

## TIDENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held at 7pm on Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2018 at Sedbury and Beachley Village Hall, King Alfred's Rd, Sedbury NP16 7AQ

**Present:** Parish Councillors: Mr J Powell - Chairman, Mr R Birch, Mrs S Bollen, Mr Graham Drew, Mr R Duff, Mr Nick Evans, Miss Sandra Gregory, Mr Jake Lewis, Mrs H Molyneux, Mr R O'Toole and Ms Audrey Tullett plus County Councillor Patrick Molyneux, PC Henry Davies, PCSO Natalie Lang, Mrs Shirley Lightbound – Monmouthshire CAB and 12 members of the public.

Also Present: Mrs C Hinton – Parish Clerk, Mr K Duffin – Admin Assistant

- 1. Apologies:** were received from Councillor G-J Koning, Lin Chidwick, Sheila Bynon, Colin Pears
- 2. Minutes of Annual Parish Meeting held on 12<sup>th</sup> April 2017:** Having given the public time to read the Minutes they were approved and duly signed.
- 3. Matters Arising:** Councillor Birch asked for an update on Police numbers (PC Davies to speak later). Councillor Powell reported that the kerb had now been lowered to allow wheelchair access to the adult exercise equipment in Wyebank Road. Pauline Civil asked if the planned work at Mopla Cottages had been carried out – Councillor Bollen confirmed that it had.
- 4. Chairman's Report:** Mr Powell welcomed everyone to the Annual Parish Meeting. Mr Powell read his Annual Report and thanked councillors for their hard work and support during the past year.
- 5. Police Report:** PC Davies introduced himself having taken over from PC Assirati in January 2018. PC Davies has been involved in the Forest of Dean for 10 years. The local team has increased with an extra PCSO, Tracy Garcia Cote. PC Davies reported that overall crime rates were at the lowest level for a few years. Reported crimes have remained the same as the preceding year however Police reporting and recording of crimes has changed over the past 18 months which has had the effect of more crimes being recorded that would previously not have been. Tidenham has the lowest crime rate in the Forest area which the local team will aim to maintain. PC Davies asked members of the public to please report every incident and to encourage others to do so – the recording of every incident helps the Police to monitor and identify issues. There are currently no worrying crime trends and burglary numbers have fallen in the last 2 years. There is currently a local drive between Police and the Fire Service to tackle road safety. PC Davies and PCSO Lang are aiming to undertake more frequent speed checks. Members of the public were encouraged to sign up to Community Alerts where information on speed check results will be published. The Community Engagement vehicles will be in the area regularly. PC Davies reported that there is a drive for the local team to be re-located back in, or much nearer to, the local area. Bob Civil had not seen much publicity about the Community Alerts. Revd. Janice Hamilton reported that an alert had prompted a response from the public. Councillor John Powell asked if the Police would support a request for crossings for the safety of school children particularly with the likely increase in school numbers once all of the approved housing has been built which PC Davies said they would along with improvements to the Tutshill roundabouts. Councillor Robin Duff introduced himself as a

Neighbourhood Watch co-ordinator and suggested that other interested members of the public may like to sign up for this with Chrissie Parkes at Coleford Police. Councillor Duff also reported that he had met with Glos. Highways Department regarding a new way of filling potholes and re-surfacing with recycled plastic. Councillor Nick Evans liked the Community Alerts and the Inspector's blog. He reported that he had received some positive feedback from members of the public particularly regarding the visibility of the Police in the area and that previous parking of the Police vehicle in Gloucester Road had the effect of slowing traffic. Councillor Roy Birch asked how the Police have taken into account the amount of new homes being built in the Parish with regard to numbers of officers. PC Davies replied that policing plans are made 2 years ahead but that locally the Inspector is aware of the of the extra population the housing will create.

#### **6. Presentation by Shirley Lightbound Chief Officer, Monmouthshire CAB:**

Shirley Lightbound gave some background to the CAB which was originally started the day after war broke out in 1939 and was anticipated to be required for around 10 years or so. Monmouthshire CAB has 4 offices in Chepstow, Caldicot, Monmouth and Abergavenny. It has a small paid part time staff and 80-90 volunteers. The service markets itself as free, fair and non-discriminatory. Every client receives a gateway (short) assessment. The client may then be given a longer appointment, be passed to a CAB specialist for more specialised help or be passed on to an external agency. Waiting times for a more specialist appointment can be up to 10 days. The introduction of the Universal Credit benefit will stretch CAB resources. Monmouthshire CAB is funded through Monmouthshire County Council (the amount of support has decreased over the past 3 or 4 years), fundraising and grants. The CAB can give advice on virtually everything. It has good referral links with other agencies. Advice given is independent and confidential and they prefer not to share premises with Council services. The Chepstow office is open 4 days a week – closed on Friday although they participate in a Wales wide telephone service. They also run 'Better Advice Better Lives' – a Welsh Government link to health services. There are 4 case workers who see people by appointment or home visit. From 24<sup>th</sup> April the Chepstow office will be re-instating a session in Sedbury Space on the last Tuesday in the month which will increase in frequency if necessary. There are currently 130 clients from the Tidenham Ward and in future more specific statistics will be available. Bob Civil asked if there were problems recruiting volunteers. Mrs Lightbound responded that they were currently lucky with the number of volunteers but that they are not keen to train further for specialisms. There is 6 months training for volunteers and they would like to recruit more younger volunteers. Councillor Jake Lewis commented that it was a good service for young people and asked if the new statistics reporting will identify age ranges of clients which Mrs Lightbound confirmed. Revd. Janice Hamilton thanked Mrs Lightbound for starting sessions in Sedbury Space. She had been impressed with the amount of leaflets available but asked if more local agency information could be available – particularly English agencies. Councillor Roy Birch asked if local banks still supported the CAB funding to which Mrs Lightbound responded 'No'.

#### **7. Tidenham Parish Council Committee Reports**

Amenities Committee – Kevin Duffin, admin assistant, read the report by Councillor Geert-Jan Koning, Chairman of Amenities Committee, who was unable to attend the meeting. Revd. Janice Hamilton asked what was being done about the unsightly rubbish that is visible from the steps up from the A48. Liz McBride commented that she had reported this at last year's meeting. Kevin

Duffin confirmed that the issue was reported last year but that a specialist team of abseilers is required to undertake the work which is still in hand. Pauline Civil commented that she hoped the arboriculturalists engaged by the Parish Council would not cut down trees in the Parish as an 'easy' option. Kevin Duffin reported that only 1 or 2% of trees surveyed require felling due to disease or having become unsafe.

Planning, Development Control and Highways Committee – Councillor Powell had read his report at the same time as his Chairman's Report.

#### **8. To Receive Financial Statements from:**

Tidenham Parish Council – Marion Huckle asked if the small underspend is carried forward which it was confirmed it will be. The Clerk and Councillor Nick Evans reported that in order to keep the precept increase to a minimum some areas have not been budgeted for in 2018/2019 and money will be taken from general reserves if required. The Parish Council has also reduced grass cutting and tree maintenance on areas that are not the Council's responsibility. Bob Civil asked who was responsible for the footpaths and was informed that they are the responsibility of the Glos CC Public Rights of Way dept. who can be contacted via the Glos. Highways telephone number. Members of the public were asked to copy the Clerk in to Highways emails. Sue Pears asked for confirmation that the Parish Council does maintain closed churchyards even though they do not belong to the Council. Councillor Sandra Gregory confirmed this and added that the Parish Council had chosen to do this rather than be billed by the District Council for work carried out.

Mopla Cottages – Pauline Civil asked if Mopla Cottages Charity will help individuals.

#### **8. To Receive Reports from:**

Tidenham War Memorial Hall and Recreation Ground Trust - Councillor John Powell read out the report from the Trust.

Sedbury and Beachley Village Hall Charity – Councillor Helen Molyneux complimented the Hall Committee on the lovely room.

Poor's Allotment Trust – Councillor Helen Molyneux gave an overview of the report as treasurer to Poor's Allotment with particular regard to the change in future funding. Pauline Civil asked if the Charity Commission were happy with the change in funding requests. Hazel Evans expressed disappointment that Michael Gove wants to protect the environment but has cut funding. Councillor Jake Lewis asked how long the Allotment could survive without funding and whether there are short or long term concerns for it. Councillor Helen Molyneux confirmed there is no immediate concern but this will depend on the success of the new funding application. Councillor Lewis also asked to see the accounts at another date. Sue Pears asked how much was paid to Glos. Wildlife Trust – Councillor Molyneux confirmed that money was received from Natural England then GWT were paid for the fantastic job they do.

#### **9. Items Submitted by the Public:**

There had been no items submitted.

Patrick Molyneux, attending as County Councillor, informed those present that there is a grant fund of £30k over 3 years for 'Growing Our Communities' – details on the website and if there are any ideas for projects deal direct with Patrick.

Councillor Roy Birch asked what the rationale was behind the Publica shared services scheme. Patrick Molyneux informed him that the idea was to share duplicated 'back office' services carried out by the 4 district councils to a) save money and b) to be more resilient. So far the scheme has been working well. Councillor Jake Lewis expressed concern that the £30k grant fund came at the expense of some child services and Patrick Molyneux confirmed that some of the grant fund can be used for this. Hazel Evans commented on the ongoing infrastructure issues, particularly when Beachley Barracks closes and asked for progress on improvements. Patrick Molyneux commented that the District Council must provide housing and that the reduction in Severn Bridge tolls will add more pressure. Road and bridge schemes will take a long time but all sides need to keep putting pressure on for them to take place. Patrick is in contact with the Welsh Transport dept. and feels that the barracks closing and the extra housing that will create may be a 'game changer' because of the huge amount of traffic that will have to go through Sedbury. Bob Civil commented on the Chepstow bottleneck and Patrick Molyneux re-iterated that constant pressure needs be applied to force action and that Highways are still looking at schemes for a bypass. Councillor Jake Lewis asked what was causing the industrial traffic through Chepstow and asked about the possibility of a third Severn crossing. Patrick Molyneux reported that he thinks that the Severn from Gloucester to the Severn Bridge is the longest stretch of unbridged river in Europe and that a third crossing from Sharpness to Lydney could be a possibility. No current transport survey shows justification for a new bridge but it could be considered for connecting communities across the County. Before funding for this can be considered more planned development will be required. Councillor Sandra Gregory commented that the infrastructure should be considered before further housing planned. Councillor Rob O'Toole commented that the bigger picture across the County needs to be looked at. Councillor Jake Lewis commented that these suggestions have been made before is there anything different about the discussions this time? Patrick Molyneux confirmed that the third river crossing is one of 7 major projects identified in the Gloucestershire County for 2050 vision.

**The meeting closed at 8.52pm**