

MINUTES 14th July, 2020

RHOSSILI COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Council: Chair - Steve Campbell-Kelly (SCK), Vice-Chair - Ian Button (IB), Tom Higgs (TH), Jeff Higgins (JH), Nicola Rees (NR), Sally Thomas (ST) and Steve Walmsley (SW)

Remote Council Meeting, carried out by video conferencing on the internet due to Restrictions on meetings caused by Coronavirus Lockdown.

Attendance: Council: SC-K, JH and SW
Residents: 4

Meeting commenced at 7.15pm, hosted by SW, Chaired by SC-K

1. **Apologies:** IB, NR, ST and TH
2. **Declaration of Interests:** None notified
3. **Minutes of last Meeting:** Minutes of 30th June meeting approved; to be signed by Chair after quarantine period.
4. **Matters arising:** Toilets in Rhossili. Councillors welcomed the news that the Public Conveniences in Rhossili had been opened and hopes were expressed that some of the unfortunate behaviour of some visitors “caught short” would now stop. The Toilets have been reduced in number but are cleaned four times a day. Clerk reported that IB had raised the concern that the number of facilities in the Men’s toilets had been reduced from 6 to 2. Clerk to contact CCS with recommendation to increase capacity to 3, whilst still maintaining required distance between facilities.
5. **Chairman’s Items:** Chair welcomed the 4 members of the public who had requested to join the inaugural RCC Virtual Meeting for residents via the Zoom platform. Hopefully this will become a monthly routine.

(i) **Summary Report of RCC Activities:** Clerk gave a brief outline of work that had been carried out by RCC during the months from April to July. All the information has been available in Draft Minutes posted onto all three Noticeboards in the village and Approved Minutes are then posted on the RCC website. The last normal meeting of RCC had been on 10th March and there was no meeting in April. RCC had spent the time trying to set up a support network, helping to co-ordinate the offers of help and volunteering. Once the Community of Rhossili Support Group had formed itself, RCC asked them to prepare an information leaflet for all villagers to have and these were delivered by all the Councillors. SW had joined the management of the Support Group which meant that their work could be covered by RCC’s Insurance. RCC had also helped SW Police in their investigations to some unsavoury episodes in and around the village, namely the threatening letter to a second-home owner, the criminal damage to a parked car and an apparent effort to cause damage to parked cars’ wheels with a number of new nails, screws, tacks and fence staples strewn onto the side of the road and in a gateway that had been used as a parking area. Concerns had been raised and discussed about litter, dog faeces, and the lack of toilet facilities available within the village for visitors, and representations had been made to appropriate CCS departments. SW referred to the letter and poster that had gone out to owners of holiday lets, and some businesses welcoming visitors back to the village after lock-down regulations had been relaxed. Clerk reported that she had received some positive feedback from residents who had seen them, and businesses who had displayed them. A resident commented that second home owners had not received the letters. It was agreed that copies would be placed on both websites so that everyone could see them.

(ii) **Support Group Report:** SW reported that he had joined the CoRSG and together with the original members had continued to support members of the community. It is envisaged that it will continue to have a role within the community for some considerable time, especially as there is reported to be a likelihood that the virus could return in the winter months. There are over 20 volunteers registered with the SG and although they have not had that many calls, the befriending service has been well-received and various instances of support and help are carried out. The Support Group applied for a grant from Western Power and was successful; a grant of £300 has been received and so far has paid for a Zoom licence so that meetings can last longer than the free 40 minutes and the hosting of a Quiz for local residents. The quiz was well-received and if there’s sufficient interest another one will be organised.

The Community Council wishes to register its sincere thanks to everyone in the village who has helped us as a community to get through our present difficulties, in whatever role. It has been good to see and acknowledge the efforts people have made to keep their community safe and well.

- (iii) Coed Cymru: SC-K spoke about an email he had received from the newly-appointed Coed Cymru Officer for Swansea. He is keen to set up a network of interested people, landowners, community organisations etc to enhance the tree landscape in local areas. Rhossili does not have much publicly-owned land that would be suitable for a tree planting project but the village has, in the past, tried to plant trees along the main road in Pitton and Pilton. IB to be asked to carry out a survey on the trees still present and recommend enhancement or replacement of specimen native trees. Residents also identified an area of a field in The Warren that might be a suitable place for as small copse of trees to be planted. IB also to be asked to liaise with NT as owners of this piece of land. IB also to try and identify any other pockets of land that might be utilised in this way. NR also expressed an interest in the proposals from the Coed Cymru Officer.
- (iv) Village Matters: SC-K referred to three items raised by a concerned resident by email. The first one referred to the proposed Seafood Shack, given permission to be held for 28 days in a field at the southern end of The Vile. SC-K said he had heard rumours about things other than seafood being sold at the shack and other activities. Other Councillors and residents at the meeting confirmed the stories as being on the owner's Facebook pages. **RCC resolved to closely monitor all activity associated with the fields in question.**

The next area raised was the land known as The Vanguard Bus Garage Land. SC-K reported what had happened after the Clerk had been to remove the signs that had been displayed following the antisocial behaviour of some visitors using the premises to relieve themselves when the public toilets had been closed (see June 30th minutes). The notices were returned to the writer, who replaced them in position after a loud verbal altercation. RCC regretted the abuse received by the Clerk, which was also witnessed by residents and members of the public. Subsequently, the offending notices were removed and a fence erected around the whole area. Two more notices were then put on posts indicating that it was private land, with no access allowed. SC-K said he understood that permission has been granted by the owner of the land to carry out this work. The sender of an email wondered whether the fence needs Planning Permission but this was felt by the meeting to be doubtful so no action will be taken at the moment. SC-K has contact details of the owner and will talk to them about the piece of land. It is possible that a Solicitor who is consulted by The Gower Society may be able to offer assistance.

The last area raised by the resident concerned the Churchyard Wall at the house Church Park. SC-K asked residents participating in the meeting if they had any information. They replied there had been no information regarding the re-building of the wall by the owner and to his own specification. The residents confirmed that the Church in Wales has not given any further information but said that they would ask for the subject to form part of the Agenda at the next PCC meeting. They said they would pass on any information to RCC. Clerk to contact CCS Planning Dept about the request for Enforcement by RCC.

6. **Planning:** Clerk reported on enforcement enquiry regarding Broad Park raised by email from SC-K 05.04/2020. RCC was informed that patio was built by previous owner and had not changed except to have a glass and rail boundary built around it. Clerk had received Householders' Technical Guide from CCS – the glass wall surrounding the patio did not breach planning guidelines. Meeting decided that it did not warrant further investigation by RCC. Other Agenda items: The Fence at The Vanguard Bus Garage land and Seafood Shack on The Vile -see **Item 5** (iv) above.

Finance: SW gave a report on the financial position. The balance stands at £3,275. 49. The report showed that the Clerk had been paid, together with Tax and insurance Premium. The Meeting heard a report from members of the congregation at St Mary's Church that the church building was deteriorating, especially the roof, where 2 pieces of lead had fallen off just in the last few days and there were loose slates on the roof of the tower. JH proposed the award of £300, as set in the annual budget be paid; SC-K seconded the proposal. SW pointed out that RCC made a similar donation to Pitton Chapel; he proposed that £300 be paid at the same time. SC-K seconded and both were **Approved unanimously**. SW said he would arrange for the money to be transferred quickly.

SC-K thanked everyone for attending, especially the residents who had joined a virtual meeting for the first time. It is hoped that members of the community will join a meeting regularly in the future.

The Virtual Meeting closed at 8.22pm

Date of next Virtual Meeting: 21st July, 2020 at 7.00pm.