

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF PORTSKEWETT COMMUNITY COUNCIL
HELD AT PORTSKEWETT & SADBROOK RECREATION HALL
WEDNESDAY 25th MARCH 2026

Councillors Present:

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

Members of the Public present:

No members of the public were present.

1. **PUBLIC MEETING**

No issues had been raised with the clerk.

2. **SIGN THE ATTENDANCE BOOK**

The Attendance Book was duly signed.

3. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

- a. Apologies were received from Cllr Carne who was on holiday.
- 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 February meeting be accepted as a true record, seconded by Cllr Parker, 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 defibrillators on Crick Road and at the Recreation Hall are on low battery. A new battery will cost £199 plus vat. A rescue ready kit is needed for the Leechpool Road defibrillator, which will cost £9.99 plus vat.
 - The grant of £14,950 for the climbing track at The Quest had been received.
 - Confirmation had been received that a donation to ARW School Year 6 Compassion Project was allowable under Section 137(2). A donation of £50 was agreed.

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

Cllr Patterson had reported fly tipping via the Monmouthshire County Council (MCC) app.

There were no objections raised to the proposed alterations to Footpath 9 in Portskewett. **Action: clerk to respond accordingly.**

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

- a. **ARW School Governing Body**
Cllr Carne was not present.
- b.i **Give Dog Fouling the Red Card Working Group**
Cllr Carne was not present.
- b.ii **One Voice Wales (OVW) – Monmouthshire/Newport Area Committee**
The next meeting will be held on 16th April 2026 at 7pm at Usk Town Council Offices. Cllr Carne is Unavailable and no one else could attend. **Action: clerk to send apologies.**
- b.iii **Portskewett and Sudbrook Recreation Hall & Playing Fields (P&SRH)**
Cllr Dymock informed members that quotes had been sought for the proposed adaptations to the Recreation Hall. The cost will be £130,000. MCC approval is needed for the project but due to the Senedd elections MCC cannot currently consider such matters.
- b.iv **Portskewett and Sudbrook Church Hall Committee**
Cllr Lillie had nothing to report.

Chairman's Signature

b.v The Cornfield Project Committee
Cllr Lillie had nothing to report.

b.vi Severnside Area Committee
No meetings had been held.

9. **DISCUSSION WITH COUNTY COUNCILLOR**

a. Cllr Dymock had received numerous complaints about potholes. MCC had been notified.

10. **CORRESPONDENCE**

a. Welsh Government consultation on the Draft Strategic Planning Guidance for the Gwent Levels
Cllr Nurcombe will respond on behalf of the council. **Action: Cllr Nurcombe to respond.**

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.

12. **FINANCE**

a. One Voice Wales Membership 2026/27
The cost of membership for 2026/27 would be £564, an increase of £41 on the previous year. The subscriptions budget for 2026/27 is £737.96. Cllr Lillie proposed the membership be renewed, seconded by Cllr Fawcitt, agreed by all. **Action: clerk to renew membership.**

b. The Society of Local Council Clerks Membership 2026/27
The cost of membership for 2026/27 would be £200, an increase of £10 on the previous year. The remaining subscriptions budget for 2026/27 is £173.96. Cllr Lillie proposed the membership be renewed with the shortfall being met from the Reserve for Unidentified Services budget, seconded by Cllr Fawcitt, agreed by all. **Action: clerk to renew membership.**

c. March Pink Paper
The pink paper for March had been circulated for councillors' consideration. Cllr Hooper proposed the following payments be approved, seconded by Cllr Dymock, agreed by all:

	£'s
Salaries	1,622.08
Torfaen CBC – Pension contributions	302.37
HMRC – NIC and PAYE	310.58
Merlin Environmental Services (Waste collection March Inv. 2292)	485.10
Portskewett and Sudbrook Recreation Hall (Hire of room February Inv. 753)	24.00
One Voice Wales (Membership 2026/27 to be paid on 1 st April 2026)	564.00
Councillors Allowances	277.33
Unity Trust Bank (Bank Charges 1.2.26 to 28.2.26 Statement 106)	7.00

Balances held: Current Account £5,999.19, Deposit Account £4,831.90.

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

d. Payment of New Living Wage Rate to Caretaker from 1st April 2026
The Living Wage Rate will increase to £12.71 from 1st April 2026. The salary budget for 2026/27 was set based on the new rate. Cllr Fawcitt proposed payment of the new rate be approved for the Village Caretaker, seconded by Cllr Lillie, agreed by all. **Action: clerk to update the payroll.**

e. Briefing on Payment Card Fraud
A briefing note had been circulated to members giving full details of fraudulent transactions initiated from outside of the organisation and identified by the bank and the clerk. A refund of £134.50 had been received from the bank on 18th March 2026.

13. **COMMUNITY EVENTS**

a. Community Fun Day
i. Update on Arrangements
An update had been circulated. **Action: Cllr Hooper to arrange for details of motorcycle display to be forwarded to the clerk, and clerk to source soft drinks and hot drinks.**

Chairman's Signature

- ii. Funtime Bounce had supplied a quote of £1,412.50 (excluding vat) for a bungee trampoline with operator and a surf simulator. St John Ambulance Cymru had not yet forwarded a formal quote but the hourly rate is £13.50 plus vat, so the estimate is £135 (excluding vat). The quote from Rockbox Roadshow to provide music and compare the event was £200, which the Chair approved and the booking is complete.
- iii. Cllr Parker proposed Funtime Bounce and St John Ambulance Cymru be booked, and the deposit payment be approved for Funtime Bounce, seconded by Cllr Fawcitt, agreed by all. **Action: clerk to make bookings and pay deposit.**

14. **PLACE PLAN**

a. **Update on Meeting of the Place Plan Working Group**

Cllr Lillie reviewed the Welsh Government (WG) policy statement and MCC's Revised Local Development Plan (RLDP) against the council's place plan. References to the RLDP and WG policy need to be added, but the place plan is in line with the documents and fits with the proposed strategies. **Action: Cllr Lillie to update the Place Plan.**

15. **SUDBROOK CAMP AND CHAPEL**

- a. All contractors had been paid and the grant of £11,861.65 had been received. An update had been requested from Cadw regarding Redrow funding the more immediate work required, no response had been received.

16. **TRAINING PLAN**

- a. The clerk had updated the plan for members no longer with the council. New members had been asked to complete Appendix 3 by 31st March 2026. The clerk will then update the planned courses and costs. **Action: Cllr Dymock, Cllr Hooper & Cllr Patterson to complete Appendix 3, clerk to update plan.**

17. **TREE SURVEY REPORT**

- a. The report referenced some ash die back but advice is no action is necessary as the trees should recover over time.
- b. One tree on the Village Green needs to be removed. An estimate has been requested from a council approved contractor and more quotes will be sought if over £500.

18. **RENEWAL OF RECREATION HALL LEASE**

- a. Cllr Dymock informed members that MCC are currently drawing up the new lease with the Recreation Hall Committee as the leaseholder and the Community Council as guarantor.
- b. No action required at this time.

19. **GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACTS 2026/27**

a. **Monmouthshire County Council Contract 2026/27**

The contract cost for 2026/27 will be £2,949.22, the budget is £2,855.57 leaving a shortfall of £93.65. Cllr Fawcitt proposed the contract be approved with the shortfall being met from the reserve for unidentified service costs, seconded by Cllr Hooper, agreed by all. **Action: clerk to forward signed contract to Monmouthshire County Council.**

b. **Mm Garden Services and Fencing Contract 2026/27**

A draft contract had been forwarded to the contractor for consideration but no response had been received. The contract cost for 2026/27 is £,1000, the budget is £1,035. Cllr Hooper proposed the contract be approved, seconded by Cllr Lillie, agreed by all. **Action: clerk to forward signed contract to Mm Garden Services and Fencing.**

20. **ITEMS FOR THE NEXT AGENDA**

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

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

- a. The Chair thanked everyone for attending and gave the date and time of the next meeting as **Wednesday 22nd April 2026 at 7pm** at Portskewett and Sudbrook Recreation Hall. The meeting was declared closed at 8.00 pm.

Mrs B Young - Clerk

Chairman's Signature

