

Ponthir Community Council

Minutes of Council Meeting

Held on 8th June 2026 at Ponthir Village Hall at 7pm

Present: Cllr M Leighton (Chair), Cllr A Lang, Cllr I Danaher, Cllr L Ryan-Scales, Cllr R Morgan

Officer(s): Clerk Mrs L McMail

Also present: Dr Simon Read - HDRC, Vicki Ware - Ground Works Wales and Cllr Karl Gauden

1. Apologies – Cllrs Cllr Buffrey & Cllr Matthews

2. Declaration of Interests - Cllr Danaher declared a personal interest in the public participation relating to the Oaklands.

3. To consider matters raised by Members of the public - a written update was received from residents of the Oaklands, an email addressed to Dr Eric Hewinson was relayed in writing to Council in relation to a BT Openreach pole which had been sited at the Oaklands. Residents of The Oaklands received confirmation from Openreach that: *“Poles will no longer be installed... services will be provided via underground methods.”* The resident group passed comments to Council that they felt despite dismissive comments made at the previous meeting by a Council member the matter had reached a positive conclusion. Residents expressed thanks to the Clerk for assistance.

4. To welcome:

(i) Dr Simon Read (HDRC) and Vicki Ware (Groundworks Wales) to discuss Flood Preparedness & Community Emergency Planning. The initial working group meeting had been held at 6:30pm. The Chair updated members present with actions.

(ii) PCSO James Llewellyn did not attend – Clerk to follow up

(iii) Cllr Karl Gauden (TCBC) updated Council on:

Constituency Boundary Changes affecting MS representation.

Solar Farm - meetings were being held with residents.

Road safety and drainage issues - ongoing discussions with TCBC.

Speeding Concerns: Significant issues were reported on the A4042 and surrounding roads. A petition has been launched by residents regarding road safety and is being supported by Peter Fox MS. Residents have raised concerns about vehicle speeds, visibility, and pedestrian safety.

Surgeries were being held at the village hall regularly.

Council noted the update and thanked Cllr Gauden for his attendance.

5. To approve the minutes of the

(a) Annual Meeting - to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 11th May 2026.

Proposed by Cllr Danaher and seconded by Cllr Lang.

(b) Council Meeting - to approve the minutes of the meeting held on 11th May 2026.

Proposed by Cllr Morgan and seconded by Cllr Ryan-Scales.

6. To receive a verbal update from the Chair in relation to the initial meeting of the Community Flood Plan Working Group - as most members were present at the working group it was confirmed that actions had been agreed as follows:

1. Dr Read to send proposal and template plan.
2. Cllrs and partners in attendance to begin recruitment and engagement activity with Local Groups and send information local group contact information to Dr Simon Read and Vicki Ware.
3. Working Group to reconvene at Ponthir Village Hall at 6:30pm on 13th July 2026
ACTION: Clerk to invite Deanne (Blaenau Gwent) and George from CCC to July W/G Meeting.

7. Matters arising from previous minutes

(a) Planters/Plants and Benches - Planters are being maintained and watered. The Chair offered to assist with the remaining planting.

It was agreed to proceed with Chris Mellons for the remedial works on Benches and Planters as per the quotation received:

- £70 per bench to be restained
- £35 for two benches to also be hot steamed
- £35 x 1 bench to be repaired
- £25 per planter to be restained.

(b) Christmas motif refurbishment - costs were discussed and it was agreed for 2 x new replacements with warranty at a cost of £189 plus VAT and one refurbished at a cost of £42 plus VAT.

(c) Solar Farm Proposal (standing item) - Clerk received legal advice (SLCC) stating councils should not take a formal position at pre-planning stage. Suggestion to invite MS/MP representatives (including Plaid Cymru, Labour, Conservative, Reform) to explain their policies on large-scale solar developments.

(d) Caerleon Times 2026/27 – an advert had been placed for July reintroducing Councillors and advising of Chairs and Vice Chair re-election.

(e) Events 2026 (Standing item) – Chair will feedback at next meeting in relation to planning for a Christmas Fayre with the Village Hall.

(f) Clerks report – the Clerk updated members on a number of matters:

- The bank mandate has been updated.
- Clerk met with School and PSCC
- Flashing Road sign still in Germany awaiting repair
- Mobile Phone Signal -Resident raised concerns about poor signal. Council advised previous attempts to secure a mast (Vodafone c2018) were unsuccessful due to lack of provider funding.
- New website expected to be test-ready in 6–8 weeks.
- No update on Boundary Review
- VAT Reclaim made for 2025/26
- Holiday pay for former Clerk submitted/to be budgeted within 26/27
- Torfaen Play providing a Play session in Ponthir Park

8. To consider and discuss items

- a) Training Plan Councillors and Staff 26/27 - the training plan presented was agreed with the addition of the Flood Resilience training to be added for members. ACTIONS – Clerk to update
- b) Grant Applications - Agreement from all members present that grants should continue to be considered case-by-case.
 - 1. Raging Bulls – request for £400; Council awarded £200.
 - 2. Brownies – request for £200 for inclusive holiday activities; Council awarded £200
 - 3. Ponthir Baptist Church – request for grounds maintenance; general consensus not to fund, as it does not align with the Council’s grant criteria.
- c) Financial Request – Urdd Eisteddfod 2027 – declined as it is not benefiting the local community of Ponthir
- d) Council Chains of Office - due to costs it was decided to not update the chains
- e) Defibrillators within Ponthir Community Council ward - discussion took place regarding siting of local defibrillators within Ponthir - defibrillators are currently situated at Ponthir Village Hall, Ponthir Community Cricket Club and in the Telephone Box at Tram Lane.
 - 1. Ponthir Village Hall – fixed to outside wall facing Park (maintained by PVH)
 - 2. Ponthir Community Cricket Club – Clerk to contact to request access information. Councils strong view that a defibrillator should be externally mounted and available 24/7 due to high footfall at sports club and the proximity to school and nursery.
 - 3. Telephone Box at Tram Lane – Clerk to investigate a contact name for persons responsible for maintenance.

9. Finance

- a) Annual Return 2025/26 & (b) Annual Governance Statement – The Council received the Annual Return and Annual Governance Statement. The Clerk informed Councillors it was the responsibility of the Council to ensure that there was a sound system of internal controls within the Council, including the preparing of the accounting statements with several boxes to be ticked subject to the Council agreeing with all statements. The Clerk outlined the requirements of the Annual Governance Statement. All members unanimously agreed the Annual Return and Annual Governance statement. The documents were then passed to the Chair of Council to sign on behalf of the Council. RESOLVED: that the Council approves the Annual Return and the Annual Governance statement for 2025/26.
- c) Annual Internal Audit Report 2025/26 - noted
- d) Explanation of Variances for 2025/26 - noted
- e) Fixed Asset Register as at 31.03.2026 – noted, the memorial stone was queried as it was not showing on the fixed asset register from previous years ACTION - Clerk to investigate if it was donated. Council to be updated when information obtained.
- f) Financial Regulations 2026 – were agreed to be adopted to reflect new Procurement Act requirements
- g) Financial Risk Assessment 2026/27 – noted

h) Cash Book - May 2026 - balance and transaction noted, these payments have previously been authorised by the Chair and checked for accuracy by the Clerk.

10. Planning – none received

11. Correspondence - noted

12. Committee Reports

Ponthir Church in Wales Primary School: Cllr R-S advised that the School has received a good Estyn Report.

Torfaen Community Transport: No meeting held.

Gwent Valleys Partnership: OVW request for a named representative - **ACTION** to be added to next agenda. Cllr ID agreed as Vice Chair he would attend the July meeting.

ACTION Clerk to forward meeting invite to Cllr ID.

Ponthir Village Hall: No update

Local Council Partnership Committee: No meeting

Chairs Report – attended the Flood Resilience community Meeting last Friday along with Vice Chair and Chair had also completed OVW Chairing Skills training module with certificate received.

The date of the next meeting is the 13th July 2026 at 7pm

Meeting closed at 20:20

This document is available on the Council's website. A copy of this document can be made available in Welsh. Please contact the Clerk on 07454 988250 or email clerk@ponthircommunitycouncil.gov.uk