



GRAIG COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held remotely via Zoom Video Conferencing on 31st March 2021 at 7pm

1. **To receive apologies for absence:** Cllrs W Haigh, D Williams.

Present: Cllrs R Caston (via phone), A Whitfield, D Evans, M Smart, K Sayer, P Gregory, J Harris, L Fry, P Appleton, J Bailey, K Thomas, N Tarr, J Taylor, S Davies (Clerk). Chaired by Cllr Gregory.

This meeting was held remotely via Zoom due to Covid-19 restrictions. Those unable to join due to lack of technology received the agenda for the meeting as normal, were aware that the meeting was taking place and did not object to it being held. Each were given the opportunity to make comments which were logged by the Clerk, relayed if requested and considered by the participants of the meeting.

2. **To receive declarations of interest:** None.

3. **To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 24th February**

2021: The minutes of the meeting held 24th February 2021 previously circulated were read and approved. Proposed Cllr Caston, seconded Cllr Bailey. There were no comments to the action points.

Action: None necessary.

4. **Clerk's Report:** Council discussed the report items briefly and agreed items which should remain on the report. Proposed Cllr Caston, seconded Cllr Taylor. **Action: Clerk to amend the report as agreed and keep updated.**

5. **Accounts for Payment:** Proposed Cllr Whitfield, seconded Cllr Thomas. The Clerk was questioned about why money was spent on postage stamps, and again why Rhiwderin Community Centre gas bills were so high. An explanation for both was given.

Clerk salary and office allowance for March 21	£2102.52
Misc expenses (Zoom Feb-Mar 21 £14.39 & 100 x 1 st class stamps £85.00)	£99.39
TalkTalk – Graig Hall monthly broadband cost (taken by DD)	£24.00
TSOHOST – Webmail monthly hosting charge (taken by DD)	£5.00
SSE – Gas costs Graig Hall Feb 21	£94.12
SSE – Gas costs Rhiwderin CC Feb 21	£374.47
St Basil's Church – annual skip cost	£520.00
One Voice Wales – Annual membership 2020/21	£944.00
HMRC – PAYE & NI Jan-Mar 21	£2759.31
Total to date:	£6922.81

Receipts:

None to date

6. **Planning:**

- a. 21/0247 – Proposal: Construction of detached garage/store to front of property (resubmission following refusal if 20/0998). Site: 9 Highfield Gardens, Bassaleg, Newport NP10 8LR. Application Type: Full. **Comment: Council agrees with and supports the comments made by Highways.**
- b. 21/0162 – Proposal: Lawful development certificate (proposed) for a single storey extension. Site: 2 Rose Walk, Rogerstone, Newport NP10 9AY Application Type: Lawful development **Comment: No objections.**
- c. 21/0227 – Proposal: Proposed two storey rear extension, porch and single storey front extension and balcony. Site: Maendy Isaf, Church Road, Lower Machen, NP10 8GW. Application Type: Full **Comment: No objections.**
- d. 210257- Proposal: Rear single storey first floor extension over existing ground floor extension. Site: 22 Park View, Bassaleg, Newport, NP10 8LA. Application Type: Full **Comment: No objections.**
- e. 21/0198 – Proposal: First floor extension above garage with front and rear dormer windows and single storey rear extension. Site: 5 Woodland Drive, Bassaleg, Newport, NP10 8PA. Application Type: Full. **Comment: No objections.**
- f. 21/0320 – Proposal: Proposed single storey rear extension and conversion of garage. Site: 9 Oaklands Park Drive, Rhiwderin, Newport, NP10 8RB. Application Type: Full. **Comment: Council objects to this proposal as there is only parking space for 1 car.**

- g. 21/0332 – Proposal: Erection of detached dwelling and external works. Site: The Burrows, Caerphilly Road, Newport, NP10 8LS. Application Type: Full **Comment: Council strongly objects to this proposal, as it has to the previous proposals for this site. Council considers this overdevelopment of the area and will limit access, ingress and egress for the other properties needing to use this shared entrance off a very busy ‘A’ road. It reiterates all its former objections to the previous proposals for this location and feels it would be unsafe for even more vehicles to be using this already awkward access.**

6. Items for Discussion/Action:

- a. Council approval of annual risk assessments for Finance and Self-Managed risk. (MS) – Cllr Smart kindly performed the risk assessments as required and they were presented to Council. They had been approved by the Chairman and Clerk, but Cllr Tarr and some other Cllrs were concerned that they had not been made available prior to the meeting and so did not have the opportunity to study them. For this reason, they would not approve the documents at this meeting. The Clerk explained it was a formality and that this method had always been used in the past, that to refuse to authorise at this meeting would make Council non-compliant at audit. Nevertheless, approval was not given. Cllr Bailey asked for it to be minuted that she was pleased and grateful to Cllr Smart for carrying out the audit on behalf of Council and felt it was undermining the authority Cllr Smart had been given to perform the audits on Council’s behalf. **Action: Clerk to circulate the assessments along with Cllr Smart’s report and re-agenda the assessments to be approved at the mid-month meeting in April.**
- b. Footpath through open space repair/refurbishment update (JT) – Cllr Taylor submitted quotes regarding the refurbishment and proposed Council take up a local contractor’s quote of £650. It was debated whether it would be better to have a larger spend and have the path tarmacked for longevity, but the only quote available to do so was for £14K. Expected, more cost-effective quotes had not materialised, it was agreed to accept Cllr Taylor’s proposal. This was seconded by Cllr Smart and agreed unanimously. **Action: Cllr Taylor to progress.**
- c. Noticeboards (deferred from March meeting) (KS) – The Clerk advised Council the noticeboards were once again being updated now the ‘Stay at Home’ restrictions had been lifted. There is an issue with 2 locks being seized but was being attended to. **Action: Cllr Fry offered to try to release the locks, Cllr Sayer offered to use his bolt cutters to remove them if necessary.**
- d. Clerks Report (deferred from March meeting) (KS) – Cllr Sayer was concerned that the Clerk’s report had not been produced during the pandemic and wished it to be reinstated. The Clerk had explained that the Clerks Report items had not encountered any movement since the pandemic began partially due to reduced work by NCC and the difficulties of being able to chase progress, so it did not seem prudent to produce the unchanged report. However, now that things were getting back more to normal, the report had been produced for this meeting and another section introduced so the report was even more informative than previously. **Action: Already taken.**
- e. Number of meetings (deferred from March meeting) (KS) – Cllr Sayer informed the group he believed that during Council’s AGM meeting it had been agreed to reinstate the mid-month meeting and was unhappy this had not been implemented. The Chair and Clerk agreed that although it was commented upon during the meeting, no decision had been taken to re-introduce it. That as the Chair and Clerk had been given delegated authority to deal with more minor day to day running issues, until this point it had not been necessary to hold 2 meetings per month. This was discussed and it was agreed that as things return to normal, the Chair and Clerk’s delegated authority should be revoked. Proposed Cllr Appleton, seconded Cllr Whitfield. From this point forward, Council would return to 2 meetings per month as was the norm prior to the pandemic restrictions. Proposed Cllr Sayer, seconded Cllr Tarr and agreed by majority. **Action: Clerk to prepare and administer for both a mid-month and a full council meeting beginning on 14th April 2021.**
- f. Cllr participation (deferred from March meeting) (KS) – Cllr Sayer expressed concern that one Cllr in particular had not attended a meeting since the start of the pandemic and he did not understand the reasoning why. He named a former Cllr who had been disqualified by lack of engagement with Council for a period of 6 months and asked why this did not apply to this Cllr. The Clerk informed him that the circumstances were very different and did not apply. Cllr Sayer also asked that it be made a requirement for any future Cllrs to have internet capabilities. The Clerk told the group this was not a requirement for the role and could not be enforced, only to state that it would be desirable. **Action: None requested.**
- g. Cllr suggestions for Council participation in celebrations for the NHS/Front Line workers – Suggestions for celebrations were discussed. It was suggested that a joined-up approach involving St Basil’s Church would be desirable. Advertising on Council’s website and Facebook page would be used. Cllr Appleton agreed to progress this with the help of Cllrs Sayer and Taylor. Cllr Tarr agreed to liaise with

the Church. **Action: Cllrs Appleton, Sayer, Taylor and Tarr to progress initially and return to Council nearer the time to finalise arrangements.**

- h. VE Day statues for sale (PG) – Cllr Gregory requested Council consider the purchase of some ‘Tommy’ statues from the RBLI to use for Remembrance celebrations. A budget of £500 was agreed to purchase goods. Proposed Cllr Whitfield, seconded Cllr Gregory and agreed unanimously. **Action: Clerk to forward the catalogue so goods may be chosen and re-agenda for final choices at the 24th April meeting.**
- i. Opening of Community Centres – Cllr Gregory told the group that prior to both centres opening back up to the general public (not including Meithrin), a number of considerations have to be made, such as cleansing regimes, Covid compliance, risk assessments etc. Cllrs were asked to think about what was needed and look over the draft risk assessment Cllr Gregory had produced. **Action: Cllrs Smart offered to review the draft risk assessment compiled by the Chairman and all Cllrs to offer suggestions for changes and consider what needed to be put in place in order for the centres to be able to open up safely. Clerk to re-agenda for the end of April meeting.**

7. Reports:

- a. Newport City Councillors – Cllr Williams was not in attendance but had offered apologies. The Clerk confirmed she had not received the reports Cllr Williams had said he intended forwarding for Council, detailing the tasks he had been involved with during February or March. Council expressed concern that of the 2 City Cllrs representing Graig, 1 Cllr was long term sick and unable to perform duties and the other falling short of Council's expectations. There was also concern that when Cllr Williams becomes Mayor, that Mayoral duties will take him further away from any ward duties he may have and Graig will be left with barely any representation at NCC. The Chairman agreed to work with the Clerk to compile a list of things previously requested assistance with and write to Cllr Williams stating Council's concerns. **Action: Chair and Clerk to progress.**

Sub Committees:

- b. Graig Community Centre Cllr Harris reported that some previous Hall users were using the grassed area outside for their classes etc. This was not thought to be of concern except if they wanted to use the Hall's toileting facilities which at this time cannot be allowed. Cllr Harris was asked to have keys returned to him until the Hall could be properly opened up again. There was concern over the cleansing of the Pumphouse following Council allowing use as a shelter for a homeless gentleman during the Winter. The Chair advised the group a company had been found who have quoted £50 for a one-off cleansing, disinfection and Covid misting of the building which was being arranged. **Action: Chair and Clerk to progress booking the cleansing, Cllr Harris to arrange collection of user groups keys until the Hall is properly opened.**
- c. Rhiwderin Community Centre & Fundraising Group – Cllr Gregory reported that a contract had been offered and taken up by Little Oaks Nursery. Details were in hand. There had been an issue with the electronics for the outside defibrillator, but this was being addressed. **Action: Chairman and Centre Management Committee to progress.**
- d. Allotments – Permission was given for the water troughs were to be repaired, polythene to cover unused plots to be purchased and a skip to be hired for the site. Issues with a polytunnel on the site were discussed. Although previously authorised, the tunnel was larger than initially realised and over the Winter had become a problem in high winds. Council were concerned at the possibility that the tunnel could be blown out of the site as it was set close to the boundary fence and this became a H&S hazard for passing cars and residents. With this in mind, Council felt it had no option other than to revoke permission on H&S grounds. **Action: Clerk to advise the Allotment Association and the allotment holder of Council's decision. Allotment Association to revise its handbook to include metal plastic covered structures.**
- e. Burial Board – Cllr Gregory updated Council on the latest news regarding the Tribunal proceedings. Council discussed the discount ratio given to Graig & Rogerstone residents and also should the cemetery be restricted to use by both wards only. Council felt this was worth discussing at the Board meetings. **Action: Clerk to request the Burial Board Clerk add both a discounts review and eligibility to use the cemetery to the agenda for the next Board meeting.**

Working Groups:

- f. Play Areas Group – Cllr Taylor submitted quotes for a wet-pour surface to be made for the approach to the top of the junior slide at Fort View play area. He proposed progressing this at the cost of £480. This was seconded by Cllr Gregory and agreed by majority. He also submitted a quote for some concrete which would be needed for the base of the wet-pour at a cost of £400 and for the installation of the swing at Cowshed Lane which had been previously authorised at the cost of £60. He proposed Council move forward with these small projects which was seconded by Cllr Gregory and agreed by majority.

He also submitted a quote for the installation of some concrete bases for the picnic benches which would be £405 each. Council reconsidered this and agreed that it may be better not to install bases so the benches could be moved around when desired. **Action: Cllr Taylor to progress the items above, Clerk to raise purchase orders for the costs.**

- g. Horticultural Group/Best Kept Villages Group – Cllr Smart reported that all was well and summer planting was in hand. She was submitting approximately £400 worth of receipts for plant purchased which she had paid for personally and needed to be re-imbursed. The group asked about their budget as these costs were to be presented to Council in a new financial year and what would happen with the remaining unspent budget left over from 2020/21. The Clerk suggested this would be for the Finance Committee to decide when they next meet, but it should be considered if the remaining budget could be rolled over into the following year. **Action: Cllr Smart to submit receipts to the Clerk to process for payment at the next meeting. Council to consider remaining budgets at the end of financial years and how to treat them.**
- h. Technology Group – Cllr Appleton reported that things were not going as well as she would have liked. Further updating of more recent material would not be put on the new site by the creators, but must be administered by Council following training. A training date had not yet been set, and now only 2 individuals would be able to be trained who would then need to cascade the training once completed. There will be a manual available. **Action: Cllr Appleton to progress.**
- i. Events and Social Group – NTR. **Action: None necessary.**
- j. Consultation Group – Cllr Tarr was arranging a consultation meeting for the following week on the Fly Tipping and Littering consultation. Cllrs Smart, Appleton, Sayer, Taylor and Williams had previously agreed to join the consultation group. **Action: Cllr Tarr to progress.**

8. Items for forthcoming agendas: None

9. Urgent Business not discussed above:
None


11. Dates of next meetings:

Mid-Month Meeting – Wednesday 14th April 2021 at 7pm remotely via Zoom
Full Council Meeting – Wednesday 28th April 2021 at 7pm remotely via Zoom
Finance meeting – Wednesday 5th May 2021 at 7pm (venue TBA)

There being no further business to discuss, the meeting was closed at 9.45pm

Signed (Chair) – 28.04.21

Compiled 08.04.21

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