CYNGOR CYMUNED

GOETRE FAWR

COMMUNITY COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD BY TELECONFERENCE ON MONDAY 11th OCTOBER 2021**

## **Present:** Community Councillors Andy Barnes, Colin Deakins, Peter Daniel, Janet Robins, Nigel Morrey, Rose Thayers, Lucyann Rands, Jan Butler, Roger Howells and Syd Welford

**In attendance:**  Jonathan Lazenby (Clerk)

**Apologies:** Community Councillors Owen Dodd and Nicola Awni

**Absent without apology:** None

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **ACTION** |
| 1 | **Apologies for Absence**  As above. |  |
| 2 | **Declarations of Interest**  In the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair asked the members present whether they had any declarations of interest to make. Councillor Awni had advised the Clerk in advance of the meeting that she had an interest in the item on Longhouse Barn under ‘matters arising’, and was also a member of the WI (see item 15 - donations). Councillor Butler is also a member of the WI. No other ‘interests’ were forthcoming. The Vice-Chair reminded members that they should notify the meeting of any additional interests which became apparent during the progress of the meeting. | All / Clerk |
| 3 | **Chairman’s Remarks**  The Vice-Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. |  |
| 4 | **Approval of the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 6th September.**  The minutes were proposed as a true and correct record by Councillor Daniel and seconded by Councillor Morrey. | Clerk |
| 5 | **Matters Arising**   1. Item 4 (i) – The Clerk has written to MCC Highways to request a ‘no through road’ sign be placed at the junction of Capel Ed Lane and Longhouse Barn (to include the house numbers). A separate sign on the opposite corner (again with house numbers) to indicate the location of house no.s 15 to 1 Longhouse Barn would also be very beneficial for local residents, given the increasing number of home deliveries and the ‘unusual’ road naming and numbering system on this part of the estate. MCC only have budget to replace broken street signs (£8K for the whole county), but OVW have confirmed we can use section 72 of the 1984 Road Traffic Act to fund the purchase and installation. Costs are still awaited from MCC (it is thought c£250 per sign). The Clerk will bring to the next meeting once costs have been confirmed. 2. Item 6 (i) – Defibrillator Training. The Clerk has now arranged for St John’s Ambulance (StJA) to deliver two training sessions – at Goytre Village Hall on Sat Oct 30th from 10-12, and Little Mill Village Hall on Sat 6th Nov from 2-4. The Clerk has posted on the web site and notice boards. Councillors confirmed that the ‘advert’ also appears on both village Facebook pages and was attracting interest. Councillor Daniel to forward a copy of the Goytre Village Hall Risk assessment to be forwarded to StJA. 3. Item 6 (iii) – The Railway Bridge footpath. Clerk contacted MCC who advised that they believed the hedges had previously been cut back. Councillor Robins said this may have been the case, but that bramble growing across the path was now a nuisance. Clerk to report to MCC. 4. Item 7 (i) – The Clerk asked whether the hedges in Little Mill Park have been cut back. Councillor Deakins advised this was not the case. Clerk to chase. 5. Item 8 (iii). Dog Waste. Merlin Waste have been advised of the fortnightly collections from Oct. They have changed their name to Merlin Environmental services Ltd from 4th October, and are now requesting payment in advance for the following month’s empties. After discussion, the change of terms was agreed, being proposed by Councillor Morrey and seconded by Councillor Deakins. Clerk to action and pay latest bill. MCC are currently working on the new contract which will then be put out to tender. A number of Councils have fed back that the proposed 5 plus 2-year contract felt a bit long. MCC have agreed to run another Dog Fouling awareness day in Goytre park on 14th October (this Thursday) around mid-day. A new set of posters covering both general litter and dog fouling are being launched by Keep Wales Tidy, as part of a significant new initiative, and will be made available by Sue Parkinson at MCC. 6. Item 15 – Monmouthshire Citizens Advice have emailed to thank Councillors for their support / donation. 7. Item 16 (i) – Email provider. The Clerk contacted Mike Powell at MCC as requested. He advised that MCC (and many other local public sector authorities), use a company based in Blaenavon. However, having spoken to the company, they only provide a full shared service facility, and won’t operate just a web or email domain in isolation from the full service. 8. Item 16 (iii) - Platinum Jubilee Celebrations. Councillor Daniel advised that   GVH are holding a meeting for local organisations and other interested   parties on November 11th to discuss options and agree a way forward.   Councillor Deakins advised that LMVH are considering a ‘picnic in the park’   format. | Clerk  Cllr Daniel  Clerk  Clerk  Clerk |
| 6 | **Maintenance (inc. items reported but not addressed)**   1. The defibrillator battery for Goytre Village Hall needs replacing at a cost of £194.38 inc VAT and delivery, (disappointingly not free as was initially indicated to the Clerk). This was agreed and proposed by Councillor Morrey and seconded by Councillor Butler. Councillor Butler mentioned that concern had been expressed, at a Macmillan coffee morning, that leaving the cabinets unlocked may allow children access to the units to potentially ‘shock’ each other. The Clerk advised that the units automatically test any potential patient, and will not shock if it does not detect any adverse heart rhythms. 2. Councillor Deakins mentioned that the broken footpath/pavement on the main road by Little Mill Village Hall has not yet been repaired. 3. Councillor Rands mentioned that the red light on the pelican crossing is obscured by a hedge/tree (village hall side of the road). Clerk to report. | Clerk  Clerk |
| 7 | **Finance**   1. Payments made since the previous meeting   **£**     1. Review of Accounts / Cashflow   The Clerk presented the meeting with a copy of the Sept 2021 cashflow.  It was confirmed that the balances had been verified by the Finance Committee to the closing balances in the Unity Trust Bank statements at the end of July/Aug/Sept 2021, with Councillor Barnes signing to confirm, in accordance with section 2.2 of the Community Council Financial Regulations (Wales). There was no further comment or observation.   1. Finance Committee update inc Risk Review 2. Audit 2021/22 update (if available) - The annual return was submitted by the Clerk/RFO on 28th June. However, Audit Wales have advised T & CC’s that due to Covid, they will not be in a position to issue their audit opinion to enable Councils to publish the outcome by 30th Sept, as required by the regulations. A statement to this effect has been provided by Wales Audit and published on the noticeboards / web site. 3. Health & Safety Risk Assessment - MCC have confirmed that no pressing action is required on the Ash tree in Little Mill Park, but we need to be aware of any die back, the first signs of which will be the tree losing its leaves from the top down. Councillor Deakins confirmed that he had recently inspected the tree and all looked well. 4. Health & Safety Checklist - The oak tree on Ton Land that required re-inspection was checked and confirmed as OK by MCC on 19/08/21. 5. An additional risk item, to ensure the monitoring and management of the asbestos in the public conveniences has also been added, dependant on the advice to be provided as part of the HSL Compliance survey. 6. Budget 2022/23 – first draft The Clerk / RFO presented the following first draft budget for 2022/23 for consideration. Key items to note: 7. A new budget of £1400 has been included under cemeteries to cover the maintenance cost of the cemetery at St Bartholomew’s (which is owned by the CC). It's a large Churchyard and the grass cutting is done by strimmer. The price has been the same for several years. The grass is cut 7 times over 6 months (April to September inclusive). LCC pay for extra work such as removing ivy and brambles. A close watch is kept on the surrounding retaining wall. So far LCC have received £310 burial fees this financial year. 8. The budget for the village maintenance will rise by 2.5% (MCC are increasing their fees). The Clerk has spoken with Roy Evans, (LCC Councillor). Apart from Rhyd-y-meirch, the rest of the village is part of Llanover Estate. However, the whole village does appear to be covered by MCC’s remit. The Clerk therefore proposed that the Little Mill maintenance budget should transfer to cover Llanover for 2022/23. 9. Full funding for 16 bins at the current rates of £6.50 per bin, on a weekly basis for the entire year has been made (at an additional cost of c£2000 per annum), with the precept adjusted accordingly. 10. At the suggestion of OVW, the Clerk proposes a further £100 in the cemetery budget to become a member of Institute of Cemetery and Crematorium Management (ICCM). Councillor Deakins recommended the British Register of Accredited Memorial Masons as a (free) alternative. The SLCC also operate an advice line which may be an appropriate alternative.  The proposed budget at this stage is as follows:   The Clerk advised that he will continue to update the budget as required, but asked that all Councillors carefully review the figures prior to the next meeting so that a final budget and precept, can be set at the November meeting. | Clerk |
| 8 | **Planning Committee**   1. To accept the responses of the Planning Committee held on 27th Sept. 2021   The Committee met to consider the following applications:   1. DM/2021/01441 - Planning Permission - Construction of a new enclosed unheated porch on an outbuilding.   Trengrove, Nant-y-derry Road, Nantyderry, Goytre, Abergavenny NP7 9DP   1. DM/2021/01325 - Householder: Remodelling and extension of the existing dwelling at Lapstone Cottage.   Lapstone Cottage, Pen-groes-oped Road, Upper Llanover, Llanover, Abergavenny, Monmouthshire NP7 9EL  Acceptance of the minutes of the meeting of 27th September was proposed by Councillor Welford and seconded by Councillor Daniel.   1. Other updates  There were no other updates.   A further planning meeting is scheduled for tomorrow evening where the proposal for Monmouth Housing to demolish a small block of flats on Melyn Bach Avenue in Little Mill, replacing them with six dwellings, will be discussed. |  |
| 9 | **Boundary Changes**   1. General updateThere have been no significant developments regarding the legislation covering the proposed boundary changes. 2. **Polling Stations in May elections** As a result of the proposed changes to the community and county boundaries at the next set of local elections in May 2022, there is a need to review the polling districts and places, to ensure that electors are assigned to the most suitable areas for voting purposes.   The proposal for Goetre Fawr is:   * Goytre – Goytre Village Hall * Goytre Wharf - Goytre Village Hall * Nantyderry - Goytre Village Hall * Llanover – Sir John Herbert Memorial Hall   A consultation period will run until the 22nd October 2022. However, Councillors felt that the proposals for Goetre Fawr were sensible and it was proposed by Councillor Daniel and seconded by Councillor Butler that the Clerk should respond to John Pearson at MCC to that effect.  The responses will be reviewed and any changes to the initial scheme will be presented to full (MCC) council in November and implemented on the 1st December | Clerk |
| 10 | **Post Office non attendance**   * Update on attendance – Post office. Councillor Daniel has spoken to the Post Office after they missed 4 of 8 visits in 2 months. They have had problems with the connection they required with Crickhowell. Engineers have now fixed the problem and their recent visits have been more regular. * Weekly cost - Councillor Daniel advised that the £12 weekly charge to the Community Council had not yet been discussed. |  |
| 11 | **Public Conveniences – maintenance update** It has come to our attention that the building contains asbestos – in the loft pipe lagging, ceiling and soffits. This is based on a survey undertaken on behalf of MCC in 2005. A specialist company (HSL), recommended by MCC, have undertaken a fresh survey, and in summary, the findings are:   1. The toilets are safe to keep open for the time being, but the gents ceiling in particular is deteriorating, so should be addressed sooner rather than later. 2. The ceiling in the ladies toilet is in better condition, but it would seem to make sense to have it repaired / re-sealed at the same time. 3. There is asbestos debris in the roof void.  As it is padlocked, we are OK for the moment.  However, it is not safe to enter, and so maintenance in the loft (e.g. to address a leaking pipe) would not be possible. It would therefore seem sensible to have the debris removed by a specialist company. 4. The soffits can just be painted – there is no particular need for any specialist treatment.   HSL don’t undertake any work themselves, but are to send the Clerk a list of approved contractors who we can ask to tender for the work. The indicative cost implications are: (NB these are no more than ball-park figures).   * 2 x toilet ceilings (and the storage cupboard) c£1000 * Removal of the debris in the roof void c£5 to £6k * HSL will need to be on site to undertake air testing at £450 a day (possibly 2 or 3 days), while the work is undertaken   Councillor Morrey felt it would be sensible to ask for a cost for the ceilings to be removed to solve the problem once and for all. The Clerk felt this may well be considerably more expensive, but would certainly explore this as an option. He also noted that the HSE advice is not to disturb / remove asbestos unless it is strictly necessary.    The cost of the survey was £400 + VAT. The Clerk had used Financial Regulation 4.1 which enabled him, with the authority of the Chairman, to sanction the expenditure for the report and this was formally approved by the meeting, being proposed by Councillor Butler and seconded by Councillor Morrey. | Clerk |
| 12 | **IRPW proposed attendance allowances** The draft annual report of the IRPW now formally proposes the introduction of an attendance allowance for Councillors, as below:    Determination 48:  Each council can decide to introduce an attendance allowance for members. The amount of each payment must not exceed £30.  A member in receipt of financial loss compensation will not be entitled to claim attendance allowance for the same event.    Councils that intend to introduce an attendance allowance must set out the details of the scheme and publish them on their website.  There is very little additional information, (inc. whether the allowance is payable for Committee and sub-committee meetings). Even with the smaller (8 member) Council in place, a £10 allowance could see payments totalling £1600 pa (as below).   * 11 x Full Council meetings x 8 members x £10 allowance = £880 * Say 12 x Planning meetings x 5 members (on average?) x £10 = £600 * 4 x Finance meetings x 3 members x £10 = £120 * Therefore, potential total amount = £1600   Councils have the flexibility to design a system that is appropriate for them, and at this stage we are just being asked to comment. However, Councils should make a recommendation at the first Council meeting held after receipt of the final report (either Feb or March next year).  In effect, we need to include something in our budget planning now if we propose to pay the allowances. Councillors had mixed feelings as to whether the payments were appropriate. Councillor Deakins thought they would be welcome for ‘young’ Councillors. In the end it was agreed that the Clerk should include funding in the next iteration of the budget with Councillors to make a final decision at November’s meeting. | Clerk |
| 13 | **Plans for updating/replacing/adding play equipment in the Park** Councillor Rands said that she had posted a question on the LM village FB page and had received c20 comments from residents with children. The large majority wanted a ground level trampoline. This was well received by the members, who asked Councillor Rands to obtain some costings and to report back. Councillor Robins queried if it was possible to post a similar survey for Goytre, although the Clerk suggested that it may be better to wait until the costings for LM have been obtained, in case the cost of replicating in Goytre Park would be prohibitive (keep in view also that Goytre Park will have a MUGA installed in due course) . | Cllr. Rands |
| 14 | **Community Council Meeting dates**  At the last meeting Councillor Awni raised the issue of some Council meetings being held on the second Monday of each month. These clashed with the regular village WI meetings, meaning that she, and another female Council member were unable to attend. She asked therefore whether the day or date of future meetings could be changed where clashes occurred (the next is in December). Prior to the meeting Councillor Dodd asked the Clerk to remind everyone they have committed to attending meetings, where possible, by virtue of becoming Councillors, and dates were previously agreed in Dec 2020, but asked Councillors to look again at the December meeting.  By way of background the clerk advised that the dates were chosen as the best fit to ensure compliance with ASM timescales, maintain a 4 or 5 week gap (except for the summer), and avoid, where possible, school holiday weeks. Dates were always confirmed by Councillors in either Dec/Jan for the following financial year. Mondays had been chosen as generally they appeared to avoid clashes with other activities.  During the discussion there appeared to be little appetite to change the existing agreed meeting dates and this was formally proposed by Councillor Barnes and seconded by Councillor Daniel. However, the Clerk said he would look closely when planning next year’s dates (to be undertaken shortly), and would specifically flag where a clash was identified (KIV that these dates will be for the new Council). | Clerk |
| 15 | **Reports – questions based on previously distributed update.**   * **Goytre Village Hall**    + A health and safety inspection from MCC has confirmed all is in place to ensure the safety of events, the number of which has increased.   + The food hall is still ongoing and is of benefit to the community. However, they are struggling to obtain sufficient volunteers. * **Little Mill Village Hall**   + In depth risk assessments are still being carried out on all hall bookings to ensure the safety of the public.   + A ramp will be added to the annexe to provide access for all users.   + Quotes are being obtained to replace the damaged fencing at the front of the hall.   + A celebration of the Platinum Jubilee is planned for May 2022   + Parking of unauthorised vehicles is an ongoing problem, measures are being considered. * **Goytre School Governors**    + The first meeting of the new academic year has taken place. There are currently 174 pupils attending.   + Numerous improvements have taken place including creating a cycling track to teach children safety when riding their bikes.   + Well-being is still a priority for the benefit of the children and staff.   + The head teacher continues to request the closure of School Lane during drop-off and picking up. This is causing numerous complaints regarding cars now parking all over the village. * **Goytre Community Centre**   + Liaison with Village Hall has taken place. It was a positive meeting; there are common areas where the two can work together.   + There has been no response from Nicola Howells at MCC to the detailed email that was sent concerning the future of the Community Centre.   + GASC continues to be the sole financial contributor. WI and classes not ready to return yet. The CC continues to pursue funding sources. * **Other Reports  - Climate Change**   Councillor Awni has attended the MCC climate change workshop which was organised to review the action plan document. It now places more emphasis on renewable energy, active travel, food production and food waste. The following links (together with pictures), were distributed to Councillors in advance of today’s meeting as part of the update report:    Programme for Government - <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-06/programme-for-government-2021-to-2026.pdf> - reference to a Community Food Strategy.    The WG circular economy strategy - <https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2021-03/beyond-recycling-strategy-document.pdf> - The doc covers aims to reduce food waste by 50% by 2025 and a 60% reduction by 2030 (based on a 2007 baseline).    Major policy initiatives include business recycling regs (which will ask business and the public sector to separate out their different waste streams) – and Extended Producer Responsibility on packaging and a Deposit Return Scheme on bottles and cans. The Welsh Gov’s Zero Carbon Plan will be issued fairly shortly. |  |
| 16 | **Donations**  2021 is the centenary year of the Gwent WI. They are working on a Centenary book which showcases and celebrates the work of all the Gwent based Institutes. Each WI is contributing a page to describe their WI past and present. However, due to the effects of Covid on membership, their subscription income falls far short of the amount that they need to professionally publish this historic account. The total cost of the project is £965, and a contribution of £75 (under s137) is requested from us.  If they are successful in meeting the target cost, they will send each WI a copy to mark their landmark year.  During the discussion Councillors Barnes & Deakins noted that the Gwent WI had reserves of some £84k (twice that of the Community Council). However, it was highlighted that the WI had been hit badly by Covid in terms of income, and that they regularly stepped up to support the Community in times of crisis. Councillor Rands noted that a donation would indirectly support two WI groups in the Ward (Little Mill and Goytre). After discussion, a donation of £75 was proposed by Councillor Rands and seconded by Councillor Daniel. The vote was three for, three against and 4 abstentions. A second vote was therefore held and this time the Vice-chair cast his vote in favour of the proposal and the motion was carried. (Councillor Butler abstained in both votes).  The Clerk to advise WI and ask that an acknowledgment of the contribution from the Community Council be included in the book. | Clerk |
| 17 | **Communications**   1. Pilot of Community and Town Councils Self-Evaluation Toolkit – Expression of Interest   One Voice Wales have invited expressions of interest from Councils interested in testing and developing a self-evaluation toolkit being developed by OVW/SLCC/Wales Audit, for community and town councils in Wales to help Councils stay on top of governance requirements an reflect on how it is serving its community.  The pilot will run this Autumn and expressions of interest are being sought from 50 Councils. Councillors agreed that if the Clerk was happy to partake in the pilot, then it would be appropriate for GFCC to be involved. This was proposed by Councillor Daniel and seconded by Councillor Butler. | Clerk |
| 18 | **Advertising** - Usk and Raglan Diary contributions Jan / Feb 2022.  Councillor Welford advised the deadline for submissions is November. Any items for inclusion should be forwarded to Councillor Welford by this date. | All |
| 19 | **Date of next meeting and close:** Monday 15th November 2021 at 19.30. | All |

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