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COMMUNITY COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT LLANOVER VILLAGE HALL & BY TELECONFERENCE ON MONDAY 9th SEPTEMBER 2024 @ 19.45**

**Present**: Community Councillors Nigel Morrey, Lewis Carter, Andy Barnes, Peter Daniel and Janet Robins.

**Guests** Jo Webb - Community Spaces Outreach Officer, Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations.

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

**Apologies**: Community / County Councillor Jan Butler, Community Councillor Owen Dodd.

**Absent without Apology:** Councillor Scott Grayland.

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|  |  | **ACTION** |
| 1 | **Apologies for Absence.**  As above. | Clerk |
| 2 | **Declarations of Interest.**  The Chair commenced by asking the members present whether they had any declarations of ‘interest’ to make, which includes previous declarations already made. No further declarations from the members were forthcoming. The Clerk noted that he is still awaiting the submission of a ‘general’ declaration from Councillor Grayland. | Clerk |
| 3 | **Chairman’s Remarks.**  Councillor Morrey took the opportunity to welcome everyone to the meeting. At this point, it was agreed to bring forward the presentation on Gwent Voluntary Associations (GAVO), and Jo Webb, Community Spaces Outreach Officer was invited to address the meeting. |  |

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| 4 | **Jo Webb - Community Spaces Outreach Officer, Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations – Exploration of ways for GAVO to support the rural community.** Jo commenced her presentation by explaining that GAVO is a ‘CVC’ (County Voluntary Council), which offers support to the third sector by developing community support groups. It is primarily government-funded so provides its services to community groups and charities for free. GAVO covers Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire and Newport.  Jo’s role is to help develop rural communities and groups, including supporting them with governance, identifying funding opportunities / helping with applications, and linking them to other agencies, who could support them further, e.g. iConnect, Halls Together, MCC, Bridges Car Sharing etc. For example, iConnect can support the upgrade of AV equipment and GAVO’s own ‘SPF Small Grants Capital Fund’ (SGCF), can be used to replace kitchen equipment. In addition, GAVO can also provide funding for things such as a new community garden or for playground equipment. They also recommend training courses for new trustees.    The Chair thanked Jo for her very informative presentation, which has already sewn a number of seeds of opportunities for funding - (iConnect to upgrade the CCTV cameras and hard drive, and the SGCF for new kitchen equipment for the Community Centre). The Clerk to distribute a copy of Jo’s slides. | Clerk |
| 5 | **Minutes.**   1. Approval of the Minutes of the meeting held on 15th July 2024**.** The minutes were proposed as a true and correct record by Councillor Daniel, seconded by Councillor Carter, and carried by all who were present at the July meeting (Councillor Barnes who did not vote, having not been in attendance in July). 2. Approval of the Minutes of the closed session meeting held on 15th July 2024 The minutes were proposed as a true and correct record by Councillor Daniel, seconded by Councillor Carter, and carried by all who were present at the July meeting (Councillor Barnes who did not vote, having not been in attendance in July). | Clerk  Clerk |
| 6 | **Matters Arising.**   1. Item 6 (i) – The leaves on the pavement in Llanover have now been swept. Clerk to chase to get the MCC team to remove those behind, and at the side of our bus stop in Llanover. 2. Item 6 (viii) – Olde Pounde Shop LED upgrade – Gwenlec Electrical are installing the new lights this Thursday (12th). 3. Item 7 (i) – Replacement of Gent’s toilet door & installation of CCTV – The CCTV cameras have been successfully installed. However, this has revealed that the existing recording hard drive is now insufficient. An upgrade is to be discussed under item 17. The Clerk has emailed Paul Lewis for a date for installation of the new door. It has now arrived and he is looking to fit it next week. In the meantime, Zurich have agreed to pay for the repairs, so we will receive £135 net after our £250 excess. 4. Item 19 (i) – Nantyderry fibre build project – latest numbers.  Pledging is still only at 34%. Anna Seargent at Openreach is going to arrange another mail shot to eligible premises who have not yet pledged. We have highlighted the service on our FB page, and the poster is still on the Goytre noticeboard. Councillor Butler is exploring further options to promote the service. However, the Clerk felt that the sign-up commitment was a little vague, and wondered if most users consider their existing speeds sufficient.   The Chair confirmed that he has received a letter under the mail shot mentioned above, and it was agreed to raise the profile of the project again (on the FB page) using a suitably redacted version of this letter to highlight the scheme. | Clerk  Cllr. Carter |
| 7 | **Maintenance.** (including items previously reported, but not yet addressed).   1. Mr Naveed has requested that we investigate repairs to, or arrange for a full replacement of the side door of the old Pounde shop. He has undertaken a temporary repair, but the issue was raised during a recent hygiene inspection (as a result of which the shop gained a 5-star rating). The Clerk has asked Paul Lewis (who installed the front window and door of the building) to provide a quote. The Clerk noted that the new lease clearly states that all repairs to the building are the responsibility of the tenant. 2. Mr Naveed has also requested that he be able to tarmac in front of the shop to improve the appearance. Technically, this is common land. However, our solicitors have suggested that if Mr Naveed provides us with a ‘specification’ of what he intends to do, and we approve it, this will add weight to any future claim to include the adjoining land to the shop in the Land Registry title. 3. The Chair noted that MCC had cleared the  kerbside gutters in the village (Goytre). | Clerk  Clerk |

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| 8 | **Finance.**   1. Payments made since the July meeting  **£**      1. Review of accounts / cashflow The Clerk presented the meeting with a copy of the August 2024 cashflow.   There was no further comment or observation.   1. 2025/26 budget – initial thoughts   Although there were no definitive numbers at present, it was felt that the following potential costs should be borne in mind:   * Community Centre – the future of the centre, together with any associated costs, will need to be re-visited by the committee, now that the main source of income (GASC) is no longer available. * Dog bins for Llanover - potential for 3 bins? * Goytre park equipment maintenance.  1. New lease on the Old Pounde Shop   The new lease is now ready and has previously been circulated to Councillors. The Clerk noted that there was no longer the requirement for the tenant to seek permission to sell alcohol, but, as this was granted back in 2022, this was now probably academic. The lease also includes a provision for the Council to use its discretion on rent review if the standard means of calculation results, in what Councillors consider, to be an excessively large increase. There were just a couple of points which needed clarification.   * Loss of rent (not previously included). This is stated as 2 years. The CC currently has 12 months cover for loss of income. The Clerk felt that our insurance company may consider 2 years as excessive, but will investigate. * The requirement for the tenant to insure all the plate glass windows. It is not clear why these wouldn’t be considered to be insured under the standard buildings policy, for which the tenant has a responsibility to re-imburse the CC.   It was also noted that the tenant is responsible for the repairs to the whole of the premises, and to keep them in good repair.  Subject to clarification of the above points, approval of the lease for signing was proposed by Councillor Morrey, seconded by Councillor Barnes and carried unanimously. The next steps are for the document to be sent to the tenant’s solicitors to advise their client, and then for the document to be signed. | Clerk  Clerk  Clerk |
| 9 | **Planning.**   1. To accept the responses of the planning committee meetings held on 17th July, 12th and 27th August.   The meetings covered the following applications   * **17th July** - DM/2024/00789 - 16 Newtown Road, Penperlleni, Goytre, and   DM/2024/00863- Melin Y Coed, Nant-y-derry Road, Nantyderry.   * **12th August** - DM/2024/00977 - Former Piggery, Black Beech, Goytre. * **27th August** - DM/2024/00975 - General portal frame agricultural field barn, land South of Great House Farm, Croes Y Pant Lane, Mamhilad.   The recommendations of the Planning Committee for each application are contained in the minutes of the relevant meetings, which have been published on the web site. Acceptance of the minutes of each meeting was proposed by Councillor Daniel, seconded by councillor Morrey and carried unanimously.   1. Any Other updates The following additional applications have now been received, and Councillor Barnes will schedule a meeting in due course.  * 24/23157/FUL - Reinstatement of former cottage and construction of two storey extension - Ty Newydd Cottage, Croft Farm, Saron Road, Penperlleni, Pontypool NP4 8SD. * 24/23137/FUL - Extension and Alterations with associated works - Ty To Maen, Ancient Road, Llanover NP7 9ES. * DM/2024/01084 - Two storey rear and side extension replacing existing structures - 2 Bryn Y Nant Cottages, Nant-y-derry Road, Nantyderry. * DM/2024/01076 - Planning Permission: Construction of a double garage and storage with occupied attic space and extension of residential curtilage - Barn Conversion known as Oak Barn, Hendre Grange, Llanover, Monmouthshire, NP7 9DG.   Unfortunately, the 21-day statutory consultation period for application 24/23157/FUL expires tomorrow. However, the Clerk will write to BBNPA to ask if they will provide a 7-day extension.  The next meeting is to be held on Monday 16th at 6 pm | Clerk  Cllr. Barnes |
| 10 | **County Council update – County Councillor Jan Butler.**  Councillor Butler was not in attendance as she is currently undertaking the pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostello in aid of Brain Tumour Research. However, in Councillor Butler’s absence, the Chair noted that:   1. Road works signage has been placed on the A4042 where the new pedestrian crossing will be. It is unclear if this is in preparation for the works to commence, although these are not expected to start until the New Year. 2. Following Councillor Butler’s requests, drop kerbs have now been installed by the Community Centre and School, and a new pavement is also being installed by the toilets. |  |
| 11 | **Green Corridor Project.** On Friday 16th August the CC held an engagement exercise in Goytre Village Hall to consult on the green corridor proposal (focussing on Goytre Village).  The exercise attracted a very good turnout, with a steady flow of residents, with the distribution of flyers seemingly helping to encourage attendance. We learnt a lot, particularly regarding concerns about negatively impacting the parking along Highfield. Perhaps surprisingly, not everyone was in favour of increasing the amount of ‘greenery’ in what they considered a rural village.  The next phase of the project will include MCC setting up a comms page, containing an on-line survey for any residents who missed the face-to face consultations. This will take a little time, but as soon as it’s live, Jane Clarke will be in touch to discuss next steps. |  |
| 12 | **Trydani – Charge Place Wales (CPW) – Interest Shown and Next steps.**  This scheme was only recently advertised on our FB page – initially asking for potentially interested users. So far there have been only a couple of ‘likes’ and comments – so nothing at this stage to suggest a groundswell of support. It was agreed that Councillor Carter should give this another ‘push’, and include the requirement for an administrator, upon which the success of the scheme, if implemented in the village, is likely to be dependent upon. | Cllr. Carter |
| 13 | **Goytre Recreation Park.** The two netball / goal ends are in the process of being installed on the football field. A notification to this effect on the Facebook pages attracted 50 ‘likes’, but just one negative comment, relating to the annual Boxing Day football match.  We are still awaiting an installation date for the equipment in the top section of the park, although we are told that this will be soon. |  |
| 14 | **St Bartholomew’s mapping update.**  The Clerk has now completed the mapping exercise of all the graves/headstones in the graveyard. It is always possible that there is the odd ‘new’ headstone that was not picked up during the review, (mapping records were not kept between 2009 -2024). However, it is hoped that these will come to light during the next stage of the process.  The Clerk has updated the list of headstones, which includes a photograph of each one, with a reference number linked to the map. The list contains the names of those on the headstone, which enables a search facility to find the burial place of anyone in the graveyard. Unfortunately, the names are not always clearly legible on the old stones (some are completely indecipherable). However, the next step is to put together, a ‘Friends of St Bartholomew’s’ group, who it is hoped will, amongst other things, work their way through the graveyard to complete the list of names (where these are still legible), so that these can be added to the official record. This review should also help to identify that all the graves are properly recorded.  Councillor Carter is to look into liaising with the Church to organise a suitable group, as soon as his existing Council commitments allow. | Cllr. Carter |
| 15 | **Trial of Digital mapping Service – update and consideration of purchase.** Our ‘Parish Online’ account is now up and running with all Govt and O/S licences in place. We have a 3-month free trial (not 30 days as indicated on the web site). So far, the indications are that this will be a very useful tool. The Clerk has already marked the position of our dog waste bins and defibrillators.  All Councillors have been provided with their own log-in and password, to gain access and explore what the system has to offer.  The cost is not the £125 the Clerk was originally quoted, but £150. However, there’s currently a 20% discount which brings the cost back down to £120.  We still have some time left on our free trial, but the Clerk thought this was an opportune time to ask whether we would wish, at this stage, to confirm the purchase of the system at the end of the trial period. He noted that we have no other map of the Council area.  It was agreed that this was probably a useful tool (especially with regard to planning applications), although it would be appropriate to review it’s usefulness after 12 months. The purchase of the system was proposed by Councillor Morrey, seconded by Councillor Daniel and carried unanimously. | Clerk |
| 16 | **Annual Report – sign off - Councillor Dodd.**  Unfortunately, Councillor Dodd is absent from this evening’s meeting and has not sent through the updated report containing his review of his final year as Chair. It was, therefore, agreed that this item would be carried forward to the next meeting. | Clerk |
| 17 | **Upgrade of CCTV Hard drive.**  Recently the police requested we provide footage of an alleged theft of a vehicle from Goytre car park in the early hours of 4th August.  The Clerk attended to recover the recording, but unfortunately, it looks as though, since we added the two additional high-quality (4K) cameras, the capacity of the hard drive of the recorder is reached that much sooner. As a consequence, our stored recordings only go back about 4 days, (rather than a fortnight, or possibly even 30 days as before).  As a result, the footage had been ‘taped’ over on the recording loop.  The recorder is now c10 years old, and will no doubt have a hard drive capacity that was standard for the time (probably 250/500GB?).  This is clearly insufficient for modern day usage. As a result, the Clerk has contacted Tod Security who have quoted £220 + VAT for the installation of a 4TB disc. This will provide a significant increase in recording space and also future proof the system, should we ever decide to update the car park camera. The clarity and resolution of the new cameras, particularly in the dark (which are in colour), is significantly better than that of the old car park camera.  It was agreed that the Clerk should look to see if grant funding was available from iConnect (see item 4 above). If this was the case, he should proceed with a request to increase the hard drive size, together with an upgrade to the car park camera (the latter having previously been discussed but declined on the grounds of cost). If funding was not available, it was agreed we should just proceed with the hard-drive upgrade.  This approach was proposed by Councillor Morrey, seconded by Councillor Robins and carried unanimously. | Clerk |
| 18 | **Llanover Village.**   1. Play Area It has been muted by Llanover Estates, that the Community Council consider taking responsibility for the management of the small children’s play area on the memorial fields. If not, they would be looking to remove the equipment which they consider too expensive to manage and maintain. However, the Clerk advised the meeting that what looks like a simple request, is much more complex in reality, both in terms of time and cost. This is probably the reason why the CC returned Goytre Park to the custodianship of MCC when that lease expired.  A minimum of monthly safety inspections and assessments are required, all clearly documented, plus an annual independent safety inspection (at cost).  The existing equipment in the park is in poor condition, especially the slide, with some of the structure / fastenings underneath completely rotten. In reality, it probably all needs replacing, together with the installation of a safety surface and fence (with safety gate), which will be costly, possibly in the order of £20k to £25k. There are also likely to be legal issues with the ownership of the land (which is part of the Estate Trust), and which would need to be handled by our solicitors, adding to the expense. Following discussion, Councillors felt this would be an expensive venture, and would require resource, time and money that the CC does not have available to allocate. It was agreed that Councillor Carter should meet with the Estates team to ask if they would reconsider their position. 2. Installation of dog bins A request has been made for the installation of some dog waste bins in Llanover. Although not been budgeted for in this financial year, the Clerk did not feel that this would be financially onerous and could be accommodated within our overall budget. He has spoken to Sue Parkinson at MCC who has advised that single bins from Earth Anchors (who supply the dog bins), will cost £214 plus VAT (including the mounting post and bag ring), but she has three used dog bins @ £100 each (ex-Devauden Community Council). This would probably be sufficient. Numbers and suggested siting have yet to be agreed. Much of the land in the village is owned by the Estate, and so this may be an issue. On Facebook the ‘favourite’, sites suggested by residents seem to be along the canal. However, we would need the permission of the C&RT, who, the Clerk advised, paid for the installation of the existing bins on the canal, with the CC paying for them to be emptied. It was agreed that Councillor Carter approach the Estate for their views on bins being installed in the village and continue to take soundings on the most appropriate sites. | Cllr. Carter  Cllr. Carter |
| 19 | **Village Committees’ Reports – questions based on previously distributed updates.**   * Goytre Village Hall   + Bookings going well.   + Looking for grants to upgrade the Hall.   + New financial system has been completed and new booking system installed.   + Still waiting on the insurance company to agree with the outside damage and re-construction. * Llanover Village Hall   + AGM was held and a new committee appointed, largely consisting of previously existing members.   + Hall is seeking grants for repair work to a rising damp problem.   + Hall is considering raising charge rates in the next financial year to align with other halls.   + Overall finances are healthy with a steady stream of bookings (enough to cover running costs).   + Village fete raised an additional £3k in total (excluding expenses) towards improving the hall. * Goytre School Governors   New academic year began on the 3rd September, so no meetings have taken place yet. The first meeting will take place in a few weeks’ time.   * Goytre Community Centre   + .   + No report submitted. * Other Reports   + There are no other reports. |  |
| 20 | **Communications**   1. GFCC Facebook page – latest posts / responses There is nothing to report at present. 2. Energy Learning Network A new Energy Learning Network, funded by the National Lottery, is looking to recruit 5-10 local councils across the UK, to work with over the next two years through six online workshops. This provides an opportunity to meet, learn from and collaborate with other councils on community energy. Councillor Butler had previously corresponded to say that she thought this was a good idea. However, with no energy projects of our own, Councillors did not feel that we could make a sufficient contribution, and that our learning from the project would be limited. It was, therefore, felt that involvement would be best left to Councils who were more active in this area. 3. Goytre Remembrance Day   As in previous years, we have been approached to organise this year’s Remembrance Day in and around the park, this time by Rev’d Sue Fletcher- Davies, who will conduct the service. However, she is concerned about the event being properly organised, with appropriate health and safety assessments / measures, without which she did not feel able to take part. We have re-iterated that the proposed site is not suitable, and even last year, where the event largely took place within the park, a number of individuals spilled out onto the kerb roadside area. Unfortunately, we do not have the resources to organise or supervise such an event. We have offered to meet with Mike and Sue to see if a long term solution can be found, but have made it clear that on current resourcing levels, this won’t include our direct organisation of, or involvement in the event. | Clerk  Clerk |
| 21 | **Advertising - Usk and Raglan Diary contributions November/December 2024.**  There were no articles for inclusion in the next edition. | Cllr. Carter / Clerk |
| 22 | **Date of next meeting and close.**  The next meeting is to be held on **Monday 14th October** at **19.45,** atLlanover Village Hall, and by teleconference using: <https://meet.jit.si/GoetreFawrCommunityCouncil> | All/  Clerk |

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