

# Llangattock Vibon Avel Community Council

## Cyngor Cymuned Llangatwg Feibion Afel

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<b>Minutes of the Llangattock Vibon Avel Community Council Public Meeting</b>	
Date	Thursday, October 5 <sup>th</sup> at 8.00 pm
Venue	Hilston Park, Newcastle, NP25 5NY
Chair	Councillor Robin Wintour
Also, present	Councillors: Ray Bowen, Graham Edmunds, George Edwards, John Kennedy, Steve Morgan, Yvonne Price, Desmond Pugh, Yvonne Rees.
In attendance	Mr Mark Nicholas, Clerk to the Council

### 1. Apologies for Absence

Community Councillor Len Lane, County Councillor Ruth Edwards.

### 2. Declarations of Interest.

Councillor Yvonne Price declared an interest as regards planning application DC/2017/01129. Councillors agreed to identify any further conflicts of interest that arose during the course of the meeting.

### 3. Minutes of the Last Meeting.

The minutes of the previous meeting held on September 7<sup>th</sup>, 2017, were confirmed as being a true record of the proceedings.

### 4. Guest Speakers.

None.

### 5. Questions and Comments from Members of the Public.

None.

### 6. Updates and Progress (except where covered by other headings)

Broadband Issues - it had been planned for Councillor Robin Wintour and the Clerk to attend a BT Open Reach meeting earlier this same evening, for rural Monmouthshire

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residents, at Raglan. However, Councillor Robin Wintour had been so successful in persuading people to pre-register for the event, that an additional meeting is now to be held on at 6.00pm, on Tuesday, the 10<sup>th</sup> of October, just for local residents. This is to be held by kind permission of the Rolls of Monmouth Golf Club, at their Clubhouse.

### **7. Correspondence and Consultations (except where covered by other headings)**

**11<sup>th</sup> September.** An invitation from Robert Tranter at MCC to attend Code of Conduct Training, for those who had been unable to attend previous sessions.

**11<sup>th</sup> September,** an email from The Countryside Alliance seeking nominations for Countryside Alliance Awards.

**12<sup>th</sup> September,** from Monmouthshire County Council (MCC), news about Abergavenny Museum winning the Women's History Network's annual Community History Project prize for its *Monmouthshire Women Making Change* exhibition which runs until 11th March 2018.

**14<sup>th</sup> September,** a Broomfield & Alexander update. The Clerk requested a change in focus to Agricultural and not-for profit topics.

**14<sup>th</sup> September,** the Clerk had contacted CADW to request that they arrange a meeting with Councillor Graham Edmunds to discuss problems with visitors to the Castle and grounds. He had received an email to say that they aimed to respond within 10 working days.

**15<sup>th</sup> September,** from One Voice Wales (OVW), confirmation that a place had been reserved for Councillor Graham Edmunds at the AGM.

**20<sup>th</sup> September,** via OVW, news of a new Rural Business Investment Scheme – Food.

**Annual Audit** – survey, a paper satisfaction survey had been received from the External Auditors, the clerk had queried the validity of this, as opposed to an anonymous online survey with OVW, who will raise this with the Auditors.

**Police Matters-** Off Road Motor Bikes. Concerns had been expressed about the illegal use of off-road motor bikes in the Hendre Area. The Clerk had sought advice from CSO Sara Mason. Sara had informed the Clerk that any organised events would be authorised by the Motor Sports Association.

**20<sup>th</sup> September,** from OVW a list of the AGM motions.

**21<sup>st</sup> September,** an email from MCC about the forthcoming Cluster Meeting, with an agenda.

**28<sup>th</sup> September,** from OVW, information about training sessions, including one at Usk on the 19<sup>th</sup>, about “the Council Meeting”, at a cost of £35.00.

Also from OVW, the September News Bulletin, and the draft minutes from the NEC meeting held in September.

**3<sup>rd</sup> October,** via OVW, information about the Local Government Review.

**3<sup>rd</sup> Oct.** From MCC, free Business Workshops (16<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup> 10<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> October)

Also, another RET (Regional Engagement Team) newsletter.

**4<sup>th</sup> October,** via OVW, WAG Draft budget and tax policy.

A copy of the draft annual report of the IRP (Independent Remuneration Panel). There were recommendations of substantial allowances and expenses to be paid to Community Councillors. The meeting agreed that Councillors would continue to waive claims to these except under exceptional circumstances.

Monmouthshire Citizen’s Advice Bureau sent an email giving thanks for the Community Council’s donation of £100.

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### 8. Planning Matters

**8<sup>th</sup> September**, from Mark Hand, an email giving Planning Services Updates and contact details for members of the Planning Department. The clerk had replied to ask for larger print versions of the attachments, and with some queries about Officer's reports that are presented to delegated panels.

**DC/2017/00552** The Bell – Marquees. 8<sup>th</sup> of Sept, an invitation to the delegated panel had been received from MCC, to be held on the 14<sup>th</sup>.

12<sup>th</sup> September, an email was received postponing the delegated panel to a time within "the next two weeks"

13<sup>th</sup> September, it was noted that the marquees had been taken down.

22<sup>nd</sup> September, the Clerk emailed Alison Pankhurst at MCC Planning to enquire about the new date for the delegated panel, to be told that it was "likely to be going back in two weeks' time".

**12<sup>th</sup> September.** Pitch Cottage, Crossways. An enquiry had been received about a new access created for this property, the Clerk had asked MCC if planning consent was required or had been given?

**20<sup>th</sup> Sept.** The Priory Skenfrith, the Clerk had requested a meeting with Guy Delamere from MCC Planning. This would be to discuss how similar developments in the area might be regarded by the Planning Department.

**27<sup>th</sup> September** – a list of training opportunities from Planning Aid Wales.

**DC/2017/01129** change of use from field to garden, erection of small shed to house historic vehicles. Ty Gwyn, NP25 5NP. Councillor Yvonne Price having declared an interest in being married to the applicant, she had taken no part in evaluating the proposal. The site and application were examined by two Councillors from another ward and a comment supporting the application had been placed on the planning portal.

**4<sup>th</sup> of October**, from MCC Planning, a list of new and completed enforcement cases.

### 9. The Community Council Website

The replacement Community Council website is now live, and the Clerk had met with Jason Cooper to discuss finalising the details and uploading various Council documents.

### 10. Financial Matters

The meeting agreed to authorise the following payments:

**£17.00** Gwent Outdoor Centres, hire of room for this meeting

**£197.55** The Wales Audit Office, for the external Audit, compared to £680.85 last year.

**£526.82** Net Salary and remaining arrears for the Clerk.

**£318.40** Tax and National Insurance on the Clerk's salary for the previous quarter.

**£87.00** Broomfield Alexander, payroll charges.

**£35.00** for the Clerk to attend the OVW training session at Usk on the 19<sup>th</sup> of October, if he is able to attend.

**OVW conference and AGM** – The £90 fee for this was approved at the September meeting. Councillor Graham Edmunds, who had attended the AGM, declined to present any expenses.

**Annual Return.** A copy of the Return had been received from the Auditors. However, some of the comments had differed from their most recent email on the subject. The Clerk had requested an electronic copy of the Return, but had received a bill instead.

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Consequentially, he had to scan several pages of the Return in order to produce an electronically transmissible version.

In brief, the Auditors had qualified the Audit because:

a) The accounts had been approved, and the return submitted, a week late. It was accepted that this was unsatisfactory and would be avoided in future years.

b) The Council should “*maintain and publish a register of member’s financial and other interests*”, and that this should be published “*even if no conflicts exist*”. Robert Tranter (Chief Legal Officer for MCC), and One Voice Wales had advised that this is not the case at the Community Council level where Councillors are unpaid. Conflicts of interest are only required to be declared as and when they arise, and there is no requirement to maintain a standing register listing all of a Member’s assets and interests.

One Voice Wales had agreed to take up the Council’s concerns about the register of interests with the Auditors, this will save the Council incurring hourly charges by the Auditors to resolve queries. The Clerk had contacted Robert Tranter at MCC, to thank him for the value of his earlier Code of Conduct Training. This had been most useful in dealing with some of the queries raised by the External Auditors.

The Register of interests will be considered again when further advice has been received from OVW.

On a minor point, the Auditors also advised that the Council’s assets be reviewed each year, following the formal addition of a set of Hand Bells to the Asset Register. It was felt that this was already an on-going process, which would be continued, and had actually been the reason that the Hand Bells were now formally identified as an asset.

### **11. Highways, footpaths & transport**

**12<sup>th</sup> September**, the Clerk had again requested copies of MCC Highways maps, the last time being on the 17<sup>th</sup> of May under ref 024955. He had received an electronic version, which had resisted his efforts to produce text of a readable size, and had requested 11 paper copies on the 15<sup>th</sup>.

**MCC Highways ref 25784** Potholes at Maypole Village, the Clerk had emailed again, following residents’ representations made to Councillors John Kennedy and Yvonne Rees. An update had been received from MCC on the 28<sup>th</sup> of September to say that the work had been completed. Councillor Robin Wintour had checked the work and considered that the bare minimum of cosmetic work had been done.

**22981/23535** Whitehall Lane – the subject of 50 emails to date. The Clerk had enquired on the 19<sup>th</sup> when this might be finished? and had had a reply to say that it had been passed on to Andrew Welsh at MCC.

**025045 Oak Grove** – Problems for Emergency Vehicles. The Clerk had received a reply that the MCC Traffic and Road Safety Officer was on leave.

**24051** Blocked drains B4233 – Councillor Robin Wintour had again offered to show MCC the position of the blocked drains,

**025861** Rockfield street light obscured by ivy – MCC reported that this was clear when they made their inspection.

**Footpaths.** Councillor John Kennedy was concerned about the state of repair of signs and stiles. Members pointed out that funding tended to be erratic and grant driven, and that much of the work on footpaths was done by volunteers rather than employees of MCC.

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### **12. Environment, recycling, waste**

Nothing to report.

### **13. Education and lifelong learning**

Nothing to report.

### **14. Health and Wellbeing**

12<sup>th</sup> September, from Aneurin Bevan Health Board, a Community Health Council Newsletter.

### **15. Visits by Councillors and Clerk**

**8th September.** Councillor Robin Wintour attended a "Talk Health Event", hosted by the Aneurin Bevan Health Board. Matters discussed included the fact that it is extremely unlikely that there will be any minor injuries provision in Monmouth in the foreseeable future.

**26<sup>th</sup> September.** Councillor Robin Wintour and the Clerk attended a cluster meeting at the Rolls Hall at 6.30 pm.

**30<sup>th</sup> September.** The Clerk had met with Jason Cooper to discuss the Community Council website.

**30<sup>th</sup> September.** Councillor Graham Edmunds had attended the OVW Annual General Meeting in Builth Wells.

### **16. Llangattock Churchyard**

Nothing to report.

### **17. War Memorials**

It was agreed that the Clerk should order two wreathes, one for each of the memorials at Llangattock and Skenfrith.

### **18. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Community Council will be held at Hilston Park on Thursday, November the 2<sup>nd</sup> at 8.00 pm.

### **19. Announcements and Comments of Interest.**

None.

The meeting closed at 10.00pm.