CYNGOR CYMUNED

GOETRE FAWR

COMMUNITY COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD BY TELECONFERENCE ON MONDAY 16th MAY 2022**

**Present**: Community Councillors, Owen Dodd, Jan Butler, Nigel Morrey, Peter Daniel,   
Janet Robins and Morgan Chandler.

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

**Apologies**: None

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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, which includes previous declarations already made. No interests were forthcoming. The 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 Chair welcomed all the members to the meeting, congratulating everyone who had been ‘elected’ to the Council. He envisaged some challenges ahead, with the plans for the MUGA, now hopefully going full steam ahead, and the continued and well documented issues surrounding the main road. |  |
| 4 | **Minutes - Approval of the Minutes of the meeting held on 25th April 2022.**  Item 9 - The clerk advised that Go**y**tre Wharf, should be spelt Go**e**tre Wharf.The minutes were then proposed as a true and correct record by Councillor Daniel and seconded by Councillor Morrey. All voted in favour except for Councillor Chandler who abstained, as he wasn’t in attendance at the meeting on 25th. | Clerk |
| 5 | **Matters Arising**   1. Item 6 – Maintenance - The Clerk has contacted MCC again regarding the re-surfacing of Star Road over the railway bridge. An acknowledgment has been received from Highways, but no specific update has been forthcoming as yet. Councillor Butler is to pursue with MCC. | Cllr. Butler |
| 6 | **Maintenance (inc. items reported but not addressed)**  There were no items to report under maintenance. |  |
| 7 | **Finance**   1. Payments made since the April meeting   **£** 2. Review of Accounts / Cashflow   The Clerk presented the cashflow for the first month of the financial year (April 2022), which had previously been circulated to the members.  There was no further comment or observation.  The Clerk was in receipt of two invoices for payment as detailed below:   1. Wallgate £665 + VAT for the twice-yearly service contract for the handwasher dryers (this is in-line with the three-year long-term agreement entered into last year). 2. Ocean Business Supplies £89.81 + VAT for toilet cleaning supplies.   Payment of both invoices was proposed by Councillor Morrey and seconded by Councillor Robins.   1. Reforecast of the 2022/23 Budget. Following the discussions held at the April meeting, the Clerk presented the newly completed budget forecast spreadsheet, which incorporated the recommendations agreed by Councillors. The changed figures were shown in Purple, with those shown in dark green representing expenditure at Councillors’ discretion still to be agreed. A vote on attendance allowances was taken at the ASM, which agreed to this payment being made available for those Councillors wishing to claim it. This element of the budget will therefore be left in the forecast as originally proposed.   The recommendation of the IRPW is that the (separate) mandated Councillor allowance of £150 should be paid at the earliest convenient date. Therefore, if both payments are made, this might require the setting up (and deletion) of a Councillor’s employment status on two separate occasions during the Financial Year (beginning and end). The Clerk will therefore consider the most appropriate way to pay these allowances via PAYE.   The updated budget was accepted and proposed by Councillor Daniel and seconded by Councillor Morrey. All Councillors voted in favour of the proposal.   1. Internal Audit – update As expected, EH Accountancy have been unable to complete their audit by today’s date. They have raised two queries, to which the Clerk will respond. They have also requested a sample of invoices, which the Clerk will send through later this week. | Clerk  Clerk |
| 8 | **Planning Committee Updates** As the Planning Committee will not have the opportunity to meet before responses are required, the following applications were considered by Full Council. (The Clerk, who has submitted Application DM/2022/00612 to MCC, ‘left’ the meeting at this point to enable Councillors to consider the application in his absence).   * DM/2022/00612 - Householder: Installation of a ground mounted 5.46 kW PV system, consisting of two seven-panel arrays in portrait mode in the north east corner of the garden.  Laburnam Cottage, Croes Y Pant Lane, Mamhilad, NP4 0JD. In the absence of the Clerk, members agreed a response of ‘No Objections’. This was proposed by Councillor Morrey and seconded by Councillor Daniel, with all Councillors voting in favour, with the exception of Councillor Butler, who abstained. The Clerk was then contacted by phone to re-join the teleconference. * DM/2022/00449 - Householder: Proposed two storey extension and single storey garage to rear of property. Llan Farm, Llanvair Road, Goytre, Usk, Monmouthshire NP15 1QD After discussion Councillors agreed that the response should be:   ‘Councillors expressed concerns about the increase in access points and requested action be taken to mitigate the impact of the removal of any hedgerow’.  This was proposed by Councillor Dodd and seconded by Councillor Morrey. All Councillors were in favour, except for Councillor Butler, who abstained.   * Consultation on changes to public footpaths at Pwllyrhwyaid, Llanover NP7 9ES Councillor Morgan confirmed that this had previously been signed off by Llanover CC, and was in relation to a footpath which went through a farmyard. The application had been made to re-route the footpath around the farmyard boundary. It was agreed that there were ‘no objections’ to the application, and this was formally proposed by Councillor Morgan and seconded by Councillor Morrey. All Councillors voted in favour, except for Councillor Butler, who abstained. | Clerk  Clerk  Clerk |
| 9 | **Appointment of two Youth Representatives to Council from May 2022 – update and next steps.**  The Clerk advised the meeting that one application had been received from a current A level student in Goytre (their CV has already been circulated to Councillors). The individual concerned is currently in the middle of their exams, but will be available for interview etc, from 27th June. As time was pressing, it was agreed to defer the Council’s decision on the next steps until the 20th June meeting. | Clerk |
| 10 | **Little Mill Park Update – request from Llanbadoc CC for additional finance (Closed session**) (Although discussed in closed session, it was agreed that full details of the discussion should be published below in the interests of transparency).  The concerns, regarding what Llanbadoc Community Council (LCC) consider to be potential liabilities with the Play Equipment in Little Mill Park, have been well documented with Councillors. In summary, LCC commissioned a Health & Safety report from a playground supplier, who, whilst confirming all equipment to be low or very low risk, nevertheless recommended spending c£25k to bring some of the equipment up to modern day standards. The annual Health & Safety report from MCC (commissioned by GFCC in February), found the play equipment and park safe to use.  A separate tree assessment undertaken by MCC has also been ‘rejected’ by LCC as it is undated, although the Clerk has separately confirmed with the inspector the date of the inspection. A full audit trail leading up to the removal of the trees recommended in the report is also available.  LCC believes there has been under-investment over the years in equipment, although the Clerk has confirmed what appears to be the purchase of equipment costing £30,748 during 2001/2, and a further £30,491 between 2006/7 and 2007/8.  The key issue is that LCC wish GFCC to contribute a further £2000 for them to agree to take on the lease.  However, the Clerk has obtained legal advice from OVW (in turn sought from NALC solicitors), who have confirmed that although Regulations 62(4) of the Local Government Area Changes Regulations 1976 gives a right to refuse a transfer, **this specifically excludes a transfer of land**. Further, Regulation 62(5) requires the land to be transferred in the state that it exists at the date of transfer, and GFCC is under no obligation to undertake or fund any improvements to the play area before or after it is transferred, unless previously contracted for. Therefore, under the appointed date for reorganisation by The Monmouthshire (Communities) Order 2021, all legal advice indicates that the land and accompanying assets transferred to LCC on 5th May.  Councillors noted that LCC had a meeting scheduled for later this week. All therefore agreed that we should contact them to understand what their position was following this meeting, before our Councillors made a final decision. This was formally proposed by Councillor Dodd, and seconded by Councillor Daniel and carried unanimously. | Clerk |
| 11 | **Ton Land - Lease update** As previously advised to Councillors by email, the prospective tenant has pulled out of leasing the land, as she felt there were a few weak spots in the hedge / fence, plus the gate could probably do with re-hanging, (although it appears secure).  The Clerk is attempting to obtain quote(s) for the replacement of a few posts and rails, plus some pig wire where necessary. In addition, he has requested a quote from Joshua Tree Services for the removal of a dead branch.    In the meantime, the Clerk requested we put a short message on Facebook, to say that we are looking to undertake some important maintenance, following which we will re-advertise the land on a 12-month let. Cllr Dodd to arrange.  Interestingly, both Councillors Butler and Robins, who had canvassed extensively during the recent elections, said that the issue of allotments had not come up during any of their doorway conversations. The Clerk also noted that the mature Oak Trees on site cast a large shadow over much of the ground and will have extensive root systems. This, together with flooding issues in the top corner, mean that the likely usable area is much smaller than might first be imagined. | Clerk  Cllr. Dodd |
| 12 | **Boundary Changes Update – including agreement of Burial and associated fees for St Bartholomew’s Church** The Council has now assumed responsibility for the following assets transferred from Llanover CC, specifically:   1. 3 x lamp posts (which MCC may have now assumed ownership of – Clerk has sought clarification). 2. 1 x defibrillator and cabinet 3. 1 x bus shelter 4. Church graveyard and wall   Notification has been sent to Zurich Insurance, with insurances arranged.   However, the transfer of cash reserves pertaining to Llanover ward are still not concluded. The Clerk of Llanover is still preparing budget figures going forward, although we argue that these should not impact on any monies owed to residents of Llanover ward from 2021/22. In particular, the Llanover Clerk states that monies have been earmarked to pay for their election fees. However, the (GFCC) Clerk argues that these fees are the responsibility of Gobion Fawr Council, and the residents of Llanover ward should not in effect be contributing to the election costs of another Community Council.  It looks as though (based on residents), some c21% of whatever sum Llanover CC agree, will be owing to GFCC. However, the number of properties transferring is a more appropriate calculation (as monies are paid by household, not resident), and the Clerk is to write to John Pearson for this information.  Fees also need to be agreed for burials. The Clerk had previously circulated the current charges agreed by Llanover CC, plus those for The Church in Wales (CIW), and MCC. At present the fees are broadly in line with those for the CIW, although they do not appear to have included the latest small increases agreed for 2022. A comparison with MCC is difficult as there are numerous categories, many of which do not read across. However, the overall impression is that MCC are far more expensive.  After due consideration, it was agreed to align the fees for St Bartholomew’s with the Table of fees published by the CIW from 2022. The new fees to be applicable with immediate effect. This was proposed by Councillor Dodd and seconded by Councillor Butler, with all members voting in favour. Clerk to update and advise relevant parties.  One area not covered in the previous rates for St B’s, is that for replacement headstones and tablets. The CIW charges the full memorial fee for replacement stones (pro-rated for partial replacements), and therefore Council needs to agree a policy on this. Shortly before the transfer from Llanover, a local resident was advised of the likely fee for two replacement cremated remains tablets he is looking to install, and wrote to Hugh Candler (Clerk Llanover CC) to request that consideration be given to waiving this charge (£198 for the two), on the basis that the original memorial fee was paid some time ago, and the replacement stones would be an aesthetic improvement. However, with no policy in place, the issue was transferred on to ourselves.  Following discussion, it was agreed that, due to there being no policy in place at the time, a £30 admin fee per tablet would be charged, rather than retrospectively applying the new fees just agreed. This was proposed by Councillor Dodd and seconded by Councillor Morrey. The Clerk / Chair to advise resident. | Clerk  Clerk  Cllr. Dodd  Clerk |
| 13 | **Off Road Biking – update from Cllr. Chandler** Councillor Chandler advised that the issue revolved around a footpath which had been recently upgraded to a bridleway. NRW had installed a step through gate to replace the previous kissing gate, and there was concern that this might encourage off road motor bikes to use the mountain. The ‘step-through’ was installed two months ago, and to date there have been no problems with motor-bikes. The Goose and Cuckoo doesn’t serve alcohol to anyone on an off-road bike, and this appears to have helped. By continuing to work with the Police (as part of their ‘Operation Harley)’ it is hoped we will be able to continue to combat inappropriate off-road biking. At present, this is a watching brief, and Councillor Morgan will continue to monitor and keep Council members informed. |  |
| 14 | **Donations**   1. Well Being café – request for £500 for a Fish & Chip Supper The Clerk had previously written to Councillors with the details of the request, and to remind them that this amount was equivalent to 50% of the entire donations budget for the year. In addition, the limit for individual grants had been set at £250. At this stage, it was unclear how many people might attend (an average of 30 people appeared to be typical for most meetings), so the actual costs incurred could not be calculated accurately. It was also unclear whether it was proposed that any carers should be included, and if costs had been negotiated with a local supplier – perhaps the village chip shop? It was agreed that any decision should be deferred until we had a clearer proposal. Councillor Daniel agreed that he would speak with the organisers of the café. 2. Llanover Village Hall Queens Jubilee Wildflower planting Llanover Village Hall has requested £180 to cover the cost of wildflower seeding activity which will be undertaken by members of the Community over the weekend following 2nd June. The funds will be used to purchase Queen’s Jubilee wildflower seed bombs which will then be distributed to attendees of all ages at the Queen’s Jubilee event. The flower mixes are native species perennials and are designed to flower red, white and blue. The seeds will have a pollinator value, a resonance with the Queen’s Jubilee, educational value and will help to promote a community led activity, which will be overseen by the Village Hall’s Queen’s Jubilee event ‘sub-committee'.   It was agreed that this was an excellent idea to support, as it involved the Community, celebrated the Jubilee and contributed to our Biodiversity and Environmental Responsibilities. £700 has already been set aside to contribute to Jubilee Activities, and it was agreed to use this funding to support the project. This was proposed by Councillor Robins and seconded by Councillor Morrey and passed unanimously.   1. Jubilee support for Goytre Village Hall An outline request has come forward from Councillors Daniel and Dodd, regarding the possibility of providing £100 towards the costs incurred by the Village Hall, in organising the Jubilee celebrations in the village. However, no supporting figures were available, and a formal donation request by the Committee has not been made at this stage. Councillor Morrey suggested that we provisionally allocate £100, subject to formal application, and this was seconded by Councillor Dodd. All voted in favour of the proposal. | Cllr Daniel  Clerk  Clerk |
| 15 | **Communications**   1. Proof reading – Consider appointment of ex-Councillor Rose Thayers Ex-Councillor Rose Thayers had offered her services to continue proof reading the minutes of our meetings, prior to publication and circulation. The Clerk, and indeed Councillors, had found this a valuable service and wished to support the idea. Obviously, Mrs Thayers would not be able to read minutes held in closed session, but the content of the ordinary minutes would have been freely available to any member of the public who had wished to attend the meeting. The idea was supported, and was formally proposed by Councillor Dodd and seconded by Councillor Robins. All Councillors voted in favour of the proposal. | Clerk |
| 16 | **Advertising** - Usk and Raglan Diary contributions July / August 2022. The closing dates for contributions is this Friday, 20th May. It was suggested that the following items be forwarded for inclusion in the diary:   1. Formation of the new Council   (ii)Pushing ahead with multi-sports area in Goytre Park  Clerk to arrange. | Clerk |
| 17 | **Date of next meeting and close:** Monday 20th June at 19.30. | All |

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