



Minutes of Rhossili Community Council

Rhossili Village Hall and via Zoom

7:15pm Thursday, 21st November 2024

Present:

Chair: Ian Button (IB)

Members: Helen Beynon (HB), Maggie Kirk (MK), Lesley-Anne Nolan (LAN)

Clerk: Charlotte Nolan (Acting)

RFO: Francis Morgan (FM)

Apologies: Gill Boulding (GB) – Vice Chair, Sue Muddeman (SM)

Public Attendees: 15 residents in person

Chair's remarks

The Chair wished to pass on his congratulations to Sally Thomas for the very successful fundraiser for Tŷ Hafan earlier in November.

The Chairman also wished to thank Knelston School for inviting him and the other governors to a lunch at the school recently. He greatly enjoyed meeting the staff and the children and the lunch was delicious!

1. Apologies for absence

Gill Boulding (GB) – Vice Chair

Sue Muddeman (SM)

2. Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests

None

3. Public Questions

There were a number of questions from residents in attendance with regard to planning application 2024/1735/FUL: Temporary use of field for tented camping for up to 120 units for 28 days in any one calendar year with associated siting of portable toilets/showers:

- Why were neighbours of the land detailed in the planning application not been individually consulted with prior to the discussion of the RCC?

The Chair confirmed that the RCC is not responsible for formally consulting residents, which is the role of Swansea Council as the planning authority. However, the RCC makes every effort to let residents know about planning applications being discussed, through our online agenda, the dedicated planning page on the website, village notice boards, and the village WhatsApp group. Residents then had the opportunity to make representations at the community council meeting.

- Why more environmental focus had not been included in the response?

Cllr Maggie Kirk acknowledged there should have been more representation in the comments submitted by the RCC in regards to the potential environmental impact of the proposed development.

- Why the council had been supportive of the planning application, as they understood the response of the RCC to be “neutral to supportive”?

Cllr Maggie Kirk confirmed that on balance the RCC were supportive of the idea of a tent-only campsite in the village, however this should be taken in the context of the significant issues raised in the RCC response. The RCC were aware that flagging concerns that included traffic and pedestrian safety, noise pollution, and the visual impact of the site could resonate strongly with Swansea Planning, and in addition to the comments suggested ways to address these concerns, including a reduced number of pitches and consideration of alternative locations.

- Was the applicant told of the outcome of the RCC discussion prior to the comments being submitted?

The Chair confirmed that the applicant not informed of the outcome, but instead had been asked about the concerns raised by the RCC in their response.

12 of the residents attending the meeting left after item 3. The meeting was paused for 5 minutes.

4. Minutes

- 4.1. **Resolved** to approve & sign the Minutes of the RCC meeting of 8th October 2024 as a correct record.

5. Final Recommendations of Boundary Commission

- 5.1. The Council discussed the final recommendation report from the Boundary Commission to merge the Rhossili Community Council with Penrice, Port Eynon and Reynoldston to form one “Gower South” Community Council.

Concerns were raised that the Boundary Commission, whilst having made some changes to the initial proposal, had not properly responded to the feedback they received as required to ensure a proper consultation process.

- 5.1.1. **Action** – MK to write to the Welsh Minister outlining the RCC’s concerns with regards to the Boundary Commission consultation process.

6. Priorities

All **updates** were **received** and **noted**

- 6.1. Renovation of Middleton Bus Shelter – LAN

The RCC is partnering with local artist Helen Sinclair on the bus shelter mural. Once Helen has availability, she will send through ideas for what the mural will depict. There will be no cost to the RCC for the mural Cllr Richard Lewis has agreed to pay for the painting of the electrical boxes.

- 6.2. Enhancement of village road signs – no update till 2025

- 6.3. Litter Picking Station – LAN

An article will be included in the Annual Magazine asking for volunteers to assist with the litter picking station.

- 6.3.1. **Action** – LAN to include article in Rhossili Annual Magazine in December 2024.

- 6.4. Benches on Rhossili Cliffs – GB (Clerk in GB absence)

The National Trust have advised that the RCC can have a bench on the cliffs, however a suicide prevention bench would not be in keeping with the area. The RCC would also need to join the formal list of requests to have a bench on the Rhossili Cliffs, and it would be unlikely to happen

soon. A bench could be placed sooner on the Vile, although the exact site would need further discussion with the NT. The bench would have to be constructed and installed as per the NT suppliers and procedures.

The Council discussed possible alternatives to the bench location.

6.4.1. It was **resolved** to explore placing a bench by the bus stop in Middleton.

6.4.2. **Action** – IB to get three quotes for solid wood benches from local suppliers to understand potential costs.

6.5. Wildlife Boxes – MK

The workshop on the 18th January 2025 has been published on the Hwb and two individuals have already signed up. Supplies have been identified and will be picked up ahead of the session.

6.5.1. **Action** – MK to include article in Rhossili Annual Magazine in December 2024 advertising the workshop.

6.6. Footpath signs around the church – IB

The Bowen Richards Trust will be assisting the Church with some required maintenance.

6.6.1. **Action** – Clerk to remove church footpath agenda item from the list of priorities going forward.

7. Administration

7.1. **Received update** that Clerk had contacted Swansea Council Elections team to inform them of the vacancy and was waiting for them to respond.

7.1.1. **Action** – Chair to clarify with members of the council who have indicated they may be leaving the RCC and when this will take place.

7.1.2. **Action** – Clerk to contact Clerks from other Community Councils in South Gower to discuss the Clerk role and if they would be interested in applying for the role.

7.1.3. **Action** – Clerk to post the Clerk vacancy on the RCC website, and include the advert in the Rhossili Annual Magazine.

8. Finance

8.1. **Agreed** to pay the following payments:

8.1.1. Rhossili Hwb Managed website hosting 01/12/2024 to 30/11/2025 - £64

8.1.2. Domain name rhossilihwb 01/12/2024 to 30/11/2025 - £16

8.1.3. SSL Certificate 01/12/2024 to 30/11/2025 - £30

8.1.4. Domain name rhossili.org 01/12/2024 to 30/11/2025 - £16

8.1.5. Biodiversity Project - Bird Boxes - Village Hall Booking 18/01/2025 - £10

8.2. The finance report for November 2024 was **received and noted**.

8.3. **Agreed** for the RFO to transfer £500 of RCC's funds from the HSBC bank account to the new Lloyds bank account.

8.4. The Council discussed the amount put aside for local donations in the budget – currently £600. Historically the RCC have given a donation to Pitton Chapel and St. Mary's Church of £300 each, however this stays the same, it does not leave room in the budget for additional requests.

Local community councils have been asked by Knelston School to help them pay for their safeguarding software. This is a core requirement for a school, and has previously been paid for by Bishopston Comprehensive School. Unfortunately, due to budget restrictions Bishopston are

unable to cover the cost for the local primary schools. The total cost for the software is £625 for each school regardless of size.

8.4.1. **Agreed** to donate £200 to Knelston School towards their software cost.

8.4.2. **Resolved** to write to Rebecca Evans MS and Cllr Richard Lewis to raise the issue of the school budget, and that the cost of the software is a core running cost of a school and they should receive the funding from the government to cover this cost.

8.5. The Council discussed the 2024/2025 forecast to more clearly understand the running costs of the RCC prior to reviewing the precept amount at the January 2025 meeting.

8.5.1. **Approved** the updated 2024/2025 forecast

9. Environment & Land Management

9.1. The **update** from the National Trust was **received** and **noted**:

- Ragwort - pulling and treating will begin much earlier next year - recognise response this year was too late- although when they realised the extent of the problem, they diverted resources to Gower from elsewhere - prioritising Gower and Rhossili in particular. 360 person hours were dedicated to ragwort pulling between July and August.
- Bench - although they have a waiting list for bench donations RCC's offer welcomed. Discussed location - car park not what we wanted - agreed. To locate a bench on the cliff path requires planning permission as AONB etc. We agreed that the look of friendship/listening benches is too urban and out of keeping. Chris is considering location on the vile as an option. This needs to be followed up in a next meeting with NT later November/early December.
- Horses - definitely on NT agenda but nothing new to report.
- NT definitely supportive of RCC's speed limit investigation - would support in principle some action on main road from Pitton X down into Pitton (new footpath discussed but many barriers to achieving this) - unsafe for walkers on the road given speed and volume of traffic on the road.

9.2. The council **received an update** taken from the Swansea Council traffic team report regarding the recent speed survey in the village:

- Where the Council can place monitoring equipment free of charge, the Council were able to place monitoring equipment at one location and the results have now been analysed, the table below indicates what has been recorded:

Middleton – B4247 (6 th Oct 2024 – 12 th Oct 2024)		
	No of Vehicles	85% Speed
Eastbound	1075	34.6mph
Westbound	1087	31.3mph

- The results indicate that the 85% speed is within what the Police would consider acceptable for a 30mph speed limit.
- I have also checked the Personal Injury Collision statistics which have been supplied to the Council by the Police and within the most recent three-year period there have been no reported Personal Injury Collisions between Pitton and Rhossili.
- Based on the above information, the Council are not currently planning to carry out any road safety measures within this area.

Further information has been sought from the traffic team including, why the road is 30mph given the number of pedestrians, no pavements and blind corners? The response received was:

- Currently, as Rhossili doesn't have a system of street lighting it is not covered under Welsh Governments arrangements for 'Restricted Road Status'.
- The Welsh Government are supposed to be issuing advice on the setting of speed limits elsewhere on the network (such as villages) which will probably cover this area, but publication/progression has been delayed.
- Previously, the Council identified budgets for implementing 20mph speed limits, however this budget is no longer available.
- I would suggest that you make your local ward member aware of your concerns, so that if Swansea Council identify funding, that Rhossili be included.

9.2.1. **Resolved** to continue this agenda item at the December meeting given its importance to local residents.

10. Planning

No items for this agenda

11. Communications

No items for this agenda

12. Correspondence

The following correspondence was **discussed and noted**:

- 12.1. Request from Principal of Knelston Primary School to RCC to assist with funding for Children Safeguarding software.
- 12.2. Acknowledgement of road clearing from Richard Lewis.
- 12.3. Request regarding Bus Stop in Middleton from local resident – to place one nearer to the site where the bus stops opposite Rose Cottage. This will be discussed at a future meeting.
- 12.4. Complaint from a non-resident regarding building works on The Tors, Lower Pitton – the individual has been advised to raise this with the planning enforcement team at Swansea Council. It is not for the RCC to enforce planning regulations.
- 12.5. Emails from local residents in response to planning application 2024/1735/FUL: Temporary use of field for tented camping for up to 120 units for 28 days in any one calendar year with associated siting of portable toilets/showers. All emails and the response are available to all RCC members.
- 12.6. A request has been made asking the RCC to contact the council asking them to clear the drains and ditches in Llandewi.
- 12.7. The RCC has been notified of the Macmillan Mighty Hike taking place in 2025. They will contact the RCC closer to the time to provide further details.

13. Public Comments

- 13.1. The issues with the internet in the village hall mean it can be difficult to follow the meeting if documents cannot be posted on the screen.
 - 13.1.1. **Action** – the Clerk to notify the Village Hall manager of the issues with the internet.
- 13.2. A query of if the “Planning in Place” initiative for the village will take place, as this could help alleviate concerns with regards to planning. This will be discussed at a future meeting.
- 13.3. A concern was raised that the RCC are increasingly spending more time on electronic communication rather than face to face communication, especially for older residents. The members of the RCC respectfully disagreed with this comment.

The meeting ended at 9:05pm.

These minutes were approved at the RCC meeting on Tuesday, 14th January 2025