

# LANGSTONE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

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## MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT LANDEVAUD VILLAGE HALL ON 18 MARCH 2025

**Councillors:** Cllr S Davies (Chair), Cllr R Bevan, Cllr S George, Cllr R Lewis, Cllr I Riley, Cllr B Newport, Cllr B Sheppard.  
Cllr J Bryant, Cllr J Humphries and Cllr L Humphries were present via Teams

**Apologies received:** Cllr S Voyle

**In attendance:** Jacqueline Ford (Acting Clerk) plus City Councillors Will Routley and Ray Mogford.

**Members of the Public:** 1 member of the public plus 2 on-line

### **25/036 Apologies for absence**

Apologies had been received as noted above.

### **25/037 Declarations of interest (and declarations of Councillors Declarations of Interest Forms)**

Cllr I Riley declared an interest in agenda item 25/048 (ii) and 25/049 (ii). A Declaration of Interest Form was completed.

### **25/038 To approve the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on 18 February 2025.**

The Council agreed that the Minutes be approved.

### **25/039 Matters arising from the Council Meeting held on 18 February 2025**

The question was raised of the payment for the bank card which the Council agreed should be cancelled. An email, addressed to Ted Jeffrey, had been received and Cllr Davies has sent everything again to Lloyds Bank to confirm closure of the account. The Direct Debit is no longer being paid.

### **25/040 To consider any verbal or written reports from the Clerk or Councillors and correspondence received.**

Correspondence received included thank you letters for Grants recently agreed – St Peters Church, St Martins, Langstone Church and the Langstone Ladies Friendship Group. A letter had also been received from Dave Masters thanking the Council for their advice on approaching St Peters Church

for match funding for the repairs to the Car Park. He was pleased to announce that the funding had been agreed (£2000).

**15/041 Co-option vote and sign Declaration of Acceptance**

Cllr Davies proposed that Dr Julian Smith be co-opted to the Council, seconded by Cllr Lewis. All were in agreement and Julian Smith was duly co-opted and signed his Declaration of Acceptance. The Clerk is to contact Vision ICT to set up his email address.

**25/042 Newport Youth Academy (short presentation)**

LCC had received assurance that NYA had adequate coverage through their own insurance. As a representative of the Newport Youth Academy was not present it was agreed that an email be sent requesting that NYA provide some idea of what design(s) were planned for the planters and for example if the plan was for all planters to be painted the same or if different designs on each. They had a plan to prime and stencil the planters. There was some discussion on pros and cons of a common theme/brand v different designs on each planter and some thought on a community theme or floral. Cost is just materials (proposed budget £500). When information is available the Council will decide informally owing to the shortage of time.

**25/043 15 minutes for the Newport City Councillors to report**

City Councillor Mogford reported on the changes to speed limits that are being proposed. Will and Ray totally support the measures and confirmed that the groundwork is good but a few opportunities missed. With a 1 April 2025 deadline they asked that if there any thoughts on specific areas please write to the Council as they are considering further amendments.

Cllr Lewis asked whether any other roads could be added and Cllr Smith stated that he had hoped that Hendry Lane was listed. And that he was very interested in traffic problems in the area.

Will stated that there was an ongoing problem by Shepherd Drive/Magor Road area. The traffic safety team attended and did an assessment and will be feeding back to NCC and the Police. On Sunday, in under 2 hours they caught 6 doing excessive speed, one seatbelt offence, one vehicle without insurance and one vehicle seized.

Flooding is still a problem and the Council are working on a number of issues, particularly Upper Road, where the water floods from the field and the drains are inadequate. They are working with local residents and trying to minimise the run off from fields and also trying to set up meetings with highways.

Cats Ash Road is also a problem with drains that are inadequate. A larger drainage system and re-tarmacking is required.

Tree cutting has been going ahead on Chepstow Road.

**25/044 Finance Committee/Working Group Update**

No Working Group update as next meeting is scheduled for 3 April 2025. Cllr Davies has been looking at Savings Plans available through Unity Trust Bank. A suitable account is an instant access

savings with easy movement and a 2.5% interest rate. The Council agreed that Cllr Davies transfer funds whilst the Finance Committee look into alternative options.

- (i) The monthly accounts for February 2025 were approved.

Unity Trust Bank Account		
Opening Balance	1 February 2025	£122,068.93
Closing Balance	28 February 2025	£116,054.75

Approve payments:

Method	Payee	Description	Amount
DD	Lloyds Bank plc	Service Charge	3.00
SO	Microshade	Citrix Hosting	57.54
Cheque	300807	Councillor Remuneration	208.00
Cheque	300809	Councillor Remuneration	156.00
Cheque	300812	Councillor Remuneration	156.00
Cheque	300814	Councillor Remuneration	208.00
Cheque	300816	Councillor Remun (part – 23/24)	34.67
Cheque	300820	Cllr S Davies (Various bills)	713.06
Cheque	300813	Councillor Remuneration	156.00
Cheque	300815	Councillor Remun (part – 23/24)	34.67
Faster payment	Llandevaud Vill Hall	Grant	2000.00
Faster payment	Cllr S Davies	Test	1.00
Cheque	300821	Interim Clerk	936.98
Cheque	300822	Grant	300.00
Cheque	300825	Grant	500.00
DD	Rombourne Ltd	Virtual Office	43.26
Cheque	3009824	Grant	500.00
Fee	Unity Trust Bank	Service Charge	6.00

- (ii) Council approved all payment for March. Cllr George confirmed that it had been agreed that listings of payments would go from meeting date rather than from 1<sup>st</sup> of the month.

- (iii) **MOTION:** To agree appointment of Internal Auditor for 2023/24 and 2024/25.

**RESOLVED:** That E H accountancy be appointed to carry out the Internal Audit for 2023/2024 and for 2024/2025.

- (iv) Recovery of Remuneration update. Letters had been sent to Carol Bryant, Jackie Harring-burn and Mike Harring-burn itemising the amounts (1 quarter) which will be recovered for the financial year 2023/24 (in respect to JH-B and MH-B) and 2044/25 for CB. No minutes are available for the July 2023 where the Remuneration payments were approved but the minutes were shown as approved in the September 2023 meeting. The minutes are required for audit purposes.

**ACTION:** Cllrs L Humphries, J Humphries and J Bryant to ascertain a copy.

**MOTION:** Propose commencing use of PAYE software from start for new FY either using HMRC basic tools or purchase of a suitable basic Cloud option.

**RESOLVED:** Finance Committee to look into options available but defer the decision until the HR Committee appoint the new Clerk/RFO.

- (v) A grant was approved for HCPT Group 99 for £500 plus grants for Sparkle and SARA, £500 each.

City Councillor Ray Mogford suggested that if members of the Council were attending his event at the Hilton Hotel on 1 May 2025 it would be a nice touch and good publicity if they could present a cheque to both charities. Cllr George to contact the Chair of the Langstone Primary School PTA for possible grant support. Cllr Newport to contact Air Ambulance to see if they want to submit a grant application

Cllr George volunteered to manage the review of actual spend v budget spend in the interim period ahead of the new Clerk/RFO taking responsibility for budget. To facilitate that JF will liaise with Cllr George by sending costings every few weeks so that he can compare to budget. The May meeting will be the first opportunity to provide the comparison to Council.

- (vi) The Council agreed that a retrospective payment be made to Heather Jones for work carried out on the inputting and year end activities for 2022/23 accounts and 2023/24 accounts. It was noted that without her expertise getting the accounts up to date ready for Internal Audit would have taken considerably longer.

## **20/045 COMMUNITY**

- (i) See agenda item 25/042.

Council is considering options for planting following the community-based project to paint the planters. Cllr Bevan has approached several garden centres and similar companies to get quotes. Several did not get back as promised. 2 options are available, use last year's company who are offering to do them for the same price £150 per planter. The other option was priced at £145 per planter, however 7 planters will be adopted by the community with plants made available by Halse (up to £50 per planter saving some £1,000 over last year. Cllr Bevan to request a firming up of the actual cost (£145 per planter) for the planters not being taken on by members of the community. There was some discussion on how this compared to the amount budgeted, Cllr Newport confirmed that £2000 had been budgeted which would mean that proposed costs only slightly above budget. Cllr Bevan read out options for focal point, flowers and bulbs for spring planting, replenishing the soil etc. It was hoped that more members of the community might be willing to look after a planter and LCC should try to encourage this but it was acknowledged this might take some time.

Cllr Newport suggested NCC could be approached to see if they would take over the planters and approach will be made for next year.

- (ii) Update on defibrillators. We are responsible for changing pads, batteries where they exceed shelf-life and also responsible for replacing them if they are used in an emergency.
- (iii) See agenda item 25/043.

**20/046 Planning committee/Working Group Update**

- (i) Consider any actions necessary regarding the issue involving planting hedgerows on verges. Cllr Riley gave the background into the problem where there are narrow lanes and increased hedging so there is nowhere to pull in (Langstone Court Road).

**ACTION:** Cllr Voyle has some experience of verges and his advice will be sought. Recommend that the Clerk contact Highways Dept and Newport City Council to see if we could have an on-site meeting.

- (ii) Council has no objection(s) to the 3 planning items listed.

**20/047 Events Committee/Working Group Update**

Cllr Davies stated that it was unfortunate that LCC can't use the Village Hall for the event on the Saturday, the only item planned is the Memorial Service on the Thursday (VE day) the event will be 9.30 pm. Cllr J Humphries had previously mentioned using Llandevaud Common but this was considered not appropriate. The Events Committee will convene to decide a programme and Cllr George has offered to host the refreshments.

If anyone in the community wants to hold an event, LCC will offer support.

**ACTION:** Council agreed that Cllr Davies to order a female silhouette be added to the 3 service personnel we already have.

**25/048 HR Committee/Working Committee update**

Cllr Davies outlined that a large number of application had been received for the role of Clerk/RFO. Four applicants (2 with relevant clerk experience) will be seen informally by the HR Committee over 2 days at the beginning of April (2,3 April 2025, 1 hour for each).

**25/049 Parks Committee/Working Group Update**

- (i) Centenary Park investigation has been completed with an expected result, there is nothing that we can drain into. Cllr Bevan indicated that there is a drain at the bottom of the park which only floods in extreme circumstances. Investigation needed which may include a drainage survey and the co-operation of Welsh Water or the Highways Authority. The Park End part of the drain is not a problem, it might just stop in the park or travel into one of the other systems.

**ACTION:** Commission a survey of the drainage system with an agreed budget of up to £500.

- (ii) Cllr Riley has spoken to WM Garden Services regarding an outstanding invoice but also awaiting a quote for the repair of park equipment. Only one item is medium risk as the zip wire is slightly stretched but it was agreed to complete all repairs in one go. Ongoing. A ROSPA report will be completed after investigation.

**25/050 Policies/procedures/statements**

- (i) A decision still has to be made on what we are archiving with Gwent Archives. Cllr Lewis to contact them and ask what the nominal fee will be to catalogue certain items decide what to send. Cllr Davies will determine how many volumes and the years they cover. Now is the time to get a scan of any interesting, relevant or humorous happenings from circa the VE Day Minutes to put on display.
- (ii)
- (iii) Cllr Lewis had circulated by email after the last meeting a copy of an actual Council's updated 2024 Financial Regulations which could be a good starting point for updating our policy. This will be considered at the next Finance Working Group.

**25/051            15 minutes set aside for Community interaction and members of the community to ask the Clerk or Councillors questions of local interest**

The only question related to the community planters, agenda item 25/045 (ii).

**25/052            Agree a date of next meeting**

The date of the next meeting will be Thursday 24 April 2025.

**MEETING TERMINATED AT 9.35 PM.**