

**TRELLECH UNITED COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING**

held at Llandogo Millennium Hall, on Monday 20 February 2017 at 7pm

Councillor	Village	Attendance
John Gooding	Catbrook	Present
Michael Mason	Catbrook	Present
Bob Dagger (Chair)	Llandogo	Present
Ashley Thomas	Llandogo	Present
Martin Blakebrough	Llanishen	Present
George Weston	Llanishen	Present
Rosemary Decker-Thomas	The Narth	Present
Larry Stoter	The Narth	Present
John Baldwin	Penallt	Not present
Tessa Murray	Penallt	Present
Alan Poulter	Trellech	Present
Ed Rogers	Trellech	Not present
Iain Stokes	Whitebrook	Present
County Cllr Debby Blakebrough	MCC	Present

Clerk: Ann Davison

PUBLIC MEETING: None

17025 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Cllrs John Baldwin and Ed Rogers

17026 **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

Cllr Stokes: planning application 2017/00107. Cllr Dagger: item 17042 (donation to Llandogo School)

Clerk

17027 **ROGER HOGGINS: MCC DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS**

Mr Hoggins had been invited to the meeting to discuss issues over street lighting. He explained that MCC has about 10,000 street lights. Its policy is to replace sodium with LED lights, and to turn off lights after midnight except in sensitive locations and at junctions. So far 1700 LED lights have been installed, and there is funding for another 2,500 in 2017/18. The system installed to remotely control lights has proved faulty, so that many of them have been on all day and night. The company which supplied the system has now allocated an engineer to work full-time with MCC to sort out the problems. Where there is inadequate mobile phone signal for the system to work, then each light will be controlled individually (as in the past). The budget for adjusting these has been used up for this financial year, but from April work will continue to ensure that more lights turn off at midnight.

The number of street lights installed on new developments was discussed at length, with councillors expressing a preference for fewer lights, and for lighting to be part of the planning consultation process. It was pointed out that the AONB is also in favour of fewer street lights in rural areas. MCC is legally responsible for the AONB, and has power to set policy for the AONB. Mr Hoggins confirmed that the level of lighting on new developments is not set by law, and although MCC follows guidance, it does have the power to vary lighting in different areas. It was also important that planning, highways and the lighting departments work together. He also acknowledged that MCC should be encouraging energy conservation, for both environmental and budgetary reasons. He suggested that a workshop be convened by MCC, to bring together MCC officials, representatives from the AONB and TUCC members, to discuss how lighting policies for rural communities might be amended. Any proposed new policy would then need to be scrutinised by the Strong Communities Select Committee.

Road safety issues were also discussed, and specifically the idea of installing attractive signs at village entrances that could help to reduce traffic speeds.

17028 **REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR DEBBY BLAKEBROUGH:** None

17029 **TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 16 January**

The minutes for 16 January were agreed and signed as a true record.

17030 **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF 16 January**

Item 16288, 16273: Electronic speed signs for Llandogo

Roger Joy had supplied costs for Vehicle Activated Signs:

- (a) If fitted to a lamp post, estimated cost of £2,200 plus another £180 for the commando socket to be fitted onto the lamp post (if not already there) plus £370 to install and commission the sign
- (b) Solar powered sign £2,200, plus large base sign post est. £250, plus £510 to install and commission . This topic should be included on the next agenda

Clerk

Item 17006, 16224: MCC Monmouth Cluster Group

Cllr Murray attended the meeting on 26 January. There was very low attendance, and no minutes had yet been issued.

Item 17006, 16229: Penallt Common survey

GWT will carry out a new survey of Penallt Common. The survey four years ago was focused on seeing whether the woodland was Local Wildlife Site quality, whereas this survey will be focused on identifying particular features of the woodland and giving practical management advice for its protection/enhancement.

Item 17011: TUCC Bank Account

Co-op Bank has confirmed the list of signatories according to their records, which includes eight current councillors. Given that an election will be held in May, and TUCC has a fixed term deposit account with the Co-op which matures on 9 June, the clerk recommended not moving the account until after the election. Details of alternative accounts will be brought to the meeting in May.

Clerk

Item 17015: Impact of new housing developments

Cllr Murray had asked to meet with Mark Hand, but her request had not yet been acknowledged. She will try again, and County Cllr Blakebrough will also pursue this.

TM, DB

Item 17016: BT Openreach

Automated response received from N Ramsay AM.

D Davies MP has asked his designated contact in BT/Openreach to look into the issue.

Lesley Griffiths (WAG Cabinet Secretary for Environment and Rural Affairs) referred to Superfast Cymru for issues over broadband, and explained that no aspect of the telephone service is devolved. He again referred to individual customers contacting their ISP with complaints. Cllr Thomas offered to attend a surgery held by D Davies to discuss it with him in person.

AT

17031 **PLANNING APPLICATIONS**

- 2016/01339, Llanishen, Access to The Old Patch adjacent to highway (agricultural land between Twyn Gorse and Gorsewood). Recommend approval
- 2016/01485, The Narth, The Paddocks, Maryland, proposed orangery to rear elevation. Recommend approval
- 2016/01488, The Narth, Petersbrooke, Pen y Fan, external storage building. Recommend approval , but use of proposed materials and colour should be a planning condition
- 2017/00004, Trellech, Salema House, Babington Close, bay window extension and installation of new window. Recommend approval
- 2017/00013, Catbrook, The Firs Barn, new roof to existing ancillary building and new link to connect ancillary building to converted barn. Recommend approval
- 00047, Llanishen, Elm Farm, Far Hill, conversion of storage outbuilding to studio workshop & letting bedroom. Recommend approval if it meets criteria for conversion of old buildings

- 00090, The Narth, Lindsey, internal reorganisation and extension to existing dwelling. Recommend approval

Clerk

17032 **FURTHER PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED**

- 00107, Whitebrook, New Mills Farm, remove damaged metal garage and replace with wooden garage. Recommend approval
- 2016/00657, Trellech, Langley House, Babington Close. Appeal lodged against condition in planning consent. (to paint fence green and include native species as well as laurel in hedge)

Clerk

17033 **PLANNING DECISIONS**

- 2016/01440, Catbrook, Chicken Shed holiday let, modification of condition to substitute original plans with plans as built. Approved
- 2016/01359, Trellech, Chiselhurst, Ceciliford, retention of extension to stable block. Approved

17034 **FURTHER PLANNING DECISIONS: None**

17035 **RISK ASSESSMENT**

The risk assessment was reviewed, and it was noted that there had been no material changes to the council's assets or activities in the last year. **It was resolved** to adopt the risk assessment.

17036 **INSURANCE POLICY**

It was noted that the council has a three-year agreement with the present insurers Hiscox (see minute 16041), which runs to March 2019. Given no change in Tucc assets or risk assessment, **it was resolved** to renew the policy as it stands.

Clerk

17037 **ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT**

Current bank balance (less uncashed cheques): £32,215.65
The comparison between the 2016/17 budget and expenditure to date was noted.
The bank statement and invoices for payment had been scrutinised and verified by Cllr Thomas.

The following accounts were presented and payment agreed:

500498	MCC, planting 5 trees at Lydart (minute 16148)	£660
500499	MCC, grass cutting	£324.65
500500	MCC, clerk's salary Oct-Dec, incl admin charge	£1246.80
500501	Wales Audit Office for 2015/16 audit	£161.10
500502	One Voice Wales membership 2017/18	£336
500503	Came & Co, insurance renewal	£583.88
500504	Llandogo Village Hall, hire 20 Feb	£30

Clerk

17038 **TUCC CHARITY DONATIONS 2016-17**

It was resolved to make a donation of £250 to Home Start Monmouthshire and £250 to Monmouthshire Women's Aid.

17039 **MCC GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACT**

It was resolved to renew this contract at the quoted price of £277.30.

Clerk

17040 **MCC SUMMER PLAYScheme 2017**

It was resolved to continue support for this scheme at £450, as provided for in the budget.

Clerk

17041 **PRIMARY SCHOOL PLACES IN THE TUCC AREA**

It was noted that County Cllr Hackett Pain had explained that all 25 places in the Reception class at Trellech School can be taken up, if there is sufficient demand from out of catchment children, with the consequence that there are then no spaces in that class through the following six years if all the children remain at the school. There is currently an MCC rule that there should be no more than 25 in a class, although this is not a statutory requirement. Cllr Gooding reported that the school governors would be

happy to have 30 places available in each class other than Reception, with the additional five places being available only to children from within the catchment area. This would then allow some flexibility to allow children moving into the area to attend their local school without needing to rely on the Appeals process.

It was resolved to write to MCC to ask them to review their policy.

Clerk

17042 **FUNDING REQUEST FROM FRIENDS OF LLANDOGO SCHOOL**

The school had been successful in obtaining a grant from Aviva of £1000 for a "green screen" recording studio. Additional costs of £1000 were anticipated to upgrade the room: the school had allocated £500 to the scheme, and Tintern CC had promised £250. **It was resolved** to contribute a quarter of the cost up to a maximum of £250, subject to copies of invoices being submitted to TUCC.

Clerk

17043 **TUCC GRANTS TO VILLAGE HALLS**

Further to minute 17012 it was clarified that each village hall committee may only make one claim for services provided to the village hall in each financial year, defined as 1 April to 31 March. Any claim must be accompanied by copies of invoices, and no payment by TUCC will represent more than 50% of such costs, up to a maximum of £500. Services may include insurance, heating, electricity, water and sewerage; but exclude any business rates payable to the County Council. This policy will apply from the beginning of the 2017/18 financial year.

17044 **FORTHCOMING ELECTIONS**

Community and county council elections will be held on 4 May 2017. Nomination forms were distributed to councillors. The close of nominations will be 4 April: if forms are delivered by hand to County Hall they will be checked for errors before being accepted; forms may be sent by post but there will not then be a chance to correct any errors. Councillors were reminded that it is compulsory to submit expenses by 2nd June, even if the sum is £0: expenses are not reimbursed, but a maximum is set by law. The residence requirement for candidates is to live within 3 miles of the council area, not of the specific ward for which they are standing - but the two proposers must be on the register of electors for the relevant ward. If candidates meet more than one qualification then they are advised to tick all that apply, in case a house move or change of work (for example) would subsequently disqualify the candidate. The current council will officially retire on 8 May. The annual meeting must then be held before 22 May (at which declarations of acceptance of office must be signed): TUCC is scheduled to meet on 15 May.

17045 **TUCC NEWSLETTER**

It was resolved to produce a newsletter prior to the election, to publicise how to stand for election. It should also explain that there is provision for paying expenses to councillors for caring costs if necessary. It should clarify that TUCC has hitherto not been party political, and give information on what the council has done recently - providing defibrillators, dog waste bins, replacement trees at Five Trees, lobbying the County Council on street lighting, road safety, school places, etc. It should fit on two sides of A4 paper. 1200 copies should cover every household, and councillors agreed to hand deliver them. The clerk and Cllr Murray will provide a draft for the next meeting.

Clerk, TM

17046 **CATBROOK FOOTBALL FIELD:** Nothing to report

17047 **BABINGTON MEADOW:** Nothing to report

17048 **OTHER REPORTS**

- Cllr Stokes had attended a meeting with the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales. TUCC will need to review its policy on expenses before the election. This will be on the next agenda

Clerk

17049 **CORRESPONDENCE**

The following correspondence was received and noted:

MCC, M Gatehouse, Monmouthshire Public Service Board, Well-Being Assessment consultation
MCC, M Hand, response to email from Cllr Gooding concerning SPG on affordable housing
MCC, R Joy, cost of Vehicle Activated Signs
MCC, G Kinsella, proposed temporary closure of New Mills lane, 6-9 March

MCC, S Lane, launch of scheme for commercial sponsorship of verges
MCC, D McCarty, query over interest in home share scheme
MCC, M Moran, report on 2016 Summer Playscheme, and request for support in 2017
MCC, S Parkinson, Give Dog Fouling the Red Card, agenda for 26 Jan
MCC, R Rourke, thanks for comments on ROWIP consultation
MCC, C Williams, Confirmation of Definitive Map Modification, footpath near Glen View, The Narth

Came & Co, invitation to renew council insurance policy
Charities Commission, request for annual return for Penallt Recreation Ground
Community Health Council (Aneurin Bevan) newsletter
Co-op Bank, confirmation of current account signatories
D Davies MP (Barrie O'Keefe), has forwarded TUCC concern to contact at BT Openreach
Gwent Wildlife Trust, A Karan, information about proposed survey at Penallt Common
Gwent Young Farmers, appeal for funds
Cllr P Jones, forwarded email from Liz Hackett Pain re primary school places in TUCC
Monmouth Comprehensive School, invitation to workshop on 16 Feb, 7-9 pm, Shire Hall, on future use of school by the community
One Voice Wales Area Committee, agenda and minutes for 26 Jan
One Voice Wales, membership renewal
Triodos Bank, reply to query about Dutch bank guarantee
D Trippett, Friends of Llandogo School, request for funding for Activities Room
WAG, Reform of school governance: regulatory framework, consultation open to 17 Feb
WAG, White Paper: Reforming Local Government - Resilient and Renewed, consultation open to 11 April
WAG, response to query over problems with telephone service

17050 **ITEMS FOR THE PRESS/NEXT AGENDA**

- Babington Meadow maintenance
- Maintenance of Catbrook Village Green

17051 **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING:** Monday, 20 March 2017 at Pelham Hall, Penallt

The meeting closed at 22.00