**REYNOLDSTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE COUNCIL**

**Held at Minor Hall, Reynoldston at 7.30pm on Tuesday 9th January 2024**

**Present:** Cllrs. Clarke, Ashelby, James, Thomas, Twitchett, Cousins,Internal Auditor Aimee Dyer and Clerk Paul Sizer

**Also present:** Cllr Lewis – Cry & County of Swansea

There was one member of the public present.

Councillor Clarke welcomed everyone to the meeting

Cllr Clarke recommended altering the order of the agenda to accommodate the member of the public and Cllr Lewis. This was agreed by all present.

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| **4.** | **Questions from members of the public.**  There was one member of the public present, Mr Paul Valerio who posed three questions to the Community council:   1. Mr Valerio explained that he was responsible for placing the lights on the Christmas Tree every year but they required replacing and requested financial support from the Community Council for next Christmas. (see later in minutes)   He also requested “physical” support from members of the Council/members of the public to erect the lights etc. It was agreed that Cllr. Ashelby would place an article in the Village Newsletter asking for support in preparation of next Christmas’s event.   1. Mr Valerio also asked about the update to the Bus Shelter. This is an on-going discussion within the Community Council and it was explained that the matter is being discussed at Council meetings although an actual outcome has not yet been decided. 2. Mr Valerio also advised that several years ago, a previous chair of the Community Council had arranged to name every road in the Village and wondered if this was proceeding. At this time there was no update to offer but it would be discussed at a future meeting as it was not on the agenda for this meeting. |
| **5.** | **Update from Cllr. Lewis – City & County of Swansea**  Cllr. Lewis gave an update of the issues surrounding City & County of Swansea finances in general and how Gower is recognised by the City & County of Swansea.  Cllr. Lewis agreed that any issues Reynoldston Community Council may have, especially with regard to Highways etc, if he was included in any e-mails he would try and put his own “pressure” on the departments.  The Community Council thanked him for his offer and Cllr. Twitchett advised the current issues as noted below under Village Greens and Highways.  Cllr. Clarke also asked the question of the state of unadopted roads in the Village, especially in Little Reynoldston and by the Upper Green where the roads had eroded causing quite large “steps” between the main adopted roads and the unadopted roads. There was concern that vehicles could be damaged or pedestrians be harmed when transversing these “steps”. Cllr Lewis asked for photographs and details of locations be forwarded to him to investigate if there was anything that could be done.  Cllr Clarke also asked about the Village First Response vehicle in reaction to a request from a member of the Community. Cllr. Lewis explained that the First Response vehicle was very underutilised and would only be called on when every other resource was not available. The Councillors felt that residents of Gower were very much “at risk” as delays in ambulances arriving were very common. Cllr. Clarke stated she would also bring this issue up at the Gower Forum of Community Councils. |
| **8.** | **Village Greens and Highways**  Cllr. Twitchett stated he had been in contact with City & County of Swansea regarding the sand box’s bases to check if they would support repairs to the foundations of the boxes but as yet had not received any response.  Cllr. Twitchett also contacted City & County of Swansea regarding the culverts at the Post Office and on the higher green which both had flooding during the recent bad weather.  Cllr Lewis asked for the details to be forwarded to him and he would investigate these two issues.  At this stage Cllr. Lewis and Mr Valerio left the meeting.  The meeting reverted to the remaining items on the agenda not already covered. |
| **1.** | **Disclosures of Personal Interests**  It was agreed that any Disclosures of Personal Interest would be discussed as they arose during the meeting. |
| **2.** | **To approve the minutes of the previous meeting**  The Chair asked if everyone was happy with the minutes of the last meeting. The clerk noted a few minor errors on the minutes as noted by the Councillors and the minutes would be adjusted to reflect these. Cllr. Clarke proposed and Cllr. Ashelby seconded that the minutes are a true record of the meeting held in September. |
| **3.** | **Matters Arising**  There were no matters arising as most minuted discussions were in the agenda for today’s meeting. |
| **6.** | **Budget for 2024/2025**  The budget had been discussed at a meeting held prior to the Community Council meeting and agreement that the precept would remain at £12500 for the year 2024/2025. The Clerk would contact City & County of Swansea to advise them of this request. |
| **7.** | **Update on possible Community Council boundary changes.**  There had been nothing received in regard to the possible boundary changes but Cllr. Clarke had written to Penmaen Community Council regarding the suggestion that properties in Little Reynoldston ought to come under Reynoldston Community Council. |
| **9.** | **Planning Applications**  There were two one planning applications:  **Applegrove Cottage Reynoldston Swansea**  [*To lop one Elm covered by TPO No. 069*](https://property.swansea.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=S5LQMEEVJ1000&activeTab=summary)  The Councillors had no objections to this planning request  **Little Reynoldston Farm Reynoldston Swansea**  [*Use of land for the siting of a maximum 5 touring caravans from Good Friday or 1st April (whichever is earlier) to 31st October during the 2024 and 2025 seasons*](https://property.swansea.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?keyVal=S60PXCEV00300&activeTab=summary)  The Councillors had no objections to this planning request or had received any objections from residents. |
| **10.** | **Grants**  Two requests had been received by the clerk   1. A request from the Village Play Group for support for equipment and events they plan to hold. Cllr. Cousins advised that there were some grants available from City & County of Swansea which could be useful for the Playgroup and it was agreed that these should be sourced before the Community Council considered their request. It was agreed that the clerk make contact with the Playgroup and explain the situation but the Community Council would be willing to entertain a request for support if no funds are available from City & County of Swansea and can be applied for after April 2024. 2. A second request was received for support for the provision of batteries for the Christmas lights on the lower green for next Christmas. It was agreed to add an arbitrary £100 into the budget as well as the £150 requested by Mr Valerio alongside the grant for the Christmas Tree that is offered each year. The Clerk was asked to adjust the budget to allow for these extra sums. The clerk would contact the group who are responsible for the decorations.   The Councillors also agreed that if any other areas of the Village wanted to consider erecting lights at Christmas, the Council would consider any financial requests. |
| **11.** | **Village Magazine**  It was agreed that Cllr. Ashelby would place an article in the Newsletter requesting assistance and support from members of the public to assist with the Christmas tree decorations next year.  The article would also include that the Councill have not increased their request for precept this next financial year. |
| **12.** | **Clerks Update**  The clerk reported that bank balance in the savings and current accounts amounted to £21606 and the latest and final balance of precept had been received, although this sum was being held ready to proceed with the Bus Shelter works.  Various payments had been made in accordance with instructions the clerk had received from the Council at the last meeting.  The clerk had signed up to personal training through the SLCC for the Introduction to Local Council Administration qualification at a cost of £120 plus VAT = £144. It was agreed to pay this sum and invoice Ilston CC £60 as they had agreed to share the training costs 50/50. Reynoldston would recover any VAT paid.  The clerk recommended that “Training” be added to every agenda from the March meeting to reflect the importance of training of Councillors and the clerk. This was agreed by all present.  The clerk had updated all the policies for the Community Council and needed support to “proof read” them to ensure their accuracy. It was agreed that the clerk will resend them to all Councillors and ask each Councillor to agree the wording of approx. 3 each. The clerk wished to add to the March agenda approval of all the policies so a deadline to agree them of the end of February was approved.  It is now a requirement to allow members of the public to attend Council meetings via electronic methods such as Zoom. It was agreed that only the section regarding questions form the public were imperative to be broadcast on-line so from April 2024 the agenda will be revised to bring this section to earlier on to allow members of the public to join in. The Council’s laptop is too old to host Zoom meetings so the clerk offered his personal laptop to host these meetings along with his Zoom licence.  The clerk proposed to write an Annual Report this year, in line with other local Community Councils. This has not been completed in Reynoldston for some time and the clerk feels this ought to be offered and placed on the Website asap.  A discussion was made regarding updating the Council’s website. An allowance has been placed in the budget for 2024/2025 to update and modernise the website. Discussion was made as to how to undertake this and the matter will be discussed in detail at the next meeting in March.  The clerk has been e-mailed from One Voice Wales with a link from the Welsh Assembly regarding Working From Home (WFH) allowances of £156. The clerk has decided not to take this allowance as he is happy to cover his WFH expenses through his personal Self-Assessment returns. The new policy also allows for a sum to be made available for consumables. The clerk again refused to accept this sum but will arrange to recover any consumables used for the Community Council through expenses claim at the end of the financial year. |
| **13.** | **Any Other Business**  An e-mail had been received to Cllr. Twitchett regarding the stones placed outside “The Firs” in Reynoldston. A discussion was held regarding these and other stones placed outside properties in Reynoldston but it was agreed that as the Community Council do not own the land there was nothing that they could do. Cllr. Twitchett will respond to the author of the e-mail. |
| **14.** | **Date of the next meeting**  The next meeting will be held on Tuesday 12th March at 19.30.  The meeting closed at 9.30 |