

Minutes of the monthly meeting of Johnston Community Council held on 9th October 2023 in the Johnston Institute, and also online using the Zoom video-conferencing platform.

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

Apologies : C'Ilr. Kaidan Alenko

Also present were P.C. Neil Lees; Michelle Bateman and Gaynor Toft, P.C.C.

1901 - Declarations of known Interests

None

1901 – To receive the minutes from the September 2023 monthly meeting

The minutes were accepted as an accurate record, and retained for signature by the Chairman following the meeting (proposer C'Ilr Nina Philpott, seconder C'Ilr Martyn Spilsbury).

1902 - Q&A session with P.C.C. Cabinet members, regarding The Silverdale and other issues

Members welcomed C'Ilr Michelle Bateman (Pembrokeshire County Council Cabinet Member for Housing) and Gaynor Toft (Pembrokeshire County Council Head of Housing) to the meeting. They had been invited to discuss issues about The Silverdale, as well as other Housing-related matters of concern to Members.

C'Ilr Aled Thomas asked about the projected timescale for use of The Silverdale for housing homeless people. Michell Bateman replied that there was no fixed end date in mind. It depended on other factors and developments, which were all an ongoing process. There had never been the intention to use The Silverdale as a permanent facility, though it could be required for the medium to long term. In terms of general homelessness, the levels were at around 600 currently. The demands on the homelessness department had got progressively worse in recent times. The impact of Covid had been the catalyst, but other factors such as cost of living crisis, the collapse of the private housing rental market, etc., had all affected the situation. The highest need was for single-bedroomed accommodation, which was less available than other types.

It was confirmed that no ex-offenders with tags, or sex offenders, were housed at The Silverdale.

C'Ilr Michelle Bateman was asked what would be the trigger for ceasing to use The Silverdale. She responded that the P.C.C. Rapid Transition Rehousing Plan was in place, providing rapid provision of housing to homeless people, with their support needs being assessed afterwards. A purpose built facility would be built in the future, but temporary accommodation would always be needed. There was also a housing strategy in place to increase housing stock, support private landlords, etc. All of these factors would play a part in the timing of any future decision to stop using The Silverdale.

C'Ilr Nina Philpott raised the issue of anti-social behaviour problems linked to The Silverdale. Michell Bateman referred to the weekly meetings held with various stakeholders, which provided opportunity for these issues to be discussed on an ongoing and regular basis.

C’lir Janet Jeffries mentioned the recurring problem of camping on public land around the community, including one current example of a homeless person camping on the cycle path. P.C. Neil Lees accepted that this was a regular occurrence, but pointed out that no offence was being committed. Gaynor Toft referred to a contract that had recently been let to provide a service to address this issue. There would be a dedicated email for people to report incidences of homelessness to them. The process was set to become more robust. Often the people involved might have complex needs, and the Authority was struggling with limited availability of suitable accommodation for housing such individuals.

C’lir Aled Thomas made reference to the fact that no council houses had been built over many decades. He asked what assurances could be given regarding the delivery timetable of the new houses in Cranham Park. Michelle Bateman confirmed that phase one was due for completion by the end of 2023, and the second phase by the end of March 2024. There had been a catalogue of obstacles to progress, but the project would be delivered successfully. She said that the Local Lettings Policy would underpin allocation of housing to this development. She also mentioned the possibility of a further development of seven units of council housing at the Johnston Country Club site, though this had not been finalised, and would also be subject to planning consent being obtained.

C’lir Janet Jeffries also asked a question about the boundary fencing around the Old School Lane development at Cranham Park. C’lir Aled Thomas undertook to email details of this question to Gaynor Toft for consideration.

Following the discussion, members thanked Michelle Bateman and Gaynor Toft for attending the meeting, after which they left the meeting.

Matters arising

1903 - Discussion of purchase of WW1 commemorative memorial bench.

C’lir Martyn Spilsbury confirmed that the graphic designer was expected to attend the next meeting in the Village Institute.

1904 - Discussion of quotation for work on bus shelter, St. Peter’s Road

C’lir Janet Jeffries mentioned that some minor remedial work was due to be done, and would be completed without charge.

1905 - Discussion of link footpath from Church Road to Hayston View

Members reported that some street lights at this location were still not functioning. C’lir Aled Thomas undertook to check on the current situation with the Highways Adoptions Officer.

1906 - Discussion of arrangements for future maintenance of defibrillators

C’lir Aled Thomas was confirmed as due to check the defibrillators in October.

1907 - Discussion of establishment of vexatious communication policy

No change, with matter still in hand with Clerk.

1908 – Close Field playpark matters.

Earth bank near skatepark. C’lir Louise Jones mentioned that some local children had asked her for consideration to providing ramps for their bikes. Matter to be tabled for discussion in November.

Boundary chainlink fencing. Investigative work had been carried out, and a quotation for remedial work received from Infinity Play. Members voted to accept the quotation (proposer C'llr Neil James, seconder C'llr Christine Wilkins). Clerk to make arrangements accordingly.

Littering problem. C'llr Nina Philpott and P.C. Neil Lees had met with the local children to join one of their regular litter picks. It had gone well, and was an ongoing arrangement. C'llr Nina Philpott had bought some treats for the children, which they had appreciated.

1909 – request for path along main road between Bulford Road and roundabout.

Currently in hand with the Welsh Government to carry out feasibility studies and produce plans of a proposal for pavement provision. Nothing further heard to date.

1910 - Loose drain cover on main road by chip shop.

Members reported that the cover had still not been fixed. Clerk to contact the Trunk Road Agency again regarding the matter.

1911 – Community school governor vacancy.

The Clerk confirmed that the names of C'llrs Neil James and Kaidan Alenko had both been sent in as nominations to P.C.C. The administration of the process was now in hand with P.C.C.

1912 - Discussion of traffic issues at junction of Langford Road / Main Road

C'llr Aled Thomas confirmed that he had enquired with P.C.C. regarding this matter, and had received a response from Darren Thomas, Head of Highways. This had confirmed that the matter was the responsibility of the Trunk Road Agency. A review of the matter had last been carried out in 2010. The need to improve the Langford Road junction with the main road had been mentioned at that time. However, nothing further had been progressed, and Darren Thomas had suggested that nothing would happen unless the Welsh Government should decide it was needed. Funding was, as always, the big issue. C'llr Aled Thomas felt that there would need to be an approach directly to the Welsh Government about the issue, if progress was ever to be achieved. He undertook to write a letter jointly with Paul Davies, S.M., to the Welsh Government to initiate discussion over the matter. Members were in agreement that something needed to be done, and it was only a fluke that there had not been a serious issue with accidents up until the present.

Planning matters

1913 - Consents issued

23/0328/PA – Replacement of lean-to utility with contemporary alternative, creation of front dormers for attic space and replacement of temporary container/log store with machinery/tools work store; Site Address: Auberon House, JOHNSTON, Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire, SA62 3HJ

23/0370/PA – Demolish existing building and construct new shed/store with rear offices; Two sheds located adjacent to Glebelands, Johnston Football Club, Johnston

23/0421/PA - Proposed new outbuilding; Site Address: Springfield, Kiln Road, JOHNSTON, Haverfordwest, Pembrokeshire, SA62 3PE

Correspondence

1914 - Infinity Play – comment on issues on grass bank adjacent to skate park, Close Field – dealt with in 1908 above.

1915 - National Grid – Request for information in connection with unmetered supply for Christmas tree lighting – the Clerk confirmed that this had been passed to Norrards Electrics for attention.

1916 - Kite Ecology – Bat report – dealt with in agenda item below

1917 - P.C.C. – Request for information about any planned road closures for Remembrance Sunday – Members confirmed that the arrangements were expected to be the same as for 2022. Clerk to inform P.C.C. accordingly.

1918 - Infinity Play – Operational inspection reports for Vine Field and Close Field – noted.

1919 - Infinity Play – Quotations for repairs to Close Field boundary fence, and litter bin provision at Vine Field – dealt with in 1908 above and 1923 below.

Accounts (to include quarterly budget review)

1920 - Payments for approval

Kite Ecology (bat survey)	:	£ 200-00
J.P.J. Home Improvements (painting to bus shelter)	:	£ 253-00
David Banfield (bus shelter cleaning for September)	:	£ 72-00
Johnston F.C. (grass-cutting)	:	£4899-00
Nina Philpott (reimbursement)	:	£ 5-50

The above payments were approved by Members (proposer C’Ilr Aled Thomas, seconder C’Ilr Yvonne Llewellyn).

1921 - Quarterly budget review

Members considered the budget review provided by the Clerk, and were content that the finances for the year were broadly on track.

1922 - Discussion of Wales Audit Office letter regarding historical complaint by Greg Bishop

Following discussion, Members voted to accept the revised Audit Wales recommendations 1-4 as worded, but to reject recommendation no. 5 on the basis that the funds received from the Village Institute had not been a reimbursement for legal fees, and it was not considered necessary to seek advice from H.M.R.C. regarding the circumstances in which V.A.T. could be reclaimed by the community council (proposer C’Ilr Janet Jeffries, seconder C’Ilr Yvonne Llewellyn). Clerk to respond to Audit Wales accordingly. No further actions were decided on by Members pursuant to the report and recommendations made by Audit Wales.

1923 - Any necessary discussion of issues connected with Vine Field

Litter bin provision. A quotation for supply and installation of a new litter bin at Vine Field had been provided by Infinity Play. This was accepted by Members (proposer C’Ilr Neil James, seconder C’Ilr Nina Philpott). Clerk to make arrangements accordingly.

Chainlink boundary fencing and goalpost installation. Work on these items was expected to be carried out imminently.

1924 - Discussion of possible provision of roller-skating rink in Close Field Playpark

Deferred for consideration in November.

1925 - Discussion of progress towards possible replacement of wooden pavilion

It was confirmed that planning consent for the project had been received. The bat survey carried out had confirmed that no bats had been present in the building. Members were currently engaged with pursuing various funding / grant opportunities, which were ongoing, Clerk to forward to C'lr Neil James a schedule of the total J.C.C. expenditure on the project investigations and planning to date.

1926 - Any necessary discussion of progress on project to develop land at Glebelands Field, including gating of ungated access from cycle path

Bulb planting. Clerk to send reminder email to Aethne Cooke in P.C.C., seeking update on this matter, which had been left with her to progress.

Commemorative Cherry trees. Members agreed that the four damaged trees should be replaced, and voted to implement this (proposer C'lr Neil James, seconder C'lr Janet Jeffries). Clerk to contact Grandiflora accordingly, and ask them to replant the four trees to be removed at the edge of the wooded area at the bottom of the field.

Entrance gate abutting cycle path. C'lr Janet Jeffries, Neil James and Yvonne Llewellyn had met with Sean Tilling of P.C.C. regarding this matter. He had undertaken to arrange the replacement of the gate, which had been removed by them. He had undertaken to forward some design proposals for approval. Members favoured a 5' gate for machinery, with an adjacent pedestrian gate.

Signage. General signage at both entrances to mark the playpark entrances was viewed by Members as important. This to be revisited once the gateway had been reinstated.

Dog fouling. Members had noted this as a significant and ongoing problem. C'lr Aled Thomas undertook to look into the new arrangements in place in P.C.C. for patrolling and enforcing regulations on this, and seek to get them implemented in Johnston.

Bushwhacking / completion of new trackways. Clerk to chase up Aled Bowen regarding bushwhacking, which had not been done, and Andrew Gray regarding completion of the stoning work.

1927 - Discussion of advertisement to fill open casual vacancy

No applications had been received as at the date of the meeting.

1928 - Discussion of tree damage along Langford Road

Members had received a number of comments about tree branches and debris coming down in this area. The tree on the junction with The Close had been inspected relatively recently and deemed safe. However, Clerk to report this again, in case of any significant deterioration.

A tree outside 12, Langford Road had been noted as having a damaged branch hanging down. Clerk to report to P.C.C.

1929 - Discussion of training for defibrillator use, and purchase of infant pads

Training. Clerk to request a training session similar to that carried out in December 2022, to be provided in spring 2024.

Defibrillator pads. The Clerk confirmed that the infant pads on all but one of the units had expired. He was awaiting advice from Zoll and an R.C.C. paramedic concerning whether or not dedicated paediatric pads were necessary for use of the defibrillator on children. Matter to be placed on November agenda for further discussion, once the advice had been received.

Any other business

1930 - Boundary fence at Cranham Park housing development. Agenda item to be tabled for discussion in November.

1931 – Remembrance Day arrangements. C’Ilr Neil James confirmed that arrangements were in hand for the service to be carried out as for 2022. C’Ilr Aled Thomas confirmed that he had been promised someone to play the Last Post at the service. C’Ilr Neil James confirmed that he would be making contact with the vicar, etc., to confirm arrangements.

1932 – Planter, Village entrances on main road. Agenda item for November to be tabled for discussion of maintenance / planting of these, etc.

The meeting ended at 8-50 pm. Next scheduled meeting – Monday 13th November 2023.

Signed.....Chairman

Date.....
