

Llantrisant Fawr Community Council

Incorporating the wards of Llantrisant, Llanllowell, Gwernesney, Llangwm and Llansoy

**Minutes of the Ordinary Council meeting held at the Parish Hall, Llangwm, on Tuesday
16th July 2024 at 7.00pm.**

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

1. Apologies for Absence:

Cllr. John Watkins, Cty Cllr Rachel Buckler, Cty Cllr Fay Bromfield.

2. Visit by Christian Schmidt – Passenger Planning & Transport Mgr, Monmouthshire C.C.

Cllr David Williams welcomed Christian Schmidt to the meeting and thanked him for coming to talk about the changes that had taken place on Route 63 since the retendering of Bus Services in Monmouthshire.

Many people were affected by the alterations made to the Route 63 timetable when Newport Buses took over from Anslow earlier this year. The consequences of these changes on local communities left them needing to find alternative ways of reaching their places of work and study. Either relying on lifts from others or even in some cases needing to purchase an additional vehicle to resolve the issue.

Christian Schmidt explained that following Covid, bus services were being used infrequently and funding issues became a problem across the whole County. Although the Welsh Government had promised to provide funding, there were concerns these funds would be insufficient to meet needs and so Monmouthshire Council took the decision to only run tendered bus services. Bus Companies were invited to tender their bids and Newport Bus Services provided the lowest quote and so was accepted.

The previous service provided by Anslow had offered two extra runs in their timetable as they were required to get their buses back to Chepstow, so were happy to provide these additional runs. However, when Newport Buses took over Route 63 they confirmed it wouldn't be possible to continue this option as it meant they would arrive too late at Usk College.

Mr Schmidt said it was a case of deciding between those services which were value for money and those that weren't.

Councillors raised several issues surrounding these changes. Cllr Hatfield commented residents had been provided with a far worse service, saying there had been no consultation with the public to discuss which routes were really needed. He asked for his comments to be reported back to Monmouthshire so as to make them aware of the disruption these changes had caused.

Signed _____

Date _____

In reply Mr Schmidt said this was set to change, advising over the next couple of years a law was being introduced making public consultation standard.

Cllr Trigg raised the point about bus timetables not being available or widely advertised, saying people need to be made aware of any changes to the service that were taking place. Mr Schmidt advised current timetables were available on the Newport Buses website and had also been advertised on social media. But Councillors said people often arrive at a bus stop to check the Bus times and with very poor mobile phone signal in the area, they were then unable to go online and find out the information.

Mr Schmidt agreed more infrastructure was required which would enable BusTimetables to be displayed and it was something they were hoping to provide going forward.

Cllr Trigg also asked about Hail and Ride and whether this was still in operation. He explained passengers seem to be able to get picked up anywhere along the bus route on their outward journey but on the return buses wouldn't stop for them in the same location. He said this was an important part of rural life especially for those living further away from a bus stop. Mr Schmidt agreed he would check this option with Newport Bus Services and come back with his findings.

Cllr David Williams asked if there were any further points anyone would like to raise and Hefina Rendle who was present at the meeting said she would like to highlight that the Newport Bus Service Drivers did not show enough care driving on the roads in the area and often drifted over the white lines causing other motorists to pull over into the hedgerow to avoid them.

She had also raised the issue of cost and how much Monmouthshire C.C. had paid Newport Buses for their tender, but Mr Schmidt replied he was unable to provide these figures and would need to ask Monmouthshire C.C. formally for the data.

Mr Schmidt ended by saying that he could not see there would be any improvements to Route 63 in the near future but that they were trying to concentrate on providing better information to everyone. He finished by saying if anyone had further questions they would like to raise with him, they should feel free to email him directly.

Cllr David Williams thanked Mr Schmidt for coming along to the meeting and discussing the issues that had arisen following the retendering.

The meeting with Christian Schmidt had been advertised to local Communities and anyone who had been affected by these changes was invited to come along and put forward their views but unfortunately attendance had been low.

Following Mr Schmidt's departure Hefina Rendle said she would like to raise the issue of Voneus Broadband. She explained she had been experiencing problems with her service once again and would like to advise anyone in a similar position, to contact the company and register their complaints via email. She said contact in this way often resulted in an engineer visit and the router being replaced, which ensured the signal was the best it could be.

Signed _____

Date _____

3. Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 18 June 2024:

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

4. Matters Arising from the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 18 June 2024:

Llangwm Parish Hall Funding Meeting

Confirmation is awaited for the proposed date of the meeting on October 15th. Cllr Watkins to advise.

Defibrillator updates

The Gwernesney defibrillator which had been returned to Zoll, the manufacturer in the United States for a service has now been reported as lost in transit on its return to the U.K. The company apologised for this and has agreed to arrange for a free replacement to be delivered as soon as possible.

At last month's meeting Councillors raised concerns over the replacement housing unit which had been suggested. They felt issues could arise in the future due to the box needing to be mounted on a neighbour's fencing. It was suggested a free-standing unit might be a better option. Cllr Gardiner agreed to research further and report back on his findings.

Postbox Llansoy

Cllr David Williams was able to confirm that since the last meeting a replacement post box had now been installed in the village.

5.Highways issues:

Update on Matters reported:

Speed watch Gwernesney and Llangwm

An update received from Cty Cllr Bromfield advised data collected from the installation of speed monitoring strips laid by Monmouthshire C.C. in Gwernesney, showed that road users were not travelling much over 30mph. But at a meeting that followed with Gareth Freeman from Highways, he confirmed the data was supportive of reducing the speed limit in Gwernesney, from the current 40mph to 30mph and this would result in all-road markings and signage being updated also.

The data from Llangwm has not yet been received but will be reported on by Cty Cllr Buckler when it becomes available. Cty Cllr Bromfield added they also hoped to put a plan in place to increase road markings, giving the appearance of narrowing of the road which should help to slow traffic.

No further updates have yet been received regarding the installation of the 30 mph Speed signs in Llangwm and Cty Cllr Buckler will approach Monmouthshire C.C. to establish when this might be completed.

Fly Tipping in Llantrisant

Cllr Jolliffe reported that building materials which had been left on the side of the road in Llantrisant had still not been collected. The clerk confirmed she had already reported this to Monmouthshire C.C. but that she would follow up on the matter.

Signed _____

Date _____

New Highways issues raised by Councillors:

Cllr Jolliffe reported that a 30mph sign had been taken from the back of an existing double sided speed sign in Llantrisant, at the entrance to the bridge just under the A449.

Cllr Hawkins reported several Highways issues, including:

At the point of the 60mph sign located on Llanllowell Lane, a Give Way sign is hanging by a thread and very worn. Additionally, a sign indicating Llangwm and the Grass Ski Centre, is out of date. The Centre has been closed for many years and a replacement sign is required for Llangwm alone.

There are also 2 grit boxes that have been smashed by the hedge cutter, the first is opposite the Almshouses at Llangeview and the other is lower down the hill.

The clerk will report these issues to Monmouthshire C.C. Highways dept.

Cllr Glyn Williams raised an issue that had been brought to his attention by a group of residents and users of Gwern Ddu Lane, Llantrisant. They had presented him with a signed letter, following recent resurfacing work carried out near the Almshouses at Coed Cwnwr. The surplus tarmac had been dumped just a couple of hundred yards away from potholes which make up a section of Gwern Ddu Lane and which is now barely passable for normal vehicles.

Residents said the lane had been neglected for two years and several of the holes are deep enough to cause expensive damage. They felt the repairs required had been given a low priority and asked if the Council would commit to carrying out these repairs during this summer.

The Clerk will forward the residents' letter to Monmouthshire C.C. Highways dept.

New issues raised by others:

A report was received that the posts for the Llangwm signs at both entrances to the village had rotted and needed to be replaced.

The clerk will report the issue to Monmouthshire C.C. Highways dept.

6. Crime Prevention and Neighbourhood Police updates:

Reports were received and forwarded to Councillors.

7. Monmouthshire County Council Report:

County Councillors had informed and updated members on issues relevant to their local Communities throughout the month.

8. Finance:

- a) The Bank Statement: For the period 30th May 2024 – 28th June 2024 was received and signed by the Chairman.
- b) Financial Accounts: A Statement of Income and Expenditure for the period ending the 28th of June 2024 was received, AGREED and signed by the Chairman.

Signed _____

Date _____

c) The Bank Reconciliation: For the period 30th May 2024- 28th June 2024 was received and signed by the Chairman.

d) Expenditure: The following expenses were APPROVED:

Clerks Net Salary for July 2024 (including an additional 8 hours worked in June)
Total- £590.90

Clerks Net Salary for August 2024
Total - £501.70

Clerks Expenses and Sundries from Monday 1st July – Friday 26th July 2024.
Total - £57.74

Audit Wales Fee (Audit of accounts on behalf of Llangwm C.C.)
Total - £355.00

Green Grafter Grounds Maintenance
Total - £160

The Parish Hall Llangwm -June - £45 plus 1 unit of electricity @ 0.57p per unit
Total - £45.57

Total £1,710.91

e) **The dissolved Llangwm Community Council Audits: 2020/21, 2021/22, 2022/23.**

The Invoice has now been received from Deryk Evans of Audit Wales for the work carried out on behalf of Llangwm Community Council. Last month Councillors said they had understood the cost was to be paid by Monmouthshire C.C. The clerk wrote to John Pearson to query this and he confirmed there was no funded or promise of costs being covered by the County Council for the dissolution process. The new councils were absorbed into the previous councils with whom the responsibility would transfer. As the residuary successor for Llangwm, the fee is required to be paid by Llantrisant Fawr Community Council.

Cllr Glyn Williams said that he wished to make the point that it was with reluctance he felt Llantrisant Fawr should be required to pay Audit Wales the charge for these services.

9. Correspondence

A list of Meeting notices was received from Monmouthshire C.C. throughout the month and advised to Councillors. NOTED

A letter was received from Evie Andrews of Llantrisant who along with her team had been selected by the Mounted Games Association to represent Wales in France later this Summer. The letter explained how fundraising had been ongoing locally to ensure sufficient money was raised to allow Evie and her team, along with their horses and transport to compete in the competition. The Community Council had already agreed their cause was worthy of support and last month had made a donation towards the costs.

Signed _____

Date _____

A letter was received from Monmouthshire C.C. concerning proposed changes to the Councils Home to School Transport Policy. The Council was seeking feedback on the changes which aim to establish a more financially sustainable transportation model for the future. The information was forwarded to Councillors by email for their participation.

Correspondence was received from a Llansoy resident showing interest in joining the 'We Don't Buy Crime – Smart Water' scheme. However, in view of the lack of response received from Communities to date, the clerk had contacted the Police Team responsible and been able to obtain a discount code which was available to residents of Gwent when purchasing 'Smart Water' directly from the manufacturer's website. The clerk went on to contact and inform those residents who had shown any interest previously of the option of now purchasing Smart Water at a reduced rate.

10.Planning:

Application received: Number DM/2024/00762
Install Orangery to the side of the property.
Brookwood Lodge, Parsonage Lane, Gwernesney Monmouthshire NP15 1HF
NOTED

Application received: Number DM/2024/00822
Fast Track Full Planning Permission
Change of use from Agricultural land, to mixed use agricultural and equine to provide grass livery facilities.
Little Wentwood Farm. Usk Road, Pen Y Cae Mawr Monmouthshire NP15 1ND
NOTED

Updates and Enforcement Issues:

Coed Y Prior Farm:
The appearance of a Chalet along the edge of the woods at the site is being investigated.
Updates awaited.

Mill Meadow Cottage and Stables Llangwm:
Information regarding the original permissions granted in 2015, was to be passed to Monmouthshire C.C. This stated the holiday accommodation should only be used from March through to October, not as now quoted 28 days in a calendar year.
Cty Cllr Buckler investigating, further updates awaited.

Wern Panna Llangwm:
A Barrier has now replaced the original Gates at the site and a further application for an extension to the existing Agricultural building had been submitted.
Updates awaited.

Allt Y Bela Llangwm:
Concerns had been previously raised over an agricultural building at the site.
Updates awaited.

Signed _____

Date _____

11. Ward Reports: None

12. HMPS: No further updates

13. Any Other Business: None

15. Date of next Meeting: Tuesday 17th September at 7.30pm to be held at The Greyhound Inn Llantrisant

Date of future Meetings for 2024:

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 Chairman declared the meeting closed at 9.15 pm.

Signed _____

Date _____

Signed _____

Date _____