**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 9TH APRIL 2024**

Those attending the meeting: Councillors Jude Rogers (Vice-Chair), Witek Mintowt-Czyz, Jan Williams, Margie Barker and Nicholas Jones, and the Clerk Robert Wade. Also present were Peter Clarke and Russell James. In the absence of the Chair, Councillor Jude Rogers chaired the meeting

1. **To accept apologies for absence**

Councillors Lowri Wynn Morgan and Jamie Edwards sent their apologies. County Councillor David Hughes-Jones had also sent his apologies for being unable to attend. Councillor Rogers said that she would be recording the meeting purely as a tool to cross-check any corrections that might be required in the Minutes.

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

It was agreed that these could be raised as and when the need occurred during any of the ensuing discussions.

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

The Clerk had distributed the report. Councillor Rogers remarked on what appeared to be an increase in road accidents, which was an issue of concern. She asked if the Clerk could request the attendance of a representative of the police at the next meeting, and if he/she could be requested to comment on the issue of road accidents, especially by the Llangua part of the area, and this was seconded by Councillor Jones and agreed.

4. **To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the Meetings on the 20th March 2024**

Councillor Rogers said that, having consulted with the Chair, and in view of the e-mail correspondence with the Clerk and the issue of the accuracy of the Minutes, and the serious allegations made at the last meeting, and the shortness of time between that meeting and next the Council should postpone this item until the meeting in May, and that a private meeting – possibly by Zoom - should be held to discuss the matter. This was agreed. She wanted to apologise to everybody who might have been affected by the fact that the Minutes had not been published for several months.

**5**. **To consider matters arising from the Minutes of the Meeting on the 20th March 2024** It was agreed that, in view of the decision on the previous item, this item also would be postponed to the May meeting, save that (a) as per item 14(c) she said that thanks were due to Jane Moggridge for helping to sort out another door key to the hall for the key-safe, and (b) the letter of acceptance of the AHF offer of additional funding had been signed and was to be scanned through. Peter Clarke, Project Manager, asked that a copy of the letter should be sent to him.

**6.** T**o consider the progress of the work relating to the Town Hall Project, the Highlight Report and the Partnership Agreement**

(a) Peter Clarke, invited to address the meeting from the floor, said that he would wish the meeting to record that the Tender Process was being reconsidered in the light of the increases in funding, change to the Hill Valley Restoration builder and supplier. It was recorded that the NLF and AFH were content with the changes, on a proposal by Councillor Mintowt-Czyz, and seconded by Councillor Rogers.

(b) Peter Clarke said that there had been difficulty on the part of the architect, Sarah Browne, in liaising with the builder and especially in itemising the cost and the date of commencement of work. Councillor Rogers suggested that part of the problem might be that builders tended to be out and about, doing their work, and not able to view e-mails on a regular basis. Peter said that he could envisage there being some delay, and that the originally proposed August start might be postponed to September or even October. The Clerk said it was important to know because of people wanting to book the Hall. Peter agreed that customer management was important, and he would keep the Clerk updated.

(c) Councillor Rogers discussed the subject of the appointment of a solicitor for the purposes of dealing with the legal work for the grants. The Clerk confirmed that he had been requested by the Chair to request a CV for Caitlin Tew, and had complied with that request but had not yet received an answer. There was no urgency but we wanted to show we were getting on with it. The issue would be raised at the May meeting, and a formal appointment then made. The Clerk said that the entire firm of Gabbs had wide experience.

(d) Councillor Rogers referred to the party which was to be held on the 13th April. GF had great stuff planned. Dignitories were coming. Councillor Rogers wanted to encourage people to come. Councillor Mintowt-Czyz said that it was to be attended by David Davies MP and by Labour’s Parliamentary candidate, Catherine Fookes. Paul Matthews had been invited, but had given his apologies. Councillor Mintowt-Czyz said he was unsure if the High Sheriff would be there or Paul Murphy or a member of the Senedd, but a visit had been promised in the future from Peter Fox and another member of the Senedd who he believed was called Delyth. Councillor Rogers commented that this was a celebration for the village, and to have the presence of the two main characters from Westminster was an achievement. Representatives of the Monmouthshire Beacon and Abergavenny Chronicle would be there, and Councillor Jones said that Des Pugh would be there. Councillor Barker said that Rachel Tudor-Best would be there to take photographs.

7.  **To discuss an Application for Borrowing Permission**

This was a standing item but, as had been recognised at the previous meeting, it could really only be done once a specific capital project was to be put forward.

**8**. **To discuss Grosmont Online**

Councillor Rogers said that she had confirmed the order to the Media Agency in Abergavenny, and was due to have her first meeting with them the following day. She said she she said she would hold a meeting of the Grosmont Online sub-committee about a wishlist of things She felt it was important for Councillor Jones and Deb Neville to be invited to attend. Councillor Jones thanked Councillor Rogers for the speed with which she had progressed the matter. Peter Clarke asked that the Media Agency should be asked to confirm how credit cards could be processed by people booking the Hall through the Hub. Councillor Rogers said that all these would be attended to, and run through him.

**9. To receive items of correspondence**

The Clerk said there was nothing other than what would be referred to under other headings in the Minutes Councillor Rogers said she had had a conversation with a lady concerned with the Church magazine that covered Llangua and Ewyas Harold and Abbey Dore just over the border in Herefordshire and some reference had been made to difficulties in obtaining planning permission for the Llangua Church repairs. Jude had given her details in case Community Council support was needed.

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

The Clerk said there were no Planning matters to discuss. Councillor Rogers asked if there was any update with reference to the Post Office. There was no definite news, it seems.

**11. To agree expenditure and other accounts matters**

The Clerk requested and was given approval for the following payments:

Council Tax £735.90

The Cleaner £281.34 and £317.81

The Village shop £68.42

Paper £5.50

Travel £97.20

The financial statement was to be looked at at the May meeting. The Clerk had sent through a spread-sheet. He said that he would have been glad to print it out, but previous experience had suggested that this ran to 13 pages of A4 and would be totally unwieldy, so he could only suggest that Councillors should view it on line. A computer with a large screen should enable the spread- sheet to be viewed in one go. In answer to a query from Councillor Jones, he said that the spread- sheet would explain how the “Admin” sum was made up. He said he had tried to ensure that the figures were correct, but would be happy to field any questions by e-mail.

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

Councillor Rogers said that Councillor Edwards had given his apologies to the meeting and had not sent any update on road issues. She enquired if Brad Heal was still reporting pot-holes to Monmouthshire County Council. She said the situation generally nation-wide was awful, and they could not change that. The Clerk said he had sent in his “monthly moan” to Carl Touhig, and had yet to receive a response from Steve Baldwin to the proposed meeting to discuss the repairs to the bridge at Kentchurch, which the Council found disappointing. Councillor Rogers said that, while the roads were still generally bad, one particularly bad patch was at the bottom of the hill leading down to the bridge at Kentchurch, and she said she would send through the location on “What 3 Words” for the Clerk to write to the County Council. Councillor Jones said that there had been graffiti on the 20 mph sign which had been cleaned, although Peter Clarke said that it still left a residue of orange paint.

**13. To discuss Footpaths** There were no issues noted under the item. It was assumed that Andrew Stumpf was still doing his excellent work.

**14. To receive and consider any other business**

(a)Councillor Williams asked who was responsible for thebank not far from the pub which had trees which had so overgrown that in the recent high wind branches had fallen on a car. She thought there were other branches which might come down. There was some inconclusive discussion as to who might own the land and/or might be responsible for the maintenance of that particular spot. Russell James said that he believed the trees might have been planted for one of the Jubilees – possibly in 1981. The Clerk said he would write to Monmouthshire County Council to ascertain ownership and/or responsibility, but said it would help if he could have the What 3 Words location. Councillor Rogers said she would try to provide this. Councillor Williams asked if Councillor Edwards might perhaps remove some branches. Councillor Barker said she would ask him when she next saw him.

(b) Russell Jenkins asked if the Agendas and Minutes could be published. Councillor Rogers said there had been some difficulty lately, but the historical documents were on the web-site, going back to 2015

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

It was agreed that the next meeting should take place on the **14th May 2024 at 7:30 pm**. The Clerk reminded the Council that this would be the AGM. Councillor Rogers said that the Chair had indicated that she was in general available on a Tuesday, and it was provisionally suggested that the 7th May might be appropriate for the private meeting referred to previously, although that would be the least favourable night for him. It was agreed that this date could be firmed up by e-mail.