

## Minutes of the Council Meeting on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> September, 2020

### Remote Meeting

**Present:** Councillor Stephen Davies (Chairman) Arlene Jones, Auriol Graham, Susan Pyart, Huw Williams, Selwyn Fyfield, County Councillor David Thomas

1. **Apologies for absence** were accepted from Councillors Ann Watkins, Carol Williams, Gail Hopkins Williams (no access) Alun Thomas, Clare Parker.
2. **Declaration of Interest** – None recorded.
3. **Police Matters** – PS Lucy Bassett and PCSO Mahmood Rahimi joined the meeting. Discussion continued on traffic speeding on the A4067. Correspondence from the MP and AS was read. The Council has supported the PAT petition submitted to the Chief Constable. The Council has requested the installation of a fixed speed camera at Penycae. PS Lucy Bassett advised the Police recognised the problem of speeding right across the force area. Operation Edward had been introduced by the Roads Policing Unit to target speeding motorbikes and drivers in the North and South of the force area. Operation Edward will include regular speed checks and enforcement at Penycae using hand held speed detection equipment. The Council requested the use of the Go Safe Partnership as an interim measure. The Council was advised to write to PC Ian Price to make the request.  
Further issues discussed included parked vehicles at Henrhyd Waterfall and the traffic congestion in the village and speeding traffic on the lane running from Banwen into Coelbren.
4. **Finance**
  - a) **Income/Expenditure Report** – The income expenditure report to the end of August had been circulated. The Clerk summarised the report. The second precept payment had been received. The Council approved the report
  - b) **Budget Report** – The Budget outturn report to the end of August had been circulated. The Council approved the report.
  - c) **September Payment Register** – The September payment register and payroll was approved.
5. **Planning**
  - a) **Henrhyd Isaf Change of Use of Land to keep horse for recreational use** – The Council had been unable to access the documentation as the BBNP website was not accessible. The Council discussed the proposal and agreed the following comments
    1. There are a few rare plants on the stone wall bordering the field on the Heol Camnant side. It's on the road side of the wall, so should not be affected by what the applicant (who maybe unaware of it) wishes to do.
    2. The Council is committed to promoting biodiversity and requests that the site not be disturbed. There is already evidence of some disturbance, perhaps by cutting or clearing part of a hedgerow.
    - 3, The species is sheep's bit, *Jasione montana*, aka sheep's bit scabious is very uncommon in the wild and has not been found in this area for 22 years. The identification has been confirmed by the Botany Recorder for Brecknock, who now has it in his records.
    4. The land is wet and run off will be a concern during periods of wet weather. The Council is concerned to prevent effluent coming into the roadway and also running down into the River Llech below.
    5. The Council notes the use is recreational and not commercial. The site is in Waterfall Country and parking is a major problem in this area. The area is unable to cope with any additional parking needs.

- b) **Global Centre of Rail Excellence** – The Council agreed to request a remote meeting with Arup to discuss the details of the proposed planning application. The Council have suggested the 1<sup>st</sup> or the 8<sup>th</sup> October.

## 6. **Footpath/Playground Report**

**Footpath** – The strimming and clearing work was continuing on the FP network in the Community

**Bridleway Penwyllt** – The Right of Way Officer at BBNP has advised the wardens are catching up with work deferred during lockdown as staff were deployed monitoring visitor movements.

The bridleways at Penwyllt were being inspected and any work required will be undertaken. Bridleway 2 and 31 had been checked and are in an acceptable condition. The Right of Way Officer will comment further if problems were found within Tawe Uchaf.

The Bridleway passing Pwllcoedog was within the Community of Llywel and was in dispute.

**Cycle Track Link Caehopkin** – The link path was becoming obstructed with branches overhanging the path. The Council agreed to refer to the active travel officer for action.

**Playgrounds** – Playground inspections could not be completed due to the wet weather. Inspections will be undertaken next week. Discussions with the probation service had been held with a view to repaint some equipment at Cefnbyrle and Caehopkin. The Council will need to provide suitable good quality metal paint and brushes.

**Craig y Nos** – Report received of damage to the surface on the Council's land at Craig y Nos. A site visit will be convened with local members present to inspect the damage and to consider what action to take.

**Caehopkin Fruit Garden** – Councillor Susan Pyart advised the herb garden had been established alongside the dram at Caehopkin. The fruit bushes will be planted on the strip of ground between the dram and the fence. The Council agreed with the suggestion.

## 7. **Correspondence**

**GP Appointment Survey** – The CHC had circulated a survey for completion by the public.

8. **Vacancy Coelbren and Ynyswen/Penycae Ward** – There has been no interest to date in either vacancy. The co-option notices will be re-issued in October.

9. **County Council Report** – County Councillor David Thomas reported as follows

The forecast impact of the Coronavirus pandemic on the County Council budget is forecast to reach £16m by the end of the FY. To date the WG has reimbursed the Council to offset costs incurred. The budget deficit will increase as there is a loss of income due to restrictions in place due to Coronavirus. Discussions are continuing on the possible use of reserves to maintain services.

Highway maintenance work will start on 21<sup>st</sup> September, to resurface the section of Neath road Coelbren from the link road junction to Cefnbyrle Road.

The Authority is reviewing Council tax rules on empty or second homes.

The provision of home to school transport for post 16 education was under review.

Specifically, where Powys pupils were forced to seek places out of County for subjects the authority did not provide. The authority should continue to provide free transport until the subjects could be delivered within County.

The County was reviewing the provision of lighting on back lanes, where public usage is low or non-existent. No decision has been taken, however, it is likely that this may be subject to a consultation

The Chairman thanked County Councillor Thomas for the update.

**10. Minutes** – The minutes of the previous meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> July, 2020 and the site meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> August 2020 were signed as a true record.

**11. Matters Arising** – No matters arising

**12. Any Urgent Business**

**Request to site storage container** – Penycae Action Team request to site a storage container in the Penycae Playground. The Clerk was asked to obtain an opinion from the Council insurers before the Council considers the request.

**13. Date of Next Meeting – Thursday 15<sup>th</sup> October 2020.**