

Minutes of the monthly meeting of Johnston Community Council held on 10th July 2023 in the Johnston Institute, Church Road, Johnston, and also online using the Zoom video-conferencing platform.

Present: Cllrs Nina Philpott (Chairman), Aled Thomas (vice-Chairman), Janet Jeffries, Yvonne Llewellyn, Neil James, Len Gale, Christine Wilkins, Tracey Young, Martyn Spilsbury; Peter Horton (Clerk).

Apologies : C'llrs Louise Jones, Kaidan Alenko.

1821 - Declarations of known Interests

- C'Ilr Nina Philpott declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the agenda item to discuss parking problems in Hillcroft, as a close neighbour affected by the subject to be discussed.
- C'Ilr Aled Thomas declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the discussion on possible charitable donations to the Pembs. Y.F.C., as a trustee of the charity.
- C'Ilr Nina Philpott declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the discussion on possible charitable donations to the Sandy Bear charity, as a trustee of the charity.

1822 – To receive the minutes from the June 2023 monthly meeting

The minutes were accepted as an accurate record, and retained for signature by the Chairman following the meeting (proposer C'Ilr Aled Thomas, seconder C'Ilr Yvonne Llewellyn).

Matters arising

1823 - Discussion of purchase of WW1 commemorative memorial bench.

No change, with C'Ilr Spilsbury still awaiting final drawings for approval.

1824 - Discussion of quotation for work on bus shelter, St. Peter's Road

No change, with C'Ilr Janet Jeffries reporting that the necessary maintenance work on the bus shelter was due to be done as soon as possible.

1825 - Discussion of link footpath from Church Road to Hayston View

C'Ilr Neil James reported that the road sign had been replaced, though not on a stand-alone post, but rather attached to the nearby streetlight. A new hydrant marker sign had also been placed on the streetlight. However, it was pointed out that the pathway still remained unadopted, with a number of streetlights still not working.

1826 - Discussion of arrangements for future maintenance of defibrillators

C'Ilr Louise Jones had confirmed that she had checked the defibrillators, and C'Ilr Yvonne Llewellyn had checked them in July prior to the meeting. C'Ilr Nina Philpott to carry out August checks.

1827 - Discussion of establishment of vexatious communication policy

No change, with matter still in hand with Clerk.

1828 – Close Field playpark matters.

Tent in playpark. A report had been received from the playground inspector of a tent pitched on the skatepark ramp platform. This had been removed, and left with the Clerk. The Clerk confirmed that he had contacted the Silverdale to invite them to collect it, but no reply had been received. He confirmed that it was his intention to dispose of the tent if this was not collected soon.

Vandalised playpark sign. P.C. Neil Lees had reported that he had followed up the matter as possible, but not identified any definite offenders. That being the case, Members accepted that nothing further could be done at present. Clerk to order a new sign, as per the quotation received from the P.C.C. Signs Unit, and also a corresponding one for Vine Field.

Chainlink fence. A report had been received from Infinity Play to say that further clearance would need to be carried out before the fence could be fully assessed for repairs. Clerk to ask Infinity Play to clear the fence to the corner as needed, and then re-assess and provide a further report to the council.

CCTV. Left in abeyance due to practical and legal obstacles.

1829 - New Council houses at Cranham Park

C’lir Aled Thomas had received a phone call from P.C.C. referring to a press release, which had subsequently been released. The information in the press release was viewed as somewhat vague. However, C’lir Aled Thomas thought it likely that around ten properties may become available by Christmas 2023, with final completion of the project sometime in spring 2024.

1830 – fly-tipping on land behind Acorn Drive.

The Clerk confirmed that this had been passed to the P.C.C. flytipping unit for action.

1831 - Discussion of community litter bin provision

Nothing further had been heard back from P.C.C. to date. Clerk to chase up P.C.C. again about overflowing bin at Glebelands, new bin provision, and confirmation of arrangements for a contract to empty the bin at Glebelands.

1832 – request for path along main road between Bulford Road and roundabout.

The Clerk had received a message from Paul Davies, passing on correspondence from the W.G. to say that the matter was going to be looked into, with a view to resolving the matter.

1833 - Discussion of closure of GP surgery for maintenance

No change, with surgery building expected to re-open in August.

1834 - Loose drain cover on main road by chip shop.

No change. Clerk to report the matter to the T.R.A. again.

1835 - Discussion of situation at Silverdale

C’lir Martyn Spilsbury had received some information from P.C.C. pursuant to a Freedom of Information request made, but nothing substantive. C’lir Aled Thomas confirmed that he had spoken to C’lir Michelle Bateman, who would be happy to attend a community council meeting to discuss the matter. C’lir Aled Thomas undertook to contact her about possible attendance in September.

1836 - Johnston Development Trust.

Arrangements for dissolution of the Trust still in hand.

1837 – Community school governor vacancy.

Currently in hand with Governor Support Services in P.C.C. They had advised that the vacancy would need to be advertised in other local communities if this was requested by the School. Give the apparent change of protocols in handling vacancies, Members pointed out the need to remove appointment of community governor from the regular A.G.M. agendas.

[NOTE – C’lrs Aled Thomas and Tracey Young declared personal but non-prejudicial interests in the discussion of this agenda item, as sitting governors on the Johnston School Board of Governors].

1838 – grass-cutting.

Due to the new playpark installed at Vine Field, it was accepted that some change in the charging regime for grass-cutting would be called for. Glenn Murray had suggested an assessment of this during the current season, with a lump sum levy being added to the grass-cutting bill at the end of the season to address this. Members accepted this as a reasonable approach (proposer C’lr Neil James, seconder C’lr Len Gale). Clerk to inform Glenn Murray accordingly.

1839 – noticeboard provision for school. The Clerk confirmed that an offer had been for the school to use the Glebelands noticeboard, and costings for a new school noticeboard had been requested from them. However, nothing had been heard back to date. C’lr Aled Thomas undertook to chase this up with the school.

1840 - Planning matters

Consultations received

Hearnshaw Planning – consultation on application for postponement of periodic review of conditions at Bolton Hill Quarry – No comments.

Consents issued

23/0212/PA - Removal of condition 3 (coal mining site investigations) of appeal reference APP/N6845/D/19/232041 (Proposed Domestic Garage);
Site Address: Land lying East of Vine Road, Johnston, Pembrokeshire, SA62 3PQ

Correspondence

1841 - Glenn Murray - Comments on goalpost proposals – dealt with in agenda item 1852 below.

1842 - Infinity Play – Comments on chainlink fencing at Close Field – dealt with in 1828 above.

1843 - P.C.C. – Press release on old school site development – dealt with in 1829 above.

1844 - Neil Lees – Update on situation with vandalised sign – dealt with in 1828 above.

1845 - Infinity Play – Annual Inspection reports for Vine Field and Close Field playparks – dealt with in agenda item 1852 below.

1846 - Scott Murray – Quotation for works to create replacement for wooden pavilion – dealt with in agenda item 1854 below.

1847 - Andrew Gray – Quotation for track works in Cunnigar Woods – dealt with in agenda item 1855 below.

Accounts (including charitable donations and consideration of quarterly budget review)

1848 - Charitable donations

[NOTE – C’lrs Nina Philpott and Aled Thomas left the meeting during discussion of donations to Sandy Bear and Pembs. Y.F.C., and took no part in the discussions. This part of the meeting was chaired by C’lir Martyn Spilsbury]

Members approved the following donations :

Sandy Bear	:	£150
Pembs. Y.F.C.	:	£150

(proposer C’lir Christine Wilkins, seconder C’lir Neil James).

[NOTE – C’lrs Nina Philpott and Aled Thomas returned to the meeting at this point, and C’lir Nina Philpott resumed chairmanship of the meeting]

The following further charitable donations were approved by Members :

Johnston Sunshine Club	:	£500
St. Peter’s Church grass-cutting fund	:	£300
Johnston Chapel grass-cutting fund	:	£300
Paul Sartori Foundation	:	£100
Wales Air Ambulance	:	£100
Get the Boys a Lift	:	£100

(proposer C’lir Neil James, seconder C’lir Christine Wilkins).

1849 - Quarterly budget review

The Clerk had circulated the quarterly budget review to Members in advance of the meeting. There were no issues of concern to note.

1850 - Payments

David Banfield (bus shelter cleaning, June)	:	£ 72-00
Infinity Play (Supply and fitting of padlock and chain)	:	£ 39-67
Infinity Play (supply and fitting of two picnic benches, Vine Field)	:	£3007-66
P.C.C. (flowers for community beds)	:	£ 376-80

The above payments were approved by Members (proposer C’lir Nina Philpott, seconder C’lir Martyn Spilsbury).

1851 - Discussion of condition of Brickhurst Park Road lane

The Clerk had checked ownership of the lane, as requested. He confirmed that the part of the land fronting 28 Brickhurst Park was in their ownership. The remaining section as far as the railway bridge was in the ownership of Longview.

[NOTE – at this point C’lir Christine Wilkins declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the discussion about the lane, as a close neighbour immediately affected by the issues under discussion, and left the meeting].

Members asked the Clerk to write a low key letter to Longview, and ask them what their intentions were regarding repair and maintenance of the track (proposer C'llr Neil James, seconder C'llr Len Gale).

[NOTE – C'llr Christine Wilkins returned to the meeting at this point]

1852 - Any necessary discussion of issues connected with Vine Field

Parking on Brickhurst Park. C'llr Christine Wilkins mentioned an issue with pavement parking by some residents. However, as pavement parking was understood not to be an offence, Members did not decide to take any action on this matter.

Anti-social behaviour. P.C. Neil Lees had offered to increase patrols in the playpark, to address concerns over anti-social behaviour and inappropriate use of the play equipment.

Football posts. Infinity Play had provided quotations for either one or two posts of a 12' width. However, Members felt that smaller ones might be more appropriate for the site. Clerk to request further quotations for the size of the temporary one already in use by the neighbour, with a view to getting these completed and installed as soon as possible, subject to Members' final agreement.

Boundary chainlink fence. It was confirmed that Infinity Play, along with C'llrs Aled Thomas and Neil James, were due to meet the adjacent landowner at 5pm on Friday 14th July, to discuss detailed arrangements.

Bolt / hanger issues on new swings. The Clerk reported that Sovereign Play had rejected responsibility for the loose bolts on the swings. The separate issue of incorrect chain links being used on the swings had been passed back to Sovereign Play, after having been raised on the annual inspection report. Further response from Sovereign Play was currently awaited. Clerk to forward message exchanges between himself and Sovereign Play to C'llr Martyn Spilsbury, for any possible discussion with the area Sovereign representative.

Maintenance gate. It was confirmed that this matter had now been resolved, with a combination lock and chain having been fitted to the gate.

1853 - Discussion of possible provision of roller-skating rink in Close Field Playpark

Matter still in hand with C'llr Kaidan Alenko. Agenda item to be tabled for discussion in September.

1854 - Discussion of progress towards possible replacement of wooden pavilion

A detailed quotation for necessary works to execute the project had been received from Scott Murray. Clerk to send message of thanks to him for the work undertaken. Clerk to contact Sean Milsom to ask him to submit a planning application for the development on behalf of the community council. Given the large estimated cost of the project, it was recognised by Members that expertise would be needed to apply for the requisite grants needed for a project of this scale. Members considered advertising for someone local to apply for grants and seek funding, this to be carried out on a rechargeable basis. C'llr Nina Philpott undertook to speak to someone she knew locally who might be able to assist. Otherwise, she offered to advertise on the community Facebook page for someone local to undertake this work. In addition, C'llr Aled Thomas undertook to speak to Michelle Webber in P.C.C. to ask if there would be any relevant assistance available.

1855 - Any necessary discussion of progress on project to develop land at Glebelands Field, including gating of ungated access from cycle path

Ungated access from cycle path. C’Ilr Janet Jeffries was due to have further discussions with Sean Tilling of P.C.C. This to be pursued as possible.

Wooden bridge. C’Ilr Janet Jeffries reported that she had cracked two ribs after tripping on loose mesh on the wooden bridge deck. However, she reassured Members that she was now much better. C’Ilr Neil James had kindly repaired the mesh as necessary, for which Members were very grateful. However, he suggested that the mesh on the bridge would need replacing within a couple of years or so.

Trackway improvements. C’Ilr Neil James had received an informal quotation from Andrew Gray of £4100 + VAT for labour / ancillary works, and £1800 + VAT for stone. Clerk to contact Mr Gray and ask him to forward a formal quotation, and exclude the £1800 stone cost from it. Clerk to also contact Gareth at G.D. Harries to ask if they would be prepared to donate the 80 tonnes or so of stone as a community gesture. Clerk to ask Mr Gray to specify the stone required, for quotation purposes. All the above was formally agreed by Members (proposer C’Ilr Nina Philpott, seconder C’Ilr Martyn Spilsbury).

Brush-cutting / general track clearance. Clerk to contact the contractor who had previously cleared the trackways in association with P.C.C., and ask them to arrange to come in September to mow the new paths as per what was carried out last time (proposer C’Ilr Neil James, seconder C’Ilr Aled Thomas).

General grass-cutting. Clerk to ask George Bevan of Bevan Lawncare if he would be interested in carrying this out. If so, C’Ilr Neil James confirmed that he would be willing to meet Mr Bevan to assess the exact requirements.

1856 - Discussion of advertisement to fill casual vacancy currently open

Clerk to place co-option notice, and place matter on the agenda for further discussion in September.

1857 - Discussion of parking problems at Hillcroft

C’Ilr Nina Philpott made a brief statement to Members regarding the caravan issue outside her house. She had reported this initially to Highways, and latterly as an abandoned vehicle. She was currently awaiting a response from P.C.C. on that matter, but was concerned at the ongoing adverse effect on parking availability for other residents. It was understood that the caravan belonged to the occupants of 62, Hillcroft.

[NOTE – C’Ilr Nina Philpott left the meeting at this point, and chairmanship was taken up by C’Ilr Aled Thomas]

C’Ilr Aled Thomas was unsure if the caravan had been present for long enough to categorise as an abandoned vehicle. There was also a lack of clarity on the legal situation. Clerk to contact (1) Neil Lees for advice / action, and (2) Darren Thomas for advice / suggestions on possible actions (proposer C’Ilr Aled Thomas, seconder C’Ilr Janet Jeffries).

[NOTE – C’Ilr Nina Philpott returned to the meeting at this point, and resumed chairmanship]

1858 - Discussion of possible honours nominations

Matter to be deferred for further discussion in September. It was recognised that there was a spectrum of types of recognition. C’lfr Aled Thomas undertook to investigate the relevant processes and forms, and pass these to the Clerk ready for September, or for possible action via the Clerk.

1859 - Discussion of Training for defibrillator use

Clerk to make enquiries about another defibrillator training session, following the previous successful one carried out. Members thought it might be good to try and arrange this for sometime towards the end of the year.

1860 - Discussion of traffic issues at junction of Langford Road / Main Road

While Members agreed that there were serious problems at the junction, it was recognised that any in depth assessment of the situation would be unlikely until the effects of the forthcoming speed limit reduction had been factored in.

C’lfr Aled Thomas undertook to contact C’lfr Michael John, and also Darren Thomas of P.C.C., to raise the matter for discussion. Item to be placed on September meeting agenda for further discussion. As background information, C’lfr Neil James mentioned that P.C.C. had produced around three concept ideas for alterations to the junction, possibly around 10-15 years ago, but nothing had come of them at the time.

Any other business

1861 - Advance apologies. C’lfr Neil James offered apologies for the September meeting, as he would be unable to attend.

1862 – volunteer community litter-picking. C’lfr Nina Philpott had been made aware of two local youngsters who had recently spent time carrying out litter-picking around the village, including an excellent effort in the Close Field. This had also been noted on the community Facebook page. Members very impressed with their efforts, and appreciative of what had been achieved.

1863 - Johnston in Bloom. Members noted that it had not been carried out this year, and was now probably too late for 2023, as it would best be carried out in June.

The meeting ended at 9-05pm. Next scheduled meeting – Monday 11th September 2023.

Signed.....Chairman

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