

Llantrisant Fawr Community Council

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

Minutes of the Ordinary Council meeting held at Llangwm Parish Hall, on Tuesday 18th March 2025 at 7.00pm.

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

1. Apologies for Absence:

Cllr. John Watkins – Holiday
County Cllr Fay Bromfield – Prior Commitment

2. Visit by PC Dan Counsell from the Rural Crime Team

PC Counsell thanked members for the opportunity of attending the meeting and explained the team were a specialist department formed in 2019 and based in Newport. The team covers rural crime in the area but often helps the local Community Police with the theft of larger items such as Quad Bikes and Defenders.

He said more advanced crimes, including vehicles stolen to order can lead to cross border work with other forces and the sharing of intelligence. Drones are regularly used for surveillance work and help with monitoring areas from the air. The team deals with Wildlife and Heritage Crimes along with the theft of monuments and this leads them to work closely with Cadw.

Operation Harley was highlighted which deals with targeting off-road vehicles that damage land, cause disturbances in communities and put road users and pedestrians at risk. Drones and smart tags are put to good use in helping to locate these bikes and vehicles and allows the team to call on Sect 59 of the Police Reform Act 2002 – which gives uniformed police the power to seize vehicles if they are being used for anti social behaviour.

Sheep theft is a problem nationwide, with a farmer recently having 90 Ewes stolen in the Newport area. Another major issue in Monmouthshire is Deer poaching and now Police and dogs are working with local Authorities to run programmes with National Resource Wales to tackle this issue.

On a local level PC Counsell confirmed Community Police Officers are available to come out to residents when called and highlighted the 'We Don't Buy Crime' incentive was working very well in those areas it had been taken up. He added if Councillors felt it would be useful they were happy to provide Notices and Stickers that could be put up locally.

3. Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 18th February 2025

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

Signed _____

Date _____

4. Matters Arising from the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 18th February 2025

Visit by Laura Jones

Following the concerns raised at the meeting over the lack of Mobile Signal and poor Broadband service, a letter was sent to highlight this further enabling Laura to tackle these issues on the Council's behalf.

In relation to the other problems discussed during the visit, County Cllr Bromfield had suggested she could arrange for Catrin Maby and Paul Griffiths of MCC to come along to a future meeting.

Gwernesney defibrillator

The new Defibrillator Cabinet has now been ordered and will be installed at the Village Bus Shelter. Cllr Gardiner has agreed to reinstate the replacement Defibrillator on the circuit and will continue as Guardian to ensure it is kept maintained.

Voneus Broadband

In recent correspondence with Voneus Cllr Watkins had said that although service was improved following recent upgrades, there were still areas in Llangwm experiencing speed issues and buffering when using streaming services and asked for this to be investigated. The company acknowledged there had been some recent problems with the Network and confirmed issues were being addressed as they arose.

In other correspondence received from Voneus, changes were highlighted within the company, which stated further roll out of their Service would be slowed and focus would instead be on Customer service and growing sales and revenue.

A letter from Catherine Fookes MP in relation to the Council's request for support with local Broadband issues, confirmed she had been working closely with MCC and Government Ministers and said she had also raised the issue with the Secretary of State. A letter of thanks was sent from the Council for the support she had given and to advise that following ongoing Network upgrades by Voneus residents were now experiencing greater reliability and speed.

The opportunity was taken to highlight the problems arising from the lack of Mobile signal in the area and to request her assistance in bringing this issue also to the attention of the Secretary of State.

Correspondence had been received recently from two Llangwm residents confirming their Broadband service had improved and been relatively incident free. Although frustration was still felt that BT Openreach were installing fibre locally but not extending that coverage to Llangwm. County Cllr Buckler confirmed she would speak with Cath Fallon to ask if there was any news on the Postcodes which had previously been highlighted to BT Openreach.

Mobile Connectivity

Cath Fallon wrote to advise the Council would shortly be receiving contact from the team involved with the River Severn Advanced Wireless programme. A visit was to be arranged to establish that Llangwm would be a suitable candidate to take part in the trial as part of the i Connect project.

Cllr Trigg added there were two existing and redundant Mobile masts in the area which he felt could possibly be made available to use. County Cllr Buckler said she would flag this as a potential opportunity.

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Date _____

5.Highways issues:

Update on Matters reported:

Gwernesney traffic/road safety measures

It was confirmed last month that the speed limit in Gwernesney would be changed from 40mph to 30mph and that further road safety measures would be considered following the meeting arranged with Gareth Freeman.

Llangwm traffic/road safety measures

Gareth Freeman is also meeting with Councillors and residents in Llangwm, to explore the opportunity of installing further road safety measures.

Points for consideration have been received from residents unable to attend the meeting and these will be raised in their absence.

Poor road conditions Trevella, Llangwm

There are no further updates from the Highways Dept in relation to the poor condition of the road. County Cllr Buckler continues to monitor.

Footpath resurfacing, Llangwm

County Cllr Buckler said despite her efforts to chase the outstanding work, the footpath appears to have low priority on the Council's list but said she would raise the issue again.

Collapsed ditch on the R113

The Clerk confirmed she had again written to Highways regarding the urgency of this situation and a response advised the issue had been passed to the Area Engineer. Cllr Glyn Williams said he was very unhappy with the situation and felt very despondent that issues are being reported month after month and yet nothing is being done.

County Cllr Buckler agreed, saying this was a systematic problem which she would bring to the attention of Officers at the next MCC meeting.

Chevron Signs down - Llanllowell and Usk

Cllr Hawkins confirmed the issue had now been resolved.

Route 60.2 Llansoy

An urgent follow up letter had been sent to MCC Highways regarding the worsening condition of the Potholes along the length of the road. Cllr David Williams confirmed one of the deeper holes had been filled but the remainder were left untouched. Cllr Williams provided photographs of the condition of the road. The clerk will forward these on as a matter of urgency.

Llansoy Traffic Speed improvements

County Cllr Buckler last month confirmed that outstanding roadwork in Llansoy would be completed by Highways as soon as the weather improved. Further correspondence received from Mr Whistance, a village resident, asked about the possibility of installing additional speed measures. He considered Speed bumps would make a big difference in view of the fact a speed camera was not an option. However, County Cllr Buckler confirmed that Speed bumps would not be an option but added she would follow up on the Speed Control signs that had been promised for the area.

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Date _____

Give Way Sign down at the junction of Llanllowell Lane

Cllr Hawkins confirmed the issue had now been resolved.

Replacement Give Way Sign at the junction of 1 Chepstow Road Gwernesney

The clerk confirmed she had requested a replacement sign and this had now been passed to the service team.

New Highways issues raised by Councillors:

Cllr Glyn Williams reported the pole displaying the 50mph sign on the R113, situated 30 yards up from Arch Farm had completely fallen over. The clerk to report to Highways.

New issues raised by others:

Notification received from Madelaine Boase of MCC advised that Sustrans the walking and cycling charity, were offering to include local routes in their Quiet-lanes pilot study 2025-26.

Cllr Hawkins put forward Route 42 as being a suitable option however County Cllr Buckler pointed out these routes would be required to provide equal use between Walkers, Cyclists and Road users. Which meant this could potentially have connotations for householders in the area, who might feel there was a danger of priority being given to leisure users.

Cllr Glyn Williams said he felt this was not the best place to encourage additional Cycling lanes as the route already experienced high volumes of traffic and was used by large Forestry vehicles coming out from Wentworth. After careful consideration Councillors agreed this route would not be a viable suggestion.

6. Crime Prevention and Neighbourhood Police updates:

Reports were received and forwarded to Councillors.

7. Monmouthshire County Council Report:

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

8. Finance:

- a) The Bank Statement: For the period 30th January 2025 – 28th February 2025 was received and signed by the Chairman.
- b) Financial Accounts: A Statement of Income and Expenditure for the period ending the 28th of February 2025 was received, AGREED and signed by the Chairman.
- c) The Bank Reconciliation: For the period 30th January 2025- 28th February 2025 was received and signed by the Chairman.
- d) Expenditure: The following expenses were APPROVED

Clerk's Net Salary for March (including an additional 5.75 hours worked in February)
Total £592.20

Clerks Expenses March – Working from home Allowance and Sundries
Total £30

Jax First Aid Supplies – External Locked Defibrillator Cabinet
Total £610.79

97 Host – LFCC Website Hosting

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Date _____

**Paid by Direct Debit Monthly
Total £30**

I T Medic – Annual renewal charge for Anti Virus & Remote Support Software
Total £86.40

I T Medic – I T support and troubleshooting of lost data following Windows Software update
Total £72

Total Expenditure to pay: £1,421.39

- e) The Statement of Fixed Assets for the year ending 31/03/2025 was reviewed by the Council. NOTED - the Gwernesney Telephone Box had now been replaced by a Locking Defibrillator Storage Box. ADOPTED.
- f) Independent Remuneration Payments – Councillors received notification of the allowances they were entitled to receive for the work carried out on behalf of the Community Council. Councillors declined to receive this remuneration, stating they wished to carry out the role voluntarily.

The clerk requested Councillors to complete and sign an opt out form for the year ended 31st March 2025.

- g) Notification was received from Monmouthshire County Council which confirmed the Community Council Precept request had been agreed and would be paid in 3 Instalments due In April, August and December 2025.
- h) A quote was received from The Green Grafter and forwarded to Councillors. As in previous years this would include the cutting of the grass in Llangwm around the Village Car Park, the Parish Hall and the verges up to the village Bus Shelter. Councillors AGREED to accept this quote.

9. Correspondence

Details of Monmouthshire County Council Meetings were received throughout the month and advised to Councillors. NOTED

Correspondence was received from Dr Catrin Jones (One Voice Wales) on behalf of the Welsh Government, requesting confirmation as to whether the Community Council was using 'General Powers of Competence'. The clerk replied to confirm the Council was not eligible to do so. NOTED

Cavendish Consulting wrote to invite Councillors to take part in the next stage of engagement regarding Cardiff Capital Region's draft Transport Plan. The consultation closes on 19th May 2025. NOTED

Notification from Carl Touhig of Monmouthshire C.C. advised monitoring of the reuseable Polypropylene recycling bags was now taking place. He reported there had been issues with contamination and Single Use Plastic bags and said going forward wardens would be sticking bags and leaving any contaminated items.

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Date _____

Further information on the recycling of waste can be found on the Council's website.

Notification received from One Voice Wales advised the Senedd report on Role, Governance and Accountability of the Community and Town Sector had now been published. The report was forwarded to Councillors.

A request was received from Gwent Young Farmers asking for a donation to assist them in supporting the young people of Gwent. Councillors requested the clerk write to advise that the Community Council are now only able to support local causes.

10. Planning:

Application received: DM/2025/000246 – The Rectory, Parsonage Lane, Gwernesney. NP15 1HF
Proposed construction of Stables, plant room and ground pipe array, associated with renewable energy proposals and for a change of use to land, for mixed use equestrian and agricultural.

NOTED - Councillors raised concerns relating to the junction with the busy Chepstow Road, this was felt to be unsuitable for increased traffic and it was recommended that any planning permission should have a clear condition prohibiting Commercial Livery.

Application received: DM/2024/01533 – Glen Court Lodge, Usk Road, Llanllowell NP15 1LP
Planning permission for Householder Extension

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

Planning updates and Enforcement Issues:

Wern Panna Llangwm

Planning permission had originally stated the gates at the entrance to the field should be inset, this being particularly important taking road safety into consideration. The head of Enforcement at Monmouthshire C.C. is taking legal advice currently and a response is awaited.

Mill Meadow Cottage and Stables Llangwm

Original permissions granted in 2015, stated the holiday accommodation could be used from March through to October and not as now stated 28 days in a calendar year. The case was closed previously as deemed not to be breaking the terms of planning. However, County Cllr Buckler reported the case has now been re opened and will be investigated further.

11. Ward Reports: None received

12. HMPS

Advice was received stating meetings had been on hold following Covid but it was hoped these would resume soon.

13. Any Other Business:

The Bridge Inn, Llangwm continues to fall into a greater state of disrepair. In view of the recent Council Tax Notices highlighting the rules over long term empty properties, members asked

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Date _____

whether this might have bearing on the building's future. County Cllr Buckler confirmed she would flag this to MCC for further investigation.

Cllr Trigg raised concerns over a vehicle seen with a roof camera in his local area. It appeared the vehicle belonged to GAIST, the company normally used by MCC to survey Highways infrastructure. County Cllr Buckler said she would investigate this further.

Cllr Trigg queried the new School Transport Policy coming in from September. He said the new policy states those living within a 2 miles distance from their school would be entitled to free School transport yet those outside of that area would need to pay.

Cllr Trigg said this policy would cause a lot of problems for parents on many levels and County Cllr Buckler agreed. She said this issue had already been put forward to Monmouthshire C.C. however the policy had been ruled in regardless of the concerns raised and would undoubtedly cause real problems in rural areas.

14. Date of next Meeting:

Tuesday 15th April at 7.30 pm to be held at the Greyhound Inn Llantrisant

Date of future Meetings for 2025:

Tuesday 13th May at 7.30 pm to be held at Llangwm Parish Hall

Tuesday 17th June at 7.30pm to be held at to be held at Llangwm Parish Hall

Tuesday 15th July at 7.30pm t be held at Llangwm Parish Hall

Tuesday 16th September at 7.30pm to be held at the Greyhound Inn Llantrisant

Tuesday 21st October at 7.30pm to be held at Llangwm Parish Hall

Tuesday 18th November at 7.30pm to be held at Llangwm Parish Hall

No meetings will be held in August or December 2025 unless deemed necessary.

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

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Date _____

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Date _____