



RHOSSILI COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Council: Chair – Ian Button (IB), Vice-Chair – Gill Boulding (GB),

Council Members: Tom Higgs (TH), Maggie Kirk (MK), Lesley-Anne Nolan (LAN), Nicola Rees (NR), Sally Thomas (ST),

Notetaker: Gill Boulding

Acting Responsible Finance Officer: Steve Walmsley

Minutes

May 9th 2023

1. Welcome and Attendance:

Meeting opened 19.22pm

Councillors: **IB GB TH NR LAN MK**

Residents: Two (in person)

2. Apologies: **ST, SW**

3. Declarations of Interest: None declared.

4. Chair's items:

4.1 Obstructive parking around village hall.

We welcomed Mrs Jo Higgins from the Rhossili Village Hall Committee to the meeting to discuss parking around the village hall which has increased in recent months. We want to ensure the lane is not blocked for traffic requiring access. Whilst there have been difficulties with visitors to the village hall who have parked obstructively in the past, recent measures have been taken to prevent this (e.g. highlighting that there is limited parking when bookings are taken, etc). The main challenges now seem to be builders' vehicles which are parked outside the hall. This appears to relate to work which is ongoing at Longways.

Action:

Proposed to erect a good sized sign to identify areas where there is no parking permitted. To be placed by the fingerpost. **MK proposed LAN seconded.**

Action: IB to seek quotations for sign

Action: IB/GB Send a letter to householder to advise builders not to use the hall car park or block access to the lane or park on the corner of School Lane.

4.2 Consider approval of 2021/22 Annual Report.

Annual report was accepted for publication on RCC website. **Proposed IB/Seconded NR**

5. Minutes from last meeting:

Agreed as accurate – **All**

6. Report from Responsible Finance Officer

6.1 SW is currently on holiday- May report was not discussed.

6.2 Renewal of Council insurance policy: premium of £239.79 now due. **IB proposed payment, GB seconded.**

Zoom licence renewal due. **IB proposed payment, NR seconded.**

7. Action list

- Bus – to circulate our work on buses on all communication channels **GB**
- Phone – BT removal– to investigate when this was removed and if it was after the OFCOM legislation. Can it be reinstated? **LAN**
- NCI Emergency phone – to investigate with Jo Scott and Peter Beynon. **TH**
- Hwb – to identify where public phones are available **MK**
- Safe driving – To pursue **IB**
- Recruit clerk – adverts circulated for posting everywhere! **All**
- Rota for acting clerk – **ST May- June; LAN June-July; MK July-August; NR August-September**
- New keys for NBs have been cut. **MK**

8. Planning – no applications received this month

9. Forward planning

9.1 To consider reports of a review of Community & Town Councils by Swansea County Council.

Threat to RCC's identity was discussed. CCS is undertaking a review of councils with possibility of changing boundaries of community councils. This may result in councils being merged possibly with financial savings for the council but a dilution of local democracy. The implications for Rhossili were discussed. We need a bigger voice and presence to survive. Annual report highlights our actions, outreach work (attendance at other council meetings) ensures we are visible and our improved governance processes mean we are a more professional council.

Action MK – to ensure details on CCS website about RCC are up to date.

9.2 Discuss Draft Annual Report and agree key objectives

The contents were reviewed and discussion of how to present this at the forthcoming annual council meeting. All were agreed that the report is comprehensive and will be useful as a marker for future progress. Ideas generated on Vocaleyes were viewed and discussed.

The vision statement was discussed. **Strapline agreed: “Celebrating our heritage and creating a sustainable community”.**

Key objectives centre around communication and engagement with the community as well as other stakeholders, planning & environment, community wellbeing. Issues arising from discussion included:

- We need to raise awareness of our work – LAN referred to her engagement training and the need for a continual update on our work.
- The idea of a “council surgery” was suggested by MK where residents could come and talk with councillors about matters of interest and concern to them.
- RCC Info Whats App group – to be reinstated as important to those not on other communication channels – IB to be added (**Action GB**)
- RCC to work with the community to create a vision for the community. Ideas such as a village meeting place/play area were discussed. People may be talking privately but not sharing with us. Suggestions to be canvassed by us all.

Current draft Annual Report was approved by all. All were agreed that revisions to the final section to capture discussion would be considered and approved virtually ahead of ACM.

9.3 Receive draft ACM Agenda and consider arrangements for the meeting.

Draft agenda: **Agreed by all.**

3 core areas to be covered:

- Looking back

Need for greater professionalism of the council and we are continuing to work on this.

Lack of clerk – this has meant we have all had to step up.

New skills learned – everyone has taken part rather than leave things to chair/clerk.

There was brief discussion about workload of councillors and how this has changed.

Agreed that everyone has certain strengths, and we need to play to these. Agreed that in June we will identify everyone’s primary responsibilities so that workload is shared equally.

- Specific achievements

- Environment – biodiversity plan and beach cleans.
- Training strategy- all councillors are encouraged to increase their skills and knowledge and many have already attended training sponsored by RCC.
- Hwb – village engagement.

- Future plans

A shared vision for Rhossili. This will be shaped through inviting questions and comments from the public such as:

- What’s most important to you as a resident of Rhossili?
- What don’t we have in Rhossili that you’d like?
- What puts you off getting more involved with the work of the council?

- What would encourage you to get involved?

10. Questions/comments from members of the public

- Expressed concern regarding possible merger of Rhossili Council with another council
Does the community understand the potential risks for losing Rhossili's identity and diluting local democracy? RCC needs to embrace diversity of membership especially farming and this might be lost if RCC were to be merged with another council.
- Raised issues such as housing and the housing mix in the village. What do we want to preserve about the village, how it looks etc. architecture and personality? If RCC had a Place Plan this would be useful when responding to planning applications.

11. Date of next (regular) meeting

Confirmed as 13th June 2023. Noted that representative from SCC Planning Dept would be in attendance and that public should be encouraged to attend.

Meeting ended 9.13 pm