

MINUTES, 8th December, 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 Regulations

1. **Attendance:** SC-K, IB, TH, SW and NR

Residents: 0

Meeting commenced at 7.11pm, hosted by SW, Chaired by SC-K

2. **Apologies:** JH and ST

3. **Declaration of Interests:** None notified

4. **Minutes of last Meeting:** 10/11/2020. Minutes a true record. **Proposed SW, 2nd IB. Approved.**

5. **Matters Arising:**

(i) Newsletter: Chair was pleased that the 2020 Newsletter had been distributed. However, some Councillors had problems delivering to Holiday lets and second homes if they didn't have letter boxes. SC-K thanked Clerk for producing it and said that feedback had been very good; the variety of articles and submissions, plus the new venture with the quiz pages made it the biggest one to date.

(ii) Article 4 Direction up-date: SC-K reported on the current situation after the virtual meeting with GS, AONB and National Trust. The Glamorgan and Gwent Archaeological Trust had still not made contact and it is felt that their input is necessary if the proposal to protect The Vile is to go forward in any form. There is no form of protection at the moment and a prospect of all landowners within The Vile exercising their 28-day trading rights if they wanted to do so. GS has requested assistance from experienced consultants to gather information about different proposals that might be recommended to achieve the necessary protection of this unique landscape in Wales. These include an extension to the already existing Rhossili Conservation Area and an Article 4 Direction to remove the automatic right for 28-day trading so that Planning Permission has to be sought for each occasion. There will be another meeting early next year and it is hoped that GGAT will be able to attend. SC-K and Clerk to "attend" and report back.

6. **Chairman's Items:**

- i) Village Signage: Clerk reported on request from a resident to move the eastern Middleton sign, as it is in the wrong position and is easily missed. There followed a discussion which widened to include the condition of many of the previously sited signs for Pilton, Pitton Cross and Pitton which were either completely destroyed during hedge-cutting or damaged by vandals shooting at them. Enquiries had been made at the time with regards to replacing them, but the cost is prohibitive, and is probably the responsibility of CCS Highways. It was thought doubtful that there would be sufficient funds in CCS budget to pay for them, but Clerk was asked to make enquiries and report back at the next meeting in January, 2021.
- ii) Rocket House: SC-K gave a brief description of the situation for the Rocket House. It is a listed building and looks as if it is in need of some maintenance. SC-K had made enquiries and found out that maintenance was responsibility of the owners, but he was not sure who owned it; NR informed the meeting that it was owned by the Thomas family who had inherited the estate after the death of Mrs. Rhona Thomas recently.
- iii) Elections 2021: Clerk reported on changes for elections to the Senedd in May next year, and Town and Community Councils. 16- and 17- year olds will now be able to vote in these elections for the first time, as well as resident foreign nationals. It is expected that the elections will be affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, so registration for postal voting may become particularly important in Rhossili.
- iv) Support Group: SC-K reported that he thought the beginning of the Community Advent Calendar had gone very well. SW said CoRSG were very pleased with the participation level and every day to Christmas Eve was covered, sometimes with two sites.

- 7 **Highways:** Clerk to contact Highways about signage. Nothing else of note reported.
- 8 **Footpaths and Rights of Way:** Clerk reported that CCS are aware of works needed and are hoping to repair gates and bridge in the near future.
- 9 **Planning:** (i) **2020/2275/NMA:** Meadowside. This application for a Non-Material Amendment has been **refused**. There was a discussion about what should happen in these circumstances. Clerk to write an Enforcement Report if builders are still working on the building.
- (ii) **2020/2033** National Trust – Application for 3 years, Catering Van. Approved, despite it being in Conservation Area.
- (iii) **2020/1951/FUL:** Creek cottage extensions. **Refused**
- 10 **Village Hall:** NTR
- 11 **Finance:** RFO gave a brief report of financial position. Balance stands at £3206.20. and then he went through each of the items, explaining each entry.
- (i) SW asked for approval of expenditure by Community of Rhossili Support Group (CoRSG) to purchase 10 sets of battery powered lights for the public places involved in the Community Advent Calendar; these then come into the ownership of RCC for future use. Proposed acceptance by SC-K, seconded by TH. **Approved unanimously**. Costs noted as £49.95 and £62.00
- (ii) Payment was agreed for the extended “Zoom” licence for last three months itemised at £43.17. These costs would be divided between RCC and the CoRSG, from the WP grant of £300.00 (Ref. Minutes November, 2020)
- (iii) SW spoke to expected expenditure on making RCC’s website compliant with new requirements. The present Webmaster is unlikely to continue hosting it after April 2021, so SW proposed that RCC used the same host as the Village Hall. There will be a significant sum involved, which will need to be added to the budget requirements and Precept. Further enquiries need to be made about what needs to be done to make the website compliant. SW to gather information on the specification needed before getting quotes from suppliers.
- (iv) SW requested permission to pay Clerk’s Salary and Tax for the quarter. **Approved unanimously**.
- (v) SW then reminded council about the Wales Audit Office’s comments from the last year’s Accounts. RCC had made adjustments to its own practice dealing with Petty Cash income, resolving to pay it into the bank account within two weeks. This was picked up by the RCC Internal Auditor and the WAO and put into the 2019-20 Audit Report. SW proposed RCC formally accepts the comments; seconded by SC-K. **Approved unanimously**.
- (vi) SW reported that he had attended a Webinar about new proposals for auditing Council’s Accounts. He said there would be a “light touch” audit for two years and every third year there would be a full audit when all documents, bank statements, invoices, receipts and copies of Minutes would be submitted for examination by the Welsh audit Office. RCC would still have to have an internal audit each year, including the third year.
- (vii) Precept will need to be discussed and set at January’s meeting, as the deadline is 31st January to inform CCS.
12. **Correspondence:** Clerk commented on an email letter sent from a Resident, which had been forwarded to all Councillors, complaining about an issue with the Community Map. IB reminded Council that the map was a “work in progress” and Clerk said the missing building had since been added. However, information had arrived too late for inclusion in the Newsletter distribution, as everything had been sent to Cardiff for printing. Clerk had replied to the email with the explanation. No further comment to be made.

The Virtual Meeting closed at 8.24pm

Date of next Virtual Meeting 12th January 2021

Residents are invited to participate in virtual meetings on the second Tuesday of each month, beginning at 7.00pm.

If you wish to “attend” please pass your email address on to the Clerk and you will be sent a link for the meeting on that Tuesday.