

Whitecastle Community Council

Cyngor Cymuned Castellgwyn

Les Taylor
Clerk to the council
2 Firs Road
Llanvapley
Abergavenny
NP7 8SL



Les Taylor
Clerc y cyngor
2 Heol y Pinwydd
Llanfable
Y Fenni
NP7 8SL

Web: whitecastlecommunitycouncil.co.uk
email: whitecastlecommunitycouncil@gmail.com

Minutes of the Council Meeting 18 June 2026 7.00pm at Penrhos Church

Present: Cllr. D. Astill-Parsons (Chair), Cllr. J. Biggs, Cllr. C. Lewis,
In attendance : L. Taylor (Clerk), County Cllr. I. Chandler

Public Speaking

The Chair welcomed members of the public to the meeting and invited residents to raise their concerns with the Council. In view of the large number of residents in attendance, it was agreed to extend the allotted public speaking time. The Chair reminded those present that public participation is permitted only at the beginning of the meeting and that residents may not speak while Council business is being conducted.

Residents from the Rockfield and St Maughans ward spoke to give their views on application DM/2026/00594 7 June 2026 Fast Track Full Planning Permission Change of use of residential property and outbuildings to a school. Rowancroft.

Residents from Penrhos and Llanvihangel-ystern-llewern spoke to give their views on application DM/2025/01590 4 June 2026 Erection of steel framed agricultural-style building for stabling on land Opposite Commin, Penrhos Farm To Beiliau Wood, Penrhos NP15 2LQ

The Chair thanked everyone for their comments and explained that members would take the views into consideration when preparing its response to the two consultations.

1. To accept apologies for absence.

Resolution: To accept written apologies from Cllr. N. Graham and Cllr. R. Metters
Proposed by Cllr. D. Astill-Parsons (Chair) and seconded by Cllr. J. Biggs.

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

It was agreed to allow members to disclose interests as they arise.

3. Matters arising from the previous meetings,

The Clerk reported that most matters arising from the previous meeting had been followed up and are to be discussed as part of the agenda.

4. To consider correspondence.

Members of the council have been updated on a number items since the last meeting including:

- Monmouthshire Litter Working Group
- MCC AI plans
- The Borderlands Festival in Monmouth 2027

5. Chair's Report

The Chair reported that she had been canvassing for new members of the council without any success.

6. Councillor ward matters

Cllr. Graham reported before the meeting that the village planter in Llantilio was now in place and the two for Tal-y-coed are now ready for planting up.

7. Allowance Policy for members

The Clerk presented a policy to cover allowances paid to members.

Resolution: To approve the Members' Allowance Policy.

Proposed by Cllr. D. Astill-Parsons (Chair) and seconded by Cllr. J. Biggs

The Chair signed and dated the policy document.

8. County Councillor's report

No relevant issues in the area.

9. Clerk's Report

- The Clerk asked members to approve as a correct record the minutes of the previous meetings held on 14 May 2026..

Resolution: To approve the two sets of Minutes.

Proposed by Cllr. D. Astill-Parsons (Chair) and seconded by Cllr. C. Lewis.

The Chair signed and dated the minutes.

- The Clerk reported that he represented the Community Council at a Monmouthshire County Council Culture Forum meeting in County Hall on 4 June. The aim of the forum is to support the development and implementation of the County Council's Culture Strategy. The Clerk has been accepted as a member of forum and will attend a follow meeting on 22 June.
- The council's Insurance cover has been renewed after the policy expired on 10 June. The policy is with Ecclesiastical Insurance.
- A notice Of Vacancy In Office Of Councillor in Rockfield and St Maughans was posted on 20 May. The council has not received a request for an election to fill the vacancies and will seek to co-opt members.
- One Voice Wales has published a number of practice development notes. These have been circulated to members.
- The Clerk notified members that the appointment of officers was not covered at the Annual meeting and proposed doing so in this meeting.

Resolution: To appoint the following to represent the council:

- Cllr. Lewis and Biggs as representatives on the Community Green Energy Advisory Group.
- Cllr. Astill-Parsons as representative on the Governing Body of Cross Ash Primary School.
- Cllr. Graham as representative on the Village Life Community Group.
- The Clerk as representative on the MCC Cultural Forum.

Proposed by Cllr. D. Astill-Parsons (Chair) and seconded by Cllr. J. Biggs

10. Community Groups

- The Chair suggested holding a second Community Open Evening in October. The format of the meeting needs to be discussed to enable it to build on the success of last year's event. The Chair and the Clerk offered to put together a plan for discussion at the next meeting.
- The Clerk met with representatives from Village Life at Penrhos Farmhouse on 8 June to decide on the position of the defibrillator which was donated when Bulmers sold the site. The Council would like to thank residents of Penrhos Farmhouse for their help and support.
- A Community Task Day was held on 4 June. The event was organised by Monlife and Whitecastle Community Council. The event was very successful and it was decided to

establish a Whitecastle Footpath Volunteer Maintenance Group. The first meeting of the group will be on Wednesday 1 July 10:00am at Llantilio Church Car Park.

- The Clerk reported on efforts to secure funding towards the maintenance costs of the public toilets at Llanvihangel-ystern-llewern and Llantilio Crossenny Churches. While Monmouthshire County Council has included the facilities on the official map of public toilets in Wales, it is unable to provide financial support for their ongoing maintenance. The Clerk has also approached the Offa's Dyke Association and the Welsh Government, but neither organisation is able to offer funding. Correspondence from the relevant Welsh Government Minister suggested that future support for such facilities could potentially be funded through the introduction of a tourism levy in Monmouthshire. However, Cllr. Chandler noted that the introduction of a tourism levy in the county is considered unlikely at present.
- Cllr. Lewis reported on a meeting with a member of the Llantilio Crossenny Church Committee regarding the cost of restoring the War Memorial. He suggested that the Community Council support the project by providing a grant towards the restoration costs, with the remaining funding to be sought through a grant application to the Community Green Energy Advisory Group. The Council recognises the important role it can play in helping to ensure that war memorials within the community are properly maintained. Members agreed to consider a grant application once confirmation has been received that the additional funding is in place. The Clerk suggested that maintenance of war memorials could be facilitated by the establishment of a community group which would work in partnership with the Community Council.
- Llanfaenor – a resident of Llanfaenor has raised the issue of the village green. The Clerk and the Chair agreed to visit the site to progress the matter.

11. Audit update

A notice informing electors of their rights to inspect the Council's accounts has been published and the inspection period will run from 6 July to 31 July.

12. To discuss the allocation of Rockfield flood relief funds.

Application forms were distributed to four properties in Rockfield using information provided by Monmouthshire County Council.

Two applications were received. It was decided to provide assistance to each residential property and to give an additional amount to the property which was also a business.

13. To consider planning matters

DM/2026/00619 15 May 2026 Fast Track Householder Proposed two storey side extension, rear single storey extension to provide larger kitchen dining area with larger master bedroom over and associated works. **Orchard Cottage** Rockfield Road Rockfield NP25 5SY.

The Council did not respond to the consultation.

DM/2026/00634 22 May 2026 Householder Demolish existing garage and construct new two storey extension to create self contained ancillary accommodation. **Bryngoleu Maypole** NP25 5QG

The Council responded to the consultation and raised no objection in principle to the application. The Council's view is that, due to the property's position and existing screening, the extension is unlikely to detract from the character of the area and recommends approval.

DM/2025/01590 4 June 2026 Erection of steel framed agricultural-style building for stabling and all weather horse arena and change of use of field to equestrian use including new entrance on to road. Land Opposite Commin, Penrhos Farm To Beiliau Wood, Penrhos NP15 2LQ

The Community Council recommends refusal of the application and requests that, if officers consider it acceptable, it be referred to the County Council's Planning Committee for

determination. The proposal is objected to due to landscape and visual harm, excessive and unjustified scale, unresolved drainage concerns, highway safety issues, and ecological impacts resulting from habitat loss and increased rural disturbance.

DM/2026/00594 7 June 2026 Fast Track Full Planning Permission for change of use of residential property and outbuildings as an extension to the existing school at Llangattock-Vibon-Avel.

Rowancroft B4233 The Hendre The Hendre NP25 5HH

The Community Council recommends refusal of the application and requests that, if officers consider it acceptable, it be referred to the County Council's Planning Committee for determination. Following detailed consideration and representations from local residents, the Council concluded that concerns over highway safety, impacts on the adjacent Hendre Conservation Area, insufficient supporting information, drainage and environmental risks, the suitability of the site for a school, and the applicant's previous planning compliance issues collectively justify refusal of the proposal.

DM/2026/00689 5 June 2026 Mod or Removal of Condition Modification of condition no.4 (agricultural occupancy condition) of planning consent DC/2011/00979

Bryn Edrych Farm Hendre Home Farm To Upper Crwys The Hendre NP25 5NL

The Community Council objects to the application to remove the agricultural occupancy condition. The dwelling was originally approved as an exception to countryside housing policies to meet a specific need for agricultural worker accommodation. It believes removing the condition would undermine that purpose, weaken the effectiveness of occupancy restrictions, risk encouraging speculative countryside development, and therefore recommends that the application be refused.

14. To consider highways matters

- MCC Highways responded to a request for a review of the Jet Spraying trial - "The operation was set up on a "find and fix" basis and although the process was productive, the area we had to cover and the number of defects were challenging so the progress across the area as a whole was not as extensive".
Members requested the Head of Highways, Carl Touhig, to attend a future meeting to listen to residents' continuing concerns.
- The request for a 30mph sign in Tal-y-coed has been progressed.
- The request for a new No HGV road sign in The Hendre on Llanvolda Lane has been completed.
- Cllr. Biggs commented on the lack of progress on major works in the community.
- Cllr. Chandler reported that he had forwarded an extensive list of problems with road signs in Llantilio to MCC.

15. To discuss churchyard matters.

Llangattock-Vibon-Avel

- The first two cuts of the season have been completed.
- Residents adjacent to the churchyard have asked the Council to prune a yew tree inside the churchyard. The Council agreed to do the work provided the residents make a contribution of £375 towards the associated costs. Members were opposed to contributing to the removal of a spruce tree outside the churchyard.
- The quotation for the new tarmac section of the footpath to the war memorial has not been received.

Llanvihangel-ystern-llewern

- No cutting until August to preserve biodiversity.

16. To discuss residents' concerns about water supply and maintenance of the network.

Members were updated on the current situation. The main leak has been fixed following a request from the council. Problems still persist and Welsh Water are aware of residents concerns.

17. To consider policing matters.

The May report has been circulated and put on the website.

18. To consider the use of the council's website and community council noticeboards.

- The change to .gov.uk domain name is still being progressed.
- The location of a new Llantilio Noticeboard was discussed. Cllr. Astill-Parsons suggested outside the pub, the church or Hostry House. None of these were deemed to be suitable. Cllr. Lewis suggested the corner opposite Hostry House as a potential site.

19. To consider financial matters.

- A set of financial reports had been circulated before the meeting
- The Clerk presented a list of payments for approval.

Resolution: to approve the payments and to the financial reports.

Proposed by Cllr. D. Astill-Parsons (Chair) and seconded by Cllr. C. Lewis.

L Taylor	Clerk services and expenses May 2026	£590.36
Marion Ashton	Purchase of plants and materials for Llantilio planter	£58.91
Nigel Graham	Purchase of materials for Tal-y-coed planters	£150.17
Nettles to Petals	Maintenance of Llanvihangel-ystern-llewern Churchyard May 26	£140.00
Clear Insurance Management Limited	Annual Council insurance from 10 June 26	£974.50
Audit Wales	Llangattock-Vibon-Avel Community Council 2021/22 Audit Fees	£270.00
Cllr. John Biggs	Annual Extra Costs and Office Consumables payment	£208.00
Cllr. Astill-Parsons	Annual Extra Costs and Office Consumables payment	£208.00
Cllr. Duncan	Annual Extra Costs and Office Consumables payment	£208.00
Cllr. Metters	Annual Extra Costs and Office Consumables payment	£208.00
Cllr. Graham	Annual Extra Costs and Office Consumables payment	£208.00
Mrs J Riou	Flooding relief support following Storm Claudia November 2025	£2,000.00
A. E. Bevan	Flooding relief support following Storm Claudia November 2025	£1,000.00

- Banking arrangements. The Clerk reported that he has been able to gain access to online banking but has had difficulties with making changes to the mandate.

20. Date of the next meeting.

- 16 July at the Grange Project
- A list of dates for meetings up to May 2027 was circulated and put on the website.

Meeting finished at 9.15pm