

Ponthir Community Council

Minutes of Meeting

Held on 14th July 2025 at Ponthir Village Hall at 7pm

Present: Cllr M Leighton (Chair), Cllr R Morgan, Cllr A Lang, Cllr L Ryan-Scales, Cllr P Matthews, Cllr P Buffery and Cllr I Danaher.

Also present: Clerk to the Council – Mrs C Danaher, D Leech TCBC, H Wixcey HRDC Torfaen, S Read HRDC Torfaen, B Mcpherson TCBC, Cllr C Gauden TCBC and PCSO J Llewellyn Gwent Police.

Prior to the main Council meeting, members met with representatives of the Candwr Solar Farm Project.

1. **Apologies** – None, as all members present.
2. **Declaration of Interests** – None.
3. **To consider matters raised by members of the public** – Cllr I Williams, Llangibi Fawr CC who is a member of the opposition group to the Candwr Solar Farm Project. Residents have set up a protest group, having already held two well attended meetings. Cllr Williams is a farmer and a planning consultant. He made the meeting aware of the concerns around traffic, flooding and visibility to residents. The project could involve 20 lorries a day delivering to the site over a period of about 24 months. Businesses on Candwr Lane would be severely affected. Council agreed for the Group to give a formal presentation to Ponthir CC at our September meeting.
4. **To approve the minutes of the meeting on 9th June 2025** – Proposed by Cllr Lang and seconded by Cllr Ryan-Scales
5. **Cllr Gauden** – Cllr Gauden firstly thanked PCC Clerk, Clare for all the work she does helping residents with day-to-day queries. Cllr Gauden has undertaken several joint surgeries with PCSO James Llewellyn, the next being held on Saturday 26th July at the village hall. Cllr Matthews asked Cllr Gauden to keep us up to date with any TCBC decisions re the solar farm. Cllr Gauden agreed to do so. Cllr Buffery asked about the refuse collection issues which have been seen over the last few weeks. Cllr Gauden and DL confirmed all is now back to normal.
6. **PCSO James Llewellyn** – James informed members of the local crime statistics for the last two months. He is now speed gun trained and will be undertaking more checks in the area at peak times and weekends. He has also made enquiries about an infer red speed van which can be used in the village at night. James also updated Council about the homeless person who has been in Ponthir and Llanfrechfa over the last few days. She has refused all help, and the Police are checking in with her on a regular basis. If anyone has concerns, please call 101. There was another car accident in the village, outside the Hall earlier today, the fence has been damaged and TCBC will be repairing as a matter of urgency.
Action: - Cllr Matthews asked PCSO James for an update on the accident for our next meeting.

7. **TCBC update** – Dave Leech introduced his colleagues, including his successor Bethan McPherson. BM is keen to add best value for us by continuing to engage with the community. How can we reach out to lonely and isolated people? Be they young or old? SR outlined some suggestions which have worked in other areas. Possible survey with residents? Link up with the Health Board? When the hall is used for Covid vaccinations, have a table led by groups in the area to show people what is available. HDRC will be looking to forge links with schools and community groups in the area, it is all about targeting the right people. Cllr Leighton is looking to run a youth club at the PSCC in the autumn. Previously, there were issues with the TCBC switchboard, with calls being misrouted. DL confirmed that training has been undertaken, it is not where it should be, but has improved. Cllr Danaher expressed his thanks for all the support DL has given the Council since he started in his community role. Clerk also expressed her thanks.

8. Matters arising

a Councillor Expenses - Cllr Matthews confirmed that he will submit his intentions regarding this, by 21st July.

9. To consider and discuss items

a Planters – All Councillors to find people to water for them while they are away.

Action: - Notifications to be put on WhatsApp group.

b Police Report - See item 6.

c Chair's Jewel - This has now been handed to Cllr Leighton. Clerk confirmed that the logo on the Jewel is 15 years out of date. **Action:** - Clerk to obtain a quote to replace this.

d Christmas Lights – Cllrs Morgan and Matthews to check the lights and report back at our September meeting.

e Destruction of Council records – Clerk confirmed that all out of date records have now been destroyed, and certificate obtained.

f Council regalia – Clerk has checked with the Manager of the hall and all has been located.

g Quarterly bank reconciliation – Cllr Matthews completed and signed.

h OVW Constitution and Governance Framework – Clerk had circulated all information relating to these important proposed changes to our governance arrangements. Clerk asked for a representative and substitute to attend the remote meeting on Wednesday 3rd September at 4pm. **Action:** - Clerk to circulate details again, as we need to confirm to OVW who will be attending by 15th August.

j Clerk interviews – Interviews to take place on Tuesday 22nd July at PSCC. ML, ID and CD to conduct the interviews and to let Council know their preferred choice before candidates are told.

10. Finance and Accounts: Balance and all transactions noted.

8. Planning: Felling and removing of dead wood and climbing plants at Zion Baptist Chapel has been completed

9. Correspondence received: Noted.

10. Committee Reports

Ponthir Church in Wales Primary School: Cllr Ryan-Scales attended the last governors meeting of the school year last week. The school had a positive open evening and at present there are 99 pupils on roll.

Torfaen Community Trust: No meeting.

Gwent Valleys Partnership: AGM 8th July, Cllr Leighton confirmed she apologised. Clerk reiterated that if Councillors are unable to attend a meeting, they are to contact the agreed reserves, so we have representation at these meetings.

Ponthir Village Hall: No report.

PSCC: Music festival will take place on Sunday 24th August.

Mick Morris Memorial Sporting Trust: Cllr Ryan-Scales unable to attend the meeting on 11th June.

Local Council Partnership Committee: Next meeting is 16th July.

Chair's Report: Cllr Leighton attended the leavers assembly at Ponthir Primary and presented the Stuart Bailey Memorial Cup. Cllr Leighton is to attend Cwmbran CC CrowFest on 19th July.

Matters arising from the floor: Cllr Ryan Scales queried the GPOC question relating to our AGM. Clerk confirmed that currently this does not apply to us as one of the conditions is that we have a qualified Clerk.

VJ Day 80 Civic event: Council have been invited on Friday 15th August to this event in Blaenavon. No Councillors available to attend.

Grant Application: Council agreed to support local resident David Hawke, who is completing a 100km ultra challenge in support of the Army Benevolent Fund 2025. Council confirmed £200.

Exercise of Electors Rights Publication: Cllr Ryan-Scales queried if this had been done. Clerk confirmed that the Notice had been published on both notice boards and on the website from 2nd June until 27th June 2025 in accordance with the Public Audit (Wales) Act 2004, the Accounts and Audit(Wales) Regulations 2014 and the Auditor General for Wales Code of Practice.

The date of the next meeting is Monday 8th September, Ponthir Village Hall at 7pm.

Meeting closed at 21.00

DRAFT