

# **Llantrisant Fawr Community Council**

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

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**Minutes of the Ordinary Council meeting held at The Greyhound Inn, Llantrisant on Tuesday 15th April 2025 at 7.30pm.**

**Present:** Cllr. David Williams (Chairman), Cllr. Gwynfor Gardiner (Vice Chairman), Cllr John Watkins, 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:**

County Cllr Fay Bromfield – Prior Commitment

### **2. Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 18th March 2025**

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

### **3. Matters Arising from the Ordinary Council Meeting held on 18th March 2025**

#### **Visit by PC Dan Counsell of the Rural Crime Team**

PC Counsell attended last month's meeting to introduce himself to Councillors and speak about the role of the Rural Crime team. He also spoke about the success of the 'We Don't Buy Crime' scheme which was in operation. Councillors informed him there had unfortunately been little interest shown locally and PC Counsell suggested he would be happy to provide the village with 'We Don't Buy Crime' Notices to display if Councillors felt this would be beneficial.

Councillors have now agreed to take up this offer and requested the clerk contact PC Counsell to establish if this would be available for each of the wards.

#### **Gwernesney defibrillator**

The new Defibrillator Cabinet is now installed at the Village Bus Shelter and Cllr Gardiner will update 'the circuit' to ensure it is live to the Emergency services. He confirmed he would continue as the guardian of the defibrillator to ensure its proper maintenance but felt it would be a good idea to purchase a sign to display in a prominent position allowing the Defibrillator to be located more easily. Councillors agreed and Cllr Gardiner will investigate what options are available to buy.

He also added that due to the lack of mobile signals in the area, it would be beneficial to locate the Cabinet Code, alongside the Code Pad. This would save time as users and allow the defibrillator to be accessed more quickly in an emergency, Councillors agreed.

#### **Voneus Broadband**

Recent correspondence from Voneus highlighted the business intended to adapt their model to focus on Customer Service and the growth of Sales and Revenue. Residents have also received notification stating current contracts were coming to an end and to continue with the existing service there were 2 available options, to carry on at an increased cost of £32.99 pm or to sign up to a new 2 year contract costing £29.99. Councillors commented that the new pricing structure was in line with other Broadband providers.

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### **Mobile and Broadband connectivity in Llangwm**

Cath Fallon, (Head of Rural Development) of MCC recently put forward the suggestion of the Council taking part in a Mobile and Broadband Pilot scheme, which is offered through the Advanced Wireless Innovation Programme and the River Severn Partnership.

The project provides an opportunity for the community to have a mobile booster box installed in the Village Hall, which she reported would improve Mobile connectivity locally and demonstrate a business case to mobile network providers that a Mobile mast was needed in the area.

The project also extends to Broadband installation but as the hall already has a broadband supply this would not be required.

A Teams meeting is being held between all parties on Wednesday 30<sup>th</sup> April to discuss the scheme in more detail.

Cllr Watkins reiterated that he felt this project was not suitable for the needs of Llangwm, he said there is no Mobile signal for a Booster to pick up on in the area and that the fundamental solution was for a Mobile Signal Mast to be installed locally by the Network providers. This solution is also supported by Catherine Fookes (MP), Laura Jones (MS) and MCC who continue to work towards this goal.

Last month following a photo opportunity with residents at the Village Hall, Laura Jones (MS) highlighted the plight of the village in the local press. The issue was also raised in the Senedd and a letter sent to the Cabinet Secretary detailing how the Mobile blackspot in Llangwm presented challenges to the whole of the community. She asked that the Secretary work with the UK Government and Mobile providers to help find a solution.

### **The Bridge Inn, Llangwm**

The continued deterioration of the building was last month highlighted to County Cllr Buckler and she has now reported that Health & Safety have been advised and agreed to revisit the site.

County Cllr Buckler was also informed of two reports on social media showing that in recent weeks two men had been seen at the property stripping Lead from the roof.

### **Survey by Gaist at the Dyffryn, Llangwm**

Following Cllr Triggs report last month that a vehicle with a roof camera had been seen in the area, County Cllr Buckler said she would investigate this further. Unfortunately to date, she has been unable to source any further information.

## **4.Highways issues:**

### **Update on Matters reported:**

#### **Gwernesney and Llangwm traffic/road safety measures**

Last month Gareth Freeman met with residents from both Communities to discuss the current road safety issues and to look at what improvements could be made to improve matters.

The visits had been very productive, with Gareth Freeman putting forward workable solutions and confirming the plans put forward would be monitored to gauge improvement and where necessary further work could be undertaken.

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**Gwernesney** – The following actions will be undertaken:

In April/May 30mph Speed limit proposals will go to public consultation and include 40mph buffer zones from both directions.

Improved Traffic Calming and Warning provisions would also be included, along with Gateway Features at 30mph Terminal points. A review of warning sign provisions is to be included as part of the reduced speed limit scheme.

The B4235/Monmouth Road junction will also undergo alterations to road markings. Existing road markings will be refreshed and Give Way signs to be replaced.

Following completion of the revised road marking layout, the situation will be monitored to identify if additional collapsible posts are necessary.

**Llangwm** – Residents attended the meeting and additional issues were put forward on behalf of those unable to come along. These included concerns over noise pollution and the excessive speeds driven by motorists and Bikers, particularly at the weekend.

Residents felt this was a major issue which needed monitoring and pointed out that although the Police had commandeered the village Lay by, the Go Safe van was never present to monitor speed or stop perpetrators. County Cllr Buckler agreed to raise these issues with the 'Go Safe' Police team.

The following actions have now been confirmed by Gareth Freeman:

It was confirmed that the incorrectly facing Speed Sign would be adjusted to point in the direction of oncoming traffic into the village.

Edge of Carriageway Markings would be installed throughout, along with improved road marking gateway features including:

Dragons Teeth leading into 30mph gateway - Visual Road Narrowing markings on 30mph gateway and additional markings on the 40mph Gateways.

All existing Road markings to be reviewed and refreshed if necessary.

Additional 'Pedestrians in Road' signs to be installed at strategic points. Prior to there being a lack of footway.

Speed Camera signs would be installed leading into the village from both directions.

Further discussions were held during the meeting on the possibility of purchasing a Solar Power Speed Camera which could be installed in the vicinity of the village hall. It was agreed that County Cllr Buckler would obtain a formal quote from Gareth Freeman and then the option of an additional Speed Camera could be added as a single item to a future agenda.

The lack of Speed Enforcement Police vehicles in the village was again highlighted and Cty Cllr Buckler confirmed she had written to the Go Safe Team with these serious concerns. Particularly with better weather approaching when there is increased traffic from Motor Bikes and day trippers alike.

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A discussion was held concerning the possibility of installing Conclave Safety mirrors to improve those areas where visibility was poor and there was an increased danger when pulling out of the concealed village side roads onto the main B4235 Chepstow Road.

It was agreed this item could also be put forward as an agenda item along with the formal quote for the Solar Speed Sign.

### **Llansoy Traffic Speed improvements**

Further correspondence was received from a local resident wishing to highlight that currently Speed Enforcement vans in the village were unable to fine Motorists who were speeding due to the work still needed on the village streetlights. He said the Go Safe vans were there purely to demonstrate their presence. County Cllr Buckler said she was unaware of this issue but would investigate the matter with the Go Safe Team.

### **Bridges on Llan Y Nant Road, Llangwm**

Project Engineer Ross Price of MCC, had recently visited the area along with County Cllr Buckler, to inspect a damaged drainage outfall pipe on Chapel Road. Following the visit, carriageway repairs and blocked gullies were reported to Highways Operations with a recommendation that repairs were undertaken.

Ross had also checked Dyffryn Brook Bridge, where safety concerns had been raised over the drop to the brook. He went on to raise a service request to ask for consideration to be given to installing a small section of fencing on the downstream side of Dyffryn Brook Bridge.

Cllr Watkins confirmed the damaged drainage outfall pipe had now been replaced by MCC but said the work had been shoddy and unsatisfactory. He explained the pipe itself was standing proud of the bank by several feet and there had been no protection placed around it to prevent further erosion of the bank. He said this area of the stream can turn into a raging torrent in storms and as stands could be easily dislodged. County Cllr Buckler will report the issue back to Ross Price.

### **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. However, following the meeting held with Gareth Freeman, he had mentioned there might be a possibility of his team replacing the path when the work relating to the installation of road markings was carried out.

County Cllr Buckler agreed she would raise this point with Gareth to confirm if this was the case.

### **Route 60.2 Llansoy**

Following the urgent letter sent to Highways regarding the worsening condition of the road due to extensive potholes being present. Cllr David Williams was able to confirm that the work had now been carried out to a high standard.

### **Collapsed ditch on the R113**

Last month a further letter was sent to Highways concerning the urgency of this matter and the response stated the issue had been passed on to the Area Engineer. Cllr Glyn Williams had voiced great concern over this situation and emphasised these issues were being reported month after month and yet still nothing was being done. County Cllr Buckler agreed with his sentiments

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and followed up by raising two concerns in Full Council to Catrin Maby (Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Environment).

County Cllr Buckler reported bridges were being left damaged and decaying and many were in a precarious state. She highlighted these bridges were vital to the surrounding areas and asked what the Cabinet Minister would do to ensure these road networks were kept open and wouldn't disappear for good.

The Councillor also raised concerns over road repairs in general in Monmouthshire which seemed to be at a crisis point. She said reported issues rarely lead to potholes being filled adequately, or Culverts being cleared and Gullies kept open. She commented that the road from Nant Y Gelli crossroads to Llansoy in the Devauden ward, was a case in point and that soon not even a Pony and Trap would be able to use them and she asked the Cabinet Member what was being done to change this depressing trajectory.

County Cllr Buckler reported a Seminar was soon to be held with Councillors to discuss Bridges in the County and to establish when they were last surveyed. She added Councillors had no idea of the network of Bridges in the area or their lack of maintenance and informed Councillors that Bridges were soon to be inspected in the same way as roads were.

Cllr Glyn Williams requested it be MINUTED that Councillors and County Councillors are working hard to rectify these issues to help bring about improvements.

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

A replacement sign was requested some time ago, but updates show the request is still with the service team.

#### **New Highways issues raised by Councillors:**

Cllr David Williams reported erosion of the Bridge on Route 63.3 between Nant Y March Farm and Oakfield Farm and asked that should be investigated by Highways. The clerk will report to Highways and County Cllr Buckler will report to MCC directly.

Cllr Trigg reported the 40 mph speed signs on the road between Gwernesney and Wern Panna had been turned around and were facing the wrong direction. The clerk will report the issue to highways.

#### **New issues raised by others:**

No new issues raised

#### **5. Crime Prevention and Neighbourhood Police updates:**

Reports were received by Councillors. Cllr Glyn Williams commented he felt the reports did not reflect a true picture of the incidents logged and were often kept to a bare minimum.

#### **6. Monmouthshire County Council Report:**

County Councillor Buckler informed members that MCC has now taken the step of awarding the current Care Contact to a large National Firm. This has caused a lot of distress for those who have kept the same carers for the last 10 years. This decision was made without being scrutinised and has serious flaws. Cllr Watkins added the existing carers will have been like extended family to their patients and this will undoubtedly cause much upset. He said the service is already very fragile without the Council interfering with it.

County Cllr Buckler reported the Carers themselves had been standing outside of the Council Offices and it was unbelievable this decision could be passed in this way. Cllr Hawkins suggested

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a Union should be involved, but it was considered unlikely Carers were members of a Union. He added there would likely be a company who would be able to take on their case.

## 7. Finance:

- a) The Bank Statement: For the period 1st March 2025 – 28<sup>th</sup> March 2025 was received and signed by the Chairman.
- b) Financial Accounts: A Statement of Income and Expenditure for the period ending the 28th of March 2025 was received, AGREED and signed by the Chairman.
- c) The Bank Reconciliation: For the period 1st March 2025- 28th March 2025 was received and signed by the Chairman.
- d) Expenditure: The following expenses were APPROVED

Clerk's Net Salary for April (including an additional 15 hours worked in March)  
**Total £692.43**

Clerks working from home Allowance and stationary sundries  
**Total £37.37**

LFCC Annual Microsoft 365 Software subscription for Council Laptop  
**Total £84.99**

97 Host – LFCC Monthly Website Hosting  
**Paid by Direct Debit Monthly**  
**Total £30**

One Voice Wales Annual Membership Fee 2025/26  
**Total £163**

Beverley & Williams Accountants Ltd  
Handling RTI Submissions for 2024/25 and issuing of P60 inc Charge for year end stationery  
**Total £65.39**

Beverley & Williams Accountants Ltd  
Charge for calculation of Payroll for January – March 2025  
**Total £36**

HMRC Employers Payslip for Tax & NIC due for January 2025 – March 2025  
**Total £405.60**

Llangwm Parish Hall hire for February £45 plus 32 units Electricity @ 57p per unit £18.24  
**Total £63.24**

Llangwm Parish Hall hire for March £45 plus 24 units Electricity @ 57p per unit £13.68  
**Total £58.68**

**Total Expenditure to pay: £1,636.70**

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**e) Review of Grant and Donations Policy**

The Policy was reviewed by members and updated to reflect the appropriate sum for the purposes of section 137(4)(a) of the Local Government Act 1972 (the 1972 Act). For Community and Town Councils in Wales for the financial year 2025-26 the amount is set at £11.10 per elector.

Amendment to Policy approved by Councillors.

Councillors agreed the Policy should remain unchanged in respect of the amount awarded for Grants/Donations. This will remain limited to a maximum of £200 per application, unless the Council considers there are exceptional circumstances in which case it can decide to exceed those limits.

**f) Donation requests received:**

Cllr Glyn Williams removed himself from the meeting at this point because of personal interest.

- Lottie Williams, a local 13-year-old ski racer from Llantrisant was selected in 2024 to join the Welsh Ski Team, and in January 2025 the GB Children's Ski Team. This opportunity has resulted in an increase to her training costs and a donation would help with her funding this. She is a role model for other children in her area and when not training abroad in the summer, helps other children at the local dry slope team at Pontypool Ski Racing.

Councillors agreed she should be awarded with an increased donation of £500 for her continued hard work and for representing her local community with pride.

- Llangwm Village Hall - Support towards the cost of electricity for maintenance of the village defibrillator and Broadband service. Councillors agreed the Village Hall was a community asset which often struggled with funding and should receive a donation of £200.

The Following Churches will receive a donation of £250 each towards the cost of Churchyard Maintenance:

- Llantrisant and Llanllowell Churches
- St Michaels Gwernesney, St David's Llangview, St Jeromes and St John's Llangwm
- Penyaemawr Methodist Chapel
- Llangwm Baptist Chapel

**g) Notice of Audit 2024-25 received from Audit Wales**

The clerk informed members she had begun preparing the Annual return, including the Accounts and Governance statements in line with requirements. The return will be passed to John Turner, the Internal Auditor, for his report before being presented to Councillors for approval at the June meeting.

The clerk advised that three further Invoices had recently been received from Audit Wales Finance for work carried out in 2020/21 (assumed for the old Llantrisant Fawr Community Council) and this would suggest a further Invoice may still be outstanding for the year 2021/22

Clarification has been requested but to date no reply has been received.

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The other two Invoices relate to the newly formed Llantrisant Fawr Community Council for Audit years 2022/23 and 2023/24.

Payment of these invoices will be made at the next Council meeting in May.

There remain outstanding invoices for the previous Llangwm Council, due to an error in invoicing by Audit Wales. These invoices will be paid once Audit Wales Finance department have concluded their investigations.

## **8. Training Policy and Plan**

The clerk had prepared a draft training policy and plan for consultation with Councillors. After reviewing and discussing the draft it was agreed the Council's Policy for the provision of training would be carried out in a proportionate way, taking into consideration the current activities undertaken by the Council and the current expertise of Councillors. The preparation of a training plan will support a move towards providing Councillors and the clerk with the relevant skills to carry out their roles and create a Council that is effective in meeting the needs of its' residents.

Proposed by Cllr Hawkins, Seconded by Cllr Watkins. ADOPTED.

## **9. Correspondence**

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

Correspondence was received from MCC detailing plans put forward by the BT Payphones Team concerning the proposed removal of some existing Payphones in Monmouthshire. Councillors agreed these were not relevant to our wards and so no action was required.

Correspondence received from OVW invited Councils to put forward two motions for debate at the AGM in October of this year. A list of requirements was included with the notification and this was sent electronically to Councillors. NOTED

National Resource Wales wrote to provide details of the new Sustainable Drainage Concept Grant. The grant related to the development of small-scale urban drainage scheme and was therefore not applicable to the Council. NOTED

Notification was received advising that the M48 Severn Bridge was to have a weight limit imposed and that from Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> May any vehicles over 7.5 Tonnes would need to use the Second Severn crossing/ Prince of Wales Bridge to travel between England and Wales. It is envisaged this restriction will remain in place for an estimated 12-18 months. The Old Severn Bridge will remain open to all emergency vehicles, scheduled buses, coaches, gritters and recovery vehicles. NOTED.

Correspondence was received from Rev Sally Ingle Gillis to advise that she had been informed by the Representative Body of the Church in Wales, that after six weeks of advertising on the open market there have been no offers to purchase the church of St John's Llangwm. As a result the church will be listed for sale by auction in June. She wished to give assurances that this changes nothing about the care of the graves and churchyard, or any desires or rights to be buried. It is simply a change in selling strategy. NOTED

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## **10. Planning:**

No Planning applications were received this month.

It was agreed that going forward when planning applications were received, a response should be sent regardless of the outcome. Either to make an observation or to state No objection.

An invitation to attend a Planning training session was received from Philip Thomas, development Services Manager MCC. The training has been organised to help Community and Town Councillors engage more effectively in the Planning process. The session is to be held in the Council Chamber, County Hall. The Rhadyr, Usk at 5pm on Tuesday 29<sup>th</sup> April. Cllr Hawkins and the clerk will attend.

## **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. County Cllr Buckler confirmed there were no updates from Enforcement.

### **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 has been re-opened and updates are awaited.

## **11. Ward Reports:** None received

## **12. HMPS** - No updates have been received.

## **13. Any Other Business:**

The Clerk confirmed that next month the AGM and Ordinary Council meeting will be held. It was agreed the AGM should start at the earlier time of 7PM with the Ordinary meeting following afterwards.

Consideration was given to the choosing of a new Chairman and Deputy with Councillors agreeing to follow the usual system of choosing a replacement by alphabetical order of Surname.

## **14. Date of next Meeting:**

Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> May at 7.00 pm to be held at Llangwm Parish Hall

### **Date of future Meetings for 2025:**

Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> June at 7.30pm to be held at to be held at Llangwm Parish Hall

Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> July at 7.30pm t be held at Llangwm Parish Hall

Tuesday 16<sup>th</sup> September at 7.30pm to be held at the Greyhound Inn Llantrisant

Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> October at 7.30pm to be held at Llangwm Parish Hall

Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> 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 10.15 pm.

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