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FULL COUNCIL MEETING OF BISHOPSTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

24/06/24 AT 19:00

CHAIR: L ELLIS

CLERK: ANTHONY JONES

Present: L Ellis, N Matthews, S Gates, S Dunce, B Ball, N Lomas, J Jones, H Hartshorn, R Brace, Cllr L Jones, I Shemilt, K Laurence

Apologies: N Matthews, C Scott L Sudbury, A James.

Statement from BCC:

Following a comprehensive public consultation held by the Bishopston Community Council and published on our website in October 2023, we thoroughly reviewed various guidance, documentation, and community input related to the proposed location of a pump-track on Murton Green. A relevant discovery had been a 'covenant', (more specifically, a draft Scheme of Regulation referring to a covenant established in 1938 but whereabouts unknown) which specified the permissible activities on the land in question. According to this Scheme of Regulation, the activities allowed are limited largely to ball games and community events – of course, we understand that the world has moved on since 1938.

Our examination extended to detailed scrutiny of all pertinent documentation, consultation feedback and planning applications and responses. It is our unwavering commitment to ensure that any project undertaken aligns with legal requirements in parallel with community interests.

A member of our council then discovered a copy of the final Scheme of Regulation dated 30th Dec 1969 which was put in the public domain in February 2024 via BCC website.

The skatepark project were then able to share these public documents with their legal team, and advised the Council that the documents need not halt the progression of their proposed project.

In Spring 2024, the Chair and Clerk uncovered* a significant number of documents that had been held in an archive. These documents contained amongst other papers, deeds of land, a notable amount of correspondence and various agreements around the land in question. BCC's solicitors are now reviewing these documents whilst working with Swansea City Council and the Commons Registration Authority to obtain an up-to-date register of land, Rights and Ownership Sections.

As a Community Council, we remain in favour of a local pump-track project; however, we believe it is necessary to exercise caution and thoroughness in our approach. Therefore, we are diligently working with our solicitors to address any potential legal considerations before proceeding with a full Council vote on the location of the pump track and any final council approval for such provision in the village.

We understand the importance of community input and wish to ensure that all aspects of this project are carefully reviewed to safeguard the interests of all our residents. Your perspectives and feedback are invaluable to us, and we appreciate your patience and understanding as we navigate due process.

At this time, the Community Council is unable to hold a vote on the matter as we wait to receive direction from our solicitors.

The council understands from informal communication with BSP on 18th June 2024 that there is an intention to submit a planning application for a pump track although BCC has not had formal confirmation of this.

Should the Bishopston Skate Park project be considering submitting a planning application for the pump-track, it is important to clarify that this potential application cannot be endorsed at this time with the full support of the Community Council. We value transparency and community involvement in all decisions that impact our community.

Rest assured that the Community Council is committed to keeping you informed and engaged throughout this decision-making process. We will provide further updates as soon as we receive direction from our solicitors and reach a clearer understanding of the next steps.

Thank you for your continued support and cooperation as we strive to make informed decisions in the best interests of the entire Bishopston community

1. Bishopston Skate Park Project Presentation

- We are looking to submit planning on Murton Green on the middle site.
- The Council has expressed interest in conducting its own consultation on this matter.
- In 2020, we initiated the Copley Common Regeneration Project, which included plans for a pump track on the opposite side of the road. We obtained permission from the commoners, the Community Council, and submitted a pre-planning application to Swansea Council. However, this application was declined due to the site's designation as an area of scientific interest, which is the same reason why the cycle track proposal was not approved.
- In February 2022, we approached the Council to propose planning permission for two additional locations on Milton Green. Swansea Council had advised that, instead of the scientifically significant site, we should consider enhancing the existing recreational areas across the road, which include playing fields and other community facilities.
- Following this advice, we collaborated with the Community Council and identified two potential locations: the middle site of Murton Green and an area adjacent to the car park near the football pitch. Both pre-planning applications for these locations received positive feedback. Subsequently, the Community Council, after discussions and meetings with Swansea Council, determined that the middle site on Murton Green was the most viable option.
- The Community Council then conducted a consultation, which concluded on 21st April 2023. This consultation yielded 96 letters of support and 32 letters of objection. The results were publicly released in October 2023, along with the proposal to submit a full planning application. However, the process was halted due to concerns regarding a covenant on the land.
- Today, we seek to discuss why the covenant is preventing us from proceeding with the planning application. We recognize that a thorough understanding of the covenant's implications is necessary before construction can commence. However, we believe that applying for planning permission should proceed along side with the legal review, as the planning process itself is lengthy.
- Swansea Council's planning procedures and legal reviews both take considerable time. Therefore, we propose running these processes in parallel to avoid further delays. It has already been eight months since the consultation closed and over a year since the positive pre-planning feedback for the middle site was received.
- We are here to request the Council's support in moving forward with the planning application. This request does not imply immediate construction but seeks to advance the necessary permissions. We understand that you have a meeting next month and we would like to bring the planning application forward for the Council's review and approval. Delaying this process further will significantly impact the timeline of the project, which has already seen considerable delays.
- We are eager to see progress for the benefit of the younger members of our community and urge the Council to consider our request.

- We are pleased to share that our project is now welcoming its third generation of young people. As previous members head off to university, we have new recruits stepping in. Some of our young members who joined about a year and a half ago are now heading to college, and we are fortunate to have new young people joining us as well.
- It appears that a decision has already been made not to vote on the pump track planning permission prior to this meeting. We seek clarification on whether this decision pertains to the site itself or the planning permission. Despite this, we request to proceed with the planning permission process. This will be a collaborative effort, similar to our pre-planning applications, which were reviewed by the community before submission and by the Council.
- Running the planning and legal processes concurrently through Swansea Council will also provide another opportunity for the community to express their support and concerns. This approach will help ensure that all voices are heard and considered.
- Chair thanked the Bishopston Skate Park Project
- BSP invited the public to discuss plans and proposals post-meeting.
- BSP clarified that funds are available for planning and design adjustments.
- BSP explained design changes to be made for implementation of a natural sound barrier based on pre-planning feedback.
- BSP addressed concerns about the project size, highlighting that it is suitable for the local community and different from larger urban projects. The Pump Track will be same size as one proposed for across the road and not as large as Gorseinon.

2. Public Questions to Bishopston Community Council

Questions were asked from members of the public to the Community Council to answer in due course

3. Declarations of Personnel and Prejudicial interest

S Gates - Pump Track

S Dunce - Common land

5. Approval of minutes of the previous meetings 29/04/24 and 28/05/24

Approved

6. Planning

- 70 Mansfield Road: Make comment: No concern with plans, but will it effect the privacy of neighboring properties
- Chantry Acre Lodge: No comments.
- 10 Ridley Way: Query if it overlooks a garden.
- 9 Copley Close: No comments.
- 42 Mansfield Road: Approved by planners.
- 15 Northlands Park: No comments.
- Copley Cottage: No comments.

7.Accounts for Approval (April and May)

- Approved.
- Request for budget and precept information to be shared monthly.

8. Project updates

• Active Travel Track

- Planning is progressing.
- Public to be invited to an event in August to see the plans.
- Fee to be looked at via chartered surveyors after finding out other parcels of lands are selling for more than the community council have been offered.

Bishopston Community Park

- Benches: All installed.
- Funds: Not yet received.

ACTION

Cllr L Jones to chase funds.

9. Approval of Policies

Approved:

- **Public Participation Policy**
- **Council Communications and Engagement Strategy**

10. Councilor and City Council update, Cllr Lyndon Jones

- Community Bus: Teams meeting scheduled for next Wednesday.
- Fares: £3.50 or £5.00 return. Introduction of short journeys.
- Usage: Nearly 1000 users in recent months.
- Number 14 Bus: Not running effectively, causing delays.
- New street signs being installed.
- CPR and Defibrillator: 60 attendees at the last session.
- Sewerage issues taken up with Welsh Water, biodegradable wipes and cesspits to be checked by Cllr L. Jones.

11. Correspondence/Clerks Report

- New dishwasher to be ordered - link to be shared to council.
- Footpaths: Not maintained in Copley Woods, not official footpaths. Can we look to get them cut again.
- Council email address. N Lomas to run a session at end of next meeting if people feel they need support setting them up.

12. AOB

Bus Shelter: New bus shelter on Northway needs reorientation. Cllr L Jones to report to Swansea.

Gateway to Gower:

- Storage container does not need planning permission due to temporary structure.
- Running sessions to work alongside the community bus.

Drainage

- Thanks to I Shemilt for assistance.
- I Shemilt advised that the pipe is open jointed and in poor condition, may need future replacement.

Meeting closed

Next Full Council Meeting - 29/07/24