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**Update Notes at 16th Jun 2020 – Llanelly Community Council**

In view of the COVID 19 outbreak LCC decided to cancel actual Council meetings until further notice. It would nevertheless publish notes updating its situation and any appropriate information/action.

Whilst there have been discussions with MCC regarding steps required in Gilwern on gradual easing of the lockdown,(see below under CC’s Report) there is as yet no timescale for the reopening of Council facilities, and we await the announcement on 19th June by the WG to see what further easing there may be. Whilst there remains a need for the Council to meet it will only do so when it is felt circumstances are appropriate.

1. **Gilwern**
2. The cctv camera at the Community Centre has now been reconnected.
3. Quotes were received for the repair to the play equipment in the playing fields and the Chair and Clerk have met with Mike Moran, MCC. The cheapest quotation was from a company called Urban Recreation who have worked on the equipment in the past and it has been agreed with MCC to ask them to carry out the work. MCC will fund this work with S106 money and we await a date for this to start. In addition a quote has been obtained for repairs and redesign of the cycle track. The quotes received from the one company so far are high – unfortunately there are few companies who carry out this work in our area – and discussions are ongoing with MCC regarding this project
4. After discussions with Cllr Bell and Gilwern Roots LCC submitted an application for a grant from Keep Wales Tidy for a fruit garden in the area beyond the skate park on the playing fields. A decision is awaited from the Grants Panel.
5. Around the Community Centre the drains and gutters have been cleared and quotes are awaited on clearing the foul water pipes that cross the car park. Two footpaths have been installed from the car park to the playing fields, meeting up with a refurbished/new path from the woods. In addition a path has been laid to the first piece of gym equipment, the piece specifically designed for disabled people, and the AFC has overseen the installation of a footpath now around the top end of the fields.
6. The public toilets in Gilwern have been decorated and, although they remain closed to the public, we have sought quotes from 3 cleaning companies to take on a contract for their cleaning and that of the Community Centre when they open.
7. Hand sanitisers have been installed in the Community Centre and discussions are ongoing on further steps that will be necessary before the Centre can reopen.
8. The tree survey at Gilwern playing fields has been completed and the Chair and Clerk are meeting with the Tree Surgeon on 22 June to discuss his report and what needs to be done.
9. **Clydach**
10. Following a concern from a local resident it has been agreed with the tree surgeon to remove two small trees on the edge of the playing fields which are growing into a boundary wall.
11. **Llanelly Hill**
12. A new 30mph sign has been obtained for Llanelly Hill to replace a damaged one, and an electronic one will also be ordered.
13. **Planning**
14. ENF/20/02153/ODP2 -an enforcement notice raised form complaints to LCC from local residents into the alleged unauthorised construction of a stable block being used as a dwelling at land opposite The Corn Exchange Inn, Crickhowell Road, Gilwern.
15. 20/18661/FUL – retrospective application for the retention of a hardstanding at land at Ty Gwyn Farm, Gilwern.
16. 20/18413/FUL// 20/18414/LBC – permission and listed building consent for rebuilding works at Dan-y-Graig, Crickhowell Road, Gilwern.
17. 20/18682/FUL – lean to sheds off existing agricultural sheds at Glangwysg Meadows, Crickhowell Road, Gilwern.
18. **Finance**
19. The VAT refund claim for 19/20 has been received in full.
20. The Internal Audit will be completed this week and a copy of the report will be circulated to councillors.
21. A draft Annual Statement has been produced by Cllr Nelmes and is attached to these Notes. Like the Annual Return it will be discussed at the next Council meeting.
22. The following cheques have been signed by the Chair and Cllr Nelmes on behalf of the Council since the last Update Notes were sent out:

-Cheques **2914/5/6/SO** – salaries for May –1528.86; **2917** – HMRC – 184.20; **2918** – PandP pest control– 120.00; **2919** – Merlin Waste, dog bins - £546.00; **2920** – Country Bookkeeping - payroll services - £15.00; **2921** – EON – 18.18; **2922** – SSP Direct 30mph sign – 39.88; **2923** – Newhall Janitorial – sanitisers – 206.64; **2924** – Metrorod- drain/gutter clearance – 720.00; **2925** – Jason Wilkes decoration toilets - £512.00; **DD** – Swalec Gas - £427.77.

1. **County Councillor’s Report**
2. **“Virtual Council Meetings** A full Council Meeting was held this month along with Cabinet Meetings online and Monmouthshire County Council have really embraced this technology. In addition to this Scrutiny events and Member Workshops have also been held online which is vital to ensure that elected members can scrutinise decisions and hold the Council to account. All these meetings can be viewed online. This is in contrast to some Councils in Wales where this is not happening.
3. **Councils Outturn Statement** MCC are facing unprecedented challenges this year, earlier we had terrible flooding then the Covid 19 Pandemic to deal with, which is still ongoing. We have lost the income streams provided by Car Parking and our Leisure Centres as well as a world- wide collapse in the market for recyclables to name just three. It was fortunate last year that we were able to gain £2.3 million as a one off payment from VAT receipts covering the period January 2007 to March 2019. We do not have the huge reserves of some of the other Councils in South Wales and a review of the funding formula which recognises the rurality of our County and the cost of providing services is long overdue. Whilst we have been able to avoid cutting any services to date, all the fat has
4. now been sliced off and we are down to the bone. There is no doubt that there will be extremely difficult decisions to be made in the future by local government in Wales unless some of the funds received by Welsh Government are passed onto local councils and there is a fairer dividing of the pot. Monmouthshire remains the worst funded Council in Wales.
5. **Reopening our Village and Town Centres** MCC have been working flat out to prepare our High Streets for the expected re-opening of non-essential shops shortly. Meetings have been held over the past 10 days with all communities discussing proposals and finding out what would work best for them. During this lock down there has been much evidence of residents valuing their local shops and services and we hope that people will continue to Shop local and shop Monmouthshire. Every thought has been put into the safety of shoppers so that they can have every confidence when they venture out locally to all shops.
6. We are also putting in plans to enable more pedestrianised areas which will allow coffee shops, pubs and restaurants when they reopen to have more tables and chairs outside as we know that the virus is less likely to be transmitted in the open air and sunshine. Whilst all these plans are temporary and can be changed, it is a good opportunity to try new things and I don’t think there is anyone who would disagree with the 20 mph speed limit which will be introduced in our town centres to allow walking and cycling to continue safely which has increased during the lockdown. Not only is it healthier for us but it reduces pollution and our carbon footprint too. 1500 residents responded to the recent online engagement concerning the reopening of our High Streets and villages and it is clear that they are really valued by us all. “

RICHARD DIXON NIGEL JAMES

Chair Temp Clerk

16 Jun 20