

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF PORTSKEWETT COMMUNITY COUNCIL

HELD AT PORTSKEWETT & SADBROOK RECREATION HALL

WEDNESDAY 22nd APRIL 2026

Councillors Present:

Cllr C Carne, Cllr T Fawcitt, Cllr B Lillie, Cllr P Nurcombe, Cllr G Parker (Chair) and Cllr M Patterson. Cllr L Dymock attended remotely.

Members of the Public present:

PCSO Adam Richards attended the meeting as he is the new liaison officer for the Portskewett area.

1. **PUBLIC MEETING**

A complaint had been received from a resident regarding the rubbish bin on Sunnycroft, Portskewett. The bin was reported as overflowing with dog waste. The caretaker emptied the bin and found very little dog waste; the bin was full of tin cans and cardboard boxes which prevented any further rubbish going fully into the bin. The caretaker advised this bin is also regularly filled with cat litter. Members again confirmed the bin had been installed at the request of numerous residents due to the litter issue at that time, which was resolved by installing the bin. A new location for the dog waste bag dispenser will be looked into. Cllr Dymock informed members that she had been contacted by the resident requesting an update on relocating the bin, and she shared photographs received from the resident. Cllr Dymock also advised she had chased Environmental Health for a response due to the nature of the complaint.

The Cornfield Project had confirmed they will be on site from 8.30am on Sunday 26th April for the council marquee to be dropped off for the annual fun run. Cllrs Carne, Parker, Patterson and Dymock confirmed they would be available to marshal.

2. **SIGN THE ATTENDANCE BOOK**

The Attendance Book was duly signed.

3. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

- a. Apologies were received from Cllr T Hooper due to family commitments.
- b. No requests had been made for apologies to be approved.

4. **DECLARATION OF INTERESTS**

No interests were declared.

5. **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

- a. Cllr Fawcitt proposed that the minutes of the March meeting be accepted as a true record, seconded by Cllr Lillie, agreed by all. **Action: clerk to publish on website.**

6. **CLERK'S REPORT**

- a. A report had been circulated prior to the meeting. The following updates were given:
 - The 2026/27 budget had been published on the council website.
 - The 2025/26 VAT reclaim for £4,130.86 had been submitted and the payment had been received.
 - Monmouthshire County Council (MCC) will need to be informed of the climbing track installation.

7. **ITEMS OF LOCAL CONCERN (FOR INFORMATION ONLY NO ACTION CAN BE AGREED)**

Cllr Dymock gave the following updates:

- The connection with the multiuser route and the Elderwood estate has been chased up with Countryside and Planning as some residents cannot currently use the active travel route.
- Based on residents feedback an objection letter had been submitted in respect of planning application DM/2026/00348.
- ARW School held a litter clean up over the previous weekend and although support was minimal some improvement was made.

- Temporary patch repairs to the highway had been carried out in Portskewett but were already lifting, so this will be followed up, along with Middle Road, Leechpool. Due to the election period highways will not meet with the County Councillor but Cllr Dymock has invited highways to visit the village once the election period is over, so she can highlight issues with patch repairs and chase permanent repairs.
- Some work has been carried out on the kickboards on the access ramp to the active travel route but further work is required.

8. **REPORT FROM REPRESENTATIVE ON ARW SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY AND OTHER BODIES**

- a. ARW School Governing Body
Cllr Carne had nothing to report.
- b.i Give Dog Fouling the Red Card Working Group
No meetings had been held.
- b.ii One Voice Wales (OVW) – Monmouthshire/Newport Area Committee
A meeting was held on 16th April 2026, minutes will be circulated when received.
- b.iii Portskewett and Sudbrook Recreation Hall & Playing Fields (P&SRH)
Cllr Nurcombe informed members a new 30 year lease is being finalised.
- b.iv Portskewett and Sudbrook Church Hall Committee
Cllr Lillie had nothing to report.
- b.v The Cornfield Project Committee
Cllr Lillie had nothing to report.
- b.vi Sevenside Area Committee
The next meeting is on Thursday 11th June 2026 at 5.00pm and will be held at the Caldicot Town Council Office. A remote link will also be available.

9. **DISCUSSION WITH COUNTY COUNCILLOR**

- a. Cllr Dymock had received complaints that the Monmouthshire County Council app is not functioning well, she will feed this back at the next Scrutiny Committee meeting.

10. **CORRESPONDENCE**

- a. Welsh Government Nature Recovery Action Plan aims and new Section 7 Species and Habitat lists
One Voice Wales has updated templates and resources in line with the new documents. **Action: Cllr Fawcitt to review and update the biodiversity plan accordingly.**
- b. One Voice Wales Civility and Respect Pledge
The civility and respect pledge sets out a number of important commitments designed to create an environment conducive to effective working avoiding many of the issues that can adversely impact on the general performance of councils. Cllr Parker proposed the council adopt the pledge, seconded by Cllr Carne, agreed by all. **Action: clerk to forward a copy of the signed pledge to OVW.**

11. **PLANNING**

- a. Planning Applications Approved/Refused by Monmouthshire County Council
No planning applications had been approved or refused.
- b. Planning Applications Received
No planning applications had been received.
- c. Response to Planning Application DM/2026/00348
Members had considered the application and raised a number of objections; it was therefore recommended that the application be refused.

12. **FINANCE**

- a. Pension Contribution Payments 2026/27
A schedule of payments for 2026/27 based on the current salary had been circulated. The Employer's contribution had decreased to 15.8% based on the latest actuarial valuation. Cllr Fawcitt proposed the payment schedule be approved, seconded by Cllr Carne, agreed by all.

b. April Pink Paper

The pink paper for April had been circulated for councillors' consideration. Cllr Lillie proposed the following payments be approved, seconded by Cllr Carne, agreed by all:

	£'s
Salaries	1,642.95
Torfaen CBC – Pension contributions	242.12
HMRC – NIC and PAYE	319.69
Merlin Environmental Services (Waste collection April Inv. 2317)	403.92
Portskewett and Sudbrook Recreation Hall (Hire of room March Inv. 765)	24.00
Unity Trust Bank (Bank Charges 1.3.26 to 31.3.26 Statement 107)	7.00

Balances held: Current Account £16,836.34, Deposit Account £16,761.34.

Action: clerk to set up payments, Cllr Nurcombe and Cllr Fawcitt to approve online.

c. Quarterly Report on Bank Reconciliations

Cllr Fawcitt had carried out the quarterly bank reconciliation check and found everything in order.

d. Quarterly Budget Monitoring Report for the 12 months ending 31st March 2026

The report had been circulated prior to the meeting for consideration. The increase in year-end reserves is attributable to income from the Bonfire Night event and the grant received for new equipment as The Quest playpark, along with significant underspends on the following budgets:

- Audit Fees – Wales Audit Office have not yet invoiced for the years 2022/23, 2023/24 and 2024/25.
- Councillors' Allowances – mandatory allowances were declined.
- Information Technology – no significant expenditure was incurred.
- Summer Playscheme – no grant was requested in 2024/25 or 2025/26.
- Training – training planned for 2023/24, 2024/25 and 2025/26 has not all been completed.
- Repairs to Gates on Harold's Field – Expenditure has not been invoiced.
- Chepstow Tourist Information Centre – no grant was requested in 2025/26.

Cllr Parker proposed the report be approved, seconded by Cllr Carne, agreed by all. **Action: clerk to publish on website.**

e. Unaudited Accounts for 2025/26

The unaudited accounts had been circulated for consideration prior to the meeting. No issues were raised.

f. Meeting of the Audit Committee

The audit committee are required to carry out the review of internal control prior to completion of the Annual Return at the May meeting. It was agreed the Audit Committee would meet on 11th May at 2pm.

Action: clerk to publish agenda.

g. Donation for Community Barbeque

A community barbeque will be held on the premises of the Portskewett Inn on 3rd May 2026. Cllr Lillie proposed food supplies be provided up to a value of £50, seconded by Cllr Fawcitt, agreed by all.

Action: clerk to arrange purchase of supplies.

h. Approval of Changes to Bank Mandate

Cllr Lillie proposed the following amendments to the mandated signatories be approved, seconded by Cllr Parker, agreed by all:

Councillors to be removed: Cllr Hubbard, Cllr Wilsher, Cllr Phillips and Cllr Holley.

Councillors to be added: Cllr Hooper, Cllr Dymock and Cllr Patterson.

Action: clerk to update bank mandates.

13. **COMMUNITY EVENTS**

a. Community Fun Day

i. Booking of Extreme Bike Battle Ltd Display Team

A quote of £480 (incl. VAT) had been received for providing a series of motorcycle displays throughout the day. The fee is non-refundable in the event of cancellation up to 10 days before the event, or if cancelled due to circumstances beyond the control of Extreme Bike Battle Ltd. An area of 15m x 35m is required for the display, and the area should be cordoned off with crowd control barriers.

Cllr Carne proposed the booking be approved subject to confirmation of availability of barriers and display area, seconded by Cllr Lillie, agreed by all. **Action: clerk to contact Gareth Lewellyn to request the loan of barriers from Caldicot Castle, Cllr Parker to confirm required display area.**

II. Meeting of the Events Working Group

A meeting will be arranged for the week commencing 27th May 2026 at 7pm, at the Portskewett Inn.
Action: clerk to confirm date.

14. PLACE PLAN

a. Update on Meeting of the Place Plan Working Group

Cllr Lillie had forwarded the first section to group members to review. **Action: Cllr Lillie to arrange a working meeting in early June.**

15. SUDBROOK CAMP AND CHAPEL

a. An update had again been requested from Cadw regarding Redrow funding the more immediate work required, no response had been received.

b. Members noted the photogrammetric survey sheets provided by ArchaeoDomus.

16. TRAINING PLAN

a. **Action: Cllr Dymock, Cllr Hooper & Cllr Patterson to complete Appendix 3, clerk to update plan.**

17. TREE SURVEY REPORT

a. Robb Lewis Tree Surgery and Ground Maintenance had supplied an estimate of £400 which had been approved by the Chair under delegated powers. Cllr Fawcitt proposed the contract be approved, seconded by Cllr Carne, agreed by all. **Action: clerk to forward contract to the contractor.**

18. RENEWAL OF RECREATION HALL LEASE

a. Recreation Hall Draft Lease

A draft lease had been forwarded by MCC, which had been reviewed by representatives of the council and the Recreation Hall committee at a meeting on 13th April 2026 and no issues or concerns were raised.

b. Approval of the Council acting as Guarantor

Cllr Lillie proposed the council act as guarantor on the lease, seconded by Cllr Patterson, agreed by all. **Action: clerk to inform MCC.**

c. Approval of the Deed of Surrender

As the current leaseholder the council is required to submit a deed of surrender in order for the new lease to transfer to the Recreation Hall committee. Cllr Patterson proposed the council submit the deed of surrender, seconded by Cllr Lillie, agreed by all. **Action: clerk to forward signed document.**

19. COUNCILLOR VACANCY

a. Councillor Resignation

A letter of resignation had been received from Cllr Holley; this was duly noted. The clerk had notified Democratic Services at Monmouthshire County Council (MCC) and the Notice of Vacancy had been published. If 10 requests for an election are not received by 23rd April 2026 the council may co-opt.

b. Update on Vacancy

An expression of interest had been received. The clerk had asked the applicant to forward some background information about themselves and invited them to observe the April council meeting.

20. APPOINTMENT OF A HEALTH AND SAFETY OFFICER

Cllr Fawcitt proposed Cllr Parker continue as the Council's Health and Safety officer, seconded by Cllr Carne, agreed by all.

21. REVIEW OF DOCUMENTS

a. Review of 2025/26 Annual Plan

The following updates were agreed for the 2026/27 Annual Plan:

- Rubbish bins to be sourced for the Elderwood site.
- Memorial Bench for Queen Elizabeth II to be provided – location to be decided.

Action: clerk to draft 2026/27 Annual Plan and agenda for approval in May.

- b. Assign Reviews of Council Policies and Procedures
 - i Complaints Procedure - The Council previously adopted the One Voice Wales Model Resolution Protocol and no updates had been received.
 - ii Freedom of Information Policy - **Action: Cllr Carne to review.**
 - iii Data Protection Policy - **Action: Cllr Lillie to review.**
 - iv Press/Media Policy - **Action: Cllr Fawcitt to review.**
 - v Social Media Policy - **Action: Cllr Fawcitt to review.**

22. **ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA**

- a. Agenda items to be forwarded to the clerk.

23. **DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

- a. The Chair thanked everyone for attending and gave the date and time of the Annual Meeting as **Wednesday 20th May 2026 at 6.30pm** at Portskewett & Sudbrook Recreation hall.
- b. The Chair gave the date and time of the May Ordinary meeting as **Wednesday 20th May 2026 at 7.00pm** at Portskewett & Sudbrook Recreation Hall. The meeting was declared closed at 8.36pm.

Mrs B Young - Clerk