



Representing and serving the communities of:

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

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Draft Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Trellech United Community Council of Monday 15th September 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 via zoom	P Ash	Councillor	Attended via zoom
D. May	Councillor	Attended	S. Roderick	Councillor	Apologies
E. Webb	Councillor	Attended via zoom	K. Darlow	Councillor	Apologies
N. Scarr	Councillor	Attended			
R John	C. Councillor	Attended till 7.30	J McKenna	C. Councillor	Attended till 7.30
S Baker	Clerk	Attended	H. Rouse	RFO	Apologies

1. APOLOGIES -noted
2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST -None
3. PUBLIC FORUM -A member of the public attended, but did not identify themselves. A prospective Community Councillor attended as an Observer.
4. MINUTES It was Resolved to approve the minutes of July OM Meeting Draft-Minutes-july-21st-2025-OM-VO 1.pdf

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

Both County Councillors reported on the main issues affecting our wards below.

- New Head of MCC Planning has been appointed as Andrew Jones.
- Village Halls rate relief currently stands at 88%, not all have applied for all reliefs.
- Issues with water quality around Lone Lane, a public meeting is being held 2/10/2025.
- The Chair raised the issue of water quality in Roman Way, Trellech.
- Monmouth Bridges Centre is disputing their lease costs
- The drainage report for Quab Lane is outstanding, resurfacing has been agreed.
- The church wall in Trellech is being damaged by vehicles and bollards have been requested from Highways
- Llanishen pub is still suffering flooding/drainage issues, the cause of which is still unclear

6. FINANCE

- To note bank balances at 31/08/2025:
 - Account 1 £50,036.63 (Precept Payment of £15,462 received in August)
 - Account 2 £11,760.62
 - **Total** **£61,797.25**
- It was **Resolved** to approve the payment schedule for September 2025 as below:

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 NJC Rates	£1,209.46	LGA1972 s111	Salaries
Back pay	New NJC Rates of pay	£173.16	LGA1972 s111	Salaries
HMRC PAYE	Salaries	Inc above TBC	LGA1972 s111	Salaries
Catherine Williams	Payroll	£108.00	LGA1972 s111	Salaries
Barclaycard- Updated value to include the annual payment.	Smarty Phones, CloudNext Hosting	£129.98	LGA1972 s111	Office Expenses
Dennis Walker	Tree Works	£1,380.00		

- **To note:**
Any payments received following the publication of the formal agenda or any expected payments to be discussed here.

Payment Authorisation Schedule is confirmed as:

- September Cllr Poulter & Cllr Wakerley
- October Cllr Wakerley & Cllr Scarr
- November Cllr Wakerley & Cllr Decker-Thomas

- **RFO email dated 18th August 2025 Financial Update and August Payment Approvals**

It was **Resolved** to approve the RFO update via email to all Councillors recording the payments that were processed, the new Salary Scales, back pay and Annual Return.

- External Audit submitted on Thursday 24th July 2025.
- NJC Pay rates received for 2025-2026 shared. The RFO calculated back pay for Clerk & RFO as £173.16 in total and the overall cost implications for 2025/26 are £426.42.
- Pension Regulator information has not been kept up to date, a cost from Catherine Williams of £45 + VAT has been instructed so we are legally compliant.
- Bank reconciliations completed on 31st July for first financial quarter of 2025-2026.
- Payments made since July OM:
- GLEAM Membership £15 paid on 29th July 2025
- Payments processed in August 2025 :
Merlin £210.22
Catherine Williams £36.00
Salaries & HMRC £1,173.28

- **Pension Scheme**

Pension Scheme to be decided. There are 2 options, the LGPS with Torfaen Borough Council or NEST. Summary as follows:

NEST	Employer Contribution 3%, Employee Contribution 5% Set Up Cost £250. Estimated Annual Cost to TUCC £419
LGPS	Employer Contribution 22%, Employee Contribution 5.5% Requires paperwork and resolution from Council Estimated Annual Cost to TUCC £3,071

It was **Resolved** to set up a Nest Pension Scheme, and the RFO will instruct Catherine Williams to set this up with an initial cost of £250. The employer contribution with the Nest scheme can be varied upwards if required.

- **Unity Bank Mandate**

Unity Bank Forms are with Rosemary and Alan for signature, update to be provided.

- **Penallt Recreational Ground Charity (Babington Meadow)**

RFO contacted our Internal Auditors for some advice regarding the charity bank account, and he has confirmed it needs to be a separate bank account.

A separate Insurance policy is required and a quote has been requested and is expected to be about £2-300.

The Annual Return for Penallt Recreational Ground Charity was submitted on 18th August 2025, based on the shared account summary, previously approved.

Cllr Scarr stated that Art in Penallt planned to give some of the funds raised towards the upkeep of the meadow. She is in contact with the Robertsons and will arrange closure of the old account. It was **Resolved** to open a new Unity Current Account in the name of the Charity, with the same signatories and processes as the TUCC account.

It was **Resolved** that Funds from Art in Penallt should be paid into the new Charity Bank Account, once operational.

- **Wells Wood**-Work has been completed and invoiced-see payment list.
- **Village Hall Maintenance Grant Funding Policy**
To approve the new policy, which has been shared and discuss the forthcoming meeting agenda on 22/9/2025 at 7.30pm.
It was **Resolved** to approve the policy, subject to a couple of minor amendments.
- **RFO Calendar** -The RFO calendar for financial actions was noted.
- **Financial Report Actual v Budget & Projected Expenditure and Reserves.**
Cllr Scarr raised questions as to the clarity of financial reporting and reserves. As the RFO was not present, Cllr Wakerley answered most of the queries, but these will be discussed further at the next Finance Working Group and by the RFO via email. The level of reserves has decreased as planned, as they have been too high in the past.
It was **Resolved** to note the financial reports and review again in October after the finance working group has met.
- **Council to consider Financial Objectives for 2026-2027**
Council to highlight any objectives for the next financial year to assist with forthcoming budget setting.
It was **Resolved** to include and prioritise the following in the next FY and for all Councillors to review and consider their Wards needs.
 - To keep Babington Meadow transactions separate from TUCC (insurance, mowing etc).
 - Broadstone playpark.
 - Assets-phone boxes.
 - To expect further Tree works following MCC reports.
- **Updated Standing Orders**
It was **Resolved** to approve the updated Standing Orders which have been reviewed by the Clerk alongside the Chair and Vice Chair, subject to a few minor amendments.
- **Grant Applications**
It was **Resolved** to approve the North & District Footpath Group Grant Application for the Tenth Anniversary Project of £1,000.

It was **Resolved** to approve the Catbrook Village Hall grant application for remedial drainage works of £1,660.

- **Members Allowances**

The Statement of Payments for 2025-2026 has been shared and the RFO will submit the figures to the IRPW and be published on the website at the end of September 2025.

It was **Resolved** to approve the Statement of Payments for Members, noting that Cllr Darlow has waived her payment, Cllr Ash needs to be added and a minor amendment is needed to the name of Cllr Geddes.

7. Forward Plan and Report-This is being drafted.

8. 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-devolved to the Clerk during August

1. **DM/2025/00947** :The proposal is split into 2 phases. Phase 1 is the demolition of the existing conservatory and the erection of a new single storey ground floor side extension; the demolition of the existing rear porch to be replaced with a new ground floor infill extension. Phase 2 is a ground floor single storey rear extension. Ty Twt Back Road Catbrook Trellech Monmouthshire NP16 6NA.
The Clerk has responded recommending Approval.
2. **DM/2025/00940**:Extension to back of property. Clarence House, The Craig Road To Penallt, Penallt Monmouthshire NP25 4SF.
The Clerk has responded recommending Approval.
3. **DM/2025/00930** New steel frame timber-clad building on stone base for storage of agricultural equipment, located next to existing building and using matching materials. Forest Cottage Ceciliford Trellech Monmouth NP25 4PT.
The Clerk has responded recommending Approval, highlighting the site is surrounded by trees and adjacent to an SSSI therefore there may be biodiversity implications.
4. **DM/2025/00980** Demolition of existing single storey side extension and garage. New single storey extension and detached double garage with loft room. Ashlea Cottage Beacon Road Trellech Monmouthshire NP25 4QB.
The Clerk has responded recommending Approval, but requesting further information on rainwater and foul drainage plans, as well as the vehicular access to the new garage, turning area and surface finishes of these.

New Planning Applications for consideration

5. **DM/2025/01115** Proposed agricultural storage building and workshop in support of the small holding with associated works. Old House Farm, Farm Road, Lydart, Mitchel Troy Monmouthshire NP25 4RN.

It was **Resolved** to recommend Approval.

Planning Updates/Enforcement/Licensing

Pen Y Fan Green-To note a letter has been sent to Hillside House notifying them of the status of the Village Green/Common Land and its protective state.

9. REPORTS & STANDING ITEMS

1. Police Monthly report has been shared, but appears to be missing an assault in Trellech and a motorbike collision in Penallt.

It was **Resolved** for the Clerk to contact the Police and query the completeness of reporting.

2. **Rights of Way Group.** (Cllr May, Cllr Wakerley, Cllr Ash and Cllr Roderick)

To note any updates following the Tracks and Trails meeting and Wye Valley Villages Meetings, and the issues of Whitebrook off-road motorbikes.

The WVVT meeting reviewed the report for the Tracks and Trails Group and identified gaps, so the Tracks and Trails meeting is delayed until the report is ready.

Whitebrook village has written to the MP C Fookes and the Senned member Peter Fox. asking them to visit and help address the issues. The Senned Member, Peter Foz has responded positively, but there has been no response from the MP.

It was **Resolved** for the ROW working group to approach our MP C Fookes about the issues, asking for a response, specifically about the noise levels late at night and the original reclassifications from 2006.

3. **Land Holdings/Biodiversity Group** (Cllr Decker-Thomas, Cllr Wakerley, Cllr Roderick and Cllr Weston)

Update on playpark and bio-diversity at Catbrook. Cllr Wakerley updated the Council on her work to date looking at what is needed, having met Cllrs Decker-Thomas and Roderick on site. It was **Resolved** for Cllr Wakerley to bring back to the Council an outline written plan of works to include:

- Land improvement-drainage, harrowing, hedges, planting of native trees.
- New Gates
- Replacement playpark plans.

10. COMMUNITY COUNCILLOR UPDATES

To receive any specific correspondence from Community Councillors not already covered.

Feedback from the TUCC reps (G Weston and S Geddes) on the Wye Valley Villages Delivery Group (WVVDG).

The WVDG did not approve the proposed Welsh translation for Catbrook, which was initiated outside of the group by the MCC officer/secretary to the group. with the advice of MCC's Welsh Language Officer. This was in response to just one Catbrook resident's complaints that the new village sign did not show a Welsh version. (Historically, Catbrook does not have a Welsh version). MCC Officers have put forward a Welsh translation (Catffrwyd) to the Welsh Language Commission for inclusion in the national database of place names without any consultation.

The WVVDG therefore agreed at the 10th September meeting that no further action is taken until the following steps were taken:

- a) Any change to local village names/signs should be submitted to the appropriate community council (TUCC) for their comments and recommendations.
- b) It is then put before the WVVDG as an agenda item for discussion and resolution.

It was **Resolved** for the Clerk to write to MCC requesting clarification as to why and when the Welsh version of Catbrook was decided upon and added to the database, as to the compliance of the new sign and that TUCC, local residents and the Wye Valley Villages Delivery Group should be consulted on the issue, if it were to go ahead.

Cllr May updated TUCC on the DMMO from MCC that dates back to 1985. He will write to GWT about the order and get their views, before working with the Clerk to formulate a response about the whole route being a BOAT.

The Chair attended the Whitebrook Village Hall open afternoon and the Art in Penallt Festival.

11. 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 Whitebrook Village Hall for the grant towards improvements.
- Correspondance on Whitebrook off-road motorbikes
- Quab lane bridleway surface improvements.
- Cleaning of pavement in Trellech
- Enquiry over Catbrook telephone kiosk-to be kept for future use.
- OVW Training dates for Councillors
- Dog Waste bags requested independently, as not enough for a joint bulk order.
- School thankyou for the bike rack

12. CLERK UPDATE

1. All Clerk actions arising from the July OM have been completed or are ongoing.
2. The Clerk is reviewing and updating policies

FORWARD LOOK

October 2025

Annual Report & Forward Plan for approval.

Risk Register

Finance and Governance Toolkit GAP Analysis

Biodiversity

Playparks

Babington Meadow Charity

Next Meeting will be 20 October 2025 via zoom and in person at Pelham Hall at 7pm.

The meeting closed at 9.20 pm.

Signature of Chair:

Date: