

Bryn Surgery

14th Jan 2012

Surgery taken with Councillor David Williams (01639 896999) and Councillor Marian Lewis (0797 4656124). Chaired and Minutes by Paul Bulmer

Present: Ray Stratford, John Thomas, Peter Corcoran, Dave Ecton, J Ecton, Mal Jenkins, Gareth Jones and David Whitelock

Apologies: Graham Rowland, Royden Rogers, Robert Davies and Steve Easton sent apologies.

Note: Items in **Red** have been outstanding for more than two months without any satisfactory progress.

Introductions

It was explained that in future David and Marian would be holding Joint surgeries. Paul said he would restructure the minutes to reflect this and actions would be owned by both Councillors and progressed between them.

Actions Reported as Completed or No Longer Required

The Councillors reported that the subsidence on the railway track was now being progressed by Welsh Water and the Council. The work has started on the site. Plans for the work have been passed to BRAG.

Complaints by Bryn Residents on the state of Carmel Chapel had been followed up by the enforcement officer and conditions put in place will be enforced.

It was reported that Gypsies had stolen covers on the lighting columns on the Maesteg road. This presented a safety issue that David was to investigate. At this meeting David reported that new covers have now been fitted. In order to stop this and similar problems it was suggested that enforcement officers should check what is in scrap yards and trace it back to source.

Holes in the road by Cwmavan traffic lights, where cat's eyes had been taken up, were to be investigated by David. David reported that this has now been repaired.

Peter had followed up the request by the youngsters of Bryn to provide training on bowling but were short of small woods (0's and 1's). Peter had asked if the Council could help with this issue. David reported that he had obtained two sets and could possibly secure further sets if the demand existed. Peter thanked him for these and offered to provide a newspaper article to publicise this facility to the people of Bryn.

Actions ongoing

LDP proposals: On 26 Feb there will be a further update for councillors. At present they are only looking at housing and review of applications for minerals has not yet started.

Goytre Valley: Concern was raised that the shanty town appearance of some of the temporary buildings along this valley appeared to be getting worse not better. David reported that notices had been served and these were still being progressed.

Dram Rd: Further work to start in the next couple of weeks.

The Road from Varteg to Chapel Terrace: is breaking up and needs urgent repair.

The Steps and the Cwms paths: need the trees cutting back along these paths. (Through the woods and below the Dram road). David stated that he would get someone onto this next week.

Trees falling down below the Dram road: were reported. The drainage improvements to the Dram road may improve this situation when it is done.

Pedestrian and road user hazards: Drains need reinstating along the Goytre road as the water has been going across the road and freezing causing a severe hazard. David had promised in Feb 2011 that this would be resolved before the next meeting.

Maesteg Road Drainage: The residents had reported flooding on the Maesteg road below the Community Centre and on the hill over to Maesteg in the Dec meeting. Both of these issues have been followed up by David and work to resolve the problems will commence in the next couple of weeks.

Bryngyrnos St. Sewage: The sewage problem leaking out across Bryngyrnos St. has been a problem for over 9 months. David has picked this up and had people injecting dye into the sewage system at different points to identify the source of the leak. This work is on-going.

Old School Wall: In past meetings residents have brought up concerns about the old school wall bulging and been in danger of collapsing onto the pavement. David has been progressing this and had the wall inspected. The structural people have now written to the owners and will take it further as required.

Bus Service: For months now the Bryn residents have been complaining about the poor bus service to Bryn. Many other issues relating to the bus service was also raised and possible solutions proposed to the Councillors. The councillors have been requested to find a suitable solution to the problems outlined.

New Actions

John raised concern about the litter opposite the school. Others noted that the litter in the village had generally increased recently and did not appear to be getting collected. This is to be looked at next week.

Concern was expressed that the cattle on the tip was making this area unsafe to use. Cattle also now appeared to be roaming the forest paths. This is to be investigated by the councillors.

Forest clearance is causing the water table to rise with increased run off water in Bryn. The drains need clearing to cope with this. This appeared to be a common problem across the village. It was noted that the gully sucker would often not clear the most blocked drains and it was suggested that work should be checked after completion by a supervisor. Marian emailed the officer during the meeting so that they would receive the complaint first thing on Monday morning.

David stated that the road at the new Varteg development was to be put in to the standard controlled by the council before housing will be allowed to start on this site. Currently it is not to standard.

They were asked about the promised Community First support for Bryn. David Whitelock said that it was still being progressed.

John Thomas reported on progress with the tennis court development for the village children. Marian informed them that she had spoken to Allan Stonehouse and he had said that the council would cover the insurance for the equipment but BRAG had to find the money for public Liability. New Sandfields have been doing this for years and would provide insurance company names that were affordable.

The Councillors praised the village on their support of the family who lost their child to cancer just before Christmas. Paul suggested that if details can be provided then this could be put in the village newsletter as well as the general press.

Marian confirmed that the allotment grants were being progressed after Graham had raised it with David Rees.

Graham has been talking with David Williams re memorial planning requirements. David will advise Graham on what is required.

The chair thanked everyone for their input then closed the meeting.

Bryn Surgery

11th Feb 2012

Surgery taken with Councillor David Williams (01639 896999) and Councillor Marian Lewis (0797 4656124). Chaired and Minutes by Paul Bulmer

Present: Ray Stratford, John Thomas, Peter Corcoran, Dave Ecton, J Ecton, Mal Jenkins, Gareth Jones, Royden Rogers, Robert Davies, Graham Merryman and Deborah Rogers

Apologies: Graham Rowland, David Whitelock and Steve Easton.

Note: Items in **Red** have been outstanding for more than two months without any satisfactory progress.

Actions Reported as Completed or No Longer Required

The edge of the road from Bryn to Cwmavon had been flayed.

The edges in the park have been cut.

New fencing for the bowling green has been purchased and is ready to be installed.

The Picnic area has been started. Seating, benches and an ornamental wall are to be erected.

David delivered bowls for use by the children. These were however still too large for the youngest children so he will see if he can obtain even smaller ones. David was thanked for obtaining these.

David also reported that the Steps and the Cwms paths (Through the woods and below the Dram road where the trees needed cutting back) had been done.

The stray cattle on the tip, that were making this area unsafe to use, have now been removed.

The road opposite the School has been tarmacked. The residents commented on what an excellent job had been done.

Actions ongoing

LDP proposals: Marian and David confirmed that on 24 Feb there will be a further update for councillors and that at present they are only looking at housing and review of applications for minerals has not yet started.

Goytre Valley: Concern was raised that the shanty town appearance of some of the temporary buildings along this valley appeared to be getting worse not better. David reported that notices had been served and these were still being progressed. Later in the meeting Deborah Rogers had joined the meeting and had asked what the concerns were with the buildings on the Goytre road. The residents of the village and the councillors clearly explained the detail of these concerns to her.

Dram Rd: Further work had been due to start in January. David explained that this had been delayed because the work force had been busy with gritting but would pick up this work as soon as the weather improved.

The Road from Varteg to Chapel Terrace: **is breaking up and needs urgent repair.**

Trees falling down below the Dram road: were reported. The drainage improvements to the Dram road may improve this situation when it is done.

Pedestrian and road user hazards: Drains need reinstating along the Goytre road as the water has been going across the road and freezing causing a severe hazard. David had promised in Feb 2011 that this would be resolved before the next meeting. In the Feb 2012 meeting he reported that this work had now started. D Ecton confirmed this. Marian also confirmed that the road was still scheduled for extensive repairs to bring it back into a serviceable condition.

Maesteg Road Drainage: The residents had reported flooding on the Maesteg road below the Community Centre and on the hill over to Maesteg in the Dec meeting. Both of these issues have been followed up by David in Jan. In the Feb meeting this was reported as complete but the residents pointed out that although the mountain side of the road had been done, the other side drains still needed to be done. The condition of the road coming down the hill from Maesteg to Bryn was also reported as again being in a dangerous condition. A number of fatalities have already occurred on this stretch of road.

Bryngywnnos St. Sewage: The sewage problem leaking out across Bryngywnnos St. had been a problem for over 9 months. Graham Rowland had raised the issue with the Environment Agency and David reported that he had also threatened to take it to the papers. This pressure has at last resulted in a resolution of the problem. The residents asked the Councillors to obtain a report from the council into why no progress had been made, by the Council or the Water Board, for 9 months until the issue was escalated.

Old School Wall: In past meetings residents have brought up concerns about the old school wall bulging and been in danger of collapsing onto the pavement. David has been progressing this and had the wall inspected. The structural people wrote to the owners in Dec to take it further. However no further progress had been made by Feb. This also now needs to be escalated by the Councillors.

Bus Service: For months now the Bryn residents have been complaining about the poor bus service to Bryn. Many other issues relating to the bus service was also raised and possible solutions proposed to the Councillors. The councillors had been requested to find a suitable solution to the problems outlined. In Feb they reported that the Welsh Assembly had imposed a 33% cut on the NPT bus subsidies. However, since the Bryn bus route is not a subsidised route this information is irrelevant. Marian reported that the bus service had offered to monitor the service but had not yet reported back to her. Marian agreed to progress this.

Excessive Litter: Residents raised concern, in the Jan Surgery, about the litter opposite the school. Others noted that the litter in the village had generally increased recently and did not appear to be getting collected. The Councillors reported that this had been addressed but the residents stated the situation was no better. The councillors pointed out that the residents of Bryn were depositing litter faster than it could be picked up and that the situation was only going to improve when the littering habits of residents improved. It was asked what education campaigns could be initiated in the village to improve the situation. To be investigated.

Drainage: In the Jan Surgery it was stated that the Forest clearance is causing the water table to rise with increased run off water in Bryn. The drains need clearing to cope with this. This appeared to be a common problem across the village. It was noted that the gully sucker would often not clear the most blocked drains and it was suggested that work should be checked after completion by a supervisor. Marian had emailed the officer during the Jan meeting so that they would receive the complaint first thing on Monday morning. In the Feb meeting the Councillors reported this work as complete. However, the residents claimed that the most blocked drains were still being ignored. The Councillors agreed to accompany the supervisors in checking the condition of the drains so that work can be scheduled to fix the problem. Exact details of many of the blocked drains were provided to the Councillors by the residents in the meeting.

Allotments: Marian confirmed that the allotment grants were still being progressed after Graham had raised it with David Rees.

Miners Memorial: David is currently awaiting these plans to be submitted. Graham needs to progress this.

New Actions

Robert Davies asked if a Boules area could be made in the Bryn Park. Marian agreed to investigate.

John asked again why litter picking cannot be done while the area is made safe for flaying. The Councillors were to ask this question with the Council.

Marian requested that BRAG provide a list of grants applied for to David Whitlock. He would then be better placed to advise on further options. Paul was to follow this up.

It was reported that water was now draining from the new estate above the Cwmavon Traffic light and running down the hill. This water has been freezing causing a hazard to traffic. It was asked that the cause of this should be investigated. It was also reported that synchronisation of these lights was incorrect and needed fixing urgently.

The chair thanked everyone for their input then closed the meeting.

Bryn Surgery

10th March 2012

Surgery taken with Councillor David Williams (01639 896999) and Councillor Marian Lewis (0797 4656124). Chaired and Minutes by Paul Bulmer

Present: Ray Stratford, John Thomas, Peter Corcoran, Dave Ecton, Royden Rogers, Robert Davies, Graham Merryman, Debra Rogers, David Whitelock

Apologies: Graham Rowland, Steve Easton, J Ecton, Mal Jenkins, Gareth Jones,

Note: Items in **Red** have been outstanding for more than two months without any satisfactory progress.

Actions Reported as Completed or No Longer Required

Pedestrian and road user hazards: Drains needed reinstating along the Goytre road as the water had been going across the road and freezing causing a severe hazard. This concern had been repeatedly raised via the surgery meetings but has at last now been attended to by the council.

Drainage: Blocked drains had appeared to be a common problem across the village. It was noted that the gully sucker would often not clear the most blocked drains. In the Feb meeting the Councillors reported this work as complete. However, the residents claimed that the most blocked drains were still being ignored. The Councillors agreed to accompany the supervisors in checking the condition of the drains so that work could be scheduled to fix the problem. Exact details of many of the blocked drains were provided to the Councillors by the residents in the meeting. In the March meeting the residents confirmed that this problem had now been fully resolved with the help of the Councillors.

Water draining from the new estate above the Cwmavon Traffic light and running down the hill had been reported in the Feb meeting. After Marian Lewis progressed this, a blocked drain was cleared.

Traffic Light Synchronisation problems were reported in Feb that was causing the lights to show green from multiple directions at the same time. This was attended to shortly after the Feb meeting.

Actions ongoing

LDP proposals: Marian reported on the 24 Feb LDP Meeting. Maps were shown at the surgery meeting that detailed where housing and mineral (coal mining) applications had been made. The chair reminded the Councillors that hundreds of letters had already been submitted to the LDP committee by the residents of Bryn objecting to any further mining of any kind in the Bryn area. The Councillors agreed to keep the village informed of any further developments in relation to the mining and to advise on appropriate courses of action to ensure their views are acted upon. Further information in relation to the LDP will be put on display in the Village Hall. David also promised to raise these concerns with Neville Morgan who handles mining applications for the area. Concerns were also raised about the building plans to the area behind the site of the old garage.

Goytre Valley: It was noted that progress was being made by some of the owners of temporary buildings along this valley by tidying them up and painting them green. However there were still some problem buildings and enforcement officers were progressing these.

Dram Rd: Further work had been due to start in January but the work force had been busy with gritting. It was felt this work would also help with the trees that were falling down below this area. **Still awaiting progress on this.**

The Road from Varteg to Chapel Terrace: **is breaking up and needs urgent repair.**

Maesteg Road Drainage: The mountain side of the road had been done but the other side drains still needed to be done. The condition of the road coming down the hill from Maesteg to Bryn was also reported as again being in a dangerous condition. A number of fatalities have already occurred on this stretch of road. **Due to the safety concerns of this long outstanding work the residents of Bryn expect some urgent action on this before it causes further accidents.**

Bryngyros St. Sewage: The sewage problem leaking out across Bryngyros St. had been resolved in Feb but has returned again. The Councillors promised to follow this up immediately.

Old School Wall: In past meetings residents have brought up concerns about the old school wall bulging and been in danger of collapsing onto the pavement. David has been progressing this and had the wall inspected. The structural people wrote to the owners in Dec to take it further. However no further progress had been made by Feb so was escalated by the Councillors. In March David reported that no further action could now be taken as the Council had now decided the wall was safe even though large stones have dropped out of the wall on to the public footpath. **The residents of Bryn totally opposed this ridiculous statement and asked that the Councillors progress it further.**

Bus Service: For months now the Bryn residents have been complaining about the poor bus service to Bryn. Many other issues relating to the bus service was also raised and possible solutions proposed to the Councillors. The councillors had been requested to find a suitable solution to the problems outlined. Marian reported that the bus service had offered to monitor the service but had not yet reported back to her. In March Marian agreed to progress this again.

Excessive Litter: See past minutes for details of this long running issue. After the meeting the Councillors were shown examples of just how bad this is. Residents are encouraged to report all instances of littering to the council to aid in prosecutions. This was now happening in Cwmavon with a number of successful prosecutions taking place. Police surveillance in Bryn had also resulted in a prosecution last month.

Allotments: Marian reported that the proposed allotments had now been designated as a building area on the LDP and could therefore no longer be progressed.

Miners Memorial: David confirmed that these plans have now been submitted by BRAG. Marian has also offered to provide the stone required for this monument after the Forestry commission had declined to provide it from their quarry.

Boules Area Robert Davies had asked if one could be made in the Bryn Park. Marian confirmed that she was progressing this.

Cost Saving Proposal In Feb John had asked again why litter picking cannot be done while the area is made safe for flaying as this would save money by not requiring the safety team to be present twice. In the March meeting David reported that he had raised this with the council but that the council were not interested in saving money.

Grant Applications BRAG had provided a list of grants applied for to David Whitlock who was better placed to advise on further options. In the surgery Paul provided further details on this to DW.

New Actions

Ray Stratford asked if the area by the entrance to the railway track will be finished off now the new wall has been built there. The Fence needs repairing, the tarmac extending, etc. David agreed to follow this up. David reported that the litter on the hill by the timber yard had been collected. However, John pointed out that the litter still needed picking all along this road through to the hill past the golf course.

Robert pointed out that the old school site is both unsafe and open to access by children.

The residents had observed what a great improvement the new picnic area was to the village. Information boards and bins are still to be provided on this site.

David reported that the sewerage pipe being laid on the Varteg site was not part of the new development. The street lights not working on the way in to Bryn was known about. This is awaiting an insurance settlement after a car demolished a lamp post. Also the light covers on the lights over the hill by the golf course have been stolen again after just being replaced in Jan. Thefts of crash barriers have also now started in the area. All residents asked to report any suspicious activities.

A photo of a collapsed drain was provided to the Councillors in the meeting for their attention.

The chair thanked everyone for their input then closed the meeting.

Bryn Surgery

12th May 2012

Surgery taken with Graham Merryman, Councillor David Whitlock (contact details to be provided) and Councillor Marian Lewis (0797 4656124).

Councillor David Williams (01639 896999) was not present

Chaired and Minutes by Paul Bulmer (BRAG)

Present: Ray Stratford, John Thomas, Peter Corcoran, Royden Rogers, Debra Rogers, Mary Conner.

Apologies: Graham Rowland, Steve Easton, J Ecton, Mal Jenkins, Gareth Jones, Dave Ecton, Robert Davies,

Note: Items in **Red** have been outstanding for more than two months without any satisfactory progress.

The chair congratulated all the councillors on their success at the recent elections. An outcome that BRAG had supported based on the past merits of the councillors and not based on politics. Councillor Marian Lewis also announced that she had been made vice Mayor of Neath and Port Talbot. All those present further congratulated Marian on this achievement.

The BRAG Chair Graham Rowland had tendered his apologies to the meeting via the chair but had asked that the Councillors assist with the success of the now imminent Bryn Beast event on the 16th June. The village is very much in need of major grass cutting, weed killing, litter picking and general tidy up. He had pointed out that the £12,000 required to run the event had been mainly raised through donations from private companies such as Tata Steel, The Coop, and many other local companies who had donated generously to the event. However, creating the best visual impression to the many visitors from outside the area was very much in the hands of NPTCBC. Councillor David Whitlock agreed to work with Councillor Marian Lewis on this challenge to make the event the great success it deserves in light of the countless hours put in by the dedicated volunteers organising the event.

Actions Reported as Completed or No Longer Required

A photo of a collapsed drain had been provided to the Councillors in the March meeting for their attention. This had been attended to within a couple of days of being reported. The tarmac that had been requested in front of the new wall at the entrance to the railway line had also been completed. No other items were reported as complete.

Actions ongoing

LDP proposals: See concerns expressed in the March minutes. No further updates available.

Goytre Valley: Same position as reported in March.

Dram Rd: Further work had been due to start in January but the work force had been busy with gritting. It was felt this work would also help with the trees that were falling down below this area. **Still awaiting progress on this. However, Councillor Marian Lewis reported that this was now in this year's budget to be done.**

The Road from Varteg to Chapel Terrace: **is breaking up and needs urgent repair. Councillor Marian Lewis promised to organise a site meeting to initiate some progress.**

Maesteg Road Drainage: The mountain side of the road had been done but the other side drains still needed to be done. The condition of the road coming down the hill from Maesteg to Bryn was also reported as again being in a dangerous condition. A number of fatalities have already occurred on this stretch of road. **Due to the safety concerns of this long outstanding work the residents of Bryn expect some urgent action on this before it causes further accidents. Councillors accepted there had been no progress but now the elections are over this will be given top priority.**

All present expressed their very strong views about the state of the roads generally within the Port Talbot area.

R Rogers tabled a newspaper cutting relating to £3million pounds being spent on urban streets in the borough. It was asked why Bryn did not appear to be benefiting from this spend. He also related to how roads outside the borough appeared to be in much better condition. The Councillors stated that due to the Barnett formula used to allocate money to councils, NPTCBC was the lowest funded in the UK. They also explained how the rates from industry in the borough all went to Cardiff and were not available to the Council to maintain the area.

Bryngywnnos St. Sewage: The sewage problem leaking out across Bryngywnnos St. had been resolved in Feb but had returned again in March. The Councillors promised to follow this up immediately. **This had not been followed up and the problem still persisted. The Councillors suggested the residents phoned the environment office.**

Old School Wall: In past meetings residents have brought up concerns about the old school wall bulging and been in danger of collapsing onto the pavement. David has been progressing this and had the wall inspected. The structural people wrote to the owners in Dec to take it further. However no further progress had been made by Feb so was escalated by the Councillors. **In the May meeting Councillor Marian Lewis stated that the enforcement officer had visited the site again and an enforcement order would be looked at as had been done with the garage.**

Bus Service: For months now the Bryn residents have been complaining about the poor bus service to Bryn. Many other issues relating to the bus service was also raised and possible solutions proposed to the Councillors. The councillors had been requested to find a suitable solution to the problems outlined. Marian reported that the bus service had offered to monitor the service but had not yet reported back to her. In March Marian agreed to progress this again. Mary suggested that the worst time was on a Saturday and could an extra bus be laid on then. The option of a community bus was also asked about. Councillor Marian Lewis reported that the bus company is paid three quarters of a million pound each year by the council to provide a service to areas where it would not otherwise be viable. The residents asked why the council had so little influence on how such a large sum was used by the bus companies. It was requested that the Councillors raise it further such as with the AM or MP.

Excessive Litter: See past minutes for details of this long running issue. After the March meeting the Councillors were shown examples of just how bad this is. Residents are encouraged to report all instances of littering to the council to aid in prosecutions. This was now happening in Cwmavon with a number of successful prosecutions taking place. Police surveillance in Bryn had also resulted in a prosecution in February. The chair mention how he and another had reported littering they had witnessed by a passing car driver. Councillor Marian Lewis suggested he ask the police for the associated crime number then she would follow it up to ensure action was taken.

Allotments: Marian reported in March that the proposed allotments had now been designated as a building area on the LDP and could therefore no longer be progressed. Ray asked that the area at least be cut back and tidied up. Marian agreed to follow this up.

Boules Area Robert Davies had asked if one could be made in the Bryn Park. Marian reported in May that the area opposite the club would be best and asked that BRAG obtain a view on this and report back to her.

Cost Saving Proposal In Feb John had asked again why litter picking cannot be done while the area is made safe for flaying as this would save money by not requiring the safety team to be present twice. John raised this again in the May meeting.

Picnic area at entrance to old railway track

In the March meeting Ray Stratford asked if the area by the entrance to the railway track will be finished off now the new wall has been built there. The Fence needs repairing, the tarmac extending, etc. David agreed to follow this up and the tarmac work has been done. However, in the May meeting Ray repeated the long list of things that still need to be done. Councillor David Whitlock made notes and agreed to follow this up in time for the Bryn Beast event that will be setting off from the area and shown on television.

Street lighting

The street lights not working on the way in to Bryn was known about in the March meeting when it was reported that this was awaiting an insurance settlement after a car demolished a lamp post. Also the light covers on the lights over the hill by the golf course have been stolen again after just being replaced in Jan.

New Actions

Peter raised the issue with the water going off in Bryn and being unsafe to drink when it came back on. Mary added that since she was on a meter it cost her money to run off dirty water. It was reported that the water board should be able to run off the dirty water so the residents do not have to. It was recommended that this issue be raised with the water boards by the residents. The phone number 02920740086 was provided for this purpose.

Ray asked if a mirror could be provided to enable safer crossing of the road from the Royal Oak to the new picnic area. Councillor Marian Lewis agreed this was a good idea and would look in to it.

It was also pointed out that to reduce the need to cross at this point a kissing gate had also been fitted opposite the community centre so that people could walk along inside the fence away from the road. However, this area is also in need of cutting back of the undergrowth to enable access. The chair asked that this be added to the list of jobs to be done before race day.

Peter reported a leak from the Welsh Water pump opposite the Rugby Club.

Debra asked if there was any further information about tarmacking the old railway track. Marian had also heard about this and would find out more.

The chair asked what progress had been made with the tunnel. Marian suggested David could follow that up with Dr Gibbons.

Peter reported that the fencing around the bowling green had only been partially repaired. David took down details to progress.

Further problems with drains were reported and again David made notes on the location of these drains so that the required actions may be taken.

The importance of the water board completing the work on the railway line before the 16th June was stressed. The Council and the water board had provided written confirmation that this would be completed in April. The Councillors agreed to investigate and progress.

After a discussion about local policing, the Councillors brought it to the attention of Bryn residents that the closest police station is now in Neath.

The chair thanked everyone for their input then closed the meeting. Next meeting will be 2nd Saturday in June at 10am in the community centre.