**GROSMONT FAWR COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**DRAFT CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES**

**MONDAY 10TH MAY 2021**

**Meeting held via Zoom following the AGM at 7.30pm**

**Present:**

C Cllr David Hughes-Jones (Chairman) Cllr Andrew Farr (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr James Stark Cllr Peter McVann

Cllr Witek Mintowt-Czyz Cllr Paul Sheriden

**In attendance:** Mrs Jan Chatfield, Mrs Jane Moggridge, Ms Clare Preece (Clerk)

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The May meeting of the Grosmont Fawr Community Council followed on from the AGM which was closed at 19.48. Cllr Mintowt-Czyz asked if the Public forum could be moved further down the agenda in case there were any more attendees joining the meeting at 8pm as advertised.

1. To accept apologies for absence: Cllr Mrs Margie Barker, Cllr Martin Davies
2. To disclose personal and pecuniary interests in items of business listed below: None declared
3. Public Forum – (The meeting will be suspended to permit the Public Forum – 10 minutes only and each participant limited to 2 minutes. The meeting will then be re-opened.) Was delayed until 8pm. See under item 4.
4. To consider matters relating to the Grosmont Futures Project – The Grosmont Hub

The monthly report from Grosmont Community Hub circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting by Cllr Mintowt-Czyz was received. Cllr Mintowt-Czyz said that the main objective tonight was to obtain support for the Green Energy fund application. Cllr Andrew Far highlighted the Bat survey of the Town Hall that would be a necessary requirement for when planning permission is sought he also stated that no doubt there will be a requirement to carry out work to the roof as a result of the survey and that this will be a very costly business. Cllr Mintowt-Czyz informed the meeting that there was a likelihood the survey will lead to work in excess of £3000. He also stated that the result of the first survey showed that there was no evidence of Bats in the Town Hall roof. Bat droppings were found outside the under croft and this was not deemed a significant factor. He also stated that at some stage work on the roof will be required as there is significant woodworm. He said the expenditure is not dead money and has to be spent in order to proceed with the grant fund application. Cllr Farr said that with this new information he is happy for the work to proceed. C Cllr David Hughes-Jones said that the Bat survey was unavoidable as it was necessary to proceed. Cllr Mintowt-Czyz told Councillors that he did not expect there to be the need for a full Bat survey and that the Grosmont Community Hub group were awaiting reports from the Preliminary Bat Roost assessment.

Cllr Stark said that less that 50% of those contacted from within the community to ascertain their opinion on the project had replied. Cllr Mintowt-Czyz said that this figure is actually higher that what would have been expected and that the response was very encouraging. The Chairman reminded everyone that the Council had pledged £5000 towards this project as the January meeting to set the budget for the year 2021-2022 and hopes that this investment will reap rewards for the Community in the future. Cllr Mintowt-Czyz reminded Councillors that the Town Hall was the Council’s asset and the improvements to it will come from a fund for which the council will not be responsible. Cllr Stark said he was mindful of the fact that Councillors will have to explain to disgruntled members of the community if the project is not realised. The Chairman made a point of information that the money towards the costs of the initial work to fulfil the preliminary work in order to make the application had already been granted to the project.

Cllr Farr said that the details of costs involved in conducting the survey were very vague and asked how far off was the roof from coming off? Cllr Mintowt-Czyz said that planning conditions will have to be met if the project is to move forward.

Mrs Jan Chatfield, a member of the Grosmont Community Hub team made the following comments during the time allotted for the Public Forum:

Mrs Chatfield said the Bat survey is currently a scoping exercise and was being charged out at £35 per hour. A survey and report taking 7.5 hours had been carried out so far and that mileage would also be charged. It was very unlikely that there were Bats at the Town Hall as there was evidence of spiders and spiders webs and that apparently the two species to not exist well together. As soon as the Dawn till Dusk survey report is received it will be shared with the Council. Mrs Chatfield also stated that the work carried out by Grosmont Events prior to the pandemic, to redecorate the Town Hall had been ruined by the damp problem in the Town Hall. The chimney breast is wet and all the paint has come away. She is concerned that the damp will the destroy the building. The Chairman agreed that action needed to be taken. **Resolved:** The Council support the project ongoing and agree to meet the costs of the Bat survey from the earmarked fund made available.

1. To approve as a correct record the Minutes of previous meetings held. **Resolved:** Unanimously agreed to accept the Minutes of the March meeting.
2. To consider matters arising from the minutes.
3. Dog fouling Following on from the email sent to Councillors 26/4/21, a volunteer is needed to take charge of marking up dog waste left by the perpetrators with the pink chalk spray.

The Clerk presented the situation to the Council. The Council need to take action against the perpetrators of dog fouling themselves as there was no other option at present. There needs to be volunteers, preferably dog walkers who can monitor the situation and use the pink chalk spray to highlight the waste, literally ,with the aim of shaming those who deliberately flout the law. The Pooper snooper app can be downloaded and waste hotspots identified. If evidence can be compiled there is scope for the issuing of fines from Monmouthshire County Council. **Resolved:** No volunteers came forward and Mrs Jane Moggridge said she would put something on the village website in the hope to drum up support. The Clerk said she would attend the next dog fouling day in September and press for a commitment to help Grosmont tackle the problem.

A cheque for £50 was raised and sent to the Welsh Air Ambulance appeal.

Public Toilets at the Town Hall – The Clerk contacted Highways regarding the public toilet signage. It was pointed out in the last meeting that the signage was misleading as it pointed towards the toilets situated at the Angel Inn. Highways referred the matter through to the Traffic department. An email from Graham Kinsella was received on 23/3/21. He stated that the sign does not appear to be an authorised highway sign and suggests that it has been installed by the Angel Inn. Can Councillors confirm this to be correct? **Resolved:** Councillors do not know whose sign it is and Cllr Mintowt-Czyz will ask the pub if they have any information.

Graham Kinsella suggested the sign be adjusted to point in the direction of the toilets in the under croft but if the sign is the property of the pub then this will not be possible and a new sign pointing to the toilets in the under croft will have to be installed. **Resolved:** If the sign is not the property of the pub then it can be moved to point in the right direction. If not then a new sign will have to be purchased.

1. To consider matters relating to Web Content Access Guidelines WCAG 2.1 – Nothing to report. The Clerk will set the project in motion when the funding becomes available.
2. To discuss the Fire Risk Assessment and ongoing closure of the Town Hall – Fire Rite attended the Town Hall on 20th March with the Clerk in attendance. The following points of non- compliance were raised, however the Town Hall has been deemed to be LOW RISK and a Certificate of Conformity issued. The date of the next Fire risk

assessment is to be 20st April 2022. Thank you to Cllr Farr who arranged for the electrician to come and install the integrated fire alarm system and to attach the exposed wiring surrounding the new fire door at the bottom of the stairs. This was found to conform with FireRite’s specifications.

1. Structural elements:
2. Are the fire resisting and separating walls and floors in good condition? It was found that fire stopping between compartments is missing and or has been poorly installed. Area identified for improvement is above electrical meter and intake situated above the external door which leads to the road. It is recommended that fire stopping is installed around the

separating floors and walls. When doing so it must be ensured that the correct approved propriety materials are installed by a competent passive fire safety officer. Will Cllr Farr be able to contact the builder and or the electrician to carry this out? **Resolved:** Cllr Farr said the builder is very busy and he doubted very much that he would be interested in carrying out the work. Cllr Farr said he would take a look and see what needed doing. He also said that the reported stated that a professional needed to carry out the work so he himself would not be qualified to. It was suggested that Rob Barker be contacted and either Cllr Mintowt-Czyz or Cllr Sheriden will speak to him when they next see him.

1. The assessor was unable to ascertain that the materials used to plug a hole in the store cupboard in the downstairs corridor are to the required and approved levels of fire resistance. The report states that a further investigation will be required by a competent person to ascertain the integrity of the materials used and that they will provide the correct level of fire resistance. Cllr Farr previously filled the hole with fire retardant foam. **Resolved:** This will be carried out along with work detailed in point a) above
2. Electrical services:
3. Are all electrical installations and appliances correctly installed and maintained? PAT testing had not been carried out. The Clerk will engage Monnow electrical to carry out PAT testing. **Resolved:** PAT testing has now been carried out by Monnow Electrical.
4. There was no evidence of the stairlift having been inspected. The Clerk has noted that in their assessment of the town hall facilities Grosmont Futures ascertained that the stair lift is no longer in working order. The Fire Risk assessor suggested that if it is not working then it should be removed. Have Councillors any recommendations or ideas on the removal of the stairlift?

The Chairman said the Council went to a lot of expense to fit the stair lift and so if possible it needs to be repaired if found to not be working. **Resolved:** The Clerk is to ascertain the whereabouts of the key which may be with Richard at the post office and arrange for the servicing and repair of the stair lift if it us currently U.S.

1. Fire Resisting Doors
2. The newly installed fire door hinges do not have the required amount
3. of screws fitted. The Clerk instructed Steven Ball to complete the work as this appeared to be overlooked. Steven Ball attended the Town Hall on 26th April 2021 and this has now been put right.
4. The Fire door leading to the under croft has an ineffective closing device. Can Cllr Farr contact the builder with a view to either replacing or fixing the current closing device? **Resolved:** Rob Barker is to be approached with a view to carrying out this work
5. Fire Alarm maintenance

There was no evidence that the fire alarm system has been tested on a weekly basis. The Clerk is to produce a log book and will carry out weekly testing.

1. Maintenance of Emergency lighting systems

There was no evidence that monthly emergency lighting checks had been carried out. The Clerk will produce a log- book and will carry out monthly checks.

ALL THE ABOVE ARE STATUTORY REQUIRMENTS AND THE COUNCIL ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR ENSURING THEY HAVE BEEN CARRIED OUT BY 20TH JULY 2021. WHEN THEY WILL BE REQUIRED TO REPORT BACK TO FIRERITE.

The Town Hall is now permitted, as of 3rd May 2021, to open for functions of not more than 15 people. The Clerk has updated the Covid Risk assessment originally carried out in August 2020, updated the booking form and fire risk assessment sheet which must be read, agreed and signed by each person responsible for booking the hall. All guidelines contained therein must be adhered to and the Grosmont Fawr Community Council are not responsible for any adverse consequences arising from the use of the Town Hall. A QR code has been obtained and users are being asked to download the NHS Covid App to check in. If a compatible device is not available then all contact tracing details must be submitted to the organiser of the event. A folder entitled “COMMUNICATIONS” has been placed in the shower room at the Town Hall for hall users which MUST NOT BE REMOVED.

As discussed at the Council meeting in January to set the Precept, no budget for an increase in cleaning costs relating to Coronavirus has be set so all Hall users are expected to thoroughly clean all areas used, before and after use, to avoid having to increase the hire charge to cover this expense. When signing the booking sheet they sign to accept responsibility for this. The Council hold the right to close the Hall if conditions are not adhered to. Does the Council agree to the opening of the Town Hall taking into consideration these new conditions? **Resolved:** Proposed by Cllr Mintowt-Czyz, Seconded by Cllr Sheriden. Unanimously agreed.

1. To receive items of correspondence. Emails referenced on the Attachments One schedule (circulated prior to the meeting) were sent to Councillors. Any discussion regarding contents? **Resolved:** No further comments were made.

Councillor Stark has attended training during April and Councillors are encouraged to attend by contacting the Clerk who can arrange this with One Voice Wales.

Cllr Stark said that he was glad he attended the advanced finance course as this one was still rather basic. He is awaiting the legal course which has had to be rescheduled due to the fact that there were not enough numbers to run the course.

1. To consider National NHS Day on 5th July 2021 – The Chairman asked that this be put on the agenda at the March Council meeting. Email from One Voice Wales 5/1/21.

Civic leaders, Chairman and leaders of Councils, large and small are being encouraged to lead their local communities in remembrance and tribute to those within the NHS, social care and key workers, along with members of the public who have sadly passed away due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

It is proposed that the following take place:

11am – TWO MINUTES SILENCE

Civic leaders, chairmen and leaders or councils are being encouraged to lead their local communities in this very important element of NHS, Social care and Frontline workers day on 5th July this year, remembering those who have lost their lives due to the current pandemic.

1pm – THE NATIONS TOAST TO THE HEROES OF THE NHS, SOCIAL CARE AND THOSE THAT WORK ON THE FRONTLINE

Civic leaders, chairmen and leaders of councils are being asked to raise a glass of refreshment of their choice , and lead their local communities in this unique toast “To those who give so much we thank you”

Other events being proposed by [www.nhsfrontlineday.org](http://www.nhsfrontlineday.org) are Street/garden parties or parties at home at 1pm and Afternoon tea at 4pm. At 8pm there will be Clapping for our Heroes and the Ringing of Church Bells 73 times – one for every year of our NHS.

The Clerk suggests that Councillors come together at the Town Hall and mark the 2 minutes silence outside the Town Hall at 11am. There will be a national raising of the NHS flag at 10am but due to the lack of a flag- pole at the Town Hall (despite there being rumours of one being erected), the Council can purchase official bunting from the supplier J W Plant and Co Ltd at a cost of £40.86 for 15 metres of 35 rectangular pennants. A donation of £5 for every length of bunting will be made to NHS Charities.

At 1PM the Clerk suggests the Council provide refreshments in the form of a glass of their choice of beverage for local residents. The Clerk suggests Cava unless anyone else has any thoughts. 1x 75cl bottle contains approximately 6 glasses. The Clerk can recommend Tesco Cava at £5.75 per bottle and suggests the council purchase a dozen bottles costing £69 (72 glasses) with a bulk buy saving of approx. £17 so £51.80. A pack of 50 disposable champagne flutes can be purchased from Amazon for £15.98. Orange juice can be made available to sweeten it or as an alternative to alcohol. It is not recommended to use water as a toast.

Local residents can be asked to participate to make it more of a social occasion and maybe there will be some volunteers who would be happy to provide food. Donations to NHS charities are being encouraged.

Councillors to discuss:

Much discussion was had surrounding the possible organisation of the event. It was highlighted that as the 5th July is a Monday it may not be very well attended due to the fact that a lot of people will be at work. Mrs Jan Chatfield who is a member of the Grosmont Events team was asked it there would be any appetite for the group to organise an event. Cllr Mintowt-Czyz said that Sunday 4th July was trending on social media and gaining momentum, being organised by the lady who first started the nationwide doorstep clap for carers. He suggested the Council would be better to vote on support for an event organised within the village community that to organise an event themselves. The Chairman asked if Mrs Jan Chatfield and Cllr Mintowt-Czyz can explore the possibilities and suggested the council donate up to £100 to support the event. **Resolved:** It was unanimously agreed to support the NHS day with a donation of up to £100.

1. To consider matters relating to Highways/Rural Roads.

The following matters were reported to Highways following the March meeting of the Council where responses from MCC have been received:

Service request 9124008 – Salt spillage – cleaned up in February 2021 – status complete

Service request 9123875 – Patching – MCC currently have contractors carrying out extensive patching work in the area to repair the road. Status complete

Service request 9123598 – Subsidence – small area of road subsided but not of concern at present. Will monitor and action when necessary. Status under review

Service request 9123952 – Drains and flooding – Status with Supervisor

Service request 9124092 – Ditches filled with silt – Status under review

There was nothing new to report. Cllr Peter McVann said that the pot hole on Cupids Hill which is a result of the diesel spillage has not been repaired and that the hedge and salt removal were carried out by local contractors. He said that he is being asked when work on the bridge is going to be carried out. **Resolved:** The Clerk to report to Highways

1. To consider matters relating to planning.

DM/2018/01407 To be compliance condition, New House, B4347 Grosmont Bridge to Whitehouse Farm, Grosmont NP7 8EP – Rewording of condition 7 (ensure Archaeologist is present for any ground disturbing works) **Resolved:** No objections

Cllr McVann asked the Clerk if she had received any notification regarding planning application DM/2020/01861. Councillors were not in receipt of this and Cllr McVann cannot access any information regarding it online. Work is being undertaken at the property in question and it is not clear if this has been approved. The Clerk checked the emails and notification had been received on 18th December but had not it appeared, been circulated.**Resolved:** The Clerk is to find out the status of the application and forward all information to Cllr McVann first thing.

Cllr Mrs Margie Barker had made a comment via email as follows:

I travel the road between Grosmont and Skenfrith on a daily basis and there is a section of road though the wooded area that has overhanging trees which are dangerous during a windy spell. At the beginning of March it wasn’t very nice driving though because it wouldn’t take much wind or rain to dislodge them and cause a serious accident. Cllr Mrs Barker also stated that the matter had been discussed previously and she seemed to recall Jane Fleming and Mike Pullin meeting the Council to discuss the matter but was not sure if it had ever been resolved. **Resolved:** The Chairman made a note to investigate the matter.

1. To consider matters relating to Grosmont Town Hall – The Clerk has noted that the Town Hall under croft has come under scrutiny due to the volume of unwanted items placed there for other villagers to make use of. A member of the public had mentioned on the Grosmont Noticeboard that it was looking very untidy and that the items still remained the responsibility of whoever placed them there and that if they had remained there for more than six weeks then the owners should remove them. As lockdown draws to a close should the Council place a notice in the under croft to prevent anymore items being place there? The Clerk noted on Thursday 6th May that the area looked a lot tidier. **Resolved:** The Clerk is to place a notice in the under croft asking that things be removed after 3 weeks.

PAT Testing has been carried out on 9 items at the Town Hall. The Fire Extinguishers are to be services on Monday 10th May 2021 and the Town Hall will then be open for business with the Clerk clarifying the situation with Public Health at MCC on Monday 10th when she will update those present. See under item 8

1. To consider matters relating to Grosmont Events. Nothing to report
2. To agree expenditure and other accounts matters.

Steven Ball was asked to straighten the catch on the door leading to the outside steps during the work to adhere to the Fire Risk Assessment. The metal catch was rusted and snapped upon straightening. He had another forged and fitted and has submitted an invoice for £70. The breakdown of this is £30 from the Blacksmith for forging the catch and £40 for removing and refitting the new latch. Does the Council agree to pay this? **Resolved:** Councillors agreed to pay Steven Ball.

Clerks Wages May/June/July £541.67 per month paid by Faster payment through the bank.

Tracie Vaughan Caretaker Jan/March – To flush clean and open the toilets at the weekends- 18hrs @ £8.72 plus materials and PPE £1.99 - £158.95 - PAID

One Voice Wales membership fee - £131 - PAID

SLCC course fees for Clerk - £131 - PAID

Clean My - £13.97 toilet rolls - PAID

NFU Mutual Insurance renewal - £1054.23 a saving of £16.38 on the previous year

Catherine Williams Audit Fees for 2020-2021 £250.00 plus VAT £50 = £300

PAT testing for 9 items at £5 each by Monnow electrical £45 plus VAT

**Resolved:** All items of expenditure approved

1. To receive and consider any other business (Items for noting only – matters requiring further consideration and will be listed for a future council meeting.)

Cllr Stark said that he was being asked by the residents of Llangua when the footbridge to the west of Llangua would be fixed. **Resolved:** The Clerk to investigate

Cllr Sheriden drew the Councils attention to a matter concerning dangerous dogs discussed at the March meeting. PC Sara Mason is not responsible for the matter and has told Cllr Sheriden to contact her colleague’ Chris. Six incidents have occurred and these resulted in 3 bites which have broken the skin. Chris, (A community police officer), says that he will try deal with the matter in a robust but diplomatic way. Cllr Sheriden will keep the council updated and the matter will be brought forward to the next meeting.

The Chairman thanked Mrs Jan Chatfield and Mrs Jane Moggridge for all their hard work behind the scenes. Mrs Chatfield and Mrs Moggridge then left the meeting.

1. Closed session of the Council to consider matters arising form the Internal audit and staffing matters.

The meeting was drawn to a close with a discussion regarding the next meeting in July. It was unanimously agreed to hold the meeting in the Town Hall.

The next meeting will be held in the Grosmont Town Hall with adherence to Covid-19 restrictions on Monday July 12th at 7.30pm

The meeting was closed at 21.37