

**TRELLECH UNITED COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING**

held at the Millennium Hall, Llandogo and via Zoom on Monday 21 March 2022 at 7 pm

Village	Councillor	Attendance
Catbrook	Guy Bowden	Present
Catbrook	Andy Pullan	Not present
Llandogo	Bob Dagger	Present
Llandogo	Lynne Parker	Present
Llanishen	Martin Blakebrough	Not present
Llanishen	George Weston	Present
The Narth	Rosemary Decker-Thomas	Present (zoom)
The Narth	Larry Stoter	Present
Penallt	David May	Present
Penallt	Mary Wakeling	Present
Trellech	Christopher Edwards	Present (zoom)
Trellech	Alan Poulter (Chair)	Present
Whitebrook	Iain Stokes	Present
MCC	County Cllr Debby Blakebrough	Not present
MCC	County Cllr Richard John	Present

Clerk: Ann Davison

PUBLIC MEETING: none

- 22041. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE:** Cllr M Blakebrough: in his absence the Vice Chair, Cllr A Poulter acted as chair of the meeting. Also Cllr A Pullan
- 22042. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:** Cllr May, item 22056, grant to Penallt Footpaths Group. As a member of the group Cllr May took no part in the discussion and did not vote.
- 22043. RURAL HOUSING ENABLER**
David James noted that since February 2020 house prices in Monmouthshire had increased by 33%. There were 307 people registered as homeless and 187 in temporary accommodation, and 2100 registered on the Housing Search portal. There was also a new difficulty for any development in north Monmouthshire, posed by the phosphate pollution in the rivers.

He updated the council on three sites in the Tucc area, in Llanishen, Penallt and Llandogo. *Llanishen:* this site was originally allocated for a mixture of social renting, low cost purchase and open market purchase. It had since changed to just social renting, but he had not been aware of this, and had had difficulty in finding out the reason. The planning permission was not altered. The MCC Housing Strategy Officer left the job in December 2020 and there was a gap until March 2021 when the position was filled. It had been suggested that there was an unusual surplus in money allocated to MCC by the Welsh Government for social housing, and that Melin had offered to spend it in Llanishen. The current MCC Housing Strategy Officer is now asking Melin if the scheme can once again offer a mix of housing types. A councillor commented that although work had started on site it now seemed to have stopped, with rumours that the contractor had left the site, and deliveries of building materials being removed again. David James would look into this and report back to the council.

Penallt: this site was approved for 4 open market houses and 6 affordable units (social housing and low cost ownership). Initial work had been carried out on the site, which meant that the planning permission was indefinite; but there was no immediate prospect of further building work.

Llandogo: The LDP had extended the Village Development Boundary to include the site, but did not allocate the proportion of social housing. The land is currently being offered for sale, with several purchasers expressing interest. MCC had provided pre-application advice for potential buyers that suggested 10-18 houses, of which 35% should be affordable. He also noted that the adjacent site had gained planning permission for workers' accommodation to facilitate re-use of the chicken sheds.

22044. WYE VALLEY VILLAGES PROJECT

Roger Hoggins, Head of Strategic Projects at MCC described the project and invited questions. He explained however that his answers might be restricted, due to the rules that apply in a pre-election period.

The project is unique, bringing together four community councils, MCC and the AONB to work together to produce a joint plan. The working group had included councillors from each of the councils involved. They had identified six themes: road safety (the original driver of the project), signage to be themed and renewed, public transport and active travel, tourism, economy (employment and retail) and governance. With this initial report adopted, MCC would then move on to decisions post election.

The delivery group would again have two delegates from each council, and would be more actively minuted by MCC, to ensure that community councils were fully informed. The timescale and costs were described in the report.

Councillors were assured that communities like Whitebrook, that is not mentioned at all in the report, could be included by the Delivery Group.

In response to worries that speed limits would apply only on the main roads and not to residential areas in the villages, the advice was to wait to see Draft Orders from MCC Highways, and to then respond to the consultations.

In future it is hoped that public consultation will include face to face meetings as well as online surveys. The reliance on online consultation had been driven by the pandemic, although the response had been very high.

Councillors expressed their thanks to Roger for moving the project forward and for attending the meeting.

22045. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 21 February: agreed as a true record. Chair to print and sign.

22046. MATTERS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MINUTES

Item 22030: Planning decision 2021/01841

The planning officer had elaborated on this "split" decision: the full reasoning was included in the "officer report" on the planning portal. While there was no issue over the proposed balcony to the rear of the property, the Heritage Officer had serious concerns about the effect the front extension would have to the appearance of the dwelling within the Conservation Area. These could not be mitigated by a change in design, as they were related to its location.

Item 22019: Dog waste

MCC is currently collecting orders for boxes of dog poo bags, and will make a bulk purchase if 20 are ordered. Each box costs £40.70 + VAT. Councillors should inform the clerk if their community needs further supplies.

22047. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- 00135, The Narth, Manorside, Pen y Fan, re 2016/01358, extend deadline in which works must commence by 6 months. Recommend approval
- 00323, Whitebrook, Mill Cottage, alterations to existing windows and internal reconfiguration. Recommend approval
- 00324, Llanishen, Bwthyn Celyn, replace timber shed and create parking area. Recommend approval
- 00342, Penallt, Clarence House, erection of 1.2m stock fence to rear of property. Recommend approval
- 2021/00224, Trellech, The Cotlands, earth sheltered dwelling: applicants have appealed against non-determination. No further comments from TUCC

Clerk

22048. FURTHER PLANNING APPLICATIONS RECEIVED

- 00204, Penallt, grounds of Croes Faen Bungalow, proposed new dwelling. Recommend refusal, on grounds of over-development of an extremely small plot. Also increased flood risk: the water table is already very high, with the nearby natural spring already flooding regularly after heavy rain. With no mains drainage available any extra waste disposal will add to the problem. The proposed parking arrangements may also lead to cars reversing onto a narrow road close to a junction.

Clerk

22049. MCC PLANNING DECISIONS

- 2021/00953, Penallt, The Forge, Farm Rd, Lydart, 2nd storey extension, new porch and balcony. Approved
- 2021/02076, Trellech, Hillside Grange, Warrens Rd, detached double garage. Approved
- 2022/00215, The Narth, Woodland to NW of the Narth, extend existing forest track to enable its use by modern forestry harvesting machinery. Agricultural notification. Acceptable

22050. FURTHER MCC PLANNING DECISIONS

- 00136, Whitebrook, New Mills, remove existing conservatory & erect single storey flat-roofed extension with terrace above. Approved
- 00153, Penallt, Llanant Farm, new agricultural barn. Amendment to 2021/00584. Approved

22051. CHANGE TO PLANNING CONDITIONS FOR 2019/02053, LLANISHEN

No further comments. See report under item 22043.

22052. SUBMITTING PLANNING COMMENTS IN APRIL 2022

Since there would be no TUCC meeting in April 2022, **it was resolved** that the clerk should submit comments on new planning applications following consultation with the local

councillors. In the case of a particularly controversial application then an extension to the consultation period should be requested until the next TUCC meeting on 16 May.

22053. INSURANCE POLICY

Quotations had been received from Zurich and from Hiscox at £557.04 (with reductions for long-term agreements) or £1484.03 respectively. **It was resolved** to continue with the policy offered by Zurich, with a 5 year agreement, at the premium of £522.33.

22054. WHITEBROOK VILLAGE HALL GRANT APPLICATION

The hall committee had applied retrospectively for grants towards the costs of refurbishing and painting the roof of the hall (£2192.50) and felling trees on the neighbouring property (£1860). It was noted that the grants policy (see minute 21029) had been circulated to village hall treasurers by email on 17 February 2021, and this application had not followed the procedure of seeking approval in advance.

Nevertheless **it was resolved** to make a grant of £1644 towards the cost of work on the roof. This represented 75% of the total, as laid out in the TUCC policy.

With regard to the tree work, councillors requested further information from the hall committee before considering the request for funding. As the Whitebrook valley is a conservation area, permission would have been needed before any tree work; was this obtained? Furthermore, was the landowner approached to at least contribute towards the cost? The amount paid for the work also appeared excessive for the work involved.

Clerk

22055. ACCOUNTS FOR PAYMENT

Current bank balance: £44,229.40

The comparison between the 2021/22 budget and expenditure to date was noted.

The following accounts were presented and payment agreed. Cllrs Poulter and Stoter were nominated to complete online authorisations for these payments.

BACS/108	Merlin Waste (£154.92 + £30.98 VAT)	£185.90
BACS/109	Clerk, salary incl pay settlement backdated to 1/4/21	£560.37
BACS/110	Clerk's expenses, office accommodation & postage	£105.15
BACS/111	HMRC PAYE (March)	£63.40
BACS/112	Playworks (Katherine Watkins), salary admin	£20
BACS/113	Llandogo Millennium Hall, hall hire	£30
BACS/114	One Voice Wales subscription	£428
BACS/115	M Camp, Broadstone Green maintenance	£500
BACS/116	Babington Centre, grant towards services	£500
BACS/117	Catbrook Hall, grant towards services	£500
BACS/118	Llanishen Hall, grant towards services	£500
BACS/119	Whitebrook VH, grant towards painting roof & felling trees	£1644
BACS/120	Insurance premium	£522.33

- It was noted that the national salary award for clerks for 2021-22 had been approved, with effect from 1 April 2021. This had the effect of increasing the clerk's pay by £0.22 per hour. The relevant increase and backpay to April 2021 had been incorporated in this month's payments.
- **It was resolved** that the regular payments that fall due during April be authorised in advance. This will include Merlin Waste, the clerk's salary and associated payments to HMRC and Playworks, and website hosting by Vision ICT. The clerk will circulate the monthly account sheet after 25 April for information, and Cllrs Poulter and Stoter will then be invited to complete the online authorisations.

- **COMPLETION OF AUDIT 2020/21.** It was noted that Audit Wales had now completed its work, and approved the accounts with no qualifications. The approved accounts had been added to the website along with the Notice of Conclusion of Audit. The latter is also available for posting on council notice boards.
- **AUDIT 2021/22.** Audit Wales had issued the forms and instructions for the financial year just coming to a close. TUCC would be in the group of councils subject to a “full audit” under their new three yearly cycle.

Clerk, AP, LS

22056. PENALLT FOOTPATHS GROUP GRANT APPLICATION

It was resolved to make a grant of £207.30 to cover the cost of specialist hand tools.

Clerk

22057. TRELLECH JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS GRANT APPLICATION

An application had been received from an ad hoc group for a grant of £2,500 towards the costs of a three-day event in Trellech. It was noted that other villages were also planning activities, and also that any grants from TUCC would need to be paid into the bank account of a recognised body.

It was resolved that up to £500 could be granted to village hall committees that wished to celebrate the Jubilee. In each case an application should be made to the council, with a full costing of how the money would be spent.

Clerk

22058. IRPW ANNUAL REPORT AND PAYMENTS TO COUNCILLORS

Receipt of the IRPW Annual Report was noted. TUCC falls into Group 4, meaning that the £150 payment to each councillor and payment of care costs are mandatory.

It was resolved to make further payments as follows: £500 as a chair’s allowance; and travel and subsistence costs incurred by councillors, according to the schedule laid out in the IRPW report.

22059. WYE VALLEY ACTION PLAN

Councillors Pullan and Bowden were thanked for the work they had contributed to this group. A further meeting was scheduled to review the design of road signage, and **it was resolved** that Cllrs Parker and Weston would attend the meeting.

It was noted that two TUCC delegates need to be nominated to the Delivery Group for the project. Given the forthcoming election, this item was deferred to the next meeting.

Clerk

22060. CARBON LITERACY TRAINING AND BIODIVERSITY

Cllr Decker-Thomas had attended a training programme offered by MCC. She reported that it had been very useful in showing how community councils and village halls could be facilitative and proactive. Examples included encouraging solar panels on halls, repair shops in halls, community orchards, car charging points, etc. She encouraged the new council in May to think bigger and better, and to be a force for change and for good. She would share the powerpoint presentation from the event with councillors.

22061. REPLACEMENT CLERK

It was resolved that the finance group would meet in early April via Zoom, to bring a proposed job advertisement and plan of action to the May meeting.

AP, LS, RD-T, MB

22062. MONMOUTH AND PARKWALL AMBULANCE STATIONS

Councillors were unanimous in their opposition to the proposed removal of rapid response vehicles from the ambulance stations at Monmouth and Parkwall. The clerk was asked to write to the CEO of the Welsh Ambulance Service.

Clerk

22063. BABINGTON MEADOW

The committee is hoping to hold its traditional fund-raising Easter egg hunt.

22064. ANY OTHER REPORTS

- Cllr Wakeling had met with Mandy Mussell, MCC to review a disputed footpath in Penallt. It transpired that the definitive map contained an error, which had caused aggravation between the landowner and the footpaths group.
- Council tax bill. It was noted that Llandogo residents had seen a large increase in the community council element of their bill following their move to the new Wye Valley Council.
- Llanishen Garage was currently refurbishing its petrol pumps and hoped to open soon for the sale of fuel.

22065. CORRESPONDENCE

The following correspondence was received and noted:

MCC, H Etherington, response on "split decision" for planning application 2021/01841
MCC, G Freeman, temporary road closure, Beacon Hill road, the Narth, 23-25 March
MCC, G Freeman, temporary road closure, Bigsweir to Whitebrook road, 16-18 March
MCC, T Humber, temporary road closure, Organy Pool road, Whitelye, 4 April
MCC, L Gillespie, meeting to review sign designs for Wye Valley villages, 11 March
MCC, R Hoggins, offer to visit council meeting over Wye Valley villages project
MCC, S Parkinson, Give Dog Fouling the Red Card, notes from meeting
MCC, J Pearson, Elections 2022 nomination papers
MCC, J Pearson, Notice of Elections
MCC, J Pearson, online submission of nominations enabled
MCC, Planning, notice of appeal for 2021/00224

Audit Wales, D Evans, completion of audit 2020/21
Audit Wales, D Evans, audit notice 2021/22
Babington Centre, J Roberts, request for grant towards services costs
Catbrook Hall, R Stevens, request for grant towards services costs
CPRW, members e-bulletin
Gallagher, G Sherritt, insurance quotation from Hiscox Insurance Company
Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales, Annual Report Feb 2022
D James, Rural Housing Enabler, to speak at TUCC meeting 21 March
K Jones, concern about planning application 2022/00204
Monmouthshire Citizens Advice, Health and Poverty in Monmouthshire
Narth Footpath Group, B Mahony, completion report for SDF funding
One Voice Wales, S Bowden, advertising clerk vacancy
One Voice Wales, W Patience, membership renewal
One Voice Wales, news bulletin
One Voice Wales, national salary award 2021-22 for clerks
One Voice Wales, seeking land suitable for tree planting for National Forest of Wales
One Voice Wales, appeal for support to Ukrainian refugees
PCSO C Watkins, February police report
Penallt Footpath Group, B Scarr, request to fund equipment
D Zsigo, application for grant towards Jubilee celebrations in Trellech
Zurich Insurance, quotation for policy renewal

- Election notices were distributed to councillors to display on local notice boards.

22066. ITEMS FOR THE PRESS/NEXT AGENDA: none

22067. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING:

Monday, 16 May 2022 at 7pm. In-person meeting at Pelham Hall, Penallt, with possibility to join by Zoom

The meeting closed at 21:30

DRAFT