



Representing and serving the communities of:

Catbrook, Llanishen, Penallt, The Narth,
Trellech, Trellech Grange and Whitebrook

 admin@trellechunited-cc.gov.uk

 07895 449756



www.trellechunited-cc.gov.uk

Draft Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Trellech United Community Council of Monday 16th June 2025, which commenced at 7:00pm via Zoom video conferencing.

All Minutes are draft until the following meeting when agreed.

A. Poulter	Councillor	Attended	R. Decker-Thomas	Chair	Attended
G. Weston	Councillor	Attended	L. Wakerley	Vice Chair	Attended
S. Geddes	Councillor	Attended	P Ash	Councillor	Attended
D. May	Councillor	Attended	S. Roderick	Councillor	Attended from 7.30
E. Webb	Councillor	Absent	K. Darlow	Councillor	Absent
N. Scarr	Councillor	Attended			
R John	C. Councillor	Attended via zoom 7.10-7.30	J McKenna	C. Councillor	Attended 7.10-7.30
S Baker	Clerk	Attended	H. Rouse	RFO	Attended-till 8.50

1. APOLOGIES -noted
2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST -Cllr Weston, May, Scarr and Ash all declared an interest in the Village Hall Grants discussion as all are involved with their local village halls. Cllr Ash confirmed that Whitebrook Village Hall has no requirement for a TUCC Appointed Trustee.
3. PUBLIC FORUM -n/a
4. MINUTES It was Resolved to approve the minutes of June OM Meeting 16/6/2025 Draft-Minutes-june-16th-2025-v0 3.pdf

5. COUNTY COUNCILLOR UPDATE (R John and J McKenna) (after Finance 6.2)

Both County Councillors provided an update on local issues including

- The ongoing Sunnyside planning application has been refused, but they may still appeal the MCC decision.
- Cllr Decker-Thomas raised the issue of the state of the pavement in Trellech that needs to be looked into further and the length of time Pobl homes has available vacant homes empty in Trellech with the shortage of affordable rental homes locally.
- A resident has raised the issues of overgrown verges in and around The North and has been advised to report it via My Monmouthshire app and with County Councillors.
- The surface of the Quabb Lane bridleway is ongoing and a MCC site visit is planned.
- The Clerk will need an exact location of what3words, if fallen livestock is to be collected from TUCC owned land, if causing a nuisance.
- The issue around the drainage and run off water in Llanishen is ongoing, MCC has jetted the local drains and discovered a collapsed culvert under the Garage which is being repaired.
- MCC is introducing changes to the local Home to School Transport Policy to statutory guidance. Due to the lack of safe local walking routes (lack of pavements) this is not thought to affect most of the children in the local rural area.
- County Councillors have received enquiries from residents in Llanishen re. tourism tax. MCC have ruled this out at least until 2027.

6. FINANCE

1. To note bank balances at 30/06/2025:

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| a. Account 1 | £41,785.56 (£710 received for VAT Reclaim 24/25) |
| b. Account 2 | £11,760.62 |
| c. Total | £53,546.18 |

2. The below payment schedule for July 2025 was **Approved** as below to include Approval of the RFO additional hours:

Payee	Details	Amount	Power to Pay	Budget
Merlin Environmental	Dog waste collection	£210.22	PHA1875 s164 (LGA1972 sched 14, power 27)	Dog Waste
Salaries inc. tax/NI	Salaries based on new contracted hours	£1,173.28	LGA1972 s111	Salaries
RFO	Overtime of 6hrs	£95.04	LGA1972 s111	Salaries
HMRC PAYE	Salaries	Inc above TBC	LGA1972 s111	Salaries
Catherine Williams	Payroll	£36.00	LGA1972 s111	Salaries
Barclaycard	Smarty Phones, new RFO Printer & Phone	£376.09	LGA1972 s111	Office Expenses
Ginkgo Tree Care	Penallt Tree reduction	£650		Biodiversity/Trees

Whitebrook Village Hall	New Ramp/landscaping	£3,000		Village Hall Grants
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3. **To note:**

RFO printer and mobile phone both needed replacing as both were purchased in 2017 & 2019, both included in the Barclaycard Statement above. RFO has disposed of the old printer and will update the asset register accordingly.

Any payments received following the publication of the formal agenda or any expected payments to be discussed here.

The CloudNext payment will automatically renewed via the RFO Barclaycard of £119.98, and will be approved in the September meeting (website hosting).

Payment Authorisation Schedule to be confirmed:

- July Cllr Scarr & Cllr Wakerley
- August Chair & Cllr Wakerley (no meeting)
- September Cllr Poulter & Cllr Wakerley

4. **External Audit Document for Approval**

The RFO sent around the External Audit Document for review and approval, submission due by 8th August, all other information has been collated.

Training Plan required for final submission-see later in the Agenda.

It was **Resolved** to **Approve** the External Audit documentation provided by the RFO for submission.

5. **Bank Reconciliations for 2025-2026**

First quarter of bank reconciliations will be undertaken later in July 2025 with Cllr Geddes and the RFO.

6. **Pension Scheme**

TUCC has no pension scheme set up and this has been suggested by Catherine Williams our payroll provider. In 2024, it was agreed to be part of the Torfaen Borough Council Pension Scheme but this was not progressed. A pension scheme needs to be set up, even if not used.

It was **Resolved** for the Clerk to investigate what the Pension options are, (including a LGPS) and to return to the September meeting with the options.

7. **Barclaycard & Unity Bank Mandate**

Barclaycard application approved for Susan Baker, new card received.

RFO has completed the Application Forms for making changes to the Unity Bank Account, this includes removing past individuals, adding Susan Baker for online banking as a back-up, adding Sallie Roderick as a payment authoriser, and making Hayley Rouse the Administrator.

It was **Resolved** for the RFO to liaise with Cllr Decker Thomas and Cllr Poulter to sign the forms and make the agreed updates.

8. Penallt Recreational Ground Charity (Babington Meadow)

The RFO has completed the Application Forms for adding an additional savings account to operate on behalf of the Charity as an interim measure, due to banking costs.

It was **Resolved** for the RFO to liaise with banking signatories to confirm the opening of the free account.

A separate Insurance policy is required and a quote has been requested.

9. MCC Mowing Schedule for information

Detailed breakdown as follows:

Pen Y Fan – 2 cuts annually (July and Winter) and QTRA (tree assessments) - £403.02

Catbrook Village green – 7 cuts annually and QTRA £307.38

Babington Meadows – 14 cuts (regular round) annual and bi annual cuts, hedge cutting annually, QTRA annually and Play inspection annually - £1,729.12

Llanishen Green – 14 cuts - £380.78

Total £2,820.30

Cllr Ash volunteered to strim near the phone box defibrillator in New Mills.

It was **Resolved** for the Clerk to confirm the status of Whitebrook Green with MCC Countryside Services (David Cox), which was an error and has been removed from our list.

10. Wells Wood

Thanks was given to Cllr Weston for the site visits to Wells Wood with the different arborists for quotes.

It was **Resolved** to accept the competitive quote for Wells Wood from Scott Walker out of the three quotes received.

11. Village Hall Maintenance Grant Funding Policy

A long discussion was had between Councillors about the different options and values. TUCC does not have the funding to cover both the usual £500 towards utilities and all of the business rates bills for all village halls in the TUCC area alongside a fund to support individual project grant requests by community groups and village halls. Business Rates have increased significantly due to revaluations by the VOA and the decision by MCC not to give 100% rate relief to Village Halls.

A simple solution was needed but with regard to the TUCC budget constraints and impact on available funds to other organisations and schemes for this financial year.

It was **Resolved** to set aside £5,000 to provide a contribution to running costs for village halls (an increase from £2,500) and for the Clerk to update the Village Hall Maintenance Grant Funding Policy for this financial year, to include

a) The grant being towards 'Running Costs', which can include

- Insurance
- Business Rates
- Electricity
- Gas
- Oil
- Water

- Internet
- Professional Fees/Licences.

b) The grant to be one payment annually and to increase proportionally as follows for a total budget of £5,000 (from £2,500)

- The North Village Hall £900
- Llanishen Village Hall £900
- Catbrook Village Hall £900
- Whitebrook Village Hall £750
- Pelham Hall £1,550.

c) An annual review of the values allocated will be undertaken as part of the budget setting process and available funds.

d) All Halls will have to formally apply for the funding each year for consideration at an agreed set OM, with the provision of VH accounts and explanation of financial reserves position for transparency.

It was **Resolved** for the Clerk to write to MCC and County Councillors Richard John and Jayne McKenna raising concerns as to the values of Village Hall rates and the impact on the rural communities.

The Clerk agreed to contact each village hall and ask for a copy of their rates bill for this year (2025/26) to aid the budget setting process for next year.

It was **Resolved** for the RFO to present the up-to-date budget/spend and reserves position at the September OM to ensure that plans are realistic and funds are available to use.

12. Grant Applications

An application from Catbrook Village Hall is expected to come to September meeting for approval.

TUCC has been notified of expected Grant applications from The North Footpath Group and the North Village Hall.

7. Forward Plan and Report

This is being drafted.

8. Updated Standing Orders

These are being reviewed

9. Training Plan

It was Resolved to agree the Training Plan for the website and External Auditors.

10. PLANNING & PLANNING UPDATES/ENFORCEMENT

Any planning application received between the issuing of the Agenda and the meeting may still be considered at the OM.

Fast Track applications received between OMs will be devolved to the Clerk to provide a response on behalf of TUCC.

New Planning Applications

1. **DM/2025/00773** Application for a new private treatment plant to replace old connection to existing septic tank, and installation of associated foul drainage pipes. Holly Tree Cottage, School Road, The Narth, Monmouth, Monmouthshire NP25 4QG.
It was **Resolved** to respond as Neutral.
2. **DM/2025/00837** Planning Permission Change of use from a holiday let to a permanent residential dwelling (Use Class C3) Location: The Chicken Shed Holiday Let, Park House Road, Parkhouse Trellech Monmouthshire NP25 4PU.
 - It was **Resolved** to recommend Refusal and if approved to recommend withdrawal of permitted development rights. There is considerable history to this application, which is well documented on the MCC Planning Portal under applications - DC/2011/00823, DC/2016/01159, DC/2016/01440. The holiday cottage is thought to be well used, having a positive impact on the rural economy. It is also providing jobs for people who service the property as a holiday let (cleaning, laundry, etc). The minutes from the Planning Committee on 7th February 2017, where the granting of planning permission for the conversion was finalised, state that it was resolved that condition 3 'The development shall be occupied as holiday accommodation only and shall not be occupied as a person's sole or main place of residence or by any persons exceeding a period of 28 days in any calendar year' should be amended 'To ensure that the property is occupied as holiday accommodation only in perpetuity.' This would suggest that the terms of the planning cannot be changed. The representation at the planning meeting on 7th Feb 2017 from the owner was that the building had been designed specifically to be suitable as a holiday let and that 'a substantial holiday letting business had been established'. Concerns have been raised that considerable works may be required to make the building useable as a permanent residence e.g. the construction of a garage and outbuildings and that the existence of the 2 acres of land may encourage future significant development of the building and land with adverse impacts on the environment and bio-diversity particularly as this land backs on to a SSSI.
3. **DM/2025/00848** Proposed side, rear and projecting bay window extensions. Applecross, Ceciliford, Broadstone, Trellech Monmouthshire NP25 4PT.
It was **Resolved** to recommend Approval, noting the public comment of previous development and different sized gardens on the plans submitted
4. **DM/2025/00866** Single storey detached garage and studio. Dickensfield, Beacon Hill Road, Pen Y Fan, The Narth Monmouthshire NP25 4Q.
It was **Resolved** to recommend Approval
5. **DM/2025/00911** New single storey sun room to side (street facing) elevation and new porch to front elevation and associated works to include removal of existing uPVC conservatory. Hillside Farm Ceciliford Broadstone Trellech Monmouthshire NP25 4QF
It was **Resolved** to recommend Approval

Planning Updates/Enforcement/Licensing

6. Email received about ongoing Catbrook planning breach-enforcement DM/2024/00712, which has been passed to County Councillors to escalate.

7. Ongoing Pen Y Fan Village Green Complaint. Pen Y Fan Green is not registered as a Village Green but is Common Land so is subject to similar protections with regard to driving across. The complainant has stated that MCC have responded stating that enforcement action is not required.

It was **Resolved** for the Clerk to write back to the Complainant and the householder driving across the Pen Y Fan Common Land.

11. REPORTS & STANDING ITEMS

1. Police Monthly report has been circulated.
2. **Rights of Way Group.** (Cllr May, Cllr Wakerley, Cllr Ash and Cllr Roderick)
ROW group to arrange next meeting for escalation of issues, in particular the reclassification of green lanes in the area that are now an off-road motorbike tourist destination.
Catbrook has set up a Footpath Group of volunteers.
The Tracks and Trails Group have not met as they are still waiting the condition report.
The Newland Parish Council Chair will be invited to be an Observer at the Wye Valley Villages Together Group, which is made up of Welsh Community Councils.
Both Cllr May and Cllr Wakerley have submitted information to the APPG for Outdoor Recreation and Access to Nature consultation as individuals as tight deadlines meant it was not possible to send a TUCC response. This consultation was communicated to councils via GLEAM.
Cllr Wakerley proposed that TUCC apply to become a member of GLEAM as have the Wye Valley community Council.
It was **Resolved** for the Clerk to apply for APP GLEAM membership (Green Lanes) at a cost of £15.
3. **Land Holdings/Biodiversity Group** (Cllr Decker-Thomas, Cllr Wakerley, Cllr Roderick and Cllr Weston)
 - a) The following are on the list for tree surveys/works. MCC will provide free tree surveys for those pieces of land that they maintain on our behalf. Further Tree management works are expected at a cost yet to be determined.

Penallt Green Tree	Cllr May	Crown reduction work completed
Llanishen Village Green	Cllr Weston	MCC mow-free Tree survey
Pen-Y-Fan Green	Cllr Ash	Issues raised, MCC mow, free tree survey.
Babington Meadow	Penallt Councillors	MCC mow, free tree survey.
Catbrook Green	Cllr Wakerley	As above
Wells Wood	Cllr Weston	3 Site visit completed

12. COMMUNITY COUNCILLOR UPDATES

A request has been received for access to create permissive footpath from Penallt Village Green, removing part of the stone wall and replacing with a pedestrian gate by Gwent Wildlife Trust.

After some discussion it was **Resolved** to allow the access, providing that TUCC is not liable for any installation or maintenance costs in any regard, now or in the future. The revised route is allowed for improved access to the meadow and for the safety of walkers. All walling stone removed must be stacked neatly against the existing wall and not removed. GWT should check with MCC the legalities of the scheme. As the owner of Penallt Green, we retain the right to withdraw the access to this land at any time, should we deem it necessary.

Cllr Ash thanked TUCC for the grant funding for the improvements to landscaping of Whitebrook Village Hall, which will have a grand opening on 25th August where tea and cakes will be offered. All TUCC Councillors and staff are invited.

13. TUCC SPECIFIC CORRESPONDENCE-

Correspondence is forwarded to Councillors upon receipt, or added to the Agenda for discussion. Specific correspondence is recorded below.

- Thankyou letter from Wales Air Ambulance has been shared.
- Agenda for Wye Valley Consortium shared and draft minutes
- The Clerk has requested the individual Ward electoral roles from MCC Amy Gullick.
- Further correspondence on Pen Y Fan Green.
- APPG GLEAM correspondence.

14. CLERK UPDATE

1. All Clerk actions arising from the June OM have been completed.
2. Priority is being given to the Grants Policy and Annual Report/Forward Plan.

FORWARD LOOK

September 2025

Annual Report & Forward Plan for approval.

Grants Policy Updates

Councillor Allowances

Risk Register

Finance and Governance Toolkit GAP Analysis

Biodiversity (reserves)

Playparks (reserves)

Reserves and Financial Position

Pension Scheme

Members Allowances

Beyond

Review of current policies

Next Meeting will be 15 September 2025 via zoom and in person at Pelham Hall at 7pm.

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The meeting closed at 9.50pm.

Signature of Chair:

Date: