improve access to another field as well.

In response to a question, he confirmed that an application had been made to the Camping and Caravan Club (at their invitation) for a site licence for 5 caravans. This would be granted, but it is felt that the conditions for consent would make the enterprise uneconomical, so will not proceed further. Cllr. Richards commented that experience in St. Brides during the first lockdown with overnight campers suggested more sites are required, although some visitors are reluctant to use them.

- e) Experiences for all in the National Park Survey – The Clerk had spoken to the officer, as she had asked that all Councillors be invited to complete the Survey even though they lived and worked in the Park area. Agreed this may be an opportunity to raise some of the ongoing issues about dog fouling and visitor parking, and the need for more small camp sites etc.

## 6. Financial Matters

- a) Precept 2021/2022 – Members had been circulated with the budget review of 2020/21, and information on the present financial position. The Council is aware that up to £900 has to be available each year in case the 6 councillors claim their allowance of £150. In this financial year an unplanned commitment has been made of £508 towards the speed control sign, which has reduced the amount available towards future election costs, although repayments can be made over three years. Cllr. Owens advised that PCC has decided that no charges will be made for any necessary bye-election costs.

The draft budget was approved subject to the payment to the Clerk being raised to £850, and a further £100 being added to cover any increases to charges. On the proposal of Cllr. Jessop, seconded by Cllr. Richards, it was agreed that the Council request a precept of £3100 for 2021/2022.

- b) MADPADS – As previously agreed, the meeting on the proposal of Cllr. Jessop, seconded by Cllr. Johnson that £100 be paid to support the ongoing replacement programme of the defibrillators.
- c) Speed Warning Sign – £508 contribution in due course.
- d) Christmas Lights Invoice – On the proposal of Cllr. Jessop seconded by Cllr. Beal the meeting approved the repayment to Cllr. Smithies of £119.97p to cover the purchase of lights from Christmas Direct - VAT of £20 to be reclaimed in due course. Cllr. Smithies declared an interest in this matter, and abstained from voting.
- e) Audit – The Clerk read out to members the letter from the Auditor dated 30<sup>th</sup> November 2020 which was a qualified report, with particular regard to Assertions 4 & 8. The Council noted that action has since been taken to approve Standing Orders with regard to procurement and awarding of contracts. It was also noted that the Notice of Conclusion of Audit has been displayed on the Village Hall notice board and on the Marloes Website. The Clerk has asked for a hard copy of the report to be sent when staff are back in the office.

Audit Fee - £276.05 - On the proposal of Cllr. Jessop, seconded by Cllr. Richards the payment of £276.05 was reluctantly approved, feeling that the charges are out of proportion to the financial activity of the Council.

- f) Lloyds Bank – Balance on the 29<sup>th</sup> December 2020 was £5,136.50. The 3<sup>rd</sup> Precept of £966 was received on 07/12/20.
- g) Welsh Government – 26/12/20 – Section 137 expenditure limit - £8.41.
- h) Clock Tower Electric Supply – now with British Gas.

## 7. Clock Tower

Cllr. Smithies advised that there had been a “ring through” event recently. Clerk to check with Andrew Howells if there is a maintenance problem. Smiths of Derby have not as yet made contact about a service – last one was in March 2020.

## 8. Urgent Matters

- a) Cllr Jessop reported that a helicopter had been circling around Martins Haven recently – no one was aware of any incident.
- b) Cllr. Richards commended the Chairman on his handling of this first Zoom meeting.

The Chairman closed the meeting, advising that the next meeting is scheduled for Monday 15<sup>th</sup> February, when the draft minutes of this meeting will be submitted for approval. It is likely that this will need to be a Zoom meeting again. He reminded Councillors about the need to observe the Code of Conduct at all times.