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GOETRE FAWR

COMMUNITY COUNCIL

**MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING HELD AT LLANOVER VILLAGE HALL AND BY TELECONFERENCE ON MONDAY 16th JUNE 2025**

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

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

**Apologies**: None.

**Absent without Apology:** Community / County Councillor Jan Butler.

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|  |  | **ACTION** |
| 1 | **Apologies for Absence.**  As above. | Clerk |
| 2 | **Declarations of Interest.**  The Chair, Councillor Morrey, commenced the meeting by asking the members present whether they had any declarations of ‘interest’ to make, which includes previous declarations already made. No declarations from the members were forthcoming. |  |
| 3 | **Chairman’s Remarks.**  The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. |  |
| 4 | **Minutes.**   1. Approval of the minutes of the Annual Statutory meeting held on 19th May 2025. The minutes were proposed as a true and correct record by Councillor Daniel, seconded by Councillor Barnes, and carried unanimously. 2. Approval of the minutes of the Ordinary meeting held on 19th May 2025 The minutes were proposed as a true and correct record by Councillor Carter, seconded by Councillor Robins, and carried unanimously. 3. Approval of the minutes of the closed session held on 19th May 2025 The minutes were proposed as a true and correct record by Councillor Daniel, seconded by Councillor Barnes, and carried unanimously. | Clerk  Clerk  Clerk |
| 5 | **Matters Arising.**   1. Annual Statutory meeting   Item 3 - The Chair has now signed his ‘Acceptance of Office’   1. Ordinary meeting 2. Item 6 (i) – Councillor Robins asked whether the corner seat under the small house/slide in the park had been repaired. Councillor Morrey said that he would check when he was next in the park. 3. Item 6 (ii) – The Clerk confirmed that the fence has now been repaired. However, the farmer has not responded to the Clerk’s text asking whether he intends to pay for the repair of the gravestone. As a result, it does not appear likely that he will pay for the its reinstatement. 4. Item 6 (iii) – The Clerk has now obtained a substantial number of cold calling stickers, which can be distributed as Councillors think best. It was thought they should be made available via the two village halls, plus a small supply to the school. The Clerk advised the meeting that MCC had confirmed that it is NOT an offence for an individual to either post a flyer through the door, or even knock on the door in a cold calling area. The only recourse is if the individual or their company can be identified and MCC / Trading standards can write asking them to cease, due to the cold calling designation. However, advice obtained on the internet advises the law states that a trader who ignores a resident's request to leave and not return, commits a criminal offence under the provisions of [The Digital Markets, Competition and Consumers Act 2024](https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2024/13/contents). Also, any trader who puts people under pressure by falsely implying that they have to make a decision there and then, or that the "special price" is only available for a limited period in order to make them sign up, is committing a criminal offence. 5. Item 10. There had been no further updates on the Green Corridor Project. 6. Closed session   Item 7 (v) the Clerk has advised all parties as to whether they were successful or unsuccessful with their tender for the tree safety inspection. | Cllr. Morrey |
| 6 | **Maintenance.** (including items previously reported, but not yet addressed).  It was noted that a builder’s sign had been placed on the fencing around Goytre Park. Advertising on the fence has generally only been regarded as appropriate for community events (rather commercial enterprises), although ultimately this is a decision for MCC, who own the fence. The Clerk said he would report the issue to MCC to see if they wished to take action. | Clerk |
| 7 | **Finance.**   1. Payments made since the May meeting  **£** 2. Review of Cashflow as at 31st May 2025 The Clerk presented the meeting with a copy of the May 2025 cashflow.   There were no comments or observations.   1. Approval of adjustment to Internal Audit for 2024/25 In previous years, our role of Custodian Trustee of the Community Centre has not be reported, as we have no involvement in its management, and nor do we hold or have access to any trust funds. However, at a recent OVW Conference, the advice from Wales Audit was that our custodianship should still be reported on the Annual Return. Our internal auditor was unaware of our role, and hence no mention was made in their audit review. The Clerk has now brought this to their attention, and as a result an amended audit, dated 5th June, was issued with their updated comments recorded under Q11 of the Annual Return. Acceptance of the updated document was then proposed by Councillor Morrey, seconded by Councillor Daniel, and carried unanimously. 2. Approval of Annual Governance Statement for 2024/25 Prior to the approval of the Annual Governance Statement, the Clerk (in his capacity as RFO), confirmed that no issues had been raised during either the 2022/23 or 2023/24 audits. There was, therefore, no requirement to confirm that any previous audit issues had been addressed, together with the relevant action(s) taken.   The Annual Governance Statement had been circulated in advance by the Clerk. Therefore, Councillors, together with the Clerk, reviewed all boxes 1 to 10, where it was confirmed that items 2 to 9 could be ticked as ‘agreed’.  Item 1 (Community Vision) is to be marked as ‘No’ with the following commentary under section 2 of ‘Additional Disclosure Notes’: “Whilst we have published a ‘vision’ in our annual report, this is not as a direct result of a specific consultation with the electorate. Although a number of individual engagements have taken place during 2024/25, (covering the development of our recreation park, biodiversity planting and installation of dog waste bins), Councillors do not consider that this adequately meets the required level of consultation on which to base a community vision”.  Item 10 (General Power of Competence) is to be marked as ‘No’ with the following commentary, also under section 2 of ‘Additional Disclosure Notes’: “Unfortunately, following the resignation in September 2022 of a Councillor previously elected unopposed, the Council no longer meets the ‘Democracy’ criteria to adopt GPOC, and as a result, ceased to hold the General Power of Competence following the Annual Statutory Meeting in May 2024”.  Under section 1 of ‘Other Disclosure Notes’ (s137 expenditure under the LGA 1972), the Clerk confirmed this figure for 2024/25 was **£1436.82**, (s137 has had to be used following the loss of the General Power of Competence in May 2024).  Approval of the Annual Governance Statement was then proposed by Councillor Morrey, seconded by Councillor Carter, and carried unanimously.   1. Approval of the Annual Accounting Statement for 2024/25 The Annual Accounting Statement had been signed, and previously circulated by the Clerk as RFO. Approval was proposed by Councillor Daniel and seconded by Councillor Robins, and carried unanimously. 2. Approval and certification of the Annual Return for 2024/25   This year, the Council is subject to the more in-depth (triennial), full transactional audit, which requires a substantial number of additional documents and papers to be sent to Wales Audit. As a result of the need to compile such a comprehensive return, the final date for submission is the 8th August (rather than the usual early July). However, the final date for approving the return remains as the 30th June, and Council is now asked to agree to its formal approval and certification.  It was therefore proposed by Councillor Barnes and seconded by Councillor Daniel, that the return be approved, with the vote being carried unanimously. Councillor Morrey, as Chair and Presiding Officer of the meeting, added his signature to the Approval & Certification section of the Audit Return. The Clerk will now finalise the papers for submission to the Auditor General for Wales, in good time for the 8th August. | Clerk  Clerk  Clerk  Clerk |
| 8 | **Planning.**   1. Confirmation of the next planning meeting   A meeting has been scheduled for tomorrow evening (17th June) at 6.30pm to consider the following applications.    **Application Number DM/2025/00644** - Planning Permission  Retention of works to provide a Hydrotherapy Unit, retention of extension to existing barn, conversion and extension of curtilage.  Brook Farm House, Old Abergavenny Road, Pencroesoped, Llanover, Monmouthshire, NP4 0JG.  **Application Number:** [**DM/2025/00596**](https://planningonline.monmouthshire.gov.uk/online-applications/simpleSearchResults.do?action=firstPage) - Planning Permission.  New drive entrance access to improve visibility & highway safety. Existing access to be permanently closed. Improvements to parking & turning on site. Change of use of land for new drive access.  [The Old Vicarage](https://www.google.com/maps/place/51%C2%B046'59.4%22N+2%C2%B059'39.4%22W/@51.7832602,-2.9930278,704m/data=!3m1!1e3!4m4!3m3!8m2!3d51.783174!4d-2.9942711?entry=ttu&g_ep=EgoyMDI1MDUwNy4wIKXMDSoASAFQAw%3D%3D), Llanover Road, Llanover, Monmouthshire. NP7 9BY  **Application Number: DM/2025/00699** - Householder Construction of proposed stable block within the residential curtilage.  Ty Llwyd, Llanvair Grange, Llanover, Monmouthshire, NP7 9DG   1. Any other issues MCC have written to the Clerk to advise that they have found no breach of planning at the property known as ‘Springfield’ on Plough Road. The Clerk has responded to request definitive clarification that there was no requirement to install an ‘accessible’ gated stile, to allow for access by walkers with push chairs etc., as was understood to be the case by Council members. | Clerk |
| 9 | **County Council update - County Councillor Jan Butler.**  In the absence of Councillor Butler, the following updates were provided by the members present.   1. Goytre A4042 Pedestrian Crossing Status This is still active. The hold up is believed to relate to it being unclear who owns some of the land which is required for the project. However, there was no further update on this. 2. Mon and Brec Canal   As a result of the recent petition organised by Councillor Butler, this issue will now be debated in the Senedd. However, the date of the debate is not known.   1. Any other updates Councillor Carter advised that the proposal for a crossing in Llanover is progressing, with the Stage 1 assessment being undertaken, and which should be complete by the end of July. The findings will help justify whether the proposal should progress to stage 2 (a more detailed assessment). |  |
| 10 | **St Bartholomew’s – Graveyard Regulations.** The Clerk reported that the past few months have seen a number of headstone ‘gardens’ appear, where the original grave headstone has been extended with the addition of kerb stones (which are not allowed under Church in Wales regulations). These are often supplemented with the addition of plants and shrubs, and/or multiple bouquets of plastic flowers. Some of these were damaged during the ‘cow incursion,’ but despite the Clerk placing a notice on the gate that they should not be re-instated, within a few days they had been repaired and replanted. It appears that as time goes by, the relatives of other people buried in the church yard are seeing these, and deciding to add something similar as a tribute to their loved ones.  The issue has been discussed at a St B’s congregational meeting, as well as at a Ministry Area Council on May 20th, where the Clerk understands there was huge sympathy for our predicament (we are far from being alone in facing this problem).  The Church in Wales Regulations (section 17) state that:  ‘Save for silk flowers and Remembrance Day poppies, no artificial wreaths or flowers, shrubs, permanent flower vases or containers, ornaments, chippings, gravel, paving stones or kerbs shall be placed on or around any grave or area set aside for cremated remains in a churchyard.’  Whilst we have generally tried to take a pastoral view on these problems, they are a trip hazard for visitors, make maintenance more difficult, and as there is no consistency in their design, they spoil the uniform look of the graveyard. Given the recent increase and potential proliferation of these additions, the Clerk recommends that Council now reviews the situation. Rather than demand the immediate removal of the items, he suggests adding a gate notice (potentially supplemented with a further notice by the individual graves), requesting that any kerb stones or planters etc which extend the gravestone area, should be removed by the end of the growing season (say 31st Oct).  The issue of plastic flowers also needs to be considered. Again, we have tried to take a pastoral view on this, particularly for relatives who may be visiting from further afield and would like to leave a longer lasting ‘floral’ display, which will last until their next visit. However, again there has been a proliferation on some graves, and so the Clerk suggests that we implement the (CiW) rule that only silk flowers (and poppies if applicable), should be placed by the headstone, and in just a single container. The Clerk provided Councillors with a copy of the proposed sign for the gate, and also a potential leaflet for undertakers to hand out, so relatives are aware of what is and is not allowed. Both notices have the ‘approval’ of Bob Evans in the congregational team.  Councillors agreed that we should proceed with the policy, using both of the proposed notices, whilst taking an understanding approach to do our best not to cause any unnecessary distress. It was proposed by Councillor Carter and seconded by Councillor Morrey, with the vote being carried unanimously. The Clerk to implement with close liaison with the St Bartholomew’s Congregational Team and the Area Ministry. | Clerk |
| 11 | **Conclusion of any remaining statutory appointments from the Annual Meeting.** At the May Annual Statutory Meeting, Councillors felt it inappropriate, in her absence, to nominate Councillor Butler to take up one of the ‘seats’ on the Community Centre Management Committee. However, as she was not present today, it was agreed that the item be carried forward to the July meeting. | Clerk |
| 12 | **Councillor Vacancy.** As Councillors are probably aware, section 85 of the Local Government Act 1972 stipulates that *‘if a member of a local authority fails throughout a period of six consecutive months from the date of his last attendance, to attend any meeting of the authority, he shall, unless the failure was due to some reason approved by the authority before the expiry of that period, cease to be a member of the authority’.*   As a result of the above stipulation, (ex) Councillor Grayland, who last attended a meeting on 9th December 2024, has now automatically ceased to become a member.  The Clerk has, therefore, advised MCC who have provided the statutory notice for the possible calling of an election for us to display. If ten electors submit a request to MCC by the 9th July, then an election will be called. If not, the Community Council will need to advertise to co-opt someone on to the Council. The Clerk has considered whether we should actively campaign for residents to sign the election request (as an ‘elected’ Councillor would enable us to qualify to regain the General Power of Competence). However, the cost of the election (which GFCC would have to bear), is likely to be in excess of £3,000. This was, therefore, discounted. In case of need, the Clerk will prepare an advertisement for co-option, for approval at our July meeting. | Clerk |
| 13 | **Youth Councillor Vacancy(ies).** Following the last meeting, the Clerk circulated a proposed advert (suitably updated from the initial suggestion, following some very useful comments from Councillor Lewis), for the two potential youth councillor vacancies on the Council.  Councillors confirmed the wording on the advert, but felt that with the school summer-break fast-approaching, and the need to recruit a new Councillor as a priority (see item 12 above), this should wait until the Autumn. Clerk to diarise accordingly. | Clerk |
| 14 | **Donation Requests.**  No donation requests have been received. |  |
| 15 | **Village Committee Reports – questions based on previously distributed updates.**   * Goytre Village Hall.   + No update since last report. * Llanover Village Hall.   + No report submitted. * Goytre School Governors.   + No report submitted. * Goytre Community Centre.   + Councillor Morrey (ex-trustee and Treasurer of the Centre), advised that Barclays Bank have been trying to make contact to confirm that the Centre is still trading and solvent. Apparently, letters sent to the Community Centre have not been answered. Barclay’s questions relate to both the past (which Cllr. Morrey could largely answer), but also the future, to which he is not in a position to respond. Unless they have a response by 24th June, Barclays will freeze the accounts. It was agreed that Cllr. Morrey would forward the emails from Barclays to Councillor Dodd. He will forward them to the new Treasurer to respond to Barclays. * Other Reports. * There were no other reports. | Cllr. Morrey |
| 16 | **Communications.**   1. GFCC Facebook page – latest posts / responses There have been no communications, although it is believed that Nicola Awni will be writing to the CC on the topic of violence against women. Clerk to keep a look out for the email. | Clerk |
| 17 | **Advertising – Usk and Raglan Diary Contributions Sept/Oct 2025.** The Clerk to liaise with Councillor Carter to prepare an article on the Green Corridor planting (with photographs), for the Sept/Oct edition. Councillor Robins said that she would forward some photos from David Owen, which capture the beauty of the flowers planted in Goytre park and the verges. | Cllr. Carter  Clerk |
| 18 | **Date of next meeting and close.**  The next meeting is to be held on **Monday 14th July** at **19.45.**  The venue to beLlanover Village Hall, and by teleconference using: <https://meet.jit.si/GoetreFawrCommunityCouncil> | All/  Clerk |

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