

LLANVACHES COMMUNITY COUNCIL
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD AT LLANVACHES CHURCH HALL
TUESDAY 17 APRIL 2012 Reconvened TUESDAY 24 APRIL 2012

Present	Councillors	Tony Rex Kay James Lyndon Jones Jenny Scully
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Apologies for Absence	Councillor	Roger George Sally Thomas
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Public Attendance	9
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2142 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

None declared

2143 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (20 March 2012)

Cllr Jenny Scully proposed that the minutes be accepted as a true record. This was seconded by Cllr Lyndon Jones and agreed unanimously.

2144 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES

2137 (i) New Playground Equipment : Covered later.

2140 (ii) Website : Mr Andy Harcombe has confirmed that he will continue as webmaster.

2145 NEW PLAYGROUND EQUIPMENT

Cllr Tony Rex reported that some residents had met to discuss potential new play equipment following the presentation by Playdale. This Working Party had used the Playdale catalogues as a rough guide with a basic cost limit of £10,000. Cllr Rex said that installation and safety surface costs had to be added to give an 'Installed Cost' and, for planning purposes, an 'on cost' of 80% could be used. The Chairman said that £10,000 had been allocated for play equipment in the 2012-13 Budget and extra money would have to be raised from other sources to cover additional expenditure. The Clerk said that it was difficult to find grants for additional play equipment, but she would follow some new leads. After further discussion, Cllr Rex said that the final decision on play equipment would be made by Council but the Working Party / Focus Group had an important role in helping Council make that decision. He suggested that the structure of the team working on the project be determined when the new Council is formed. Mr Philip Bishop said that with this large project Council should go out to tender. The Chairman stated that a tender process would be necessary later but at this stage we were gaining knowledge from the potential suppliers.

2146 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES (21 February 2012)

2094(i) Grit Bins and Gritting Routes : The Clerk had spoken with NCC who had agreed to extend the current gritting route to the Lime Kiln.

2113(i) Community Council' Emergency Plan : Cllr Tony Rex said that Cllr Sally Thomas had been 'Lead Cllr' on preparation of an Emergency Plan which would have telephone numbers and references of appropriate contacts. This task will now move to a new 'owner' because Cllr Sally Thomas will not be standing for re-election.

2114 (ii) Recreation Field Gates : Cllr Tony Rex said that the order would be detailed at the June meeting and by then Newport CC should have commented on our intentions.

2123 (i) Street Names : Cllr Tony Rex reminded the Clerk to contact NCC regarding their policy on using signs to name village streets / roads.

2123 (ii) Lighting on A48 at Tabernacle Lane Junction. Cllr Tony Rex said that this matter had been rejected by Newport CC some time ago, but the Clerk would approach NCC Street about the new request. Cllr Rex reminded Council that the key problem previously had been that the optimum siting of such a light was on Monmouthshire CC land.

2123 (iii) Notice Board Repairs – Letter of Thanks :Cllr Tony Rex reminded the Clerk to send a letter of thanks to John Wood and his team as soon as possible.

2124 (vii) Jubilee Celebrations : Cllr Tony Rex asked for Council's thoughts on planting a specimen tree on the village green to replace the chestnut tree that had been culled. After brief discussion, it was agreed that the new Council be asked to consider the proposal.

2127(i) Financial Matters : Cllr Tony Rex said that Cllr Roger George had resolved the query regarding the £312 invoice for grass mats. This invoice had been paid the previously.

2129 BT Activity at Reservoir House : Now resolved.

2129 Footpaths, Stiles and Rights of Way. The Clerk has been unable to obtain an up-to-date map of the footpaths etc in the community. Cllr Tony Rex had suggested a formal programme to check all footpaths etc be established before the June Council Meeting. Clearly, this matter will now have to be taken up by the new Council.

2147 COUNCIL MANAGEMENT MATTERS

(i) New Council – Dates for Diaries : The Clerk announced that when the list closed at noon on 4 April, NCC had received only 4 nominations. Cllr Tony Rex stated that the new Council would be able to conduct business because the quorum was 3 Cllrs. The Clerk said that the present Cllrs will retire on 8 May 2012 and the new Cllrs will take office the same day. The AGM will be held on 15 May 2012, when new Cllrs will sign their Acceptance of Office and Code of Conduct, and a new Chairman will be elected.

(ii) Co-option to Fill Vacancies : After the retirement of the existing Cllrs, the process of filling the 3 vacancies by co-option will start in accordance with the defined Standard Practice. The Notice of Vacancies, calling for volunteers for co-option, will be posted on Notice Boards for a period of 10 working days and if there are more than 3 applicants, the 3 people to be offered co-option will be chosen by Cllrs through a secret ballot. The aim is that the Co-opted Cllrs will take office at the Council Meeting on 19 June.

2148 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (10 mins maximum)

(i) Hedge Cutting : Cllr Elect Peter Challenger asked who is responsible for the cutting of the roadside hedges as he had experienced two punctures caused by hedge debris being left on the lane. Cllr Tony Rex said it was the responsibility of NCC Streetscene (formerly Highways). The Clerk will speak to NCC about clearing the roads after cutting of the hedges.

(ii) Recreation Field Hedges : Mr Philip Bishop enquired about responsibility for the hedge boundary on the north side of the playing field. Cllr Tony Rex replied that a clause in the Recreation Field Lease stated that LCC were responsible for maintenance of the hedges and provision of a stock proof fence. But, Cllrs had refused to sign the lease for several years up to 1982 as a result of this clause. Finally, NCC had written to LCC releasing LCC from the responsibility. The matter is being debated again with NCC Estates Dept. Mr Bishop asked for a formal letter from LCC about the outcome regarding responsibility for the boundary.

(iii) Meeting Adjournment : Cllr Elect Lesley Morgan MBE asked the Chairman why the Meeting Agenda was being adjourned part way through. Cllr Tony Rex said that this was due to the number of items to be covered on the Agenda being too long for one meeting.

2149 MATTERS OF LOCAL INTEREST OR CONCERN

(i) Jubilee Celebration – Plans : Cllr Tony Rex enquired about plans for celebration of the Queen's Jubilee. The Clerk said that Mrs Ruth Bishop is heading a team of ladies who are planning a *Big Jubilee Lunch*. In outline, there is a Family Services at 11.00 a.m. in St Dubritius Church, followed by coffee and tea in the Church Hall and then The Big Lunch at Willow Lodge, Church Lane. Due to the Penhow celebrations covering the whole weekend, the Llanvaches event will be held on Sunday 3 June to enable residents to attend Penhow events. The Clerk stated that any financial support from LCC would be welcome.

(ii) Grant for Jubilee Celebrations : Cllr Tony Rex said that LCC had budgeted £500 for events in 2012, (say) Jubilee Celebrations, Jubilee Tree and a Christmas Party. Cllr Rex said that some bunting for the Jubilee Event might be bought by Council and then stored by the Clerk for future events. Cllr Rex added that a grant of £150-£200 could be made, but it would be based on consideration of the Event Budget and the Church Service would need to be separate from the *Big Lunch Celebration* on posters and other publicity.

(iii) Gray Hill Surgery PPG Report : Cllr Tony Rex reported that discussions with the Aneurin Bevan Trust about quality of services in the area are ongoing.

(iv) Community First Report : No report given, Mr John Wood was not present.

2150 PLANNING MATTERS

(i) Excavations alongside Turnpike Road : The backfilling on this land is still not completed.

(ii) Barn Conversion nr Hillside Cottage – New Access Road : Approved Access & Splay : The history on this development goes back to 2007/08 with various planning applications. An application for a driveway around the field was refused by NCC as it would be unsightly and require an additional entrance onto Gilfach Lane. However, over the Easter Weekend an access road was built linking to the gateway created last July. Newport Planning have been informed and it is expected that an Enforcement Order will be issued.

(iii) 11/1107 Installation of Larger Velux Windows, Mulberry Barn, Millbrook Lane
Accepted with conditions

(iv) 12/0060 Detached Garage with Storage Loft, Forest Lodge : A decision has not been made pending resolution of questions about Rights of Way.

(v) Replacement of Rear Extension, Karnebri, Tabernacle Road : Granted

(iv) Local Development Plan : Newport CC is now at the consultation stage again. Cllr Tony Rex said that on 15 May Lucie Taylor will give a presentation about the LDP to Council and residents. Cllr Rex said that the candidate sites put forward by Council – South View, Land around the Church, Village Green, Glebelands Field and the Recreation Field – had been accepted as Amenity Land in the plan.

(v) Glebelands : Cllr Tony Rex reported that there had been rumours recently that the Football Field, that we lease on an annual basis from the Church in Wales, had been sold. Cllr Rex has spoken to the Church in Wales and their Land Agent who said there was no truth in the rumour. Council noted that the Church in Wales regards the land as a medium term investment to be sold at some time in the future.

(vi) Development of Long Meadow : Cllr Tony Rex said there had been a lot of survey activity, since the autumn of last year, in Long Meadow. The site had been put forward as a LDP Candidate Site for Residential Use in 2011 but had been rejected because the application was out of time. Cllr Rex reported that he was approached by an architect about setting up a questionnaire and a meeting in the village regarding the possible development of Long Meadow for housing. It was indicated that the development would include new access roads and a mix of house types including 'affordable properties'. A recent mail from the architect and Mr Hugh Spence stated that the project was to be withdrawn and the fact finding exercise and the presentation meeting was cancelled.

2151 CORRESPONDENCE LIST

The Clerk had distributed the correspondence list to Councillors. There were no queries.

The meeting closed at 9.15 p.m. and will be re-convened on Tuesday 24 April at 7.00pm.

RECONVENED MEETING AT LLANVACHES CHURCH HALL - TUESDAY 24 APRIL 2012

Present	Councillors	Tony Rex Kay James Lyndon Jones Jenny Scully Roger George Sally Thomas
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Public Attendance	6
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2152 DECLARATION OF INTERESTS

Cllr Roger George declared an interest in an agenda item relating to *Birchfield Right of Way*. Cllr Tony Rex responded by saying he would not have to withdraw for the general update.

2153 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION (10 Minutes Maximum)

(i) Budget Timing : Mrs Eileen Wood, on behalf of her husband, Mr John Wood, asked whether it was proper for the outgoing Council to be confirming the next budget. Cllr Tony Rex explained that the Budget had already been confirmed earlier in the year and it was mandatory that it be finalised before the start of the Financial Year.

2154 PLAYING FIELD MATTERS

(i) Inspection Report : Cllr Kay James said that the football goal net pegs had been removed and a large piece of wood was being used to hold down the football net. As this was dangerous, she had removed the wood and was going to replace the ground pegs. The Clerk will obtain more pegs. Cllr Tony Rex reminded Council that the Annual Inspection and Report was expected to take place end April – early May.

(ii) Recreation Field Gates – Order : Quotes and specification from three contractors had been received. Cllr Roger George suggested Council award the contract to the lowest cost. This was seconded by Cllr Sally Thomas. It was agreed to place the order with Lewis Grounds Maintenance.

(iii) Grass Cutting Contract – Order : Cllr Tony Rex stated that Ward Cllr David Atwell had negotiated a 50% discount from NCC for 2011 and he had been asked to try to obtain

some discount for 2012. Cllr Rex said that grass cutting costs LCC c£900 and £240 is granted for churchyard maintenance, so, about 70% of Council's Concurrent Income is spent on grass cutting. The Clerk had obtained three quotes for the contract, of which NCC were about £5 more than the lowest. Cllr Rex suggested that Council stay with NCC and that he would contact Mr Nick Fisher of NCC to try and obtain a discount for this year. Cllr Sally Thomas asked whether we should just go with the lowest quote received. Cllr Roger George reported that NCC has in the past provided a very good service and LCC do not have to accept the lowest quote. Cllr Sally Thomas said that grass cutting charges are unfair and amounted to double taxation. Cllr Kay James proposed that Council award the grass cutting contract to NCC and Cllr Jenny Scully seconded the proposal which was agreed unanimously.

(iv) Responsibility for Hedges : The Chairman said that there was nothing more to report following the reply to Mr Philip Bishop (2148 (ii)).

(v) Birchfield Right of Way : Cllr Tony Rex said that there had been no change in the longer term view about the Right of Way. But, it could be re-opened or left dormant for the time being. The urgency of having this access re-opened had declined because there was to be no Jubilee or Olympic events in the field and the incidence of bullying / threatening behaviour was currently very low. Long discussions have taken place with Playsafe, RoSPA and our insurers about the prevention of incidents and accidents. The need to resolve the RoW issue at speed has passed but Council must consider the likely needs and legislation. With this in mind, Cllr Rex concluded that dormancy was the best option for the present.

2155 FINANCIAL AND MANAGEMENT MATTERS

(i) Review Financial Regulations : Cllr Tony Rex confirmed that Regulations required monthly bank statements. Council receive statements quarterly. Cllr Roger George expressed the view that monthly statements were not necessary and Cllr Rex agreed. Cllr George, seconded by Cllr Jenny Scully, proposed that statements continue on a quarterly cycle and Council agreed unanimously. The Regulations were amended.

(ii) Standing Orders and Constitution : Cllr Tony Rex reported that LCC had a set of Standing Orders pre-1995 but they cannot be found on file. The *Good Councillor Guide* and *OVW Model Standing Orders*, together with custom and practice plus a range of Standard Practices that have been written and agreed for specific purposes, govern and guide Council's meetings and operations. Cllr Tony Rex said he is converting the OVW Model to be Llanvaches specific but this was a very time consuming task and much work is still needed. LCC had a Constitution which was updated some 5 years ago by a purchase from OVW but this version cannot be found. OVW take the view that Part 1 of the Model covers all of the items formerly in the Constitution so they do not produce one for small councils now.

(iii) Risk Assessment. Cllr Tony Rex presented an updated Risk Assessment and said that Council are required to complete an annual Risk Assessment for our Insurers and the Auditors and a minute number has to be allocated. After some changes, Cllr Jenny Scully, seconded by Cllr Sally Thomas, proposed acceptance of the assessment: Council agreed.

(iv) Review Asset Register. Cllr Tony Rex drew Council's attention to the updated Asset Register and Insurance Review. The current Asset Value is £5,983 and the estimated replacement cost is £33,275. Cllr Jenny Scully proposed that the review be accepted, this was seconded by Cllr Sally Thomas and passed unanimously.

(v) Statement of Accounts 2011-2012. Cllr Roger George reported that the latest bank statement only detailed business up to 2 March instead of 31 March and therefore we do not know whether 7 cheques, amounting to £800, have been presented. With this proviso, there are no new salient features in the Accounts for discussion. The Clerk will contact the bank for the statement up to 31 March to enable the Accounts to be finalised.

(vi) Confirm Budget 2012-2013. Cllr Tony Rex reported that the Budget Expenditure had been approved earlier and the document circulated merely identified more accurate values for the forecast opening and closing values.

(vii) Agree Fidelity Guarantee level. Cllr Tony Rex said that the insurance contains a Fidelity Guarantee and there is a standard calculation method for the amount of cover needed. This calculation suggested that £5,990 would be sufficient for 2012-13. Cllr Rex said that he had added £5,000 to the calculated level because the expenditure on new play equipment was likely to take place in the second half of the year. After brief discussion, Cllr Roger George, seconded by Cllr Lyndon Jones, proposed that the Fidelity Guarantee Level of £10,990 be accepted, other Cllrs agreed unanimously.

(viii) Agree Insurance Provider and Premium. Cllr Tony Rex said that Aon is our current and long term insurers and as recognition, last year Council received a renewal premium at a one-off special discounted rate. The Clerk had contacted two other insurance companies for quotations but only had a response from Zurich, who was cheaper than Aon's £700. Cllr

Rex spoke to Aon to try to obtain another special discount and was offered a three year deal, at the previous special rate, for £562.49 Zurich was also asked to quote for a three year deal and replied with a premium offer significantly above AON. It was proposed by Cllr Roger George and seconded by Cllr Lyndon Jones, and agreed unanimously, that Council should be insured by Aon on the three year fixed basic rates deal. Cllr Rex asked that the Insurance cheque for Aon be raised before 8 May 2012.

(ix) Payments of Accounts – Payments Due and Payments Confirmed.

	£
1 Clerk's salary April 2012	120.24
2 Tax due March 2012	30.06
3 Church Hall Rent for 2011-2012	150.00
TOTAL	£ 300.30

Approved : Proposed by: Cllr Roger George
Seconded by: Cllr Sally Thomas and agreed unanimously

2156 CORRESPONDENCE – since 17 April 2012

The correspondence list had been circulated to Councillors, there were no queries.

2157 JUBILEE EVENT GRANT

(i) Big Jubilee Lunch. Cllr Tony Rex stated that he had seen the budget prepared by the *Llanvaches Big Lunch Committee* and his first reaction was that the printing costs were high. The Clerk (a member of the committee) said that most of the printing had already been commissioned so this cost was unlikely to be reduced. The budget totalled £185 plus £50 already spent on good quality bunting. Cllr Rex indicated that Council could support the celebrations to £235 – subject to receipts etc - and the bunting would become Council property and be stored afterwards by the Clerk for future occasions. However, Council could not support the event if the routine Anglican Church Service was to be an integral part of the programme. Cllr Rex added that the service formed a large part of the published programme and the rulings about support for political and religious events were well founded and not determined by Council. He suggested that the routine Family Church Service be advertised alongside the Big Lunch, but not as part of this event, or that having taken the service from the celebration programme, short non-denominational Thanksgiving Prayers and Grace be included at the start of lunch. A grant of £235 (£185 plus £50 for the bunting), subject to the Church Service restriction defined above, was proposed by Cllr Roger George and seconded by Cllr Kay James: agreement was unanimous.

[later : Mr and Mrs Bishop met with the Chairman and the Clerk. The Chairman had taken further advice from OVW and The Monitoring Officer and reiterated that Council could not support the planned Jubilee Celebrations with a routine Church Service as an integral large part of the programme. Mr and Mrs Bishop said that the restriction was unacceptable and consequently the Committee would fund the whole event themselves.]

2158 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(i) New Stiles. Cllr Sally Thomas requested that a thank you letter be sent on behalf of LCC for the excellent work that had been carried out on providing new stiles in the area.

(ii) LDP Presentation. Cllr Lyndon Jones enquired about LDP Presentation. Cllr Tony Rex said that the presentation by Lucie Taylor, would be on 15 May immediately before the AGM.

(iii) Retiring Councillors : Cllr Jenny Scully announced that this would be her last meeting. Cllr Tony Rex said the community owes a debt of gratitude for the wisdom, work and time spent by Jenny and other retiring Cllrs. Cllr Rex then commented particularly on the contribution by Cllr Roger George who had said that he was also retiring. Cllr Rex said that Cllr George had served the community excellently over a long period of time, being Clerk to the Village Meeting, Councillor then Chairman and Vice-Chairman. He extended his personal thanks to Cllr George.

2159 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

AGM of New Council	15 May 2012
First Ordinary Meeting of New Council	19 June 2012

The meeting closed at 9.00 p.m.