

Llangattock Vibon Avel Community Council
Cyngor Cymuned Llangatwg Feibion Afel

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Minutes of the Llangattock Vibon Avel Community Council Public Meeting	
Date	Wednesday 11 th December 2019, at 7.30 pm
Venue	Hilston Park, Newcastle, NP25 5NY
Chair	Councillor Yvonne Rees
Also present	Councillors: Ray Bowen, Graham Edmunds, George Edwards, John Kennedy, Len Lane, Steve Morgan, Yvonne Price, & Desmond Pugh. County Councillor: Ruth Edwards
In attendance	Mark Nicholas, Clerk to the Council

1. Apologies for Absence

Councillor Robin Wintour.

2. Declarations of Interest.

None were received as regards the published Agenda. Councillors agreed to identify any that arose during the course of the meeting.

3. Minutes of the Last Meeting.

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 6th November 2019 were confirmed as being a true record of the proceedings.

4. Guest Speakers.

None

5. Questions and Comments from Members of the Public.

None.

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

Skenfrith – October flooding. Ross Price from Monmouthshire County Council (MCC) is working on a report regarding this event. The Police have been making extra visits to Skenfrith to monitor vulnerable properties.

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

7th November, from Monmouthshire CAB, notice and invitation to their AGM, and a copy of their accounts. (The Community Council gave a donation of £100 in September).

Also, from One Voice Wales (OVW), information about a local government finance training event, at Usk, on the 12th November.

27th November, from OVW, a copy of the November News Bulletin

10th December, from Monmouth Town Council, the Agenda for their meeting of the 16th.

8. Planning Matters

7th November, from MCC, a list of new and closed enforcement actions.

DM/2019/01801 Demesne Farm, Llantellen Road, NP7 8UF – the meeting regarded this as a repeat of the earlier DC/2006/00675, which had not been completed. Approval is recommended for this later application in order to remove the eyesore of a derelict building.

3rd December, from MCC, a further list of new and closed enforcement actions.

9. Financial Matters

The meeting agreed to authorise the following payments:

£17.00 Monmouthshire County Council, hire of room for this meeting

£322.07 Net Salary for the Clerk for November

£322.07 Net Salary for the Clerk for December (for payment in January)

£241.60 Tax and National Insurance on the Clerk's salary for the previous quarter.

£271.10 Welsh Audit Office – fee for the 2018/2019 External Audit.

26th Nov, from WAG - Local Government Finance and Workforce Partnerships Division, information about the Discretionary Expenditure Limit for 2020/2021 – Section 137, will now be £8.32.

27th November, from MCC, an email asking for views on being paid the precept as a lump sum in April, rather than in three instalments. It was agreed that the present arrangements are satisfactory.

4th December, forwarded by Jane Lee at Abergavenny Town Council, a power point presentation from a recent training programme about local government finance planning.

Budget Monitoring for current financial year - 2019/2020

The meeting examined a budget monitoring document (Annexe 1 to these minutes) prepared by the Clerk. The figures are derived from actual spending to date, and predicted spending to 31 March 2020. Based on current information, it seems likely that there will be an underspend in the region of £1400. There had been additional spending of £792 on the Skenfrith War Memorial, but this had been more than offset by the fact that none of the councillors had claimed expenses or allowances against the budgeted £1500. There had also been additional savings on other items.

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Budget and Precept for next financial year – 2020/2021, Reserves

Following discussions around a draft document produced by the Clerk, the expenditure budget for 2020/2021 was agreed, to a total of £9953.00. Proposed by DP, seconded by LL, all agreed, please see annexe 2.

The External Auditors had raised the issue of “excessive reserves” at the 2018/2019 Annual Return. Reserves being the money held by the council at the turn of the financial year after all spending from the previous year, and prior to (or disregarding) receipt of income for the new year.

The Clerk had sought advice from OVW, who informed him that the “unallocated” reserves held by a council should be between 3 and 12 months (25 and 100%) of its annual spending.

After taking into account the Council’s “allocated reserves” held in its Churchyard Account, the projected remaining funds held at the turn of the year are likely to exceed the proposed spending for 2020/2021. The practical effect of this is, that the 2020/2021 budget will be partially funded from the MCC precept, with the remainder met from the Community Council’s reserves.

Sources of Funds to meet LVACC Budgeted Expenditure for 2020/2021	
	£
Precept to be requested from Monmouthshire County Council	8784.60
To be drawn from LVACC Unallocated Reserves	1168.40
Total	9953.60

It is of interest to note that having held the precept at £9300 for the previous three years, the Council has now been able to reduce the precept to £8784.60

It was agreed that £1000 should be transferred from the Councils unallocated reserves within its Lloyds Bank account into the allocated reserves held in its Nationwide Churchyard Account. This account is held to cover expenditure on maintenance and repairs to the closed part of the Llangattock Churchyard and its War Memorial. It was also agreed that the Nationwide account should be re-named along the lines of “Churchyard & War Memorials Account”, with a view to also using it to pay for repairs and maintenance to the Skenfrith memorial. The Clerk will seek advice on the procedures to follow for these actions to be completed.

10. Highways, footpaths & transport

From MCC, more information about the draft ROWIP. consultations invited by 26 November 2019. <https://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/rights-of-way-improvement-plan-rowip/>

Floods at Rockfield. The Clerk had pointed out to MCC the three outstanding cases of blocked drains reported to them on the B4233 leading into Rockfield from the west. He had suggested a resolution of cleaning the drains as a routine measure, rather than waiting for them to become blocked.

Carl Touhig from MCC informed the Clerk that there had problems in updating cases held on the “MyMon App”. This makes it difficult for users to know if a reported problem has been resolved, been resolved and recurred, or is still awaiting resolution.

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County Councillor Ruth Edwards had been asked by MCC to seek the Community Council's views on removing the water trough at the lowest part of the B4233 as it passes through Rockfield, as a means of alleviating flooding during times of heavy rain.

The Councillors do not consider that this is a viable option, as they believe that were the drains coming down the hill to be cleaned thoroughly and more frequently, that a repeat of the recent flooding episodes would be much less likely to occur. Also, the effects of removing the trough, without first addressing the issue of the water coming down the hill, are unknown - possibly this could result in erosion and undermining of the road surface and any drains passing beneath the bend in the road. It is also felt that the ownership of the trough is uncertain.

Regarding keeping the drains clear on the B4233 as it approaches Rockfield from the west, councillors do not feel that they are cleaned often enough, or that they are always completely unblocked.

It is appreciated that money and manpower to spend on activities such as drain clearance is limited. However, if the drains are not kept in good order, there are effectively streams running alongside the road whenever there is heavy rain. This has already caused erosion at the sides of the road, and if allowed to continue, will result in the need for expensive repairs to the road itself.

25th November, from OVW, information about changes to the Bus System. All current ones will expire on 31st December 2019.

www.tfw.wales/travelcards

Existing Newcastle Village – Speeding, reported to MCC and the Police.

B4233, the Hendre – potential creation of 40mph limit.

B4347 Crossway to Norton – blocked drains, MCC have “scheduled” the work.

B4521 by Trebella Farm – collapsed culvert, road restricted to one lane with traffic lights, no change.

River wall at Skenfrith – no further news.

B4233 coming into Rockfield from the west – blocked drains. Ongoing, subject of discussions with MCC.

B4233 from Rockfield to Monmouth. The effective width of the pavement has been much reduced by the intrusion of soil, grass, branches and brambles from the hedgerow side towards the road. The hedges have been cut back, but the verge intrusion has not been rectified.

B4233, south side, going past Rockfield Studios, water failing to drain away.

B4233 – Bridge over Llymon Brook, water failing to drain from road surface on top of bridge.

11. Environment, recycling, waste

28th November, from MCC, an email saying that the garden waste service will be extended until 13th December.

12. Education and lifelong learning

Nothing to report.

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13. Health and Wellbeing

6th December, from ABUHB, a copy of Your Local Health Newsletter
Introduction of "Common Ailment Service", free treatment at pharmacies.

14. Visits by Councillors and Clerk

The Clerk had attended a Planning Aid Wales training event at the Shirehall on the 11th of November.

15. Llangattock Churchyard (the "closed part")

This is in good order, following the last grass cut of the season.

16. War Memorials

Remembrance Day commemorations were held at the Llangattock and Skenfrith war memorials. The Council provided wreathes for both memorials. The recently re-pointed setts at the Skenfrith Memorial have enhanced its safety and appearance.

17. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Community Council will be held at Hilston Park, on Wednesday, February 5th 2020 at 7.30 pm.

18. Announcements and Comments of Interest.

Nothing to report.

The meeting closed at 9.20 pm.