CYNGOR CYMUNED

GOETRE FAWR

COMMUNITY COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD BY TELECONFERENCE ON MONDAY 21st MARCH 2022**

## **Present:** Community Councillors Andy Barnes, Peter Daniel, Janet Robins, Jan Butler, Nigel Morrey, Colin Deakins and Syd Welford

**In attendance:** Rachel Beardsmore (resident) to speak on Ukraine   
 Martin Stevens (resident) – observing. Jonathan Lazenby (Clerk)

**Apologies:** Community Councillors Owen Dodd, Nicola Awni, Lucyann Rands and Rose Thayers

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

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | **ACTION** |
| 1 | **Apologies for Absence**  As above. |  |
| 2 | **Declarations of Interest**  The Vice-Chair asked the members present whether they had any declarations of ‘interest’ to make. No interests were forthcoming. Prior to the meeting, Councillor Awni advised the Clerk that she has accepted, on a temporary basis, the position of Clerk to Llanbadoc Community Council. 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, and in particular, two local residents, Rachel Beardsmore and Mr Martin Stevens. |  |
| 4 | **Community Support Officer, North Monmouthshire Neighbourhood Policing Team** As no-one from the Community Support Team joined the meeting, the Vice-Chair moved the agenda on to the next item. (The Clerk will check if someone will be able to join our next meeting). | Clerk |
| 5 | **Ukrainian Refugee Crisis – Community Council Support**  At this point (7.40pm), the Vice-Chair suspended standing orders to enable Ms. Rachel Beardsmore to address the Council, to garner our support for the refugees fleeing Ukraine. Rachel advised that three households in Capel Ed have already registered their interest and in addition has been in touch with the school. The three priorities at the moment are:   * Knowing who has registered to offer accommodation. * Identifying who can provide help with regard to benefits / job opportunities / school placements. * Fundraising.   Councillor Butler has been in touch with Richard Lord, MCC Council Leader, and was able to provide the following update:   * The best way to get resources where they are needed most is via the Ukraine Humanitarian Appeal Disasters Emergency Committee ([dec.org.uk](http://dec.org.uk/)). * If residents have a house or flat they are willing to let out, they should pass their details on to the Housing Options team at MCC. The sponsorship scheme runs for six months, but visas last for three years, so a lot of properties will be needed. * Residents who have a spare room for six months and are willing to sponsor a Ukrainian family (and are already in contact with a family needing help) can register at Homes for Ukraine - Local Sponsorship Scheme for Ukraine ([campaign.gov.uk](https://l.facebook.com/l.php?u=https%3A%2F%2Fcampaign.gov.uk%2F&h=AT2YhASlPQkMQdS7adR_gWiY9vyR2ZKvp4jyq8z6uv6OH_WnP5Yri9Z637vraD55Jgb-qJP0SKnB8HQJXK0oBkJREbvgAKiqHSAe-SscTCjQs6sknaOi5hUtBtcLpKI6CY_Ivar_7HXuP6abkWMS&__tn__=-UK-R&c%5b0%5d=AT10SUqyJqvUT7g_GrxEuut7bNEv2Q5wI9FZoUyW8zMYiyIXXQ8ZVXebf2KWT7Bj8lE2Zv6uwOk02zaUATSdczmHbxExrMkpm8SiuOmOXurxvxGOVSmjjtwetskARvdbxZGJjn6uOxYkKe2qBq5H3PjVVI87ssY1ZFtN0dfcyBWZkwz6ucfv7CFRnp2qp5ApyBiKZ4vSxo1W6UGMkfaRzbedixNJoqACB8beKandofVe)). * Residents who don’t know anyone to sponsor, but who still want to offer accommodation, can apply via Reset, which is a UK charity commissioned by the Government to match refugees to placements. <https://resetuk.org/about/ukraine> * MCC will be working with local groups, the voluntary sector and charities, to develop other ways to help as more people arrive. The current focus is on getting people to safety, into homes in the UK and ensuring access to health, social care and education. * The Clerk advised that he will keep an eye on the MCC web site, to monitor for emails with any additional initiatives we can take. He will also post details of the web sites above on the CC’s web page.   In the meantime, Councillor Robins will provide Rachel with her contact details to set up a local co-ordination group.  The Vice-Chair reconvened the meeting at 7.50pm. | Clerk |
| 6 | **Approval of the Minutes of the Council Meeting held on 14th February.** The minutes were proposed as a true and correct record by Councillor Daniel and seconded by Councillor Morrey. All Councillors voted in favour. | Clerk |
| 7 | **Matters Arising**   1. Item 8 (iv) – The Clerk has sent the appointment letter for our Internal Audit to EH Accountancy which has been accepted. 2. Item 8 (v) – The Clerk’s new salary has now been advised to Beverley & Williams Accountants (our payroll), backdated to 1st April 2021.  The Closed session minutes discussing the proposal are still outstanding from the Chair. 3. Item 11 – Welsh Government Self Evaluation toolkit. Councillor Daniel and the Clerk attended the virtual feedback session on Monday 28th February. 4. Item 12 – MUGA - The Clerk prepared a reply for the Chair to send to Mike Moran at MCC, which has now been sent. In response, Mike has asked for information regarding the original survey / engagement. Clerk is waiting on the Chair for confirmation of the proposed letter content which he has drafted. 5. Item 14 – The diseased Ash Tree in Little Mill Park is due to be cut down next Monday, 28th March. 6. Item 15 - Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021. The Clerk has provided a response on the proposed guidance, to enable Councils to comply with the new requirements under the Act. 7. Item 16 - Public Conveniences – Funding of £4050.15 (representing a 50% contribution of the asbestos removal costs), has been received from MCC. 8. Item 19 – Donations. Payments to the Y Felin Fach Scout Group and Welsh Ambulance have been made. The Borough Theatre Manager has thanked us for considering their request, and understands our decision. |  |
| 8 | **Maintenance (inc. items reported but not addressed)**  The following items were reported:   1. Councillor Deakins advised that the pavement by Little Mill Village Hall has still not been repaired – both he and the Clerk to chase. 2. The Clerk thinks the SIDs unit (as you enter Little Mill from the direction of Usk) may not be working. Councillor Deakins to check. 3. The trees along the A472 by the railway bridge need cutting back – Councillor Deakins to report via ‘MyMonmoutshire’ or ‘Fix My Street’. 4. Councillor Welford advised that a pot hole had recently been repaired near his house, although this consisted of no more than some tarmac being used to fill and then patted down. He did not think this would lead to a durable repair, but will keep an eye on the situation. 5. Some kerb stones near the Chip Shop have been damaged / dislodged by the heavy lorries undertaking the A4042 resurfacing work. Clerk to visit and take photos to submit via ‘MyMonmoutshire’ or ‘Fix My Street’ | Cllr Deakins  Cllr. Deakins  Cllr. Deakins  Clerk |
| 9 | **Finance**   1. Payments made since the previous meeting   £      1. Review of Accounts / Cashflow   The Clerk presented the meeting with a copy of the Feb 2022 cashflow.  There was no further comment or observation regarding the cashflow.   1. SLCC Membership Review   The SLCC have now been in touch, and their cemeteries expert (Yvonne Colverson) has telephoned the Clerk to provide advice and guidance on the management of the cemetery at St Bartholemew’s. She has provided her mobile number for the Clerk to contact her direct with future queries. The Clerk therefore recommends that our membership be renewed for a further 12 months at a cost of £186, (just £1 more than last year). This was proposed by Councillor Barnes and seconded by Councillor Deakins.   1. One Voice Wales Membership Renewal This is now due at a cost of £406 for the year (£390 for 2021/22). Renewal of membership was proposed by Councillor Deakins and seconded by Councillor Welford. 2. Wages 2022/2023 (closed session)   The minutes of the discussion and subsequent proposal are recorded separately. However, Councillors agreed an increase to the new National Living Wage. Clerk to implement.   1. Confirmation of 2022/23 budget Clerk advised that by the year end, our reserves will be c£18k (down from  £32.4k at the end of the last financial year). The boundary change transfers are likely to see a further net outflow of £2.5k at the beginning of the year. Coupled with this we have budgeted for a budget deficit of £10k next year, which, if it all came to fruition would see our reserves drop to £5.5k – way below where we want to be. Traditionally, we have always underspent on our budget, but next year we will need to be particularly careful with any discretionary expenditure. It is possible that some budgeted expenditure may well not come to fruition. For example:  * Councillor allowances / honoraria – c£1k * Attendance Allowances / care costs - c£3k * Annual Report £1k (if we publish on-line) * Election Costs £1k   The Community Council also have some other options to reduce spend. For example:   * Donations - £1500 * Park / Play Equipment spend £5k * Maintaining fortnightly dog waste collections for as long as possible c£1k? * Reduce the frequency / scrap the villages cleaning maintenance - £3679 per annum   The Clerk thought that some of the items listed above were more appropriate for the new Council members to decide upon (allowances etc). Once these are known, Councillors will be better informed as to what level of additional budget re-alignment is required.  Councillor Deakins, (declaring a potential interest as a stone mason), thought that there may be opportunities to improve the income stream from St Bartholomew’s Cemetery by allowing burials from the wider area.  Other Councillors were concerned at the increase in precept for the residents of Llanover, which receives few CC services (no dog bins etc). The Clerk advised that he has specifically requested the transfer of the Little Mill element of the village cleaning services to go to Llanover to improve the balance of services.  After further consideration it was agreed that the Finance Committee should consider the situation at their next meeting, but the final decision should rest with the new Council.  This was proposed by Councillor Butler and seconded by Councillor Robins.   1. The annual fee for hosting our domain (£29.99 + VAT) to Web Solutions Direct (formerly M247) has just been received and is due prior to our next meeting. This amount is budgeted for and payment was formally proposed by Councillor Butler and seconded by Councillor Daniel. 2. Councillors confirmed the recent ‘emergency’ purchase of replacement batteries by the Clerk, for the Goytre Wharf Defibrillator, at a total cost of £21.37. This was proposed by Councillor Barnes and seconded by Councillor Robins. | Clerk  Clerk  Clerk  Clerk  Clerk |
| 10 | **Planning Committee**   1. Consultation on the application to create a public footpath at Cwm Wood At last month’s meeting, Councillors agreed that unless anyone had any specific local knowledge, they did not feel it worth convening a meeting specifically to discuss the issue. However, BBNPA have requested whether this represents a formal response of ‘no issues or comments’. The Clerk therefore requested that an agreed response be formally passed by Councillors. A motion of ‘The Community Council has no issues or concerns with the proposal’ was therefore proposed by Councillor Morrey and seconded by Councillor Butler. Clerk to advise BBNPA. 2. Other updates  There are currently no updates or scheduled meetings | Clerk |
| 11 | **Silent Soldier.**  Contrary to last month’s update, it appears that Mike Jones is looking to re-instate the silent soldier. However, it has now appeared on MCC’s enforcement list, to determine if it requires formal planning permission. In the meantime, the Clerk has confirmed with Zurich that as it is not owned by GFCC, or on our land, we have no insurable interest in it, and therefore, as it stands, it would not be covered by our Public Liability Insurance. Clerk to keep Councillors updated. | Clerk |
| 12 | **Appointment of Youth Representatives to the new Council from May 2022**  This item has been discussed on several occasions previously, when it was agreed to postpone the ‘recruitment’ due to Covid-19, and the future change of boundaries. With the improving Covid environment, and now impending boundary changes, the Clerk has redistributed the ‘advert’ in advance for Councillors to consider.  Councillor Butler thought that with the change in voting ages, there was a greater awareness amongst younger people, and that this was a good way to build upon it. After discussion it was agreed that the advert should be placed ‘locally’ as follows.   * Community Council Noticeboards * The Village Facebook pages * The CC web page * The Village Shop * The Olde Pounde Shop (Chip Shop) * The Diary   This was formally proposed by Councillor Barnes and seconded by Councillor Robins. | Clerk |
| 13 | **Little Mill Playground Equipment – decision as to whether to proceed on the proposed purchase** The final decision has been postponed from previous meetings pending greater certainty on the final financial position. Given the projected end of year reserves outlined under item 9(vi) above, the Clerk felt that it would no longer be financially prudent to commit to this expenditure. Whilst disappointing, this was endorsed by Councillors and formally proposed by Councillor Daniel and seconded by Councillor Morrey. Clerk to advise the Clerk of Llanbadoc CC. | Clerk |
| 14 | **Teleconferencing Software - consider purchase of paid-for software**  Last month’s teleconferencing was ‘plagued’ with poor video reception. The Clerk wonders if this may be due to limited bandwidth provided with the free software(?). The Clerk therefore asked Councillors whether we should invest in a paid-for version and outlined three possibilities:   1. Microsoft Team Essentials £3.00 pm + VAT 2. Microsoft 365 business basic £4.50 pm + VAT (includes ability to record and has Cloud access to 365 software – It also includes a month’s free trial) 3. Star Leaf (as promoted by OVW) - £10.99 pm + VAT   However, the teleconference system appeared to be working well this evening, and as a result Councillors felt this should be put on the back-burner, but to keep the situation under review. |  |
| 15 | **Ton Land Rental – agreement for potential new lessee** The current tenant has decided not to continue with the lease and so the land will need to be re-advertised at a proposed monthly fee of £30 (based on the usual 23-month lease). This was formally proposed by Councillor Morrey and seconded by Councillor Butler. Initially, the plot to be advertised for the keeping of horses, but with other options to be considered if there are no applicants. | Clerk |
| 16 | **Boundary Change Update** There have been no updates from MCC, or to their on-line FAQ which affect Goetre Fawr C.C. |  |
| 17 | **Reports – questions based on previously distributed update.**   * **Goytre Village Hall**    + Post Office has been open each Friday, except for the one day due to adverse weather conditions.   + Bookings are still good.   + Jubilee meetings have been taking place, with lots of ideas put forward. Date of event to be 4th June.   + Food hall still going well. * **Little Mill Village Hall**   + Review of Covid restrictions will take place at the end of March.   + Reviewed and updated standing orders for the Hall.   + Social sub-committee gave proposed activities for Jubilee celebrations,   + Village Hall are looking for volunteers to set up a Community Cafe. * **Goytre School Governors**    + No report at present. * **Goytre Community Centre**   + No report available – next Meeting Tuesday 29th March. * **Other Reports**   + There are no other reports |  |
| 18 | **Donations**   1. The Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod   The organising committee have written to Town & Community Councils, requesting support as part of their annual fundraising appeal to Local Authorities.  Traditionally the CC has not directly sponsored such events, but has been prepared to provide financial support to Goytre Fawr Primary school in the event they wished to take pupils to attend. Councillors agreed the same principles should apply this year and this was formally proposed by Councillor Deakins and seconded by Councillor Daniel.  Councillor Daniel to speak to the Headteacher, Mike Gough to advise. | Cllr. Daniel |
| 19 | **Communications**   1. Monmouth & Parkwall Ambulance Stations – request to Lobby Welsh Ambulance Service (WAS). Richard John, Leader of Monmouthshire County Council and Councillor for Mitchel Troy has written to us asking for our support. In Sept the WAS is proposing to remove the Rapid Response Vehicles in Monmouth and Parkwall (between Caldicot and Chepstow) stations.  This would halve the number of vehicles at these two sites and severely impede the ability of paramedics to respond to emergency calls. It is claimed that it will also significantly reduce the resilience of the service across Monmouthshire.   Recently, Councillors of all political colours in Monmouthshire, voted in favour of his motion condemning these plans and calling on WAS and the Welsh Government’s Health Minister to put a stop to them.  We are asked to write to WAS and/or the Welsh Government setting out our concerns about these proposals.  After discussion, Councillors felt that the Clerk should write to WAS expressing our deep concern and requesting a detailed rationale of the decision and seeking assurances that it will not affect the level of service in our area.  This was formally proposed by Councillor Barnes and seconded by Councillor Robins.  Shan Bowden (One Voice Wales)  The Clerk thought that Councillors might wish to know that Shan will be retiring from her role at the end of the month. The Clerk has sent best wishes on behalf of the Council and himself, and thanked her for the support and guidance she has provided over the years. | Clerk |
| 20 | **Advertising** - Usk and Raglan Diary contributions May / June 2022.  It was recommended that the following items be included:   * The Little Mill Jubilee Party * The Youth Representative (Clerk to forward the advert) * The advert for Ton Land * Councillor Welford to contact Holly Skinner for GVH & Social club activities | All / Cllr. Welford |
| 21 | **Date of next meeting and close:** Monday 25th April at 19.30.  It was agreed that as this will be the last meeting of the present Council (before the May elections), we should look hold this on a face-to-face basis. We will need internet access to provide for ‘hybrid attendance’, and the Clerk will trial a camera he has at home to test its effectiveness for this type of meeting. Councillor Butler will check with Joan Howells whether the use of the Community Centre will be disruptive to the running of GASC due to any potential remaining Covid requirements. As an alternative Goytre Village Hall can also be considered. | All  Cllr. Butler /  Clerk |

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