

**Report on a meeting regarding the proposed NRG Fest 2010
April 28th 2010 at 6.00pm in the large room, War Memorial Institute.**

Present - Cllrs Newman, Miles, Rowlands, Prichard, Burton, Price, and James. Cllr Van-Rees arrived at 7pm, and took part in discussions about Post Office services only.

In attendance - Mrs Pat Dryden.

Invited Guests - Mrs Bernice Benton, Mr Andy Gilmore, Mr Kevin Campbell, Operations Manager, Showtime Security and Mr Matt Davies, Managing Director of Showtime Security.

Members of the Public - Mrs June Duncan, Mr Roger Davies, Mrs Gill Lloyd, Mr Richard Cronchey, Mr Ray Hancock, Mr Trevor Jones, Mr Andy Brown and Mrs Jacque Brown.

Cllr Newman thanked everyone for attending the meeting, and advised that although members of the public are welcome to attend, they do so purely as observers and cannot take part in the discussions. There is to be an open public meeting on May 4th at 6pm in this room and members of the public will have the opportunity to air their views on that occasion.

Cllr Newman said that the Town Council have been approached by many people who are very concerned about the proposed festival and the lack of consultation that has taken place regards staging the event. Only one article has been placed in Grapevine and that was asking for volunteers but not saying the event would take place in Llanwrtyd Wells.

Mr Gilmore had several newspapers with articles about the proposed festival, the earliest being a B&R Express from November 2009 where there was a report on the Oxjam concert, and mention was made of a major festival to take place in Llanwrtyd Wells, which at that time was called Gilmore Fest. There were further articles outlining the proposition in the B&R and Mid Wales Journal in January, March and April 2010, the contents of which were read out at the meeting. A previous public meeting had been advertised in local shop windows and had taken place, but only around 12 people attended.

Mrs Benthon said she and Mr Gilmore had approached Cllr Van-Rees about the use of Cae Coch, and in ignorance had made the assumption that he would have told the Town Council. Cllr Newman said it was not Cllr Van-Rees' responsibility to inform the Town Council, and Mrs Benton said they realise that now and wanted to apologise.

Mr Gilmore said he had been advertising the event for some while, and he thought that with being a small town, everyone would know. Cllr Newman said that there had been no approach what so ever to the community to ask whether they wanted a festival of this nature. She continued that there should have been an open evening and full consultation last year, and that when they had invited PCC for discussions, they should have invited the TC also. Mrs Benton said that it was the first time they had organised anything this big, they had spoken with of people who were supportive so wrongly assumed all was OK. Mrs Benthon said they had received many letters of support and these were presented to members. Mrs Benton said that in hindsight they realise they should have come to the Town Council and had consultation with local people and for this they apologised.

Cllr Newman asked would it not have been better to have had an open meeting to consult the town when the idea first came to them. Mr Davies said he felt there was more opposition because things hadn't been done properly and people consulted with. There had been meetings with the Environmental Health, Police and Fire Service to find out what was required, but Cllr James said they were using the name of the town without its permission. Cllr Price said that as local Fire Officer he had not been consulted, and that he had spoken with Dave Saunders who said he had promised nothing. Mrs Benthon said she accepted that they had made mistakes, but all intentions are good to raise money for charity, and provide good events for the town. She continued that she has always attempted to do her best for the town and there was no intention to upset anyone, but this had happened through lack of experience. She said she was very sorry, but couldn't turn the

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clock back, only apologise. Mr Gilmore said he had visited houses nearest the field and the people he had spoken to had not objected; however he had not spoken with everyone.

Cllr Newman asked if this was planned to be a one off or yearly event, and Mr Gilmore said that if it was a success he hoped it would be yearly, on the same site if possible. This year money raised will go to 'Help the Heroes' and Bromsgrove Hall, but next year all the proceeds would go to the town. Cllr Newman asked if the landowner aware they planned it to be a yearly event, and Mrs Benton and Mr Gilmore answered yes. Cllr Newman asked if the landowner was aware they would like to use the same site yearly, and they said he was aware but no agreement had been made.

Cllr Price asked whether the application is for a licence for a one off event or an event to be held at the same time each year. Mr Gilmore said he would like the town to support the event, however if the town don't want future events, then they won't happen. Mr Davies said that even if the licence is agreed, the event won't take place if the TC objects. Cllr Rowlands said that there was no date on the licence application so the event could be held anytime.

Cllr James said the event is advertised as family friendly. What is the difference in that and a rave? Mrs Benton gave an explanation. Cllr Newman said it felt like a contradiction for a family event to have alcohol until 2am and music until 4am. Mrs Benton and Mr Gilmore explained that the festival is aimed at all age groups, and there would be many things for children during the day, including bouncy castle; face painting, funfair, story telling tent and Tony Bain would be there with a scout tent and activities. There would be a big variety of different music, soul, blues, Irish, 60's etc., the main stage will close at midnight, a smaller stage with amplified music until 2am and there would then be unplugged (non amplified) music until 4am and bar until 2am. Children will not be allowed in the bar, the music would not be loud so would not cause disturbance. Mr Gilmore said that local businesses are being encouraged to have a stall at the event. Cllr Rowlands said he had heard from Tony Bain that he will not now be taking the scouts to the event.

Mr Davies and Mr Campbell said the whole site would be surrounded by fencing 7ft high including the allotment garden site. This is to prevent non payers getting in and would provide security for people living in town and people attending the event. There will be 24 hour security officers who are all fully trained and experienced, 20 by day and 18 by night, and a response team who are crisis trained plus the stage crew. There will be personnel patrolling the camping area, the parking area, on the gates and if necessary within the town. Mr Davies said that that a controlled and limited number of people would be allowed to leave the event and come into town at any one time, and that if people are concerned about drunken yobs, they needn't be. If people are concerned about damage to their property, if that were to happen, he would pay. Showtime Security Ltd provides the security for the Royal Welsh Show and cover 52 shows/festival a year. There are always fewer problems at music festivals than agricultural shows. Mr Davies said he gives away £60k per year to charities, and will be standing the cost of the fencing for this event himself.

The organisers were asked about ticket sales, 500 have been reserved for musicians etc. and to give free to local people, and just over 500 have been reserved online. No one has yet paid for tickets and people reserving tickets have to provide an email address.

Foss Road and Station Road will not be closed, but will be for access to residents only. Access to the event by car will be via Beulah. Once attendees have parked up, they will walk to the event and to and from the camping area. Cefn Ghastr has offered extra camping space. Mr Gilmore confirmed they had not yet had discussions with Highways, and members shared concerns if emergency vehicles were needed for properties near the event site. Mr Davies said there are similar problems with all events; the Royal Welsh for instance often has 8 miles tail back of traffic. There are to be 60 recycling bins, 29 toilets, 3 disabled toilets, plus 2 shower blocks, the organisers have taken advice from Environmental Health and a Health and Safety expert.

7pm – Cllr Van-Rees arrived. Cllr Newman asked Cllr Van-Rees to confirm that neither he nor his family would have any financial gain from the event. Cllr Van-Rees said he could confirm that, he would declare in interest, explain his situation then sit at the back.

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Cllr Van-Rees said he had agreed for the event being held on his land because when he first became councillor, most other members had seen active service as he had. On Saturday, his regiment will march through the streets of Brecon to receive the Freedom of the Town. Were the proceeds of the event only going to 'Help the Heroes', he would not declare an interest, however as Bromsgrove Hall is to benefit, he had taken advice and declares an interest because he is a Trustee and the Chairman. Cllr Newman thanked Cllr Van-Rees for making his position clear; Cllr Van-Rees took no part in the discussions regarding NRG Fest 2010.

Mr Gilmore said the licence will regulate the sound and determine how many decibels are appropriate given the proximity of residential properties. He confirmed that although he has a powerful sound system, this is not so it can be played loudly, but that the sound quality is better at a lower volume. He said that 'Help the Heroes' will be present, and hopefully lots of military families will attend.

Mr Davies said as there is opposition to the event as it has been planned, so it might be better if the TC and local people put together a suggestion for how they would like the event to be. He said there was no reason why the timings couldn't be flexible, and that although the maximum attendance is 5,000 it is unlikely more than 2,500 will attend and then some will only come for one day, or to see certain bands. Mr Davies said the fencing would cost him around £8k and he was happy to pay this himself to support the town in this event. Mr Davies said that he will ensure all properties around the site have his card so they can contact him personally 24 hours a day should there be an issue. His number is on the vehicle and he is happy for this to be in Grapevine.

Mr Gilmore said the festival would be filmed for Festival Diaries and would be on Sky TV. When asked about the mission statement, Mr Gilmore explained that if the festival were to be a yearly event, he hoped to finance a music section with all the equipment for Ysgol Dolafon. Also to finance some solar or wind powered energy for local people.

Cllr Newman offered to chair the public meeting, but said that the organisers must be willing to consult, listen and act upon whatever is said. She thanked everyone for attending and invited guests and member of the public left.

Cllr Price said too many assumptions had been made, and Cllr James said that although it was to support two very worthy causes, it might be at cost to the town. It was felt that Mr Davies and Mr Campbell had made very worthy contributions to the discussions; they answered questions openly and were willing to suggest compromises. Cllr James said Showtime Security had been at the first Food Festival and he had found them very good.

Members felt that people walking to and from cars and camping might well be noisy. Cllrs Newman and James are to have an informal meeting with Chief Superintendent Hughson on May 18th and they will raise the issue with him. A decision was taken to write to the Licencing Department outlining concerns and requesting that the licence is not until 2am and 4am.

Post Office Services

Cllr Van-Rees joined the meeting. The clerk had today received a letter from the Network Change Operations Manager admitting that the service received has fallen short of what should be expected. The clerk had also received an email from Boughrood who have had the same experiences as Llanwrtyd Wells. Cllr Newman had spoken with Richard Brown of Consumer Focus Wales who said that the level of dissatisfaction with this kind of mobile service is widespread. He would be looking to meet with members and Post Office after the elections, and Boughrood would be welcome to attend.

Pat Dryden
29/04/2010