

## SHIRENEWTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Council meeting held at Shirenewton Recreation Hall  
on **Monday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2025** at 7.30pm

Councillors: P. Butterworth (Chair), C Martin, I Martin

### Also in attendance

Mrs. L Brown, County Councillor and Geoff Todd (prospective Councillor)

#### 1. **Minute 5021 – To co-opt Geoff Todd as a Councillor for Earlswood**

The Council resolved to make the appointment, and the Chairman welcomed Cllr G Todd. It having been resolved at the Council's AGM held immediately before this meeting that Cllr C Martin be appointed as acting Clerk to the Council for the purpose of witnessing Councillors' acceptance of office in the absence of J McLagan being indisposed, Cllr G Todd signed his acceptance of office and Cllr C Martin countersigned.

#### 2. **Minute 5022 – To confirm the minutes** from the Shirenewton Community Council meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> April 2025 as a true record.

The minutes were approved by the Council.

#### 3. **Minute 5023 – To Receive Apologies for Absence**, Cllr G Mitchell and J McLagan (Clerk to the Council)

#### 4. **Minute 5024 – Public Participation** – Juliet Nicholls and Robert Hookway attended to make representations regarding planning application DM/2025/00474 The Grove Cottage, inter alia that their own neighbouring property would be overlooked and their privacy invaded, that the subject property could be seen from the road, that the new entrance encroached on a footpath and that the photographs in support were out of date and not currently accurate.

#### 5. **Minute 5025 – To Disclose personal and pecuniary interests.** None Declared by Councillors

### Items for decision

#### **Minute 5026 – To Consider 3 Planning Matters**

**DM/2025/00474** The Grove Cottage Earlswood, replace existing single storey at front of dwelling with two storey extension to create entrance hall and office.

The Grove is a modern two storey 4 bedroom detached house set in extensive grounds to the south of Earlswood hall. The house faces northeast, the main gardens are to the south and not affected by these proposals. The ground to the front of the house comprises the parking area, garaging and steps down. Directly inside the entrance to the house is a study to the left and utility room and toilet to the right.

The proposal is to replace the utility and toilet with a two storey gable extension to provide an enlarged entrance hall and stairs to the upper storey, and a study/home office above. The new gable will be of similar size to the existing and neither gable exceeds the ridge height of the main roof. The front of the new gable is primarily large panel glazing. External walls are to be painted render and the roof is to be mineral slate tiles rather than concrete tiles as existing.

The access from the parking area to the house will be widened and provided with enhanced planting including a mix of grassed areas with wildflower mixes and gravel paths to encourage biodiversity. The house will be fitted with a bat boxes and bird nest box with bat access points along the ridge of the extension. External lighting will be in accordance with BCT Guidance Note 08/18 Bats and artificial lighting.

Councillors will wish to take account of a neighbour's objection to the windows for the extension that these are unnecessarily oversized, and totally out of keeping for the area, and pose a risk to wild birds inadvertently colliding with the glass.

**Resolved by unanimous vote to object** on the grounds that :

- a) MCC had refused a previous application in 2023 to which the current application is very similar
- b) The proposed glazing to the front elevation is out of character for the local landscape, presents a danger to wild bird flight, and will create light spill particularly at dusk to the detriment of the local bat population
- c) The development will have a detrimental impact on existing residences and amenities.

**DM/2025/00486** Annex Rhewl Cottage, extension to existing annex.

This is a retrospective application for building works only recently completed.

Rhewl Cottage lies on the back road from Shirenewton to Mathern. The whole site has a long frontage to the road but the depth is relatively narrow. The site plan shows the main residence itself and a single storey annex which is the subject of this application. The annex was once a garage and Planning consent DM/2022/00263 approved an extension for the garage and change of use into a dog care facility. The submitted plans for DM/2022/00263 showed the internal garage layout at the time as garage style timber double doors, behind which were 2 small bedrooms, a kitchen/diner and a living room with a toilet off. No detail of the internal layout of the proposed extension was shown. In 2024 there was an application to enlarge the car park. The new drawing, which includes the extension, shows 3 bedrooms, a kitchen/diner and a bathroom. There does not appear to be any provision for dog grooming or kenneling on either layout and the new application makes no mention of the dog care facility business. Whilst the former garage is described in the application as an annex, it is a completely self contained building.

In brief, the former garage appears to have been converted at some time past for residential accommodation. It is not clear whether there was any planning approval. Whether or not it had residential consent, the DM/2022/00263 consent permitted the extension and change of use into dog day care facility. The extension has been built and the applicant now seeks retrospective consent. The supporting layout plan shows a 3 bedroom residence. A surface water drain to a soakaway is shown but no other services.

Councillors may query :

1. The usage in the application of the term "annex". An annex is ordinarily an attachment to an existing dwelling with shared facilities and services and not a detached and self contained building as here.
2. On what basis the dog care facility needs a 3 bedroom bungalow and no business accommodation.
3. Whether, if this were an application for the extension prior to the start of work, it would double the footprint and is thus excessively large.
4. Whether, were consent to be granted, it would in effect give consent for change of use to residential.
5. Whether, if this authorises residential use, the extension would comply with planning policy H4 (rural conversions), particularly e) f) and g) and H5 (see extracts below)

6. Whether the dog care business is continuing and if so from where.

7. How the extension as constructed differs from the plans in consent 00263.

**Resolved by unanimous vote to object** on the grounds that :

a) the annex is de facto constructed as a residence involving an increase in excess of 30% in footprint from the original garage and unsupported by any statement demonstrating how the annex for which consent was given only 2 years ago to use as a dog care facility is no longer fit for business purposes.

b) The development does not comply with policy H4 in that neither the garage as was nor the new extension have been used for a significant period of time, nor is the extension capable of providing adequate living space other than as an adjunct to the main dwelling Rhewl Cottage nor has any consideration been given of further outbuildings such as garaging.

c) There are no Green Infrastructure or Design Statements, bat reports and the like.

Should MCC be minded to grant consent then SCC request conditions that the annex should not be occupied at any time other than as and by a single family as part of Rhewl Cottage and shall not be independently occupied, and that permitted development rights be removed.

It was also agreed that as the site sits on the boundary between Shirenewton and Mathern communities and our Clerk being indisposed, County Councillor L Brown be asked to refer a copy of SCC's resolution to Mathern Community Council for their information.

**DM/2025/00406** Whitebrook Farm, proposed conversion of redundant agricultural outbuilding/cow shed into residential dwelling.

Councillors may recall Whitebrook Farm is subject to a planning application for replacement by a 2 storey house. SCC objected pending clarification on foul and surface water treatment, external paint and finish colours, bat mitigation and the lack of a Design statement justifying the development.

This further application is for the old cowshed which sits in the farmyard opposite the farmhouse. It is a single storey with various doors, windows, and other openings, corrugated roofing, concrete walls and corrugated cladding and floors variously of concrete, tiles and earth. The floor area is some 69 sqm. It has been unused in recent times and is stated to be unsuitable for viable alternative viable commercial/ business use nor for an office / small scale businesses /holiday let.

It is proposed to create a one bedroom dwelling, finished in insulated profile cladding roof, walls with corrugated sheeting in grey/ black, and aluminium powder coated doors (colour unspecified). Parking for 2 cars is provided.

The Bat report confirms the cowshed is a breeding home to lesser horseshoe bats and possibly some long eared bats. Mitigation is to include a purpose built bat roost.

Councillors may wish to consider:

1. Whether the applicant's statement that the conversion does not involve substantial reconstruction (which would be contrary to policy H4 c) below) is fair or results in a building which lacks longevity and costly to run and maintain.

2. Whether the conversion provides adequate living space (H4 f)) including outbuildings such as garaging and woodstore.

3. Whether the proposed finishes affect the local landscape and heritage

4. What purpose the conversion would serve given the cowshed is said not to be suitable for holiday lets and is self contained.

**Resolved by unanimous vote to object** for want of specific details on external materials and finishes, heating, lighting and landscaping. SCC will wish to make further comment when these are provided.

**6. Minute 5027 – Finance:** To approve a list of expenditure as detailed

EXPENDITURE AND INVOICES – May 2025

Expenditure -		
Clerk's salary/allowances.	April 2025	£862.78
Clerk's Pension (Council 25% & Clerk's contribution)	April 2025	£334.88
HMRC Employers NI Contribution	April 2025	£274.31

Payments

Payee	Reason for expenditure	Amount £	Vat £	Total £	Type
C Martin	Monthly Microsoft 365	8.60	1.72	10.32	BACS
C Martin	Monthly Google storage	1.33	0.26	1.59	BACS
Zurich Insurance Ltd	Annual insurance bill	939.81		939.81	BACS
Merlin Environmental Services Ltd	April Collections – Invoice 2044	127.50	25.48	152.88	BACS
Chepstow Accountancy Services Ltd	Inv April payroll Clerk Inv 3064	25.00		25.00	BACS
Chepstow Accountancy Services Ltd	Inv EOY P60 inv 3042	15.00		15.00	BACS
Bank Charges Lloyds		0		0	
Transfer to deposit account	Transfer			14,000	Transfer

Breakdown of Clerk's expenses Apr 2025:-

Mileage =  
Purchases =  
Electric for meeting  
Total =

Balances HSBC Bank Account Savings account £0 Lloyds Bank Account £17,262.65 Savings account £55,302.65
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The above list of liabilities was approved by the council save for a Standard Life payment for which an invoice is awaited. The insurance policy premium was approved for payment but Cllr C Martin to report back with any policy changes when the renewal documents can be accessed on the Clerk's return.

**Items for Discussion:**

- Minute 5028 - Earlswood field rental - Biodiversity report** – details awaited from prospective hirers
- Minute 5029 - Cllr Vacancies** – one less now that Cllr G Todd has been co-opted

9. **Minute 5030 - Clock-** awaiting fund raising update from the bellringers
10. **Minute 5031 - Audit** – this requires a basic audit which can be submitted once reviewed by the Council's auditor
11. **Minute 5032 - Auditor** – existing arrangement to continue
12. **Minute 5033 - Bank Account** – CM to report further on Clerk's return
13. **Minute 5034 - Biodiversity** – Section 6 Reports 2025 (webinar). Cllr G Todd to be emailed a copy of our current report with a view to updating.

#### **Items for Information:**

14. **Minute 5035 - To receive reports from County Councillor & Clerk.**  
County Councillor L Brown report as follows was noted:

#### **COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT MAY 2025**

County Councillor Brown advised:

#### **Performance and Overview Committee- 29<sup>th</sup> of April 2025**

The above Committee received reports on the Key Stage 4 results for Monmouthshire Schools, the development of children's placements into accommodation and investment and Commercial interests update.

The reports on this Committee can be found at the following link:

<https://democracy.monmouthshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=305&MId=5853>

#### **Public Services Scrutiny Committee-12<sup>th</sup> of May 2025**

The meeting is largely one of discussion as opposed to reports on the National Highways M48 and Severn Bridge 7.5t weight limit and to discuss the proposed changes to the operation of the Severn Bridges and the implications for Monmouthshire with Highways UK.

The meeting can be watched at the following link:

<https://democracy.monmouthshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=260&MId=6177>

#### **County Council on the 15<sup>th</sup> of May 2025**

The County Council meeting on the 15<sup>th</sup> of May, covers the appointments to committees and the political representation, appointment to outside bodies, members motions and questions. One of the motions about the impact of the weight limit on the M48 Severn Bridge and another on Direct payments for care. These details can be found in the following link:

<https://democracy.monmouthshire.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=143&MId=6080>

#### **Regional Transport Plan Consultation**

There is currently a consultation on the above regional transport plan for South Wales region. The consultation remains open **until 11:59pm on Monday 19 May 2025**, and you can review the draft plan and share your views using the online form here:

<https://regionaltransportplanccr.wales/>

You can watch a video of the presentation given at the Member webinars we have been conducting here:

<https://regionaltransportplanccr.wales/documents-and-downloads/>

If you have any questions or would like to speak to the team directly, please don't hesitate to get in touch via this email at [info@regionaltransportplanccr.wales](mailto:info@regionaltransportplanccr.wales)

### **B4235 Collision reduction scheme**

The County Councillor and representatives from the community council have been regularly meeting online on a quarterly multi-agency basis with the Police, Highways and Go Safe due to concerns about the accident prone B4235.

A grant has been obtained by MCC for a collision reduction scheme along the B4235 between Chepstow and Mynyddbach, where ten collisions, occurred between 2020 and 2023.

It is anticipated that all remedial measures, repairs, and investigations will be completed by the end of 2025-26. This proactive approach aims to enhance road safety and reduce the likelihood and severity of future collisions on the specified section of the B4235.

The Clerk being indisposed, Cllr C Martin reported that the War Memorial cleaning report had been received and is to be costed. A method statement is required by MCC; the new planter is ready and should be located on the Crick Road by Owls Barn.

### **15. Minute 5036 - Police report**

↑ Crime Category	Crimes
<b>Total</b>	<b>7</b>
Shoplifting	2
Violence With Injury	2
All Other Theft	1
Criminal Damage & Arson	1
Violence Without Injury	1

The table above shows us the top crime categories for the month of April.

The Table breaks down for us the crime categories.

Shoplifting- There have been two recorded incidents of this. These shoplifting offences have taken place at the Chepstow garden center on Pwllmeyric road. A female has been identified along with the registration of the vehicle used to leave the scene. Investigations are ongoing regarding this matter.

Violence with injury, this is something we have seen a slow increase in. However this particular reported incident relates to an altercation which resulted in a dog bite. The dog and the owner have been identified. The bite victim has no deep wounds and is okay after seeking medical attention.

The dog and the owner will now be given an opportunity to go on a dangerous dog course, for education purposes. This course requires a payment amount which has been charged to the dog owner as a fine. Failure to comply with the dangerous dog course will result in further police action.

The second report is an aggressive male who has been causing ongoing issues at a local hotel being aggressive towards staff barging and pushing his way past. This male has been identified and dealt with for his actions and is now banned from the local hotel.

Criminal damage, this is where a bump between two vehicles took place and a male drove off without exchanging insurance details. The victim has a small crack the bumper. A registration of the vehicle has been obtained and this has been passed to the victims insurance company.

The upcoming month of May local PCSO are hoping to conduct more speed monitoring checks along the the earlswood road area of Shiernewton

There is no further to report and no incidents of late that require any additional information.

**16. Minute 5037 - Meetings attended.**

Cllr I Martin attended MCC's webinar on Planning and Enforcement. Slides to be circulated to Cllrs when available.

**17. Minute 5038 - AOB and ward reports –** Noted as above

**18. Minute 5039 - Correspondence -** awaits Clerk's return

**19. Minute 5040 - To agree the date of the next meeting**

Councillors agreed the date of the next meeting as **Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2025 at 7.00pm** by public meeting in Shirenewton Recreation Hall or remotely via Google meet.

There being no further business the meeting closed at approximately 8.40pm.