

Ponthir Community Council

Minutes of Council Meeting

Held on 13th April 2026 at Ponthir Village Hall at 7pm

Present: Cllr M Leighton (Chair), Cllr P Buffrey, Cllr A Lang and Cllr I Danaher, Cllr P Matthews.

Officers: Outgoing Clerk to the Council Mrs C Danaher and newly appointed Clerk Mrs L McMail.

Also present: Residents of Oaklands, Ponthir including spokesperson for the group Jim Pilgrim.

1. Apologies - Cllr L Ryan-Scales, Cllr R Morgan and Cllr P Mathews. Apologies accepted by Councillors present.

2. Declaration of Interests - Cllr I Danaher declared a personal interest in the Oaklands matter raised during the public session.

3. To consider matters raised by members of the public - The Chair welcomed the residents of Oaklands to the meeting and asked the spokesperson for the group Jim Pilgrim to outline their concerns in relation to the installation of a telegraph pole near their homes at Oaklands, Ponthir.

Members received reports from several residents regarding the recent installation of a telegraph pole/lamppost structure within the pavement in Oaklands. Residents advised that the works were undertaken by BT contractors and that no prior consultation or survey had been carried out with local households, photographic evidence was shared.

Residents expressed significant concern that the newly installed pole now obstructs the footway, preventing access for mobility scooters, wheelchairs, and double buggies. It was noted that this obstruction forces pedestrians, including those with prams, into the carriageway, creating an unsafe environment.

Residents also questioned why overhead cabling had been installed on a new pole rather than being routed underground. They indicated that overhead cabling was not acceptable to them and raised concerns that additional poles were reportedly planned along the Orchard through to Station Road.

A query was raised as to whether Torfaen County Borough Council (TCBC) had issued the required 28-day notice for such works. The Community Council confirmed that it had not been made aware of the installation in advance.

Cllr PB summarised the concerns, noting the absence of consultation, the safety implications for pedestrians, and the strong views expressed by residents. Residents were advised to submit their concerns directly to TCBC Highways via the online reporting portal or by telephone, and to contact their elected TCBC councillor.

ACTION: The Clerk would also raise the matter with TCBC Member Services.

The Chair requested that any responses received be forwarded to the Clerk, contact details were shared. Once submissions have been received, the Clerk will ensure that this matter is included as a formal agenda item for the next Council meeting in May.

4.To approve the minutes of the meeting on 9th March 2026 - Proposed by Cllr Lang and seconded by Cllr Danaher.

5.Matters arising, to consider and discuss:

Planters and benches:

The Chair had provided the Clerk with a list of planters and benches.

The Chair had chased a quote from AS for painting and maintenance of benches and planters. Clerk had also chased a quote from CM for the same.

Clerk informed members that bulbs need cutting right down and topsoil added. No bulbs in bus stop at Hafod Road (Cllr LRS has the bulbs). Summer plants ordered and are due Whitson week.

Christmas Lights: the 3 Christmas light units had been returned to Festive by Cllr ID and CD.

New cabling has been noted on the light located at Candwr bus stop and has been reported to Enervio by the Clerk as this could affect the Christmas lights - we await further comments.

ACTION: Clerk to follow up with Enervio for update.

ACTION: Clerk to diarise in September that trees at main road bus stop to be cut back - Phil Grimes is aware.

Solar Farm: (Standing item) no update for this meeting we will await an update at May Council meeting.

Quarterly reconciliation of figures, bank account and missing invoice:

Quarterly figures agreed at the March meeting. Cllr PM to provide missing invoice or sign a receipt asap. The Reserve Bank statement has been received. The bank mandate has been completed with the Clerks as an authorised user and awaits all relevant authorised signatures.

ACTION: Clerk to arrange for all relevant bank signatories to sign the bank mandate and request the bank action the request.

Caerleon Community Times 26/27: Clerk was pleased to confirm that JD has agreed £300 for six articles for 26/27. Invoice received for coming year and has been paid.

Events 2026 (Standing Item): It was suggested by Cllr PB to allow the Village Hall to organise the seasonal events, the details require formalising and the Community Council would support these events.

ACTION: The Chair will contact local not for profit groups ie the local Brownie group and the Chair and Clerk will visit these groups to explain about grants available through the Community Council.

Members discussed the feasibility to hold a Remembrance Service at Ponthir Baptist Chapel. **ACTION:** Clerk to make contact with the Chapel to commence discussions.

Audit 24/25 Action Plan: A qualified Audit opinion had been received from Audit Wales for 24/25.

The Action Plan to address the reasons for a qualified audit had been circulated to members prior to the meeting and the Clerk provided feedback on matters raised by Audit Wales. The Clerk would meet with our IT support and look at ways to include the required information in a clearer way on the website to ensure the External Auditor can locate the relevant documents.

PSCC: It was noted that a new manager has been appointed, Shane Parsons and the Clerk to follow up with an introduction. Action Clerk to make contact with new Manager at PSCC.

Mic Morris Sporting Trust: Deferred until the Annual meeting in May.

Council Reserve Account: Transfer had been actioned by Clerk after the March meeting and an up-to-date statement received from Co-op for the Reserve Account.

Drains: TCBC have reviewed the drains from Lamb Lane to Candwr Park bus stop, and will be carrying out major works within the next few weeks. It was noted that this may cause disruption through the village.

The Clerk had chased a response for additional information and would advise members as soon as a response was received from TCBC. A local resident had advised that the work was starting on the drains next week. [Response from TCBC received 14/04/26 and emailed to members]

6.To consider and discuss items

Ponthir Village Hall Room Hire 26/27: It was agreed to continue to hire the room for future meetings and an invoice be issued for 11 meetings by PVH for 2026/27 civic year.

Clerk phone/ hours update: The Clerk confirmed her intention to work mostly on Mondays, Tuesdays and Wednesdays with a monthly visit to Ponthir Village Hall to attend the Warm Hub to give members of the community an opportunity to discuss any matters relating to Council business. This would be advertised on the Facebook page. The Clerk confirmed her working hours would be flexible.

Councillor Expenses 26/27: The members allowance is payable to all members unless you advise the Clerk formally in writing that you do not wish to receive them, this item will be added to the May agenda where all members will be updated on the process.

Training Plan 26/27: Members were requested to consider what training they may be interested to attend and inform for the Clerk at the next Council meeting, to enable an updated training plan to be developed.

Councillor Attendance for 25/26: Percentages of attendance for the year,

Cllr Buffery 54%

Cllr Danaher 100%

Cllr Leighton 81%

Cllr Morgan 100%

Cllr Lang 81%

Cllr Ryan Scales 54%

Cllr Mathews 63%

These were noted by Council

Printer Costs for Clerk: The Clerk will be using her own printer and asked that monthly printer costs be met by the Council at a cost of £6.49 per month which will cover ink cartridges.

RESOLVED: It was agreed that the Council will contribute £6.49 towards the Clerks printer costs.

Flashing Road Sign: The sign is being repaired as advised by TCBC ACTION: Clerk to follow up.

Police Safety Camera Enforcement Unit speed data: From the recent survey of traffic carried out on 22nd March between 14:17PM and 14:47PM 154 vehicles were checked, 14 vehicles were exceeding the speed limit of which the average speed was 26.7 mph. The information was noted.

Cllr PB suggested that we ask the local PCSO to carry out speed checks in Ponthir off Tram Lane/Caerleon Road at busy times. ACTION: Clerk to raise with local PCSO.

Staff cost budget reset 26/27: The Council noted that an overspend on staff costs for 25/26 of £555 for the year, this was due to Clerk hours. Two Clerks being paid in September 25 and more recently in February/March 2026, due to the Clerks resignation and Mrs C Danaher stepping back in short term. The Council requested that the salary costs for 2026/27 be recalculated and the budget adjusted accordingly by the new Clerk due to increased pay scales and include a one month handover in April 2026.

RESOLVED: Council noted the overspend on staff costs for 2025/26 of £555.

ACTION: Clerk to recalculate 2026/27 staff costs and the budget be adjusted accordingly and advised to May Council Meeting.

Internal Auditor: The Clerk informed Council that the Internal Auditor had agreed to carry out the internal audit for the year end 2025/26 at a cost of £150. Terms of Reference would be issued and presented to the May Council meeting.

Chair's Annual Report 25/26 , The Annual Report had been sent to members in a draft format, Cllr PB asked that the report include some additional governance information.

ACTION: Clerk to update the report and present a finalised version to May Council meeting.

7.Finance and Accounts

Balance and transaction noted.

8.Planning – MMCA/26/P/0051/HH – no comments

9.Committee Reports

Ponthir Church in Wales Primary School: No report.

Torfaen Community Transport: No meeting held.

Gwent Valleys Partnership: Next meeting 21/04/26 Clerk to query if Cllr PM will attend. Clerk to also send agenda to Cllrs PB and ML.

Ponthir Village Hall: Cllr PB informed the meeting that the Village Hall faced significant challenges due to increased costs. The hall is being well utilised and additional activities are planned.

PSCC: No update

Mic Morris Memorial Sporting Trust: Deferred to May 26 Annual Meeting

Local Council Partnership Committee: No meeting held.

The date of the next meeting is the Annual meeting on Monday 11th May , at Ponthir Village Hall at 6:30pm followed by the Council Meeting at 7pm.

Meeting closed at 20:15

This document is available on our website. A copy of this document can be made available in Welsh.

Please contact the Clerk on 07454 988250 or email clerk@ponthircommunityconcil.gov.uk