

**OFFA COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF A REMOTE MEETING OF THE OFFA COMMUNITY COUNCIL
HELD ON THURSDAY 2nd July 2020
MEMBERS**

Councillor Alex Jones (Chairman)

- “ Caroline Dawson*
- “ Christine Griffiths
- “ Kevin Hughes
- “ R Alun Jenkins
- “ David Jones*
- “ Susan Jones
- “ Barbara Lloyd
- “ Elane Roberts
- “ Sarah Roberts
- “ Graham Rogers
- “ Jim Steele
- “ Linda Subacchi*
- “ Steven Vale
- “ John Williams
- “ Keith Williams
- “ Graham Wynn*
- “ Phillip Wynn

*Absent

The meeting was also attended by WCBC Paul Roberts and Offa Community Agent Kelly Hewitt.

371 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Linda Subacchi, David Jones and Caroline Dawson

372 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were made.

373 POLICE MATTERS

The monthly crime report for June was received:

Anti-Social Behaviour Issues/Trends:

Brynyffynon - We believe recently there is a homeless male moved to the area behind Morrisons. This male was previously staying by Aldi but has now moved across.

Issues with children from the itinerant site throwing items at passing vehicles and also at windows in Bryn Offa.

The Bryn Offa estate has seen a lot of ASB and drug dealing. Tensions amongst residents are quite high as they feel intimidated by the situation and those involved. Patrols will be increased in the area.

Offa - The Brickie – complaints about persons gathering/drinking/smoking drugs – Patrols are still on-going.

Erddig - None currently.

Hermitage - Patrols are continuing on Brynycabanau Road after some issues in the park.

Crime Issues / Trends:

Brynyffynon - No current trends.

Drugs warrant executed at an address on Peel Street after receiving information that the persons in there were dealing cannabis. Cannabis found at the property.

Burglaries reported on Mold Road and Yale Park. A female has been arrested for these offences, charged and has been remanded in custody. It is hoped she will receive a long custodial sentence if convicted.

Offa - 6 criminal damages at Bron Y Dre to Council Garages. Investigations on going. One male arrested after being found at scene. He has been to Court and was given a suspended sentence.

2 criminal damages to a window reported at the same address on Erddig Road a week apart. Investigations on-going.

Positive stop-searches carried out on Bron Y Dre for drugs.

Erddig - Thefts of milk in Coed Y Glyn area. Male has been identified. Investigation on-going. No other trends.

Hermitage - Incident noted on previous May report - Saxon Street where a vehicle has collided with 3 others, attacking one of the vehicles involved smashing a window. The 3 males inside the vehicle then ran from the car. This is still under investigation currently. One male has been arrested for this.

Positive stop-searches carried out in Hightown for drugs.

No other trends.

Other News/PCSO activities:

Cllr Alun Jenkins thanked the police for their on-going patrols at Erddig. He reported that the dugouts on the Brickfield playing fields had now been removed and requested assistance from the Community Council with further landscaping work at the end of Bron y Dre. This was provisionally agreed subject to estimates.

Cllr Phil Wynn thanked the police for their handling of the recent 'Black Lives Matter' protest at Bellevue Park which went smoothly without incident.

Cllr Paul Roberts reported that rogue traders and fly tipping were the main causes of complaint at Erddig.

Cllr Graham Rogers reported on-going issues with anti-social behaviour at the Brynycabanau playarea.

A joint approach had been requested between the youth team and the PCSOs and the Clerk had exchanged relevant contact details between the 2 groups.

A request had been made for a CCTV camera to be located on Madeira Hill linked to the main town CCTV control room to address issues of drug taking and anti-social behaviour in the area. The Clerk is waiting for a reply from Aled Pugh Jones at WCBC on further information and costings.

374 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the Remote Council meeting held on 7th May 2020 were confirmed as a true and accurate record. **It was RESOLVED for the minutes to be signed at the next Council meeting that meets in person.**

375 MATTERS ARISING

1. The Clerk confirmed that 3 hand sanitizer stations and hand gel had been purchased ready for the re-opening of the Community Centres and LOCH.
2. Safety checks on the defibrillators had been carried out.
3. Little Vawnog - A community clean up over 2 days took place last week in Little Vawnog. Members formed a working party to open up the footpaths again and were helped with the mowing and strimming by residents from the estate. A big thank you for a job well done under difficult conditions was extended to all the weary volunteers which included Offa Community Chairman Alex Jones, Councillors Sarah Roberts and her husband, Councillor Keith Williams, Councillor Kevin Hughes, Ken Roberts husband of Councillor Elane Roberts and several residents of The Foxwood Estate.

376 COMMITTEE REPORTS

It was noted that all Management and Finance Committee Meetings remain suspended until further notice. However it was agreed to re-start the Planning Committee meetings from 12th July 2020 due to the new applications now being processed by the Planning Dept at WCBC.

377 OFFA COMMUNITY AGENT

The first report of the Offa Community Agent Kelly Hewitt was received and accepted.

The Offa Community Agent had attended the following Asset Based training with the other Community Agents:

The Autism Bus experience

Dementia Tour bus

Kelly will also be attending a Safeguarding - Working with Polish families - Level 2 at a future date.

Networking

Kelly has engaged with a number of agencies since becoming Community Agent these include:

Newcis, Age Connect, Wales and West, Avow, Wrexham Council Housing Services

Mind, The Vic, Wrexham Council Contact Centre, Over 50s forum meeting

Local PCSOs, Hightown Resource Centre, Maes Gwyn Community Centre

Kelly has also met up with neighbouring Community Agents and has frequent contact with them.

Sylvester Court Project

Kelly and Arienne the community worker from Wales and West housing are in the process of setting up a weekly group at the community centre at Sylvester Court. They have already met up with a number of residents and have decided to hold different activities every Wednesday after the current lockdown ends. The locals are extremely keen to attend and are particularly interested in arts and crafts, arm-chair aerobics, creative writing and sports such as darts and badminton.

Buses

Residents of Sylvester court state their main concern is the lack of buses within the area. Cllr Graham Rogers confirmed that this had been an on-going concern for a long time and many meetings had taken place to try and address the problems. Cllr Paul Roberts supported Cllr Rogers in trying to get the bus service for the area re-instated. The Clerk was asked to contact Darren Williams and Cllr Dave Bithell at WCBC and also to copy in Ken Skates AM and Lesley Griffiths AM to request that the bus service for Hermitage is re-instated and to ask about the 300 plus petition from residents that was submitted to WCBC but has not been answered yet.

Discretionary Assistance Fund

Kelly decided to become a partner with the Discretionary Assistance Fund after visiting residents at Sylvester Court and has recently received an email confirming she is now an official partner and can submit supported applications on behalf of residents.

Since Covid 19 Lock down came into place.

Kelly is currently working set hours so colleagues and clients know her availability. Her current working hours are Monday to Thursday 10am until 2pm. With flexibility if specific medications need picking up.

At the moment Kelly is currently supporting 25 people with picking up prescriptions, assisting with essential food shopping or just a regular phone call to ensure they are ok. Kelly has been working closely with Cllr Graham Rogers and supporting people in his area when needed. However is also finding a lot of referrals are being passed over from AVOW. Kelly has created a Facebook page and posts any information she feels could benefit people.

378 AUGUST RECESS

It was RESOLVED to approve powers for the Chair in consultation with the Clerk to act on any urgent matters that may arise during the August Recess and for the Chair and Vice-chair of the Planning Committee to act on any planning matters that may arise.

379 REQUEST FOR FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Cllr Graham Rogers requested that 2 matters be considered by the Community Council for financial assistance:

Following the change over to LED street lighting in Hermitage it had become apparent that a further street lighting column was required on the corner of Beechley Rd and Saxon Street to address a blackspot. Concerns were raised that this may lead to the Community Council setting a precedent as there were now many areas in Offa where the lighting level was not as bright as before the introduction of LED street lighting.

Brynycabanau playarea - over the last few months numerous reports of anti-social behaviour have been received taking place inside the play area despite it being locked. Older youths and adults are jumping over the low gates and drinking, taking drugs and setting fires inside. The playarea belongs to WCBC and members agreed to request if it is possible for WCBC to erect some temporary 6ft harris fencing at both entrances to prevent access to the site.

Cllr Graham Rogers also requested some higher permanent metal fencing and gates and WCBC will be asked of the feasibility and costs involved for this.

380 COVID 19 EMERGENCY

- It was reported that the tape had been removed from the fitness trail in Bellevue Park. The Clerk will contact the parks dept and ask for it to be replaced.
- Cllr Alex Jones complained about the amount of litter in the town centre.

381 PLANNING MATTERS

The Clerk reported that new planning applications were now starting to be registered by planning officers at WCBC. **It was RESOLVED for the Planning Committee to re-start remotely on Tuesday 14th July.**

382 ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Accounts were then authorized for payment as follows: **Chq Nos**

Parciau Bowling Club (annual grant)	£2,000	3776
Innotech (3x 5L hand-gel plus floor dispensers)	£763.40	3777
Griffiths Tool Hire (strimmers Little Vawnog)	£103.80	3777
K Benfield (expenses)	£97.12	3778
K Benfield (LOCH p/cash and fan)	£71.90	3778
Corona Energy (gas Maesgwyn)	£71.33	DD
EDF Energy (electric Maesgwyn)	£96.65	DD
Brit Tel (business 1 plan account)	£347.84	DD
Caia Park CC (advice service -see below)	£1,512	DD
Total:	£5,064.04	

The Clerk had previously informed the CC about a chq for £1,512 dated 7th March 2019 payable to Caia Park Community Council for qtr SLA for the advice service that had never been processed by Lloyds Bank. At the time she had contacted both Caia CC and Lloyds. Mike Morris the Clerk to Caia Park insisted the chq had been banked and they had already received the money – Lloyds said it never had been presented to them. In the end of year accounts this year she wrote the chq out of the accounts as unrepresented as it never showed up as leaving any of our accounts during the year. This week the following was heard from Lloyds:

‘Further to our conversation this morning I can confirm that due to teething issues with the digital cheque clearing system introduced last year, the cheque written out in March 2019 payable to Caia Park Community Council had never debited the account (chq 003563 dated 07/03/2019). The cheque did however credit the intended beneficiary. We therefore requested debit authority today, in order to debit the business account for the sum of £1,512 to rectify this.’ **This was noted.**

Salary Reports:

June – salaries totalling £4,559.59 to include monthly pension contributions for all 4 staff members to the Clwyd Pension Fund

383 Correspondence

- Boundary Commission for Wales – notice that the consultation in relation to draft proposals for the future electoral arrangement for the County Borough of Wrexham has been extended to 13th July 2020 (circulated by email)
- Nick Elphick Sculptor – estimate for Barracks memorial

Cllr Sarah Roberts reported to members about a recent site meeting she had held at Little Vawnog with Stuart from the Probation Service:

'There are two distinct areas. One is the conservation area, which has an information board purchased by the community council previously, describing the wildlife that could be found there. We felt that this would need input from the conservation society as to how it was handled in the future or whether indeed it still qualified as a conservation area....it's a lovely space with a large tree which frames a circle almost as a story telling area.

The main section of the area is made up of footpaths which lead to the river with trees along the path that leads to Erddig and along the river bank. There are the remains of wooden planters which have currently been taken over by ivy and we also found a footpath marker for the heritage trail which was completely hidden by tall grass. There is still a big area to clear although the footpaths look much clearer and wider now, also branches which were at head height have been trimmed back. There is so much potential here for not only the residents but also for local schools to use as part of their natural world curriculum.

Stuart would be really keen for him and his team to help to manage the area in the future when we have a definitive plan for it. Initially I think we would need to get the area under control I agree that the residents would benefit from reinstating their residents association which would encourage their ownership of the area and Stuart and his team could then work with them which would help with our responsibility of managing it.

Firstly I think the trees need to be dealt with, then we can take a more informed view of our next actions'

It was AGREED as a first step for the Clerk to make enquiries about a tree survey of the woodland area being undertaken. Once the lockdown rules are eased then it will be possible to arrange a meeting of the residents association to discuss the area.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.20 pm.

