CYNGOR CYMUNED

GOETRE FAWR

COMMUNITY COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD BY TELECONFERENCE ON MONDAY 6th SEPTEMBER 2021**

## **Present:** Community Councillors Owen Dodd, Andy Barnes, Colin Deakins, Nicola Awni, Peter Daniel, Janet Robins and Jan Butler

**In attendance:**  Sara Mason, Community Support Officer, North Monmouthshire  
 Neighbourhood Policing Teamand Jonathan Lazenby (Clerk)

**Apologies:** Community Councillors Nigel Morrey, Lucyann Rands, Syd Welford and Rose Thayers (IT problems)

**Absent without apology:** Community Councillor Roger Howells

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|  |  | **ACTION** |
| 1 | **Apologies for Absence**  As above. |  |
| 2 | **Declarations of Interest**  The Chair asked the members present whether they had any declarations of interest to make. Councillor Daniel advised that he was now a trustee of the War Memorial Committee. The Chair reminded members that they should notify the meeting of any additional interests which became apparent during the progress of the meeting. Clerk to update the register of interests. | All / Clerk |
| 3 | **Chairman’s Remarks**  The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. |  |
| 4 | **Sara Mason, Community Support Officer, North Monmouthshire Neighbourhood Policing Team** At this point (7.35), the Chair suspended standing orders to enable Sara to address the meeting.  Sara referred to the August police report which was circulated recently and asked if there were any queries – none were raised.   1. Councillor Awni raised the issue of delivery van drivers mounting the pavement along Longhouse Barn. Sara will advise her colleagues to look out for this behaviour. 2. Councillor Dodd flagged the issue of accidents on the A4042, where diverted traffic is causing jams on the side lanes. Sara said she would re-iterate with the traffic officers who may not be aware of the congestion this may cause. 3. PC Rhydian Evans (who is presenting to Llanover CC this evening), is working on addressing some of the problems being caused by motorbikes using the Baffle Haus (noise), and will take the opportunity to promote the ‘Go Safe’ campaign. They are also looking to have camera sites to undertake speed monitoring (CSO’s can only monitor roads up to a max 30 mph). Go Safe will have to work with SWTRA to get the necessary risk assessments and permissions. An engagement event on 19th Sept with the bikers is also planned. 4. Councillor Deakins queried whether Sara looks at the village Facebook pages to pick up the concerns that residents have posted, e.g. ‘strange’ vans. Sara confirmed ‘yes’, and said that it was a useful source of information as it often contained issues which were not formally logged with the police. 5. Councillor Awni mentioned the issue of groups of dogs being let off the lead in the woods. Sara advised that she was not aware of the laws regarding this activity as her jurisdiction was limited to dog fouling.   The Chair thanked Sara for her time and input into tonight’s meeting. Sara will join us again at the November meeting. The meeting reconvened at 7.52. |  |
| 5 | **Approval of the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 12th July**   1. Main meeting minutes: In the Finance section, under section 8.1 (list of payments made since the last meeting), the Clerk noted that the payment of £111.60 to Beverley & Williams was (correctly) included in the June meeting minutes and the payment to Nantyderry Garden centre (£106.42) is properly included into today’s list of payments – Clerk to amend. 2. Closed Session minutes: There were no comments.   With the proposed amendments to section 8.1 (as described above), both sets of minutes were proposed as a true and correct record by Councillor Daniel and seconded by Councillor Barnes. | Clerk |
| 6 | **Matters Arising**   1. Item 6 (i) – Defibrillator Training. St John’s Ambulance (StJA) have now been in touch and their details passed to the Chair to forward on to the Scout / Guide group to arrange training. In addition, a session will be arranged in the Village Hall for local residents as soon as Govt. guidelines and Councillors feel it is safe to do so. Clerk to contact StJA to establish if they are now happy to proceed and to liaise with Councillors Robins/Daniel and Sara Fodden (GVH) and Colin Berg (LMVH) as required. 2. Item 7 (ii) – The Clerk contacted BT property services asking for the Little Mill exchange grounds to be cut / tidied. He was told that the work had been scheduled for the 14th September. However, Councillor Deakins confirmed that the work has now been done. 3. Item 7 (iii) – The Clerk again requested an update from MCC on the cutting of the hedge by the railway bridge footpath (this was first raised with them back in February). Still no response has been received. Clerk to chase again and ask for an explanation, as, in the past, such reports have been acted upon promptly. | Clerk  Clerk |
| 7 | **Maintenance (inc. items reported but not addressed)**  New item – the hedge in Little Mill park needs cutting – Clerk to contact MCC | Clerk |
| 8 | **Finance**   1. Payments made since the previous meeting   **£**     1. Review of Accounts / Cashflow   The Clerk presented the meeting with a copy of the August 2021 cashflow.  It was advised that the second precept payment (£11667), had now been received. It was also confirmed that the number of payments made into the Clerk’s pension was correct, although it was unclear why the ‘payment date’ was rather erratic.  There was no further comment or observation.   1. Dog waste collection price – budget going forward As previously advised to Councillors – the collection company announced (out of the blue) a 56% price increase from £4 per bin to £6.25 per bin. This would take our annual bill from £4,160 to £6,500. To date, there have been no further developments regarding the proposed meeting between MCC (and some Clerks) with Merlin Waste. However, the Clerk does not anticipate any developments which will reduce the price.   The main financial alternatives (at least in the short term), appear to be:  a) Continue with weekly collections and exceed the budget, i.e., spend £5860 against a budget of £4160, (so a deficit of £1700). Next year it will cost £6500, even at current prices.   b) Continue with weekly collections until the end of the summer period, and then revert to fortnightly collections for the remainder of the financial year.  Starting fortnightly collections from October would see spend for the current financial year of £4434 (vs £6059 – no action) against the budget of £4160, (so a deficit of £274).   The Clerk has noticed that since the lifting of the lockdown restrictions, fewer people appear to be walking their dogs along the towpath and as a result some of the bins appear to be under a little less pressure.  After some debate it was agreed that we should return to fortnightly collections (from October) with labels on the ‘busiest’ bins to advise residents to use adjacent / nearby general litter bins. This was proposed by Councillor Barnes and seconded by Councillor Butler.   1. Reallocation of Graveyards budget  This item was deferred from the last meeting. At the beginning of the year a budget of £2000 was set aside to pay up to £500 per church for the maintenance of their graveyards. As Council took the decision not to continue with these payments (following advice from NALC), the opportunity has arisen to allocate the budget elsewhere – possibly the refurbishment of the public conveniences (which would incur additional VAT), or to cover the dog waste price increase (where no VAT is payable). It was proposed that the funding be reallocated in full (£2,000) to the maintenance budget (which will attract VAT), so the Clerk will need to add an additional £400 to the VAT budget (which will be reclaimable from HMRC the following year). This was proposed by Councillor Barnes and seconded by Councillor Deakins. 2. One Voice Wales – annual membership  The fee is now due at a cost of £390 (based on 1129 chargeable dwellings @ £0.346p per dwelling - based on Valuation List, not the Electoral Register. Payment was proposed by Councillor Butler and seconded by Councillor Daniel and carried unanimously. 3. Councillor Allowances  These are scheduled to be paid in November (as in previous years). The Clerk will therefore be sending out the HMRC starter checklist forms for Councillors to complete. Despite OVW negotiations with HMRC there is nothing to suggest the taxable liability is to be lifted for this year. These will then be sent to Beverley & Williams, to enable them to pay the monies net of tax (at 20%). At this point, (although already agreed in the budget), for good order it was proposed that the (discretionary) honoraria (£500 for the Chair and £250 for the Vice-Chair) should be formally confirmed by Councillors, with the Clerk arranging payment to be made at the same time. This was proposed by Councillor Deakins and seconded by Councillor Daniel. (Neither Councillor Owen or Barnes voiced any opinion or voted on the resolution) | Clerk  Clerk  Clerk  Clerk |
| 9 | **Planning Committee**   1. To accept the responses of the Planning Committee held on 9th August 2021   The Committee met to consider the following applications:   1. [DM/2021/01232](https://planningonline.monmouthshire.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=QWAKHAKYGUY00) - Modification or Removal of Condition   **Former Piggery,** Black Beech, Star Road, Penperlleni, NP4 0AA   1. [DM/2020/00978](https://planningonline.monmouthshire.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=QDVLTIKYJXF00) - Change of use of existing redundant barn and garage to form 4 x no. holiday lets.   [Black Beech](https://www.google.com/maps/place/51%C2%B044'14.8%22N+2%C2%B058'18.8%22W/@51.7377453,-2.9714896,644m/data=!3m1!1e3!4m5!3m4!1s0x0:0x0!8m2!3d51.737433!4d-2.9718766), Star Road, Penperlleni, Monmouthshire, NP4 0AA   1. [21/20242/CPL](https://planningonline.beacons-npa.gov.uk/online-applications/simpleSearchResults.do?action=firstPage) Proposed use of existing curtilage buildings and alteration and extension of those building and constructing walls and roof coverings [Ty-Eos-Y-Coed](https://www.google.com/maps/place/51%C2%B045'24.5%22N+3%C2%B000'00.6%22W/@51.7568861,-2.9994739,1306m/data=!3m1!1e3!4m5!3m4!1s0x0:0x0!8m2!3d51.756815!4d-3.0001536), Pencroesoped, Upper Llanover, Llanover, Mons, NP7 9EL   Acceptance of the minutes of the meeting was proposed by Councillor Deakins and seconded by Councillor Daniel.   1. A4042 upgrades consultation A teleconference presentation was made to a number of Councillors on the 19th August to outline, (at high level), the proposed improvements to the A4042 corridor south of Pontypool. The proposals were circulated to the Community Council prior to the July meeting (during which specific authorisation was passed to enable the planning committee to consider this issue on behalf of Council). Councillor Barnes advised Councillors that no specific proposals were presented at the meeting and that it was more of a discussion to pick up ideas (possibly through a subsequent brainstorming session). The project team will then sift through the ideas for the best ones to implement. After discussion it was agreed that a further meeting of the planning committee would not be beneficial. It was decided the Clerk should draft an email to confirm the following suggestions regarding the lane layout at the Re-Chem roundabout:    1. Southbound – the dedicated lane for vehicles to turn left to New Inn should be ‘reclassified’ to be used by both vehicles turning left and continuing across the roundabout on the A4042.    2. Northbound – review the lanes and signage to improve the flow of traffic continuing north on the A4042.   The response was proposed by Councillor Deakins and seconded by Councillor Barnes.   1. Other updates  Councillor Barnes confirmed that application 20/19119/FUL (to BBNPA) for the development and refurbishment of a path through a woodland area at Goytre Wharf had been approved. 2. There are currently no outstanding applications or planning meetings in the diary. | Clerk |
| 10 | **Boundary Change Update** The Clerk has been contacted by Beverley Young (Clerk for Llanbadoc) regarding the proposed boundary changes next year. He has sent an initial outline of assets etc that will need to be managed (which has been circulated to Councillors). However, it is suggested that a teleconference meeting be held to discuss the items in more detail. After reflection, he felt it would be more appropriate to wait until the boundary change legislation was published so that firm plans could be made based on its content / requirements. Clerk to advise Beverley, and to continue to monitor the situation. | Clerk |
| 11 | **Post Office non attendance**  Councillor Daniel confirmed that the Post office had failed to open in the village hall on four occasions in the last four months, due to a variety of reasons (usually technical). Cash has also been unavailable on some occasions. Councillors discussed some potential broadband issues, although it was not clear if this was definitely a problem, and certainly the last failed attendance was unrelated (problems with the card machine). The Clerk is also conscious that the CC pays £12 a week for the hire of the Arthur Morris room (for 2 hours on a Friday) - whereas the room is ‘rented’ free to other users on a daily basis (although they do not have priority use).  Councillor Daniel to take up the issue of non-attendance (as the primary relationship is between the Post Office and Village Hall). Councillor Dodd to raise the issue of the £12 weekly charge at the next committee meeting on 28th Sept. | Cllrs Daniel & Dodd |
| 12 | **Public Conveniences – maintenance update** The provisional date for the works to commence is Monday 13th Sept. although the Clerk has been unable to confirm this. He has also asked for swatches of possible colours schemes for the doors / interior woodwork to try and brighten the inside. Clerk to continue to chase. | Clerk |
| 13 | **E&D Policy** During the course run by One Voice Wales for Councillors in June, the trainer emphasised the need for the Council to adopt a policy on Equality & Diversity. This is because although E&D is covered in the Code of Conduct for Councillors, this does not apply to the Community Council as a ‘body corporate’. The Clerk therefore presented a draft policy to Councillors for consideration. This was previously considered by Council in the summer of 2020 but without agreement or vote.  The Policy has been written for OVW for use by T&CCs and the version presented today included the few (minor) amendments from Councillors Awni and Morrey from last year, to make it more relevant to GFCC. There was still some debate about the implications of the policy and whether further time should be taken to review. However, Councillor Butler felt that we would continue to go round in circles and proposed that it should be adopted, and this was seconded by Councillor Robins. A vote was taken with four votes in favour and Councillor Barnes and Awni abstaining (Cllr. Awni said she had not read the policy since last year). As a result of the vote the policy was adopted. | Clerk |
| 14 | **Reports – questions based on previously distributed update.**   * **Goytre Village Hall** * The Post office has been absent 3 *(now 4)* times recently - mainly due to poor internet connection, and once due to the postman being in self-isolation. In addition, there have been several occasions when they have had no cash available. * Are now getting bookings from previous users.  They have also held an open forum meeting to invite the community to come and bring ideas. So far, they have held a well-being coffee morning twice a month - arranged for those with medical issues or being on their own. Also, musical events where anybody can attend to learn how to play an instrument, with the idea of sometime having a musical event for the community. * **Little Mill Village Hall**   + No report submitted. * **Goytre School Governors**    + No report submitted – meet at the end of Sept. * **Goytre Community Centre**   + No report submitted - meet next week. * **Other Reports  - Climate Change**   MCC are in the process of preparing a refresh of the Action Plan to take to full Council in Nov.  This is an important opportunity to think carefully about:   * + whether they are going in the right direction,   + whether ambition is enough to reach commitment of net zero for emissions by 2030,   + to what extent can and should MCC tackle wider community emissions from across the County,   + how best to include more actions to ADAPT to climate change, particularly in light of the recent UK 3rd [Climate Change Risk Assessment](https://www.ukclimaterisk.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/CCRA-Evidence-Report-Wales-Summary-Final.pdf)   + From 2pm to 5pm on the 20th September, there will be a drop in event for the public, businesses or other organisations to come along and let MCC know what they think. Are also doing a short online survey to find out what people think which will be publicised on social media.   **- War Memorial Committee**  A working group has now been established and begun events to raise funds. Mike Jones believes the cost around will be around £9,000+. In the meantime, he intends to place a temporary wooden copy where the current soldier is, to establish what the community think. However, it’s likely to be some time before the final memorial comes to fruition. |  |
| 15 | **Donations**  Monmouthshire Citizens Advice have written to us asking for support. They are writing to all Town & Community Councils to raise funds (£38,500), to launch a financial inclusion project which will provide advice on benefits, dealing with problem debt, form filling, better budgeting, dealing with fuel debt etc. (although it was unclear whether this was simply part of the normal financial counselling service). Either way it was agreed that it was a valuable service, and CAB figures showed that they had dealt with 122 issues in the ward, providing an income gain of nearly £25k to the community. Last year, the CC provided a donation of £100. Following discussion, Councillor Deakins proposed a donation of £150 this year, and this was seconded by Councillor Barnes. Carried with Councillor Awni abstaining. | Clerk |
| 16 | 1. **Communications** Email provider: Following issues with non-delivery of mail to MS based email platforms, the Clerk has investigated alternative providers. However, it appears that no-one is immune from the knock-on side effects from the MS security patches which sometimes inadvertently ‘blacklists’ some email servers. A change of provider is therefore, unlikely to solve the problems faced by some Councillors, will cost more and may not provide the flexible forwarding service that we currently enjoy. However, there was a good amount of debate, including whether we need to have a web site / email host at all, and should do away with the ‘goytre.gov’ web site and email domains (Clerk to check if this is possibile). After further discussion, the Clerk was requested to contact Mike Powell, Rural Development Manager at MCC to see if they could ‘host’ the platforms in any way. 2. IRPW Consultation – this has been circulated, together with the response from OVW (including their frustration that the consultation period was during the summer months when many Councils don’t meet). The key potential change to affect us would be the possible re-introduction of the attendance allowance, although no further details (amount/qualification etc) were given at this stage. Clerk to monitor developments and to update Councillors as appropriate. 3. Platinum Jubilee Celebrations - Traditionally the CC hasn’t taken the lead on village events, but the Clerk wondered if this was something that the village halls would be interested in?  The village hall Councillors agreed that they would take this to their respective hall committees to see if they wanted to arrange an appropriate event, most likely over the extended bank holiday in June. | Clerk  Clerk  Cllrs Dodd/ Daniel/ Deakins |
| 17 | **Advertising** - Usk and Raglan Diary contributions Nov / Dec 2021.  The deadline for submissions is 24th September. Any items for inclusion should be forwarded to Councillor Welford by this date. Suggested items included:   * Platinum Jubilee * Citizens Advice Support   The Diary is still desperate for someone to take on the marketing role – otherwise it will likely fold. Councillor Dodd to publicise on the village Facebook page to see if a suitable candidate can be identified. | All |
| 18 | **Date of next meeting and close:** Monday 11th October 2021 at 19.30.Councillor Awni wished it minutedthat the CC should look to change the date / timings of its meetings so they did not clash with the WI meetings (held the second Monday of every month). As a result of the clash she would not be attending the next meeting. Clerk to add to the agenda for next month. | All |

Chairman: **…………………………………….……………** Date:**…………………….**