**REYNOLDSTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL held VIA ZOOM at 7.30pm on Tuesday 11th January 2022**

**PRESENT:** Councillors: Deb Vine (Chair), Margie Bond, Jennie Clements, Sue Ashelby, Charles Twitchett, Michelle Clarke, the Clerk Andrew Berry the Internal Auditor Paul Sizer and members of the local community via Zoom.

**APOLOGIES:** There were none.

Cllr. Vine welcomed everyone to the meeting, Particularly David Gibson who was going to speak on behalf of the Play Park action group.

1. **DISCLOSURES OF PERSONAL INTEREST:** The chair said that as no-one had a pecuniary interest in the main item on the agenda everyone could take part in the discussion.
2. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING:**

These were agreed and will be signed by the chair in due course.

1. **MATTERS ARISING**

* Item four had been held over to this meeting from last due to concerns about Covid 19 preventing some from attending the last meeting of the council.
* The new village defibrillators had been purchased and installed in the church, outside the chapel and outside the village hall. The old ones were now kept as back up with new batteries and pads inside the hall and chapel most likely to be disposed of when the batteries fail as they have passed their design lives. The hall and chapel have agreed to check them regularly.
* Gary Evans was thanked for his very generous gift of the offer of free servicing for the mower from Celtic Mowers
* The top of the Higher Green is planned to be reseeded with new stones by Neil before the end of April. Trees on the Higher Green had been discussed with the commoners but there was a concern about safety issues in the future.
* There were no concerns about planning applications.
* £500 had been donated to the Wales Air Ambulance.
* One Voice Wale had been paid.
* Grants had been made to the Community Churchyard and the Church for the Christmas tree on the Lower Green.
* The Clerk had received queries about the Christmas tree and about the provision of electricity on the Lower Green from the Penrice Estate, the Clerk had replied that these had been put in place by the church although there had for many years been a grant toward the cost of the Christmas tree.

1. **PROPOSAL OF GIFT OF LAND TO THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL FOR A PLAY PARK OFF ROBBINS LANE REYNOLDSTON AND**
2. **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC (LIMITED TO A TOTAL OF 20 MINUTES)**

* Cllr. Vine thanked John and Gill Pittman for the offer of land for a proposed play park in the village and for the work done by David Gibson in connection with this proposal. The Chair also thanked the people who had written and emailed the clerk in support of the proposal and in particular the children who had written in. There had been sixty-one letters in support and a petition running to eleven sides of A4 from the village and the surrounding area.
* David Gibson then gave a presentation on the proposal. He said it was geared to young families and that there were an increasing number of these in and around the village. He said that the survey was limited due to Covid and that meaning it was very difficult to hold a door-to-door survey. He thanked Eve Wakeford for getting the petition together. He also thanked the Headteacher of Knelston School Phillip Jenkins for his letter of support. He acknowledged that there would be many ups and downs on the way and that getting permissions and funding would take some time.
* Councillor Vine thanked David Gibson and asked for comments.
* Cllr. Bond said that she had been very impressed by the tremendous efforts of the action group. She asked if The Penrice Estate would allow access over the stream? David Gibson said that the land on the Robbins Lane side of the stream was most likely owned by the estate. Cllr. Richard Lewis has said that he would speak to Thomas Methuen-Campbell who had asked that no-one else be present. Cllr. Lewis will get back to the supporters group.
* Cllr. Vine said that it was also important to understand that the Commoners had legal access to all open land and that they would also need to be consulted.
* David Gibson said that he had not wanted to involve too many different groups at this stage.
* Cllr. Twitchett congratulated the group on the report that had been submitted to councillors a week ago. He thanked John and Gill Pittman for the principle of their donation of land. He felt that the community council as currently constituted should not proceed with arrangements for implementation. He said that the case made underestimates the requirements for certain aspects for example legal liability for inspection and maintenance. For the RCC to proceed with arrangements for implementation two councillors should be given the responsibility of forwarding the project (at present one would probably need to be co-opted). This would ensure that RCC would have sufficient direction and control in order to enable compliance with consequential responsibilities and duties. The Council elections are scheduled for May and these could serve as an extra opportunity for the local community to express their views by either supporting candidates in favour or otherwise.
* Cllr. Vine then asked if anyone wished to join the council. Gill Pittman then said that with one or two on the council there could be a group of 5/7 people who would work as a sub-committee to push the idea forward if accepted in principle
* Cllr. Vine said that this was a very useful idea.
* Cllr. Ashelby said that the Council shouldn’t accept the land yet. She said that she thought a trust would be a much better idea.
* Gill Pittman said she was much happier to give the land to the council as a trust for these purposes seemed a very insubstantial organisation.
* Ralph Lyell said he thought that people would come forward.
* David Gibson said that as the council only met once every two months a committee under its jurisdiction with two councillors could meet much more frequently.

The meeting then paused for five minutes.

* Cllr. Vine said that as it stood the council didn’t know the cost of the project, whether planning permission would be granted or access allowed or approved. The council has a precept of only £12,500 a year. Other villages with playgrounds were much bigger with a larger precept.
* David Gibson said that it was very difficult to answer all the questions at the present time.
* Gill Pittman asked whether the council had done any research in to other local councils playgrounds.
* Cllr. Clarke answered that Three Crosses Council had a weekly inspection of their playground by the person who cuts the grass. The cost of insurance shouldn’t be prohibitive as the council has public liability insurance but obviously the playground would have to be listed as such for insurance purposes.
* Cllr. Twitchett said that Llangenith playground was run by the hall which seemed to have absorbed the playground costs.
* At Pennard the land had been gifted to the RDC
* Bishopston playground had recently been refurbished with money from Swansea CC. Obtaining the £36000 grant had been difficult as land owned by the community council.
* Cllr. Vine said that the she had nothing in principle against the idea of the playpark. The council needed to know first about the question of access.
* David Gibson said he was chasing Cllr. Richard Lewis who was chasing Thomas Methuen-Campbell who was chasing his solicitor.
* John Pittman had obtained at his own expense maps from the Land Registry that showed no ownership of the land the Robbins Lane side of the stream.
* Ralph Lyell urged that the work on the park continue. He said that it was a bit early to ask people to immediately volunteer to join the council.
* The Clerk said it was a bit more complicated than just joining and that due to elections in May it might be better to wait.
* The Chair thanked everyone for their participation in the meeting.

1. **2022/2023 COUNCIL BUDGET APPROVAL**

The budget following the recent budget meeting, was discussed by the council and unanimously approved. The precept was agreed to be kept at £12,500 for 2022/2023

1. **VILLAGE GREENS AND HIGHWAYS**

Cllr. Vine said that Neil Pritchard would add topsoil and seed the area at the top of the Higher Green at the end of March or early April. Larger stones would be placed and partially buried at either end to stop people driving on it.

The culverts opposite the post office and at the bottom of the Higher Green will be repaired so that they don’t get blocked so easily and the car park opposite the post office resurfaced.

The Clerk will write to the Highways Department about the verge next to the Portobello wall on the Higher Green that is becoming dangerously deep and wide, Nigel Fitzgerald is the contact.

Cllr. Twitchett said that Chris Smith had been contacted about trees on the Higher Green and he had confirmed Bob’s view about the trees. This might be looked at again in the future.

1. **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

Cllr. Twitchett said that Swansea CC had turned down a number of planning applications otherwise there was nothing to report.

1. **GRANTS**

The Clerk had nothing to report on this (see Financial Position)

1. **VILLAGE MAGAZINE**

It was agreed that there would be a mention of the work on the Higher Green scheduled for the Spring.

Thanks to Gary from Celtic Mowers for their offer of free servicing this year.

Mention of the defibrillators and future training in the use if these when Covid regulations allow.

Mention of the audio-visual grant for the hall

The discussion of the play park would also be included with thanks for the offer and the petition plus letters/emails and a mention that 24 people took part in the meeting. This will be discussed further at the next meeting.

The article should include asking if anyone is interested in the position of Clerk to the Community Council from the March meeting onwards.

Also a mention of the elections in May

1. **CORRESPONDENCE**

Thanks again to all those who wrote in support of the play park, particularly the children.

There had been requests to be put on the list for defibrillator training when Covid regulations allow.

A letter from St. George’s Church thanking the Council for the new defibrillator

A report circulated to all councillors on the proposed play park from David Gibson

A petition delivered in support of the play park

An email from Gary of Celtic Mowers offering free servicing of the mower.

1. **FINANCIAL POSITION AND BILLS FOR PAYMENT**

**Since the last meeting:**

£630.75 reimbursed to Peter Bowen-Simpkins who paid Just Host for the website hosting for the next three years (many thanks)

Clerks Remuneration £556.89 (three times a year)

PAYE income tax £139.22

Batteries and pads for old defibrillators £190.95

New Defibrillators outside the chapel, hall and inside the church £3150.00

Hire of halls during the year £56.00

Precept payment from Swansea City and County £4,166.66 (total £12,500 for the year)

Balance on 11/01/2022 is £15,240.25. Larger than expected due to work delayed by Covid.

1. **AOB.** The Clerk said he would resign after working for the council for six years when he only planned to do it for five! He will continue up to and including the March meeting.

There are elections scheduled for Thursday 5th May. The estimated cost to the council if there is an election is £1,500. If there is no contest there will still be some administrative costs. The Clerk has a timetable for nominations etc. The notice of election will take place before 28th March (after the next meeting)

1. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Tuesday March 8th 2022 at 7.30 pm.