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GOETRE FAWR

COMMUNITY COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT LLANOVER VILLAGE HALL & BY TELECONFERENCE ON MONDAY 17th JULY 2023 @ 19.45**

**Present**: Community Councillors Owen Dodd (left early), Andy Barnes, Nigel Morrey, Peter Daniel, Janet Robins (left early), Morgan Chandler and Community / County Councillor Jan Butler.

**Guests** None

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

**Apologies**: Community Councillor Scott Grayland

**Absent without Apology:** None.

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|  |  | **ACTION** |
| 1 | **Apologies for Absence.**  As above. | Clerk |
| 2 | **Declarations of Interest.**  Unfortunately, Councillor Dodd’s remote connection was poor. As a result, it was agreed that Councillor Barnes would chair the meeting this evening. He began by asking the members present whether they had any ‘declarations of interest’ to make, which includes previous declarations already made. He also reminded members that they should notify the meeting of any additional interests which became apparent during the progress of the meeting. Councillor Barnes himself re-declared his interest in the MUGA, as, depending on its siting, (if on the lower section of the park), he was likely to object on the grounds of noise. Councillors Butler and Daniel declared an interest in Goytre Village Hall, which had submitted a donations request, (Councillor Dodd, as the CC’s appointed representative to the committee does not need to declare his interest). No further declarations were forthcoming. | All / Clerk |
| 3 | **Chairman’s Remarks.**  The Chair took the opportunity to welcome everyone to the meeting. He welcomed the return of Councillor Robins, following her recent illness. Councillor Robins said she was pleased to be back but, as she was still recovering, she was unlikely to stay for the whole meeting. |  |
| 4 | **Approval of Minutes of the Meeting held on 19th June 2023** The minutes were proposed as a true and correct record by Councillor Morrey, seconded by Councillor Daniel, and carried unanimously. | Clerk |
| 5 | **Matters Arising.**   1. Item 8(i) - Councillor Butler met with Jason Kinsella (MCC Highways) regarding the protruding bolt in the speed cushion outside the chip shop. As a result, the speed cushion has been removed. 2. Item 8(ii) - The speed cushion by the new zebra crossing is still missing. 3. Item 8 (iii) – Flooding by the Village Hall. The camera survey work of the drains is continuing. Councillor Butler has asked MCC to provide her with the ‘all clear’ once completed, so we can take the MUGA SUDs forward. 4. Item 9(v) - The Annual Return was sent to Audit Wales on 27th June by signed delivery and receipt has been confirmed. 5. Item 11(ii) – Go Safe Campaign. Councillor Butler has met with Christopher Edwards, and the new speed check sites have now been agreed. The team were at Capel Ed and Highfield today. Newtown Road and the junction of School Lane with the A4042 will also be included at a later date. However, Plough Road is not currently on the list. Christopher Edwards is hoping to attend the September meeting. The team are looking to add Llanover to their list of speed check sites at a future date. 6. Item 21 – Ramblers Cymru. The Clerk contacted the organisation but was advised that this initiative is aimed at building new networks, rather than relying on established groups. The Clerk had asked if any Councillor wished to ‘pick up the baton’, but no volunteers were forthcoming. |  |
| 6 | **Maintenance.** (including items previously reported but not yet addressed).   1. Councillor Robins advised that the road surface of the railway bridge has now been repaired and was in a much better condition. |  |
| 7 | **Finance.**   1. Payments made since the previous meeting.   £      1. Review of accounts and cashflow The Clerk presented the meeting with a copy of the June 2023 cashflow.   It was confirmed that during the Finance meeting held on 11th July, the cashflow balances had been verified to the closing balances in the Unity Trust Bank statements at the end of Apr/May/June 2023. Councillor Daniel signed to confirm the verification, 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 from Finance Meeting on 11th July   The Clerk referred to the Risk Assessment Document and Health & Safety Checklists, which had previously been circulated to members in advance of tonight’s meeting. The key areas highlighted / discussed during the meeting were:   1. Precept   Not Paid by Council. First payment of 2023/24 monies, received in April. Next due at the end of August. Clerk/RFO will prepare first draft of the 2024/25 budget for the Oct meeting in readiness for next year’s precept.   1. Legal Powers – Illegal Payment or Activity   The General Power of Competence was adopted at the May 2022 ASM, and, following an unqualified External Audit for 2022/23, was re-adopted at May’s 2023 ASM. (The unqualified audit means that we still meet all three eligibility criteria). A new model set of standing orders to take into account the changes brought about by the Local Govt. and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, was adopted at the same meeting, together with the existing set of Financial Regulations.   1. Councillors Allowances – proper deduction of Tax   We are still awaiting confirmation from OVW as to whether the IRPW approved ‘basic’ and ‘consumables’ allowances for Councillors can now be paid without deduction of tax. The indication from OVW is that they are still taxable, but specific written advice has now been outstanding for several months. Given the length of time it is taking to clarify the situation, the Clerk/RFO is to suggest to Full Council that we continue with the existing policy, whereby the allowance is paid with tax deducted at the basic rate, and the re-imbursement of consumables is made based on actual costs incurred.   1. Training of Clerk / Staff   Training Plan published first week of November 2022 and formally reviewed at the June 2023 ordinary meeting.   1. Assets   Maintenance - Gents‘ toilet door is to be replaced shortly, following vandalism damage. Paul Lewis has confirmed the new door is on order from Travis Perkins.   1. Health & Safety   Electrical safety checks for the Public Conveniences and Community Centre, last completed in Autumn 2020, are due in October this year. Electrician already notified with work diarised to be undertaken. The Community Centre Committee have been advised.   1. Disability Discrimination Issues   It is noted that none of the equipment in Goytre Recreation Park is Disability Inclusive. As a result, a review of existing, and supply of new equipment is actively under review. *[This has now changed with the recent installation of the spider swing].*   1. Data Protection Legislations (GDPR) 2. Councillor Dodd is reviewing retention timescales and is scheduled to present to Council at July [*this meeting*] meeting for approval / sign-off (later agenda item). 3. Our ICO registration was renewed on 1st June 2023.   The **Health & Safety Checklist** update was then provided by the Clerk / RFO as follows:  As per item (f) above, the electrical safety checks for the Public Conveniences and Community Centre, completed Autumn 2020, are due in October this year.   1. 2024/2025 budget – initial thoughts The Clerk requested that Councillors give consideration to what specific funding requests will be required as part of the 2024/25 budget, to support the delivery of services as part of next year’s plan. This will ensure that any proposed service delivery is not inadvertently frustrated by insufficient funding. The Finance Committee will consider the initial budget at their next meeting on 4th October, following which, it will be presented to Full Council at its meeting on 9th October. The Clerk mentioned that we will need to include the legal costs of renewing the lease on the Olde Pounde Shop, and it may be wise to make provision for a new lap top. Funding for additional equipment in the park was also mentioned. 2. IRPW Determinations   As per the recommendations of the Clerk during the Finance meeting, (see item 7(iii)(c) above), it was agreed that we continue with the existing policy, whereby the allowance is paid to members with tax deducted at the basic rate, and the re-imbursement of consumables is made based on actual costs incurred. This was agreed by the Council members and formally proposed by Councillor Morrey, seconded by Councillor Barnes, and passed unanimously |  |
| 8 | **Planning.**   1. To accept the responses of the planning committee meeting held on 27th June   The following applications were listed for consideration during the meeting:   * + DM/2023/00762- Planning Permission. Proposed extension to existing storage building - The Old Forge, Newtown Road, Penperlleni, Goytre, Monmouthshire, NP4 0AB   + DM/2023/00838 - Fast Track Full Planning Permission - Proposed construction of manege/horse riding arena on former pig yard area.   Agricultural Wholesale Unit Belonging to Wi Wurrie, Pen-y-wern Road, Penperlleni, Goytre, Monmouthshire  There were no issues or concerns with the first application. Unfortunately, the second application could not be considered as two of the three Councillors present declared an interest (the applicant being personally well known to them). This made the meeting inquorate for the second application.  Acceptance of the minutes (previously circulated), was proposed by Councillor Daniel and seconded by Councillor Morrey and passed with all in favour, except for Councillor Dodd who abstained.   1. Any other updates There are currently no other meetings in the diary. However, we have received a pre-application consultation on a proposal to upgrade the telecoms mast in the village to 5G, and improve the current 4 G services. This will eventually be submitted as a formal application through MCC, and as such Councillors did not feel it necessary to convene a meeting to discuss it at this stage, with this being proposed by Councillor Barnes, seconded by Councillor Daniel and carried unanimously.   An application to consider a proposed two storey extension with wheelchair access at 1 Parkview, Park Y Brain Lane in Goytre has just been received, and a meeting to consider this will be convened in due course. |  |
| 9 | **County Council update – County Councillor Jan Butler.**  Councillor Butler advised that she has been in discussions to request drop kerbs for all the bus stops in the ward. It is probably unlikely we will get them at all the locations, but hopefully the more frequently used stops will be upgraded. Councillor Butler to monitor progress. | Cllr. Butler |
| 10 | **GDPR - Review of and update (as necessary), of GDPR document retention policy.** Unfortunately, Councillor Dodd could not establish an audio connection to discuss his findings / recommendations, and after a couple of failed attempts to present his findings, it was decided that it should be deferred until the September meeting. | Clerk |
| 11 | **Annual Report for 2022/2023 -** update and agreement to publish  The Annual Report (v5) has been previously circulated for final commentary. Councillors Robins and Butler had both provided some useful observations and input, all of which has been included with the updated report now presented to Councillors for approval and sign-off. This was proposed by Councillor Robins, seconded by Councillor Barnes and passed unanimously. Clerk to publish on the web site and Councillor Dodd will put a link on the village Facebook page. | Clerk |
| 12 | **Community Centre – Proposal for the Community Council to formally relinquish the lease in favour of the Centre Committee.** Background. The Community Centre, (an entirely separate trust to the Community Council, but comprised mainly of the same members), is currently seeking grant funding to improve the condition of the building and finances of the Committee. Originally MCC granted a lease on the Community Centre to the Community Council at a price of £25 per annum (which we still pay at the same rate). However, the lease was subsequently transferred to the Community Centre Trust when it was set up in 1987 (this had the consent of both the Community & County Council). Initially it was for three years, and was then extended for another three. Therefore, the formal (at least documented), agreement lapsed about 30 years ago. However, the working assumption is that the lease continues (with the Community Council paying the annual rent), and the Community Centre continuing as the actual leaseholder, as per the Trust Deed. In the Trust Deed the Community Council is named as the Custodian Trustee – so the property is held in the Community Council’s **name only,** for the absolute benefit of the Community Centre. However, this gives the Community Council no rights on the running of the Centre, which remains the responsibility of the Centre Committee.  The future  To enable the Centre Management Committee to progress with their grant application, they need to obtain clarity / stability of tenure over the property, by way of a new lease or perhaps formal asset transfer from MCC. Rather than formally renew the lease in favour of the Community Council, the Clerk suggested that it may now make more sense for a new lease to be granted directly in favour of the Centre Committee. This would help further separate the Council and Centre Committee and avoid potential conflicts of interest. If Members were in agreement, the Clerk felt that a formal motion should be passed by Councillors confirming that they were comfortable for the Council to relinquish its interest in the property if requested to do so. However, it was for the Centre Committee to decide how it wanted to proceed, and to pursue the lease with MCC if they so decided. The motion to potentially relinquish the lease to enable it to be obtained by the Community Centre (if they wished), was proposed by Councillor Daniel and seconded by Councillor Morrey and passed with one abstention (Councillor Dodd). Councillor Butler to advise MCC if required.  Councillor Butler confirmed that a review of MCC’s community assets was underway. There have so far been discussions with Nicholas Keyes (department head) and Nicola Howells from the Asset Management team. However, Ashley Morgan (Community Networks Lead) has now been appointed to work with the Centre Committee and is to visit the property on 1st August, as he will be taking on the responsibility for managing / renewing the lease. | Cllr Butler.  Cllr Butler. |
| 13 | **Community Engagement – Councillor Janet Robins/Jan Butler/Nigel Morrey.**  Unfortunately, Councillor Robins has not been available to undertake the work with Councillors Butler and Morrey, and so, to date, there has been no further progress. However, they now plan to meet up in the middle of August to discuss the way forward. | Cllrs. Butler/ Robins/  Morrey |
| 14 | **Churchwood / Village Surgery – update.** Councillorshave been advised that The Health Board has followed the Vacant Surgery Process, informed patients affected by the change, and held panel interviews with prospective GPs for the Churchwood Surgery.  The Panel has made recommendations to the Health Board and a final decision has been made by them.  Letters to inform patients about the decision are going out this week. The decision will also address the Churchwood Surgery’s branch at Goytre, as this is also included in the contract. |  |
| 15 | **Goytre Recreation Park.**   1. Sports recreation hub inc MUGA update Johnathan Wassall at MCC has said that he will check the recently installed goal posts for safety. 2. Playground equipment update   MCC have now installed an ‘accessible’ spider swing in the park. The Clerk confirmed that we have received the £5000 from the micro-geography fund for the purchase of a table tennis table. Any remaining funds can be used towards other facilities in the park. It was agreed that we should confirm the purchase and installation of the same type of table which has been provided to King Henry school, and which is proving very popular with students. This was proposed by Councillor Barnes and seconded by Councillor Daniel with all in favour except for Councillor Butler who abstained.  On a separate point, it was noted that MCC had not re-seeded the flower beds in the Park this year (it was not known why). However, the beds have obviously self-seeded, and whilst the displays are not as ornate as in previous years, they are nevertheless perfectly acceptable. It is too late to manually seed them now, and so this will have saved £1000 from the budget. It was agreed to ‘hold’ these funds for the moment, before agreeing to allocate the monies elsewhere.  At this point Councillor Robins, who is still recovering from her recent illness, left the meeting. | Cllr. Butler |
| 16 | **St Bartholomew’s Graveyard – update** Since the last meeting the Clerk has undertaken further research into the possibility of extending the graveyard at St Bartholomew’s, including speaking to the SLCC’s expert on graveyard management and the Institute of Cemetery and Crematoria Management (ICCM). Both advised that new regulations have recently been introduced, and that as a minimum, the land would need to be tested for water / drainage, and we would need a change of usage from MCC. Having spoken with a company which specialises in the surveying / design of cemeteries, the Clerk has advised Councillors that the new regulations require a range of surveys including:   * Water / Drainage * Ecology / Environmental Testing * Archaeology * Design / site plan * An Access / Transport statement (as access will be from the road)   All the above will be required, as a minimum, to take an application to planning.  The total cost for surveying / testing / preparing the application, will be, as a minimum, somewhere between £25k and £30k.  This excludes the cost of acquiring the land, building walls / access path / fences etc.  Given the significant capital outlay required, Councillors felt that the suggested extension could not be justified. As an alternative, the Clerk suggested that we could arrange for a ground penetrating radar survey of the land to the north of the church (traditionally not favoured for burials). The Clerk has spoken with Kevin Hasler, (Rector and Ministry Area Leader), who did not think burial in that area would pose a problem for most people. If it is found that the area has not been used previously, it would provide space for approximately 60 burial plots. The Clerk has therefore obtained three quotes for such a survey and accompanying report. These are:   * Wales Measure Survey £1600 + VAT * Rowland Brothers Ltd £1975 + VAT (includes £400 travel and accommodation). * KB GPR Surveys Ltd £1,385.00 +VAT.   All quotes had been previously distributed by the Clerk. The costs of the actual testing and report writing are fairly similar. However, because of location (Croydon), the quote from Rowland Brothers is significantly more expensive due to travel and accommodation costs.  Feedback has been received from some local residents that the north ground has a lot of gravel and so has not been used for this reason. However, it is not understood how this is known, why it would be different from the rest of the graveyard, or indeed, if true, how it would affect its use. It was suggested that we might employ a sexton to undertake a test dig to establish the ground conditions.  It was agreed that the best way forward was to firstly undertake the GPR analysis, with KB GPR surveys the preferred choice based on cost. This was formally proposed by Councillor Morrey and seconded by Councillor Butler, and passed unanimously. The Clerk to progress and formally advise Tom Jones at Llanover Estates that we will not be proceeding with the suggested land ‘acquisition’. | Clerk |
| 17 | **Village Committees’ Reports – questions based on previously distributed updates**   * Goytre Village Hall * Nothing major to report, still waiting on quotes for upgrading the toilets. * Plenty of events taking place.  Next major event is the community fun day at the end of August * Llanover Village Hall   + No report submitted. * Goytre School Governors * The current term finishes this week. A lot of planning is being undertaken to begin the new assymetric programme for the next academic year. No major concerns with parents. * Goytre Community Centre * The Cheese and Wine fundraiser was a success, (26 attending). Final calculations still to be made, but it looks as though the event broke even with wine to spare for next event. * A short survey has provided a nucleus for the start of a Friends of Goytre Community Centre WhatsApp group. * An open evening is planned for September (date to be advised). * Ashley Morgan (Community Networks Lead), who is taking on some of Nicola Howells work, is visiting the Community Centre on Tuesday 1st August at 10:30am. Councillors are welcome to attend. This will be an opportunity to discuss the leasehold transfer to the Community Centre Committee, which will clear the ground for fund applications. * Other Reports * There were no other reports |  |
| 18 | **Donation requests.** The Clerk reminded Councillors that only £600 of this year’s donations budget remained, and so this should be borne in mind when making any awards.   1. Goytre Village Hall   We have received a donation request from Goytre Village Hall / the S&SC events committee, requesting a contribution towards the costs of c£1775 to hold a family fun day in the park, focussing on animals, but with the addition of a bouncy castle and other children’s / family entertainments. As this was a community event, it was agreed that a donation should be made. After some debate, it was eventually decided that a contribution of £450 should be made to cover the cost of the ‘Animal Encounters’, listed in their donation application. This was proposed by Councillor Barnes and seconded by Councillor Morrey with Councillor Chandler also voting in favour. Councillor Dodd abstained (following which he left the meeting). As Councillors Daniel and Butler are both on the VH committee, they did not take part in the vote.   1. Well-Being Café   The café would like to offer their members the opportunity to spend a day at the seaside and have booked a bus to take everyone to Weston-Super-Mare. The trip has been arranged for the end of August at a cost of £695. The Well-being Café are approaching other organisations for part funding, but are prepared to cover the difference between the money received and the total cost. Accounts for 2022 showed income of c£2000 and expenditure of £1700, with a donation of £300 being made to the Village Hall in recognition of their free usage. They therefore have no cash assets to speak of.  It was agreed that a donation of £150 should be made, and this was proposed by Councillor Morrey, seconded by Councillor Daniel, and passed unanimously. | Clerk  Clerk |
| 19 | **Communications.**   1. Aderyn - We have received an invite for the Clerk and four others to attend the Aderyn Garden Open Day on Friday 28th July between 10 am and 2 pm. Unfortunately, the Clerk will be away on holiday (as will Councillor Butler). Work commitments were also a difficulty for some. However, Councillor Daniel expressed his intention to attend and the Clerk will advise Aderyn accordingly. 2. Mind Monmouthshire – The Clerk has received a self-help booklet, together with two ‘flyers’ to publish on the noticeboards, encouraging people to contact the organisation for mental health support. The booklet was circulated to Councillors for them to read. The Clerk will post the leaflets on the two noticeboards. | Clerk  Clerk |
| 20 | **Advertising** - **Usk and Raglan Diary contributions September / October 2023.**  The closing date for submissions is Friday 28th July. There were no submissions for the next edition. Clerk to advise Penny Reeves. | Clerk |
| 21 | **Date of next meeting and close.**  The next meeting is to be held on **Monday 11th September** at **19.45**. The venue to be Llanover Village Hall, and by teleconference via: <https://meet.jit.si/GoetreFawrCommunityCouncil>  The Clerk advised the Council of the dates that the office will be closed during the summer holiday period. | All/  Clerk |

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