RHOSILI COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 13 September 2011

1. Attendance: Anne Morse-Jones (AMJ) (Vice Chair), Steve Campbell Kelly (SCK), Roger Button (RB), Nicola Rees (NR), Dai Cann (DC), Caroline Johnson (CJ) (Clerk). Also welcome to Shane Logan (National Trust), Mike Williams (re village security), Dudley and June Thomas (residents), Deborah and Peter Lloyd (Llangennith residents).

2. Apologies: Steve Walmsley (SW), Sally Thomas (ST).

3. Declaration of interests: SCK and DC – Coastguards.

4. Minutes of the last meeting: Approved

5. Matters arising: Recycling bags are now available from the shop at Pitton Cross Caravan Park. More organic matter has been dumped in the Vile. Gordon & Beryl Howe have requested correction to Minutes of July 2011: mentions of Gordon’s Lane to be changed to Mewslade Lane – approved.

6. National Trust: Shane Logan, new Property Manager for Swansea, Neath & Port Talbot attended. Shane explained the aims and objectives of his job on Gower, using the NT ‘Strategy Wheel’. Staffing 3.5 people. There will be a more hands-on approach especially concerning agriculture. Several SSSIs are failing on Gower. He is learning about ‘common ground’. NT loses money in Wales, £63k in Gower. Ideas for tearooms at the Rhossili shop, and several small campsites, in consultation with the community before going to Planning. NT will move to South Pitton Green Farm on 1 November. It will have holiday accommodation, farm, office, and possible camping. He is taking tenancy advice from the Land Agency. Shane will listen to views of locals and farming community; he is here to work in partnership with the community, e.g. on the defibrillator and on Atlantic Array. He is working with the Police and Countryside Council for Wales to improve coverage and deter wild camping. Council thanked Shane for attending.

7. Footpaths: Latch on gate from farm path to Mewslade - Steve Parry has made temporary repair. It is not his gate so he will check with National Trust, but send his own team if NT are not covering it. Shane believes this has now been agreed with SP. SP would like to survey all Rhossili paths, to check effectiveness of work and highlight further work, and is requesting volunteers. Council agreed. Clerk to arrange with SP, use volunteers from Gowerton School (see 19).

8. Highways: Clerk requested from John Hague details of action plan with First Cymru and what is wanted from RCC from hereon. Reply from JH asks RCC to continue reporting issues. First Cymru has increased its monitoring and suggested minor changes to 118 to restore punctuality during daytime. Some adjustments may be made to peak tourist season timetables to allow for delays. Another meeting was being held on 31 August. Clerk to report that generally the service has been reasonable this month, but one bus broke down in Port Eynon, driver could not speak English so required a passenger to phone the bus depot for help. Another bus and driver eventually arrived and managed to restart our bus which then ran at least 30 minutes late.
- Potholes in School Lane at High Priest and Brook Cottage, Steve Thomas advises they are scheduled for repair in September, weather permitting.
- Grit bins arrived this week in School Lane.

9. Village Hall: AMJ reported that outside lights have been left on for 8 nights. Location of the switch may be the problem. Clerk to raise the matter with SW on his return.

10. Defibrillator: SCK reported that prices and funding sources have changed from the original agreement. Heatbeat Trust UK will now provide the two defibrillators at £1300 each. RCC will contribute £500, Village Hall and National Trust the balance. Village Hall will order one this week, NT will order when they are ready. One will be located outside the Village Hall, the other at the NT shop (tba) not at the Coastwatch Lookout. Having 38 trained volunteers has helped reduce the purchase procedure.
11. **Atlantic Array Offshore Wind Farm:** This is a proposed 1500MW farm in Bristol Channel, set 13km from Lundy and 16km from Welsh coast, comprising up to 417 turbines and associated paraphernalia, which will be visible from Rhossili. There is now a formal public consultation period ending 10 November 2011. Public exhibition dates for Wales have been announced. Background material was circulated prior to this meeting. Additional materials and audience participation aided debate about jobs for Wales, lack of political lobbying by Wales (this is not a devolved matter), reasons for not bringing power on-shore in Wales, aesthetics for Gower communities, NT stance (they are against), raising discussion about alternatives to wind power including nuclear, the long term prospect, options for protest, joining up with other community councils, e.g. Llangennith, Horton, Oxwich, etc. SCK has asked RWE for a montage showing how the wind farm could look from Rhossili. Council agreed to mailshot the village quickly and then hold an open meeting soon after the exhibition events. Clerk to organise mailshot and book the meeting.

12. **Village Security:** Posters on village noticeboards. Mike Williams gave advice on good practice and helped discussion – empty honesty boxes daily, secure them in walls if possible, report all crime to the police so that they know how much activity there is (call 101), record car details and registration numbers in suspicious circumstances. Most crime here is opportunistic and not in homes. Shane suggested Council write to Andy Reed, police inspector for Gower and Townhill, Council asked Clerk to prepare a letter for next meeting. Council agreed to include security advice in the village mailshot, and ask for all incidents to be reported so that we can be better policed. Gower PACT meetings are held in Reynoldston but we could arrange for one in Rhossili, see www.ourbobby.com. Council thanked Mike for his help.

Note: SCK advised that the village post box has been removed by Royal Mail because it was corroded. SCK is offering that, for the moment, residents can hand in letters to The Gallery which has a daily business collection by Royal Mail at 5pm.

13. **Swansea Coastguard closure:** A 100,000 signature petition has been handed to the House of Commons. Martin Caton and other local MPs are supportive. Council agreed that the best action is to complete the MCA response to the Consultation on Revised Proposals for Modernising HM Coastguard. Clerk to organise.

14. **Underground cabling project:** Mike Scott replied to RCC’s request for a progress update: “…the section of overhead line running across the car park opposite the Worms Head Hotel was removed in June, with a replacement line running around the edge of the car park. Western Power Distribution (WPD) also removed the pole-mounted transformer outside the Coast Guard building – simplifying the network, and reducing the visual impact at a key visitor site in the village. I have been working on another undergrounding project at Reynoldston with WPD, and am trying to use their contacts in BT to find the right person to raise this with. My aim is to arrange a site visit with BT and WPD, and discuss with them how we could use WPD trenches to bury BT cables. My problem is that there is no funding available for BT to cover the cost of their undergrounding, so I need to persuade them that it is interest to get involved. If I can’t get BT involved, it is unlikely that I will get WPD to prioritise this project – removing the power lines will not make sufficient impact, if the BT lines remain. As you will appreciate, it is unlikely that this will all happen quickly, but I will keep you informed as things develop.” Council agreed to monitor Mike Scott’s progress and to take photos of current situation from Village Hall to Worm. Also to ring BT to ask them to become involved. Clerk to organise.

15. **Welsh Assembly correspondence:** None

16. **One Voice Wales:** Queen’s Diamond Jubilee Beacon Celebrations on 4th June 2012 – NT will help organise it on Rhossili Down.
- National Principles for Public Engagement: events to put into practice (14 Sept in Swansea)
- Details of publication: Being a Councillor 2012
- Council training programme Autumn 2011 – C/F to next meeting
- SCK reported that he has taken advice from OVW on PAYE for Clerks, a P46 form needs signing by the Clerk, and a New Employer form by the Council. SCK to arrange.

17. **Planning:**
- Candidate Sites for LDP: none in Rhossili, several in Scurlange. Council agreed to object to GW0012 which would join 2 hamlets, state 'not in favour’ on all others except GW0023, where the statement will be 'RCC has no comments to make’. Clerk to make the comments on the LDP website.
- 2010/1567 South Pilton Green Farm SA3 1PQ approved with conditions.
- 2011/0620 Field 0004 East Pilton Farm SA3 1PQ approved.
- Swansea Rural Development News 8 & 9, RDP Annual Reports 2009 & 2010 several copies.

18. **Finance:** Latest statement presented. Received C&C Swansea notification of payment of Precept £792. Received invoice £60 to pay maintenance and support for Gower Community Council Website – SCK to handle.
SCK reported that the End of Year draft has gone to Mazars. No progress on changing bank signatories. Next year the precept will need to rise to cover additional expenditure over 3 years – discuss at next meeting.
- Expenses: Selina’s expenses now closed. SCK has claimed for Hall hire for defibrillator sessions.

19. **Correspondence:**
- Email from Dean Mason Gowerton School requesting community work for students. Council agreed the Footpath Survey could be undertaken by students. Clerk to reply.
- Email from Victim Support requesting fundraising activities. Council agreed it is not viable at this time.
- IOG Saltex seminar programme 6-8 Sept Windsor
- Email from Carmarthen Bay & Estuaries European Marine Site re draft Management Scheme consultation, available for public consultation until 31 October, address www.cbeems.org.uk - C/F to next meeting.
- Email from Xspozure Events, asking for RCC’s experience of the recent skinny-dipping world record attempt on Rhossili beach. Council was not approached before the event, has no issues, it was on NT beach, Clerk to copy Shane on the reply.
- Email from eibe re community play spaces.
- Letter from NSPCC asking for RCC donation. Reply that donations are made to church and parish.
- Clerks & Councils Direct magazine
- Letter from C&C Swansea advising Community/Town Councils Forum on 6 October 2011 at 5pm.
- Information regarding the intended spending of £1m Heritage Lottery funding for Gower, including protecting and restoring heritage features of the landscape, history training for volunteers, involvement for communities and educational establishments, and a Gower dialect dictionary. The bid is in its first stages.

20. **Items for the next meeting:** Councillor training programme; Carmarthen Bay & Estuaries European Marine Site draft Management Scheme consultation; RCC newsletter preparation; Precept discussion.

21. **Next meeting:** Village open meeting about the proposed Atlantic Array wind farm Tuesday 4 October 2011 Rhossili Village Hall 7.15pm; next Community Council meeting Tuesday 11 October 2011 Rhossili Village Hall 7.15pm.