

Minutes for the Annual Public Meeting of the Community Council Held on Tuesday 27th May at 7pm in Llangorse Community Centre

Members Present: Cllr D Scully (Vice Chair), Cllr H Quarrell, Cllr C Preece, Cllr G Beaven, Cllr D Jones, Cllr S Bailey

In attendance: County Councillor Sian Cox, Ryan Thomas, Mike Scruby, 54 members of the public.

1. Chairman's welcome, emergency exit procedure and participation protocol

Cllr David Scully (Vice Chair) was acting Chair in the absence of Cllr A Jevons (Chair). Cllr Scully welcomed everyone to the Annual Public Meeting (APM) of the Council, and pointed out the emergency exits for those in attendance if a fire alarm was to sound. There were no drills scheduled for the evening.

There had been no requests to attend the meeting by remote link.

2. Apologies for absence

Cllr A Jevons (Chair), Cllr C Owen, Hannah Davies (Clerk)

3. Minutes of the APM held 17/07/2024, as approved at the meeting held 13/08/2024 for information only.

All minutes of LCC meetings can be found online at: <https://llangors.org.uk/community-council/minutes-agendas/>

4. Community Council update: Annual Report from Chair – Cllr D Scully (Vice Chair) on behalf of Cllr A Jevons

Cllr D Scully gave a brief summary of the Annual Report as a summary of work conducted by the Council for the last financial year 2024-2025.

This included the work undertaken by all members of the council and working parties that councillors represent the community on, and a number of local matters that the council has been supporting and working on.

Cllr D Scully explained that the full Annual Report is available to be viewed online, at the below web address

<https://llangors.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/05/2024-to-2025-Annual-Report.pdf>

Cllr Scully then asked all councillors present to introduce themselves to the members of the public as well as asking the speakers present to do the same. He explained that Cllr Beaven was only available for a short period of time this evening and would take questions immediately after his presentation

4 a) Annual Planning Report– Cllr G Beaven

Cllr D Scully explained that Cllr G Beaven has been a point of contact and has taken on matters relating to planning for the council, for which thanks was given for his knowledge and expertise. Cllr D Scully introduced Cllr G Beaven to speak.

Cllr Geoff Beaven proceeded to explain the role of the Community Council as a formal consultee for all local planning applications and reviewed the work of the Council on planning matters over the past year.

Cllr G Beaven introduced himself as a Councillor for the Llangors ward, a position held for about 3 years. Cllr G Beaven then outlined the planning process. Following the submission of a planning application to the Planning Authority which for much of the council's area, is the Bannau Brycheiniog National Park (BBNP) Authority whereas Powys County Council is the Planning Authority for the rest such as the area around Llanfihangel Talyllyn. The Planning Authority must then seek local views on the application through a period of consultation before deciding whether to grant or refuse permission for whatever is proposed by the application. Planning is strictly controlled which means basically you need permission if you want to build something new, knock a building down or change its use and there are lots of rules, regulations and policies that apply.

Cllr G Beaven goes on to explain the role that LCC have in the planning process. When a planning application is received by the Planning Authority it will display all of the drawings, plans, reports, etc on its website and they also send out a number of notifications letters the formal consultees. These should also go to the most affected near neighbours and they should be posted in prominent position close to the affected site. The formal consultees are explained to be organisations such as Highways, Welsh Water and National Resources Wales.

Cllr G Beaven explains that LCC is a formal consultee for all planning applications affecting our area, and the council takes this responsibility very seriously spending much time and effort on this on your behalf. The council considers and decides how to respond to all planning application at special meetings of the full Council which we call a PAD meeting standing for Planning Application Decision meeting. This is not a public meeting but a meeting in public. All such meetings tend to be held at relatively short notice but they are advertised on the council's notice boards and our website aiming to give a week's notice, but at the very least 3 days. These meetings are all minuted and the draft minutes are displayed on the notice boards and the website. The council's comments/decision is passed to the Planning Authority and this is then also displayed on the Authorities website.

Cllr G Beaven goes on to say that residents can also send their own comments direct to the Authority and that the council will always encourage the public to do this, as the resident's reaction is more influential than that of the council. The council needs to take a balanced view taking a range of opinions into account. LCC's job is not over when the consultation is dealt with. We then monitor the Authorities website to keep abreast of developments as for example we are interested in other consultees' comments and any additional information that becomes available. Cllr G Beaven continues to summarise a review of the work undertaken since January 2024 -

The council has considered 22 consultations. Of this 22, 4 are from the Powys jurisdiction and 18 are from the BBNP. There were 15 PAD meetings in total. The council supported 14 - 9 of which were approved, 5 of which are still in the planning system. The council opposed 2 - one of which as withdrawn, the other was modified and subsequently was not submitted. The council did not support 4 - 1 of which was approved, the other 3 are still in process. The council did not reply to 2 applications, 1 of which was changed, the other didn't need planning permission.

There were 2 applications that have been of particular interest in the past year, that of "Tan Troed" and the other being "Royal Oak"

Tan Troed had applied for 48 lodges which was subsequently reduced to 40 lodges and approved for 9 month occupancy only. There appears to have been no work undertaken at the site following this approval.

Royal Oak was an application for 20 accommodation units, reduced to 15 and was approved as an amendment to the site layout, for 6 months of the year and for occupation by children only however there was a further application for family occupancy over a 12 months period to include the introduction of a restaurant. The council did not support the application and suggested a 9 month occupancy limit however the application has since been withdrawn so the council is currently unaware of the current status or the future plans of the developer.

Cllr Bevan asked if there were any questions from member of the public, of which there were none. He then left the meeting.

5. Introduction and presentations from:

a) Glebe Field Biodiversity– Mr Mike Scruby

Cllr Scully introduced Mike Scruby

Mr Scruby explained that he was no longer a councillor however remained involved with the Glebe Field in Llanfihangel Talyllyn as a member of the public. He explained that the Glebe was originally leased by the Llangors Community Council from the Church in Wales in April 2011 for an initial 10 year period as an amenity playing field, totalling approximately 1.5 acres. Some play equipment was obtained for the use of the public. The whole area was mowed by external contractors every 2 weeks (during the growing season). In 2016, there was a new environmental act passed which took into account biodiversity in public spaces amongst other things. When the council renewed the lease in 2021, they started to look more closely to the biodiversity in particular, the southern most area. The council received a £500 Nature Recovery Grant in 2024 which was used for 3 elements of improvement to biodiversity:

a) Change the mowing regime to introduce “no mow” areas around the margins which is an area of approximately 500 sq meters. This area was then cut at the end of September. As a result there is a rich area of meadow grassland which was commented upon by a BBNP Nature officer.

b) A large number of native bulbs have been planted.

c) A 100m length of native hedgerow has been planted by volunteers from the community - a mixture of 14 different species of trees and shrubs, approximately 800 plants in total which were very kindly donated by an organisation near Abergavenny called Stump up For Trees.

The biodiversity work at the Glebe is ongoing as there another 12 year lease in place. An event in the Summer of 2025 will be organised to encourage identification and recording of different species of birds and wildlife etc.

Cllr Scully thanked Mr Scruby for his presentation.

b) Llangorse Common Management Group - County Councillor Sian Cox & Ryan Thomas

Cllr Scully introduced County Cllr Sian Cox to speak. Ryan Thomas remained seated to answer questions at the end of the presentation session.

Sian explained that in the past 12 months after being elected, she met with everyone interested and affected issue of the maintenance of the road and the common, to gather their perspectives, then brought all of those people together with key officers from the council, and a key support officer with PAVO, in a series of meetings exploring how best to progress the issue for the benefit of residents, commoners and nature. As a result the Llangorse Common Management Group has been formed with representatives from groups such as the Llangorse Commoners, the Sailing Club, the Toilet group, the caravan parks, the Wildlife Trust, Green Park (developers of Royal Oak Camp), Llangorse Community Council, Powys County Council. A feasibility study has been funded to understand the best way to manage the group, to ensure the financial sustainability of the management of the roads and car parks - initially by introducing an honesty box system for car parking charges, also to encourage responsible dog owners to reduce dog mess which in turn would make it easier for graziers to use the common. There is a lot of work to be done and the group is in its early stages however signs of collaboration are excellent and there appears to be a very positive outlook for the common with the hope that it can be restored to its former glory, allowing everyone to work together for the benefit of all.

Cllr Scully thanked County Cllr Sian Cox and asked that any questions from the public to be raised at the very end of the presentations

c) Powys County Council - Ward Update - County Councillor Sian Cox

Cllr Scully introduced County Cllr Sian Cox again in her capacity as County Councillor.

Sian explained the work she had been undertaking, where she is and where she hopes to be. Sian went on to say that she is passionate about public participation in decision making and that there are various models for this to bring people into the design process for public decisions such as what services are needed and how they'll be delivered.

Sian explained that her work primarily consisted of two elements,

a) One to one help for Ward residents which she equates to “Casework” as per her many years of experience in the 3rd Sector. Sian received and responds to requests for help via email, phone and message platforms, by meeting people in places they choose and also by running drop in sessions around the ward (to include the Bwlch area which she also represents). She also has a Facebook page

b) Project work - more widespread community issues such as speeding and parking issues, the improvement of Llanwern Common which needs maintenance and could follow a similar model to the collaborative work which is being undertaken on Llangorse common, and a project to encourage a more Dementia Friendly Community amongst many others.

Sian summarised by saying that there is a lot of things that she would like to do but that more importantly she wants to hear from local people about what they would like her to do. Sian has a mailing list that is kept to only relevant information and matters for the community, again if anyone wishes to be included to let her know. Similarly, Sian produces a ward report for each meeting of LCC, and has a mailing list for residents who receive a copy of the report monthly; any resident can ask to be added to that list. Sian is happy to accept/return calls from local people.

Cllr Scully again thanked County Cllr Sian Cox and asked if there were any questions from the public relating to the previous presentations.

6. Any questions from Members of the Public followed by informal session

The first question was to Mike Scruby regarding what support would be needed on the Glebe Biodiversity Project this summer. Mike explained that he would be contacting the previous volunteers nearer the time as well as the Community Council. LCC can then publish on it's Facebook page that help was need. Together with word of mouth he was sure that there would be another fantastic show of local support for this worthwhile project. Sian also asked Mike about community vegetable growing at the Glebe, however this activity isn't something that could be facilitated under the terns of the lease as the Glebe is primarily for amenity and play.

The next question was to Sian and Ryan - was there any plan to create a running track at the Common as well as bringing back community events such as Cricket matches as a running group was ready to be constituted with many local residents keen to be involved? Sian responded that all options such as this were being considered as the group was eager to bring the common back to its former glory to the benefit of all users.

A member of the public also asked if the condition of the ground which was severely damaged by horses over the very wet winter period, would be restored. Ryan explained that in future it may be possible to fence of certain areas for grazing which could alleviate such a problem in future however there was hope that working groups would be formed using local people and skills to improve the habitat for all users whilst preserving areas for nature and wildlife.

A further question to Sian related to the importance of Dementia Matters - an organisation in Brecon which acts as a lifeline for Dementia sufferers and their families. Sian agreed how important this work was and reiterated her intention to develop a Dementia Friendly Community.

The final question was directed to Llangorse Community Council and asked what LCC was doing to help protect the Llangorse Lake from pollution. Cllr Colin Preece explained that LCC has a representative on the Llangorse Lake Advisory Committee (ie Cllr Simon Bailey) and that following a public meeting in Llangasty Village Hall last week relating more specifically to river pollution on the Wye and Usk, which was attended by three LCC councillors, there would definitely be an active role being played by LCC. This subject was to be an agenda item at the next LCC monthly meeting to be held on 10th June.

There being no further questions, Cllr Scully thanked members of the public for their attendance and support at the meeting as well as the guest speakers and Councillors for their contribution.

The meeting was then closed at 8:25pm