

RAGLAN COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Wednesday 30 September 2009 at 7:30pm in Raglan Junior School.

Present: Cllr T Phillips (Chairman)

Cllrs R Moorby, R Watkins, D Watkins, N Porter, Mrs H Williams, Mrs S Price, S Thomas, A Crump and Mrs A Vaughan.

In Attendance: The Clerk, Mr S Greenslade and Mr G Ashworth for the School and Village Hall item, Pc Mike Thomas and Pc Len Oliver for the first item, and Mr C Fountain and Mr C Butler for the third item. Mr J Piper (Head Teacher) and 5 members of the public.

2135. Apologies for absence were received from Cllr R Parry.

2136. Declarations of interest would be made as and when necessary, but Cllr Crump declared an interest as a member of the County Planning Committee and took no part in Planning decisions.

The Chairman suspended Standing Orders for the following discussions.

He first invited the Police Representatives to present their report. Pc Thomas explained that Pc Oliver had joined the Team and would cover raglan in future while Pc Thomas was focused on Usk, but that each would cover for the other. He then briefly introduced his report, and as there were no immediate questions the Chairman thanked the two officers for coming and they left the meeting.

The Chairman next welcomed Mr Greenslade and Mr Ashworth to the meeting and invited Mr Greenslade to address the Council.

Mr Greenslade explained that the current land use arrangements for the Brook Holdings land were as set out in a report to Cabinet in 2004. The Cabinet had considered that the site should be for affordable housing and a Village Hall. Since then with the development of the Local Development Plan, this site and some adjacent land on the other side of the road had been identified as Candidate Sites for inclusion in the LDP.

The LDP should be completed by 2012, but in the meantime, the school development was in the programme, subject to Welsh Assembly Government support for start in 2010. (This means that in order to commit to a start in 2010, unless the Brook Holdings site is released from the list of candidate sites, the Education Department has no choice but to plan to develop on the existing site)

Mr Ashworth explained the LDP process, which means that an inspector appointed by WAG will preside over an examination of the LDP proposals and any evidence submitted by others before coming to a conclusion.

Cllr Crump, confirmed that the points made were also his understanding of the situation, but he wondered if the officers were aware of the large amount of work done in Raglan including work by Mr Colin Barnard who had been appointed by the County as a Project officer to bring together the aspirations of the Village Hall Committee and the needs of the school. Councillor Crump`s own representations had been ignored when the land originally identified for the village hall was identified as possible housing land. He had been told not to worry as nothing had been finalised, but we now had a situation where, unless the Cabinet were prepared to reconsider their decision and to free up the piece of land for the school or village hall.

Property Services Dept have told Education that it is not available, leaving the Education Department with little choice but to propose redevelopment on the existing site. They are acting on the current Cabinet decision.

Mr D Brown, representing the Village Hall Committee, noted that the Village Hall Committee had planning permission for the Brooks Holdings site, but had held off with their fund-raising because Mr Barnard had suggested that the new school could be built on that site and the Village Hall could then be housed in part of the existing school. This was identified as saving about £1M at the time. Mr Brown stated that what was currently in the plans for the new school for community use was only about 10% of what they felt was needed for the village.

Mr Greenslade acknowledged that the cabinet decision of 2004 still stands but the situation had been changed by the site being identified for housing as that had substantially changed the market value of the land.

A number of other issues were raised:

- Who owns the existing school site (the church)
- The plan to move the school onto the Brook Holdings site had the advantage of taking the children away from the traffic in the busy Chepstow Road
- The new school will be for 210 children which is a standard design brief (the next size is 420) and if more houses are to be built, given that the school is already over-subscribed, that will be too small.
- Concerns about health and safety on the existing school site during the rebuild were voiced. Mr Greenslade said the County had done this before and had an excellent record of designing, developing and delivering schools on target and in safety.
- The new school will only have one hall, whereas the existing school has two. There will be no village hall for about 9 months during the rebuild, and the new hall is much smaller than the present main hall.
- Community use has only been allocated 140 square metres, whereas they had planned for 916. They had been told there was no room for more.
- There was a closed loop at present in that without a plan for the community development the Village Hall Committee could not apply for grants, but the school developers were saying that without the funding they could not plan to include the community use.

Mr Greenslade pointed out that the County cannot build on the presumption that there will be money.

Members queried where they could go next. It was suggested that they may wish to invite the Cabinet Members for Lifelong Learning and Leisure and for Finance to come to talk to them. It was agreed to pursue this route, but first a summary of the points to be made will be prepared to enable them to attend with an understanding of the concerns to be addressed.

The Chairman thanked Mr Greenslade and Mr Ashworth for attending and they left at this point.

The Chairman then invited Mr Fountain and Mr Butler to sit at the table to discuss Twinning issues. They explained that twinning links between Parce in France and Raglan were moving forward very positively, and that as a consequence an event had been planned for 22 October in the Beaufort when the French Mayor and Deputy Mayor and their partners would be present. It was planned to present them with a plaque from Raglan, and this had

been commissioned from Ned Heywood of Chepstow for the occasion. They felt that if the event was to be a success it needed representatives from Raglan Community Council to be present, and they hoped that this could be arranged.

The Chairman thanked them for their presentation and said that the Council would consider what they had said during the meeting.

The Chairman then resumed the meeting under Standing Orders.

2137. The minutes of the Council Meeting held on 19 August 2009 were received and adopted as a correct record. There were no matters arising.

2138. Planning Matters

a) Enforcement lists and Planning Agendas were noted.

b) The following Planning Application was considered:

DC/2009/00793 Ground Floor extension to 1 Barton Bridge Close, Raglan – agreed.

2139. Finance Matters.

a) The following were agreed for payment:

Clerks salary and expenses £338.81

Additional insurance £81.80

With regard to the Insurance issue, the Clerk noted that he had received an e-mail that day from Mr A Watkins concerning potential damage to his property if one of the litter bins was set on fire. After discussion it was agreed that the Clerk would make inquiries of the County Council as to how they dealt with this situation.

In regard to the Twinning discussion, it was agreed that the Council would pay for the plaque and would fund the Chairman's attendance at the Twinning event on 22 October, in the sum of approximately £125 in total.

b) Several requests for financial support were deferred to the January budget meeting.

2140 Highway Matters.

a) There was no Highway Correspondence.

b) Members concerns.

Route 41.2 about 200 yards from the Walks Crossroads, there was settlement from previous excavation and the road badly needs repair. This would be reported.

The drain opposite the Crown in the village was blocked and could cause flooding.

The Cross-over of the dual carriageway was still causing concern. A white line that previously slowed traffic has gone and either needs replacing or there should be no cross-over to the Dingestow Rd from the dual carriageway – the traffic should be directed to go around the roundabout and back. Speed restriction at this point would also be an advantage. This would also be reported.

Cllr Phillips will make enquiries about who is responsible for trees growing over the Wilcae Brook.

2141. Correspondence.

A number of items of correspondence were considered and received.

Regarding adopting the BT phone-box at Llandenny, the clerk reported on the two letters received and on what he had done since the last meeting. There were concerns about the power supply to the box and whether it was needed. He would continue with his enquiries.

2142. Members Reports.

Cllr Mrs Vaughan noted that the field next to the MUGA had been cut, but it was also pointed out that the edge where it met some gardens was not cut and weeds were migrating into the adjoining gardens. It was further noted that some damage had been done to the MUGA as it is left open and unsupervised. This would need to be addressed.

Cllr Mrs Vaughan noted that there was a ramshackle shed being put up in a property in Castle Hill. She would let the Clerk have the address so that it could be reported to Enforcement.

Cllr Phillips announced that Raglan had won the Best Kept Village category. Members congratulated him and others who worked tirelessly for the village on this achievement. It was agreed that this should be publicised.

2143. Any Other Business.

Cllr Moorby asked what had happened about the Rural Housing Enabler's Report. It was now some time since it had been submitted to County. The Clerk will chase Mr Ashworth on this.

The meeting ended at 9:25pm