

Llantrisant Fawr Community Council

Incorporating the wards of Llantrisant, Llangwm and Llansoy

Minutes of the Ordinary Council meeting held at the Parish Hall, Llangwm, on Tuesday 17th October 2023 at 7.00pm.

Present: Cllr. David Williams (Vice Chairman), Cllr. John Watkins, Cllr. Bob Trigg, Cllr. James Hawkins, Cllr. Gwynfor Gardiner, Cllr. Steve Jolliffe, Mrs. Jayne Stoodley (Clerk).

1. Apologies for Absence: Cllr. Glyn Williams (Chairman), Cllr. Malcolm Hatfield, County Cllr. Rachel Buckler, County Cllr. Fay Bromfield.

2. Visit by Carl Touhig of Monmouthshire County Council

Mr Touhig had been invited to join Councillors at their meeting to talk about his role as Head of Neighbourhood services within Monmouthshire CC and to give an insight into the work carried out by his department. He began by giving an overview of the services they covered, including Waste, Grounds Maintenance, (A roads, Highways and Welsh Government roads) potholes, drainage, and gullies.

He spoke about the poor budget received by the department and how they had taken on jobs from outside of the Council to raise enough revenue to complete work within the Monmouthshire C.C. area. However, he went on to say a further injection of funds had been received recently and they were now hopeful this would enable maintenance rather than complete overhauls/replacement going forward.

Councillors highlighted concerns over their individual issues:

Cllr Gardiner

Raised the problem of Kerbs and Tarmac being covered with grass along the main road into Gwernesney. Mr Touhig confirmed that spraying of the weeds and grass at kerb sides had been cut back partly due to budget but also from an environmental perspective. Alternative applications have been tried but to little effect unfortunately.

Cllr Trigg

Pointed out that Tarmac paths locally were breaking up due to poor maintenance. Leaving a gritty mess which could no longer be classed as a path. This was particularly noticeable in the area of Yew Tree Cottage down to the Mill House in Llangwm.

Reported the lack of Gullies in the area being swept and kept free of debris even after the issue was reported. The main road from The Lodge at Cefn Tilla to the start of the dual carriageway in Usk is always badly affected by flooding and this impacts on the whole area.

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Date _____

Cllr Trigg questioned the poor gritting of some roads in Winter and highlighted the impact this has on children travelling to school. Carl Touhig advised that the foremost concern of the Gritting team was to keep main roads open and passable. He added if there were any areas where this was not the case he would investigate further.

A problem with the Culvert on the B4235 Llangwm was also highlighted, particularly in the area around the old Bridge Inn. This produces flooding of the road which allows water to pour in through the farm gates causing Hay bales to float and become waterlogged.

Cllr Hawkins

Reported an issue on the road coming out of Usk where the grass on the verge is left long and uncut. After August time the long grass can become very wet, falling over forcing Pedestrians to walk in the road. This is not a safe option and this stretch of verge should be kept mowed.

Additionally, around the area of the Flood Barrier where flailing is carried out, the sides of the bank are being left uncut which adds to the problem of flooding and this needs to be addressed.

A question was raised about the appearance of Flower symbols on the main road out of Usk and Mr Touhig confirmed these symbols were to identify areas where hedges and flower types were purposely to be left uncut.

Councillors suggested these ideas needed to be better communicated, as communities were unaware of their intention, which meant it was a good incentive poorly advertised.

Councillors also raised concerns over:

Countryside Hedges being left uncut during the growing months, causing safety issues for cyclists and motorists alike and make for dangerous road conditions in late summer.

Waste Management - concern was raised over those communities still waiting for new reuseable recycling bags. It was confirmed reuseable bags were being distributed to all Communities over the coming months and that Single use bags would no longer be offered. This was a better choice for the environment and would also help to save money in the long run. Mr Touhig advised that the replacement reuseable bags will be rolled out to the North of the County in November and to the remainder of the County by the New Year.

Mr Touhig confirmed he had noted the issues raised and would endeavor to tackle those problems which are still outstanding and awaiting action. He added the Community Council could contact him directly with any issues that remained unresolved or required more immediate attention.

Cllr David Williams thanked Mr Touhig for joining Councillors and said it had proved a very interesting and valuable discussion for everyone.

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Date _____

3. Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 26th September 2023:

Agreed as a correct record by all present and signed by the Vice Chairman.

4. Matters Arising from the Council Meeting held on 26th September 2023:

Llangwm Parish Hall

Following last month's decision by the Councillors and starting in the New Year one in four meetings will be held at the Greyhound Inn Llantrisant. The dates for these meetings would be set later in the meeting.

'We Don't Buy Crime' Presentation'

It was agreed at the last meeting to further explore the possibility of taking part in the Gwent Police innovative approach to fighting crime and to offer the option of the scheme to all of Llantrisant Fawr's Communities.

Councillors proposed engaging with their communities by placing a short explanation of the scheme onto their social media platforms and the Llantrisant Fawr Website. Feedback and interest would be monitored by the Clerk and enable Councillors to gauge whether participation in the scheme would be viable.

The Clerk circulated a notice she had prepared giving a brief outline of the scheme which Councillors could use to post within their communities.

Broadway Broadband

Correspondence received from County Cllr Bromfield advised that following an update from Cath Fallon at Monmouthshire C.C. She was now able to confirm that Broadway Broadband had been taken over by a company called Voneus. Customers will already have been notified that everything will continue as normal.

Llantrisant Fawr Community Council Website –

The Clerk confirmed she had spoken with Matthew Hammond of the IT Medic with a view to rectifying the current issues experienced by Councillors when setting up/using their Llantrisant Fawr email addresses.

A quote had been obtained for the cost of setting up a similar named domain to host the replacement email addresses using an Outlook 365 package. However, following discussion and consideration of the costs, Councillors decided it was too expensive to proceed. Instead, it was agreed the Community Council would continue using the Clerks Llantrisant Fawr email for all contact and that she would forward mail for individual Councillors as necessary.

The Clerk confirmed she would request Isobel Brown to remove the Councillors individual email accounts from the website as they were no longer required.

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Date _____

Defibrillator updates

The Clerk reported that Cllr Glyn Williams had notified the Church Warden at Llantrisant that the Defibrillator housed in the Church Porch currently was to be moved to a more accessible location at the village Bus Shelter, which he was happy with. It was also confirmed by Cllr Gardiner that two new boxes had been ordered to house both the Llantrisant and Gwernesney Defibrillators. This would ensure they remained in good condition and unaffected by weather conditions.

Renovation of the bench and noticeboard at the site of Llangwm Parish Hall

Cllr Gardiner advised that he had still to contact the Prison Governor at Usk regarding the renovation of the Bench and noticeboard. But that he would update Councillors on any progress at the November meeting.

5. Highways Issues: Update on Matters reported:

Llantrisant Highways Issues-Collapsed Road near the Bridge at the R113 towards Wentwood. County Cllr Bromfield sent an update advising that whilst roadworks had been completed the bridge had still not been repaired. The structural Engineer had been chased and hopefully the Bridge would be repaired very soon.

Llantrisant and Llanllowell Speed Consultation

The Clerk had forwarded correspondence received from County Cllr Bromfield, which included attachments on the speed consultation. The signage for the new speed limits is still awaiting installation and is due to take place after the 8th October.

Gwernesney – dangerous road conditions for local children walking to meet school buses. Monmouthshire C.C. Reference :16583772

The Highways department previously confirmed the authority would not support any road alterations due to the minimum width required for the Lower Raglan Road. However, Araf/Slow markings could be considered along with Pedestrians in road signs and the possibility of having the school bus pick up points changed.

Additional concerns had also been raised previously over the speed limit and road layout in the area. Both of which pose additional danger to residents. County Councillors are currently looking into both of these outstanding issues.

New Highways issues raised by Councillors:

Cllr Hatfield had advised the Clerk of Potholes located on the small road from the B4235 towards 'Trevella'. (Monmouth Road Map 64.3). Ever increasing Potholes were present in that area and a further reported Pothole was situated on the edge of the road to the B4235. Although this is a minor road it services several properties in the vicinity. The Clerk had reported these issues on the Monmouthshire CC Website.

New issues raised by others:

None

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Date _____

6. Crime – Neighbourhood Police updates:

Reports were received and forwarded to Councillors.

7. Monmouthshire County Council Report:

County Councillors informed and updated members on issues relating to local communities throughout the month.

8. Finance:

- a) Financial Accounts: A Statement of Expenditure and Income for the period ending the 29th September 2023 was received, AGREED and signed by the Vice Chairman.
- b) Bank Statement: For the period 2nd September – 29th September 2023 was received and signed by the Vice Chairman.
- c) Expenditure: The following expenses were APPROVED.

Clerks Salary October 2023 (incl additional 6 hours worked during September)- £638.87

Clerks Expenses 2nd – 29th October 2023 - £51.26

Green Grafter Grass cutting Llangwm October 2023 - £152.

Llangwm Parish Hall Rental - cost with Electricity for September 2023 - £45.57

Total £887.70

d) Annual Appraisal and Review of Clerks Salary

It was agreed both the Appraisal and Review of the Clerks Salary would be moved forward to the November meeting.

e) Audit Wales – Llangwm Council Audit

Correspondence was received from Mr Deryck Evans requesting urgent action be taken regarding outstanding Audits for Llangwm Council. Councillors were in strong agreement that no further action was required by Llantrisant Fawr as an independent Council following the merger in 2022. Cllr Hawkins advised the Clerk to forward a copy of his own email reply which had been sent to the other Llantrisant Fawr Councillors by way of a response to Mr Evans, as this had laid out in clear terms the Community Council's intentions.

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Date _____

f) National Westminster Bank - Reordering of Cheque books

The Clerk explained new cheque books were no longer sent automatically by the Bank and were difficult for her to reorder as she wasn't a signatory on the Bank account. The bank suggested a letter of authorisation be sent to enable the Clerk to reorder cheque books on the Council's behalf. Cllr Watkins and Cllr Hawkins both signed a letter requesting this to be actioned by the bank going forward.

9. Correspondence:

A letter was received from One Voice Wales which included a Guide to taking part in D Day 80 on the 6th June 2024. Events are being organised throughout the Country to mark the 80th Anniversary of the D Day landings on the beaches of Normandy, France on the 6th June 1944.

Councillors felt that any commemoration would likely follow events held during the Jubilee year when Beacons were lit countrywide. It was suggested something similar might take place at the Beacon in Llansoy, bringing people together for the evening as one whole community. Cllr David Williams agreed to make enquiries with the Landowner and to establish if he would be happy for such an event to take place.

Cllr Hatfield had contacted the Clerk prior to the meeting stating that should the issue of commemorating D Day 80 be raised at the meeting; He would like to make it clear that he would not support any Council involvement in this.

Correspondence was received from Adele Skinner, Communications and Engagement Officer for Wales NHS. The letter advised that in a recent evaluation of the Minor Injury Unit Services, an imbalance between opening hours and patient demand was highlighted.

The Health Board was seeking to ensure that valuable resources be used as effectively as possible and wanted the public to be able to consider any proposals that were being made thoroughly and to provide feedback through a Survey and by attending formal public engagement sessions.

The Clerk had forwarded the letter to Councillors and highlighted the issue locally on the Llangwm notice boards. Cllr Watkins commented that the whole of A & E Services were currently in great medical disarray and difficulties were experienced staffing overnight services at the Minor Injuries units and he urged Councillors to complete the survey. Cllr David Williams suggested a letter be sent on behalf of the Community Council to highlight our opinion on the proposed Closures and Cllr Watkins agreed he would be happy to compose this along with the Clerk.

An appeal was received from Welsh Air Ambulance requesting a contribution to their Life Saving Service. Councillors confirmed the agreement made earlier in the year to only support local communities should stand and whilst the cause was very worthy, Councillors should remain with their original decision.

Numerous Agenda for Meetings and Training sessions for online attendance were received throughout the month and these were NOTED by Councillors.

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Date _____

10. Planning

Cllr Gwyn Williams had raised with the Clerk the number of planning applications received by the Council. He felt far less were being received now than in the past. The Clerk contacted Planning services to check whether all applications in relation to the areas covered by the Community Council were being forwarded. This was confirmed as being the case and the clerk was advised that applications for the Community Council could also be viewed directly on the Monmouthshire Website.

Application received: Number DM/2023/01337
Change of use of two existing traditional Barns to provide residential accommodation.
Nanty Gelli to Perthcretig Farm Llangwm Usk NP15 1EX

Application received: DM/2022/00235
Stables with day room/accommodation and Barn – revised plans
Upper Maerdy Farm Red Hill to the B4235 Llangeview Usk NP15 1EY

Councillors had no comments to add on these proposals and agreed there was no reason to object.

Updates on previous issues:

Mill Meadow Cottage and Stables
Original Planning Permission had been for one building to be used between the months of March and October. Cllr Trigg reported this had been disregarded over the last two years.
County Cllr Buckler was investigating the issue with Planning and would report back to Council.

A further issue regarding the Planning Application for ref DM/2020/01463 – Wern Panna Llangwm. Buildings have now been erected and although the original plans show an Entrance Gate 5 Meters back from the carriageway, this was currently not the case.
County Cllr Buckler was investigating the issue with Planning and would report back to Council.

Cllr Hawkins had previously raised concerns over the hard landscaping depot which had been erected on common land at Allt Y Bella and asked whether Planning Permission had been received for this.
County Cllr Buckler had raised the issue with Planning and was awaiting an update.

New Issues raised:

Cllr Hawkins raised the issue of widening work having been carried out at the Olway Brook Usk and that in the area just before the Pumping Station a mobile home had now been sited. The Councillor wonders whether Planning Permission has been received for this.

The Clerk will follow up these concerns with the County Councillors.

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Date _____

Llantrisant Councillors raised concerns over the Motocross events which have begun taking place in the local area. The event appears to be ongoing and several residents had brought this to the Councillors attention.

The Clerk will follow up these concerns with the County Councillors.

11. Ward Reports –

Cllr Gardiner had previously highlighted an issue regarding a large tree overhanging telegraph lines alongside the gateway into the field on the main road in Gwernesney. Following further discussion, it was suggested the Transport department also be made aware of the problem. Cllr Gardiner has provided photographs to County Cllr Bromfield and the matter is being investigated.

Cllr Gardiner raised concerns over recent activities taking place with the Army and vehicles at the Usk Showground. The field was occupied by 23 Vehicles for around 6 nights and led to much activity in the field including patrolling which was carried out late at night. Residents were quite alarmed by the experience. No notice had been received and Cllr Gardiner felt in the circumstances prior notice should have been given to residents.

The Clerk will follow up on these concerns with the County Councillors.

12. HMPS

A future date for a meeting is still to be announced.

13. Any Other Business:

Cllr Jolliffe proposed the idea of holding a Children's Christmas party in the Llangwm Parish Hall in December. Councillors felt this was an excellent idea and said it would be a good way of engaging with the local communities. Councillors agreed they would be prepared to help fund and support the occasion. Cllr Jolliffe confirmed he would look into what would be required to put on such an event and report back at the next meeting.

Date of next Meeting: Tuesday 21st November 2023 at 7:30 pm

Date of future Meetings for 2024:

Tuesday 16th January at 7.30 pm to be held at The Greyhound Inn Llantrisant
Tuesday 20th February at 7.30 pm to be held at Llangwm Parish Hall
Tuesday 19th March at 7.30 pm to be held at Llangwm Parish Hall
Tuesday 16th April at 7.30 pm to be held at The Greyhound Inn Llantrisant
Tuesday 21st May at 7.30 pm to be held at Llangwm Parish Hall
Tuesday 18th June at 7.30pm to be held at Llangwm Parish Hall
Tuesday 16th July at 7.30pm to be held at Llangwm Parish Hall
Tuesday 17th September at 7.30pm to be held at The Greyhound Inn Llantrisant
Tuesday 15th October at 7.30pm to be held at Llangwm Parish Hall
Tuesday 19th November at 7.30pm to be held at Llangwm Parish Hall

There being no further business, the Vice Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.30 pm.

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Date _____