**GROSMONT FAWR COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

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**MONDAY 14th SEPTEMBER 2020 7.30PM – ZOOM MEETING TO FACILITATE THE BI-MONTHLY COUNCIL MEETING**

**DRAFT CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES**

**Present:**

C.Cllr David Hughes-Jones (Chair) Cllr Andrew Farr (Vice Chairman)

Cllr Jim Beavan Cllr Paul Sheridan

Cllr Witek Minowt-Czyz Cllr James Stark

**In attendance:** Ms Clare Preece (Clerk) Mrs Jane Moggridge

1. **To accept apologies for absence:**

Cllr Mrs Margie Barker, Cllr Peter McVann, Cllr Martin Davies

1. **To disclose personal and pecuniary interests in items of business listed below:**

None declared

1. **Public Forum –** (The meeting was suspended to permit the Public Forum – 10 minutes only and each participant limited to 2 minutes. The meeting was then reopened.)

Mrs Jane Moggridge stated that the street- light outside her property

at Onaway is still going off at 1am instead of 12 midnight. She asked what difference the clocks going back in October would make and the Chairman said that this would mean the light would go off at Midnight. **Resolved** The Clerk to monitor the situation and report if necessary.

1. **To consider matters relating to the Grosmont Futures project including play area at the castle. Resolved** Cllr Witek Minowt-Czyz reported that Peter Willis is now back full-time and the group are trying to organise a meeting using Zoom in the not too distant future.
2. **To approve as a correct record the Minutes of previous meetings held.** **Resolved** Councillors approved the minutes of the last meeting in July and the Chairman asked the Clerk to forward him hard copies of the minutes for the meetings held this year in order for him to initial each page as approval for internal audit purposes. **Resolved** The Clerk to collate the information and forward on.
3. **To consider matters arising from the minutes.**
4. Craft Club – See under Grosmont Town Hall
5. Outstanding items from Fire Risk Assessment – See under Grosmont Town Hall
6. Outstanding Matters concerning the Town Hall – See under Grosmont Town Hall
7. Boundary Review – The Council’s response was formulated by Cllr Farr and the Clerk as it was considered more appropriate in light of the Chairman having already replied in his capacity as County Councillor. The Council’s opposition to the review has been recorded and their comments will be considered by the Commission when they prepare their Draft Proposals. It must be noted however, that despite opposition the new arrangements will come into force following a Welsh Government Order as a basis for the review. **Resolved** The Clerk is to maintain contact with One Voice Wales for updates ongoing.
8. The water system in the Town Hall was thoroughly flushed through and all areas disinfected by the Clerk to mitigate the risk of legionella in line with guidance from Welsh Government. It came to the attention of the Clerk that further mitigation of the risk had occurred as the Caretaker had taken it upon herself to flush the system through on a weekly basis throughout the lockdown. The Chairman thanked Tracie Vaughan on behalf of the Council for using her initiative in these trying times.
9. Request for funding from Citizens Advice – The Chairman noted that this item should have been put on the agenda separately for discussion and this was noted by the Clerk. Cllr Minowt-Czyz suggested that it be discussed instead of taking it forward to the next meeting. The Chairman noted that in the past the Council had made donations to the cause and Cllr Minowt-Czyz brought the Council’s attention to the fact that the services provided by the Citizens Advice Bureau had a direct benefit to members of the community here in Grosmont Fawr. **Resolved** It was unanimously agreed that a donation of £50 be made to the Citizens advice Bureau and the Clerk is to raise a cheque for signature.
10. **To receive items of correspondence**
11. Email from Welsh Government Audit dated 19/08/2020 to be discussed under item 14 of the Closed session of the Council.
12. Email from One Voice Wales dated 11/09/2020 drawing the Council’s attention to the Covid 19 loss application process. The Clerk has submitted an application for the loss of income between April and June for £765.82. The Clerk had been told by a spokesperson for One Voice Wales that it was unlikely that the Council’s application would be successful due to the considerable losses sustained by larger councils. The Chairman, C Cllr D Hughes-Jones stated that relatively, this was a substantial loss to Grosmont and Cllr Minowt-Czyz said that he would hope that claims would be settled on a per capita basis. Cllr Stark said he would hope that if it was not possible to settle all claims fully that each claim be settled on a percentage basis. The Chairman said that the Council should remain optimistic.
13. Email from “My Parish Council” drawing the Clerks attention to Web Content Access Guidelines (WCAG 2.1) compliance by 22nd September 2020. The Clerk had been quoted a fee of £460 plus VAT for the transfer of 50% of the current website content to a template that will make the information accessible to people with disabilities such as sight loss, autism and dyslexia. The current site is not accessible. The current rental of the site from IONOS is £8.38 per month and My Parish Council would charge an ongoing rental of £10 per month for its site. Councillors are not prepared to rush into any agreement, and it was decided that more investigatory work into the matter of compliance needs to be done by the Clerk. Cllr Stark asked if it was necessary to transfer 50% of the content of the current site or whether legislation required that the information be stored in an accessible to all format going forward. Cllr Minowt-Czyz asked what the law was surrounding keeping the content online and suggested the Monmouthshire County Council Tech department be consulted over the matter. Cllr Sheridan suggested that the Clerk contact the Royal National College for the Blind in Hereford to see what their opinion was on the matter and what their needs would be from a similar website. **Resolved:** The Clerk is to conduct a full investigation into WCAG 2.1 compliance and report back to the Council at the next meeting.
14. **To consider matters relating to Highways and Rural Roads.** Cllr Stark reported a caravan surrounded by cones at Wellfield and posed the question as to whether this was a permanent fixture as he had seen it on several occasions. Cllr Minowt-Czyz lives in the area and he left the meeting to see if it was still there. He reported back that it was not to be seen so it is hoped that this is not the case. Cllr Beavan reported that Caggle Street in Llanvetherine was in a very poor state of repair. Heavy rain has washed the road surface away leaving just a dirt track in front of houses in some places. The drainage needs attention. Cllr Sheridan and Cllr Stark agreed that the roads are in a poor state of repair and pot- holes need attention. The Chairman has spoken with the County Engineer and said that there is gang of around 14 men working on various car-parks and highways at present. We seem to be holding our own he said.
15. **To consider matters relating to planning.** DM/2020/0072 Proposed new vehicular access, closure of existing access and small extension of domestic curtilage at Graig view, Hand Road, Grosmont NP7 8ET. Cllr Farr pointed out that this was an amendment to an original application and he could not see any reason to turn it down regardless of what may happen in the future. Cllr Minowt-Czyz and Cllr Stark also agreed they could see no reason to turn it down. **Resolved** The Council unanimously agreed to support the application and the Clerk to make the necessary comments online at MCC.
16. **To consider matters relating to Grosmont Town Hall.**
17. Cllr Farr was asked if he had been able to attend to the Smoke alarm synchronisation and the gap in the ceiling which are actions outstanding from the Fire-Risk assessment carried out by Firerite . **Resolved** Cllr Farr apologised and said he had not been able to attend to these things but will attend to them before the Town Hall reopens for business. He has the electrician doing some work for him soon and will ask him to attend to matters.
18. Following the Coronavirus training held by the Clerk with Debs Neville and Jan Chatfield at the Town Hall the Clerk had been asked by Jan Chatfield whether there needed to be “Call point fire alarm” fitted to the Town Hall. Cllr Minowt-Czyz pointed out that for there to be a Call point there needed to be a bell. He also pointed out that the legal requirements for a fire risk assessment needed to be studied in more depth. He had in the past carried out a fire risk assessment based on guidance he had received from the Fire Brigade. The Clerk had also spoken to the fire brigade and had been told that commercial fire risk assessments often proved to insist on implementations that were not always entirely necessary. Cllr Minowt-Czyz said that in his experience they were often over bureaucratic. Cllr Stark added that they have always done their own at Llangua. The fire risk assessment done by Firerite had also concluded that there needed to be a push bar exit on the downstairs door leading to the forecourt in front of the Angel Inn. Cllr Minowt-Czyz said that if there was a fire the most logical and safe way to exit the building would be through the fire escape on the first floor. To attempt to exit down the stairs via the narrow steep internal staircase would be hazardous. **Resolved** The Clerk and Cllr Minowt-Czyz are to liaise and to perform a council run fire risk assessment using guidelines from the Fire Brigade.
19. Cllr Farr was asked if the broken toilet seat had been mended. He said that he thought the matter had been resolved. **Resolved** The Clerk looked back at the minutes from July and ascertained that the consensus of opinion on the matter was that if it did not pose a danger then it was alright to be left.
20. Cllr Farr was asked what the situation was regarding the leaking hot water system in the toilet in the undercroft. **Resolved** Cllr Farr will chase up the electrician and plumber again in an attempt to get the situation sorted which may involve some pressure to get the job done as previous attempts have been unsuccessful.
21. It had been brought to the Clerks attention that a padlock to secure the gate between the undercroft and Angel Inn is needed to discourage the use of the toilets by patrons of the pub. This causes added work for the Caretaker and smoking in the undercroft must be discouraged. **Resolved** It was unanimously agreed that a padlock be installed and a key given to the Caretaker.
22. Cllr Sheridan was asked if he had been able to dispose of the old storage heaters in the pub skip. **Resolved** Cllr Sheridan said that unfortunately the skip had gone so it had not been possible. Cllr Stark said that he would be able to dispose of them using his transport when he next goes to Wye Valley Metals and Cllr Farr offered to help lift them sometime next week.
23. Cllr Minowt-Czyz brought up the matter concerning the damp in the Town Hall. He said that damp is caused by defects in the roof and the gutters need to be inspected as there is a problem with the downpipe which is a relatively easy problem to sort out. Jane Moggridge said that Grosmont Futures are looking into obtaining a Grant to refurbish the Town Hall. Before the lockdown a publicity event had been planned to promote this. The Chairman said that he hoped that any grant application would be successful in obtaining funds to restore the building. Cllr Minowt-Czyz said that grant monies were available but these were contingent upon application but the process hasn’t begun yet.
24. The Town Hall has undergone a rigorous risk assessment to meet Coronavirus legislation. The assessment has now been published and amended in line with a brainstorming meeting with local residents, Debs Neville and Jan Chatfield, the organisers of community groups in Grosmont. The hall is now ready to reopen when legislation permits. The Chairman thanked the Clerk for all her hard work.
25. A hand sanitizer product supplier account with “Clean My” has been secured by the Clerk with a £500 credit limit. Going forward, this could become a high cost to the Council if supply cannot be monitored. The Clerk said it would be preferable to have wall mounted hand sanitising stations at the entrance and exist points in the building. It must be noted too that hand sanitising is not a replacement for hand washing and paper towels and bins have been provided for the disposal of waste. **Resolved** Councillors approved the purchase and installation of hand sanitiser dispensers and Cllr Minowt-Czyz will install them.
26. The Clerk has spoken to Gill Clark and Jan Chatfield regarding the Grosmont Craft Club. There are normally 6 attendees at the club who are charged £2 subs. This means after the Town Hall hire charge fee the club runs at a loss. The Clerk enquired as to whether an exception could be considered in the case of the Craft club and a reduced fee charged. If the club had to fold it would be a loss to the community. **Resolved** The Chairman said that whilst it was the aim of the Council to support local groups there will have to be a review of Town Hall fees to incorporate and take account of extra costs which will be incurred due to the maintaining of health and safety procedures due to Covid 19. If money is to be allocated in the form of a grant to community groups then this will have to be taken into account when compiling the budget for 2021-2022 and the Precept application in January next year. Cllr Farr suggested that the Craft Club publicise their event more widely in an attempt to attract more members.
27. **To consider matters relating to Grosmont Events.** There have been no updates from Grosmont Events who have been unable to hold meetings during the Coronavirus. The Councillors would like to express their thanks to Debs Neville and Jan Chatfield for their contribution towards the implementation of the Coronavirus Risk assessment and the reorganisation of the Town Hall.
28. **To agree expenditure and other accounts matters.**

The Chairman had been emailed the bank reconciliations for July and August and has approved them.

Expenditure for approval was as follows:

MS C J PREECE WAGES JULY £338.69

MS C J PREECE WAGES AUGUST £338.69

MS C J PREECE WAGES SEPTEMBER £338.69

MS C J PREECE EXPENSES JULY £245.36

MS C J PREECE EXPENSES AUGUST £440.36

MS T VAUGHAN MAINTENANCE £29.31

1. **To receive and consider any other business (items for noting only – matters requiring further consideration and will be listed for a future council meeting)**

Cllr Farr brought to the attention of the Council an area known as the “Council Bank”, ground which was transferred into council custodianship a number of years ago and two trees planted on it. The cherry trees have grown substantially and a resident whose house is located behind the trees has sunlight into her property obscured by the branches. The resident has asked if the council will prune and lop the trees. Cllr Minowt-Czyz said that legally the council are not responsible for carrying out the work and are under no obligation to carry it out. Cllr Stark said that if permission was granted to the resident to prune and lop the trees then the permission should be conditional requiring that the work be carried out by a professional tree surgeon. A discussion took place and the Chairman asked could a compromise with the resident be sought. **Resolved** Cllr Farr is in touch with Dennis Walker, a tree surgeon who has done work for him in the past and will investigate the matter and obtain a quote. He added that the Council Bank had always been problematic in the past.

1. **Closed session of the Council to consider matters arising from the internal audit and staffing matters.**

The Chairman thanked everyone and closed the meeting at 21.10pm.

The date of the next meeting is Monday 9th November 2020

**Date of next council meeting – Monday 9th November 2020 at 7.30pm**

The meeting was closed at 21.10pm