**GROSMONT COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**CYNGOR CYMUNED GROSMONT**

**Chairman/Cadeirydd Clerk/Clerc**

**Councillor Lowri Wynn Morgan Mr R Wade**

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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE GROSMONT COMMUNITY COUNCIL HELD AT THE GROSMONT TOWN HALL AT 7:30 PM ON THE 13TH SEPTEMBER 2023**

Those attending the meeting: Councillors Jude Rogers, Witek Mintowt-Czyz, Janet Williams, Jamie Edwards and Margaret Barker, and the Clerk to the Council, Robert Wade. On the floor of the meeting were Susanna Jones, Peter Clarke, Russell James, David Probert and County Councillor David Hughes-Jones.

1. **To accept apologies for absence**

Councillor Jude Rogers acted as Chairman of the meeting. She said that Councillor Lowri Wynn Morgan had sent apologies for her absence.

1. **To disclose personal and pecuniary interests in items of business listed below**

It was agreed that these could be announced as and when the situation arose during the meeting.

1. **Discussion on matters arising from the Police Reports and police issues generally**

The reports for July and August 2023 had been circulated by e-mail previously. No points of significance were noted. Councillor Edwards confirmed his knowledge of the neighbour dispute noted in August, and said it was likely to continue.

1. **To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Meeting on the 12th July 2023**

The Minutes of the Meeting on the 12th July 2023 were approved as a correct record, Councillor Williams proposing and Councillor Edwards seconding.

1. **To consider matters arising from the Minutes of the Meeting on the 12th July 2023**
2. Page 2 – 5(a) – Councillor Rogers said that the “Henry” Hoover had been ordered, but the Clerk said it had been left outside a house nearby to the Chair’s home, and had disappeared. He had made a report to Amazon, requesting a refund, but had not yet had a response.
3. Page 2 – 5(b) – Councillor Rogers said she was unaware if the Chair had received a response from Cadw to her e-mail regarding the mowing of grass at the area around the Castle. This would be looked at again at the next meeting to see if it was still a cause for concern.
4. Page 3 – 9 – Councillor Rogers asked about the planning application regarding Whitney Villa for which details had been unavailable at the last meeting. It was too late for any representations to be made, in any event. It was generally agreed that the application presented no difficulties, but she said she would look into it anyway.
5. Page 4 – 10 – The Clerk said he had not spoken to HMRC as yet concerning the issue of Income Tax, but would do so tactfully. He anticipated being on the telephone for a while, which was always problematical.
6. Page 4 – 11 – the issue of the bridge at the bottom of Cupid’s Hill was still ongoing. The general expectation was that the County Council would not be in a position to set aside money for the necessary repairs. County Councillor Hughes-Jones said that he continued to apply what pressure he could on behalf of the Council. He understood that there had been a change to the scheme, but still no early action was expected.
7. **To consider the progress of the work relating to the Town Hall Project**
8. **To discuss the Partnership Agreement**
9. These two items were considered together. The most recent Highlight Report was accepted. From the floor, Peter Clarke said that the process of getting quotes for the building work was progressing – nine builders had already been approached. What was hoped for was a local builder who would be sympathetic to the aims of the project. Builders from other areas would probably feel that the project was too small for them. He hoped that work might start in March 2024. It was necessary for funders to approve the project, and integral to it was the Public Works loan which would enable the Council to contribute 20% of the cost. Councillor Rogers said there would need to be more public consultation. They were looking for a leaflet drop and an event to which the residents could be invited so that the process and the money implications could be explained. She said that there might be a need for an EGM to conclude arrangements for this.
10. It was proposed by Councillor Mintowt-Czyz (seconded by Councillor Rogers) that the draft agreement and appendices distributed by Councillor Rogers by e-mail on the 13th September should be accepted as the working documents to be used by the Council. It was agreed that, if at all possible, the documentation should be signed off by the October meeting, and that it should be a matter for the Agenda.

1. From the floor, David Probert asked whether the gates at the front of the Town Hall would be retained, as he felt those were part of the history of the village. Councillor Mintowt-Czyz said that everybody was anxious to preserve the history of the hall, and that this would be ensured (among others) by the Heritage Officer. Peter Clarke confirmed this, mentioning also the ceiling and windows, whilst pointing out that the aim of the project was to ensure that the village had a Town Hall that was capable of being used to its optimum extent. Councillor Rogers said that she would arrange to see Mr Probert to reassure him as to his concerns.
2. **To discuss Grosmont Online**

Councillor Rogers referred to her weekly submissions, which appeared on the Web-site.

1. **To receive items of correspondence**

The Clerk said that there were no items not already covered by other aspects of the Agenda.

1. **To consider matters relating to Planning.**

The Council considered one application:

DM/2023/01110 – St James’ Church, Llangua – various works including the repairs to the roof without which the roof might collapse. It was generally agreed that these works were vital, and should be agreed.

1. **To agree expenditure and other accounts matters**
2. The Clerk had previously distributed the Financial Statement, which showed a current bank balance of approximately £40,000. It was proposed by Councillor Barker and seconded by Councillor Rogers that Eloise Farr should be refunded the booking fee she had paid for the use of the Hall prior to her wedding because the shower was not working, and this was agreed. Councillor Jamie Edwards said he would ask Marcus to check the shower to see if it was an electrical issue.
3. The Council agreed the following payments:

Clerk’s salary £1354.17

HMRC £270.83

Paper, envelopes, travel £44.45

Cleaner £317.81

The Clerk also asked for formal confirmation of payments which had previously been agreed:

Coast 2 Coast £840

Lean £765

Henry Hoover £155

Henry bags £11.99

Toilet signs £23.34

All these matters were agreed.

1. **To discuss the issue of co-option of a Councillor to replace Councillor Bateman**

The resignation of Councillor Bateman because of business pressures was acknowledged with regret. It was agreed that a notification would be made as previously, asking for applicants for the vacant seat. The suggestion of Councillor Mintowt-Czyz, that it should be indicated that preference would be given to a candidate from Llangattock-Lingoed, was approved, whilst of course applications were welcome from residents throughout the ward.

1. **To discuss the state of the roads in and about Grosmont**

The continuing concern of the community over the state of the roads was expressed by several Councillors. There was no update. The Clerk referred to an e-mail he had received that day, confirming that the new 20 mph speed limit would be applied almost universally in the village, but that it would be relaxed to 30 mph at one or two points. Concern was expressed at the fact that one of those points was outside the Chantries, which seemed to present a danger. Councillor Mintowt-Czyz agreed to look into the issue of how the new order could be appealed.

14. **To discuss Footpaths**

No particular issues arose**.**

1. **To receive and consider any other business**
2. Councillor Rogers mentioned the issue of the use of the Hall for Yoga. Unfortunately, a recent session had been interrupted by people looking at the Hall, and this had been quickly followed by Alison Mann’s concern at the fact that she was required to book the Hall for three hours, whereas the yoga sessions took one hour on a Wednesday and one and a half hours on a Monday. She asked if this could be reduced by paying an hourly rate. The general feeling of the meeting was that, although payment by the hour was in principle going to be the appropriate way once the Hall had been renovated and the booking system was “up and running”, the fee needed to cover (e,g) the electricity charges. The Clerk said that Llantilio Pertholey Community Hall charged £15 *per hour*, and Peter Clarke said to general approval that the fee did need to be a commercial rate. On the other hand, Councillor Rogers said that she did not want the Yoga group to stop using the Hall – it was a valuable social resource for the village. She would confer with Alison about this.
3. On a related issue, Peter Clarke asked if Hall users could ensure that they locked the doors when they were inside upstairs. It was all too easy for undesirable elements to gain access unseen downstairs, and cause damage and/or theft.
4. Councillor Rogers said she had distributed a heating survey. For the most part, it seemed to show that the Council was doing what it could to limit expenditure. However, the Clerk was requested to do what he could to renegotiate the rates of pay for SSE, which could be improved.

**15. To decide the date of the next meeting**

This was agreed on an *ad hoc* basis to be **Tuesday, 10th October**, pending a final decision which would change Standing Orders permanently. It was agreed that the Council should meet at 7 p.m. to interview candidates for co-option onto the Council.