



GRAIG COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting of the Community Council held at
Graig Community Hall (and remotely via Zoom)
at 19.00 on Wednesday 29th April 2026

Members present: Cllr Watts (Chair), Cllr Cleeve (Vice Chair), Cllr Morris, Cllr Tarr, Cllr Grant, Cllr Sayer & Cllr Harris.

Members of the Public (MoP): 6

Guests: Ben Maizey (BM) & Rory Baker (Neal Soils)
Jayne Bryant (JB) (Labour Candidate)

Absent: 0

Minutes: Mrs. N Goodfellow (Community Council Clerk/RFO)

The meeting started at 1902 hrs.

1. Chairman's Welcome and Public Participation

The Chairman introduced himself and welcomed Councillors, Guests and Members of the Public. Attendees introduced themselves.

2. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Cllr Williams & Cllr Roe. The Clerk updated attendees on email correspondence to Cllrs Harris and Jones re non attendance. Cllr Watts agreed to follow up on the absences. Cllr Harris arrived at 19:05 hours

3. Declarations of Interest

Members to declare an interest in any items of business on the agenda. Cllr Cleeve and Cllr Morris confirmed an interest in item 14, Allotments.

4. Minutes

To agree the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 28th January 2026. Acceptance **Proposed:** Cllr Cleeve. **Seconded:** Cllr Tarr. **Voted:** in favour (3 Abstained due to their absence from the meeting in question).

5. Matters Arising from Minutes, Updates and Clerk's Update

- a) To consider matters arising from the minutes. None.
- b) To receive any other updates. Cllr Cleeve confirmed that signs for planters had been received and would be put in place (free of charge), in the next three weeks.
- c) To receive Clerk's update.

Relevant correspondence had been shared via email. All Councillors had been given read only access to the Scribe system, so they had direct access to all banking transactions. It was noted that some Councillors were yet to access the system and they were encouraged to do so to ensure they had full visibility of Graig Community Council's finances. Accounting information for the 2025/26 Financial Year had been provided to L Llewellyn for the year end accounts. Read only access to Scribe has also been provided. The Clerk was awaiting further instructions. The



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Clerk confirmed that she would be on annual leave from Tuesday 5th May - Wednesday 13th May inclusive.

6. Bassaleg Bridge

To receive an update on the bridge improvements / replacement.

Cllr Cleeve provided an update to progress on Bassaleg Bridge (BB) developments. A meeting had been scheduled for 6pm on Wednesday 13th May with Councillors, Forge Mews Residents (FMR) and Members of the Public. It was confirmed that Dimitri Batrouni, Rhian Howells & Yvonne Forsey would be in attendance. It was confirmed that John Blackwell's planning application had been presented to FMR during a meeting held on 28th April 2026. All parties who attended were enthused with the application and in full support.

Cllr Tarr **proposed** that item 11 - Planning was moved to follow the BB item. **Seconded:** Cllr Watts. **Voted:** Unanimously in favour.

Cllr Cleeve shared how residents had been concerned about Forge Mews drainage issues and also Drug Dealing in the vicinity. Both of these issues were being fed back to Newport City Council (NCC) and Gwent Police respectively.

John Blackwell explained the background as to why he had submitted his application to NCC to provide an alternative solution for Bassaleg Bridge. The proposal (detailed on the NCC planning portal), was considered a viable opportunity to provide a modular solution to the BB challenges with an estimated cost of less than £1 Million. A decision on the application was expected by 4th June 2026. No adverse comments had been received to date. A number of residents had confirmed their intentions to write to support the application. Concerns were expressed that NCC didn't appear to have a plan B for bridge repairs. Questions were raised around the aesthetics of the bridge, all of which were answered to the satisfaction of those present. For the benefit of Jayne Bryant, John Blackwell provided a brief overview of his professional career and how this correlated with the BB project.

It was suggested that Rhian Howells, Demitri Batrouni and Yvonne Forsey should be made aware that John's application had been submitted, prior to the meeting on 13th May. Cllr Cleeve agreed to take this action.

JB thanked attendees for inviting her to the meeting. It was confirmed that JB was keen to find a solution to the BB issues and supported the work that had been undertaken so far. The requirement for all parties to work collaboratively to find a solution was emphasised. JB praised the work of GCC and residents in progressing potential solutions.

Residents raised their concerns that it had taken a local volunteer to come up with this solution and aired frustrations that NCC hadn't managed to do this. Further concerns were also raised that this scenario could be replicated across NCC with other projects and tax payers money could potentially be wasted.



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The injustice to FMRs and the amount of time they have waited for a solution was discussed. JB confirmed that, if re-elected, she would fully support the initiative.

11. Planning

To consider responses to any planning applications received and opportunity to ask questions around the latest planning report

The proposed GCC comments on the recent BB planning application was shared and discussed with attendees. Many of the comments from the initial BB planning application had been purposefully replicated and modified. GCC planned to fully support the application. It was agreed that Cllr Tarr would circulate the proposed response immediately so Cllrs could comment.

The deadline for comment was agreed as 1st May 2026, so the final draft could be circulated and approved. Motion for council to support the BB planning application. **Proposed:** Cllr Watts. **Seconded :** Cllr Grant. **Voted:** Unanimously in favour

JB left the meeting at 19:45 hours.

Cllr Tarr asked that another member reviewed the other pending application. Cllrs Watts and Cleeve agreed to do this.

Cllr Cleeve requested that item 8 was moved to the next item. **Proposed:** Cllr Cleeve, **Seconded** Cllr Watts. **Voted:** Unanimously in favour

MoP requested that awareness was raised about the planning application on Social Media so more residents were aware and could support. Cllr Watts agreed this would be done.

8. Neal Soils

To receive and update from Ben Maizey from Neal Soils in relation to the lorries that pass through Bassaleg early each morning

BM updated attendees on he and his colleague's roles within Neal Soils. It was confirmed that open communications between Neal Soils and GCC remained in place. A number of questions had been provided from MoP via Social Media and these had been shared prior to the meeting. It was agreed that full responses would be shared after the meeting and communicated to MoP.

Work on restoring an old waste site had initially been completed on the site. Approved soils were being brought in to restore the land (as per the initial planning condition). It was confirmed

that no waste was being put on site, only soils. The length of time the initiative had taken so far was raised as an issue. BM confirmed that works were mainly driven by the weather as soil can not be moved in bad weather. Work had been undertaken at times of minimum disruption but they were keen to understand what could be done to minimise the impact on residents in the meantime. Concerns around the environmental impact to the area would need to be addressed by Natural Resources Wales. The condition of some of the access lanes was discussed and



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concerns raised that the lanes had not been constructed to take the weight of some of the lorries using them and the "craters" were considered unacceptable. BM confirmed that NCC were responsible for repairs to road surfaces. Cllr Cleeve confirmed that the issues had been reported to NCC and these were being escalated by them. NCC had also confirmed that the lanes in question had no weight restrictions on them. BM advised that he would liaise with NCC on these issues. It was expected that work may have to continue into Spring of next year. MoP requested an update on the area that still required reinstatement. BM could not provide the information requested, but agreed that he would find this out and report back to GCC. BM shared some of the soil recycling initiatives they had undertaken and that nothing had been sent to landfill (soil wise), for approximately 4 years. An estimate on completion of the works was thought to be Summer 2027 though this couldn't be committed to. All soils used go through stringent quality protocols. The high level process for this was shared with attendees. It was asked why there was no wheel washer on site as this would help reduce soil on roads. It was agreed that this would be looked into by Neal Soils who would in return report back to GCC. It was suggested that NCC should insist on wheelwashing provision.

A high level summary of traffic management to site was shared and it was asked if further things could be done to improve the situation. All of the lorries in use at the site have the latest safety features on them and Health and Safety was at the forefront of Neal Soils activities. The use of lighting would be reviewed. Discussions on road sweeping took place and the processes for doing this was shared. Water run-off and the impact to the roads was highlighted. It was suggested that the use of semi-loaded lorries could be implemented. It was agreed that this would be investigated but would obviously impact completion dates. Neal Soils had expressed an interest to return to future GCC meetings. An open invite was given. Weekly updates would continue to be provided to GCC. A Dawson Community Social fund may be able to support the Community and details would be passed on to GCC.

Neal Soils representatives left the meeting at 20:28 hours

7. Best Kept Village (BKV)

- a) To receive proposals and approve costs for 2026 hanging baskets and new irrigation systems for both Community Centres
Cllr Cleeve provided an overview of the hanging basket provision for last year and suggested that numbers were increased from 6 per community hall to 8. A total cost of £448 for all 18 (semi-self watering) baskets. An additional requirement of 4 brackets was also required at a cost of c£250. Cllr Cleeve proposed that we used an automated watering system for both Community Halls. The process on how these systems worked was shared and it was confirmed it would cost £980 plus an installation cost of £250. Questions were asked and answered to the satisfaction of councillors. Acceptance of these costs was **Proposed**: Cllr Cleeve. **Seconded**: Cllr Sayer. **Voted**: Unanimously in favour.
- b) To discuss and agree Litter Picking plans for the ward
Cllr Cleeve updated attendees on the litterpicking user group meeting (discussed in the previous GCC meeting) had been postponed until Tuesday 26th May. BKV would work with



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the new Litterpicking team to enhance the ascetics of the ward. The set up of the proposed establishment and the protocols / processes for litter picking groups were shared.

Cllr Tarr shared concerns around the constitution but it was confirmed that the constitution was not a completed document but a work in progress. Cllr Sayer expressed an interest in being part of the initiative. A meeting outside of the GCC remit would take place. It was asked that feedback be provided to Cllr Cleeve.

An application from Best Kept Village had been received for £500 to manage councils planters. Cllr Tarr requested that this request be circulated and postponed to the next meeting.

8. Neal Soils Update

To receive and update from Ben Maizey from Neal Soils in relation to the lorries that pass through Bassaleg early each morning (already covered above)

Proposed: Cllr Tarr that items 9 and 10 are deferred to the next meeting. **Seconded :** Cllr Watts.

Voted: Unanimously in favour.

9. Task and Project Management - Deferred

To review, discuss and approve project proposals for 2026 / 27.

10. Graig Ward Policing - Deferred

To discuss and agree engagement and visibility of policing within the ward, in particular:

- a) To confirm police attendance at GCC meetings (confirm dates / communication)
- b) To agree format of police communications
- c) To agree future police led initiatives within the community (eg security marking events)

11. Planning

To consider responses to any planning applications received and opportunity to ask questions around the latest planning report (already covered earlier in the meeting)

12. Graig Ward Defibrillators

- a) To consider the proposal to formally adopt the defibrillator unit located at Forge Lane / Court Crescent and purchase a replacement battery unit for the device. Approximate cost of between £200 to £300 including VAT and delivery. Cllr Watts explained the background to the proposal. It was proposed that GCC adopted the defibrillator. Guardianship of the defibrillator would remain with the existing resident who held responsibility but GCC would adopt it and be responsible for maintenance.

Proposed: Cllr Watts. **Seconded** Cllr Sayer. **Voted :** Unanimously in favour

- b) Update on Debibrillator project, Lower Machen (Cllr Tarr declared an interest)
Cllr Watts confirmed that progress was slow but the initiative was progressing. A broader update would be provided in a future meeting.



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13. Graig Community Council Insurance

To consider quotations and agree on insurance providers from 1st June 2026 to 31st May 2027. The Clerk shared the GCC Insurance renewal with Councillors. The renewal was £5081.46 (a 3.7%

increase on the previous year's premium). Other providers (including Hiscox and Gallaghers), confirmed that they could not compete with this price (so no quote was offered), as the Zurich product was designed specifically for Community Councils.

Motion to accept renewal - **Proposed:** Cllr Watts. **Seconded:** Cllr Sayer. **Voted:** Unanimously in favour

14. Allotments

To consider the request from the Bassaleg Allotment Association to cover the cost of 30 packs of rat bait at a total cost of £143.39

Allotment inspection had taken place by Cllr Watts and Sayer. On the whole the inspection was really positive.

Motion to spend £143.39 provided for rat bait. **Proposed:** Cllr Watts **Seconded:** Cllr Harris **Voted:** 6 in favour 1 abstained

15. Finance

- a) To receive financial documents to 31st March 2026. The bank reconciliation, receipts and payments summary were received and noted. **Proposed:** Cllr Harris. **Seconded:** Cllr Watts. **Voted:** Unanimously in favour.
- b) To approve / inform the schedule of payments. * Indicates items already approved / processed

Payee		Amount
N Goodfellow	Clerk Salary January 2026	£ 996.16
Tai Hedy (NCH)	Grass Cutting Fort View Park March 2026	£ 212.04
Secure Systems	Fire Alarm Servicing GCC	£ 216.00
Fire Safety Compliance Ltd	GCC Fire Risk Assessment	£ 150.00
St Basils Church Hall	Church Hall Hire - Resident's meeting	£ 30.00*
Blacker Heating Solutions	Gas Safety Inspection Check GCC	£ 72.00
Newport City Council	Premise Licence	£ 180.00

Acceptance **Proposed:** Cllr Watts. **Seconded:** Cllr Tarr. **Voted:** Unanimously in favour.

Request received to extend the meeting by 15 minutes. **Proposed:** Cllr Tarr. **Seconded:** Cllr Watts. **Voted:** Unanimously in favour.



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16. Councillor Vacancies

Cllr Watts **proposed** that members of the press and public were excluded from the meeting.
Seconded : Cllr Tarr. **Voted**: Unanimously in favour

- a) Co-option to fill councillor vacancies
To receive presentations for co-option to the Graig Community Council. Brett Davis shared details of what he considered he could bring to GCC.
- b) Exclusion of Press and Public
To consider a resolution under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to exclude the press and public for agenda item 16c, on the grounds that the business involves the likely disclosure of personal information regarding candidates
- c) Determination of Co-option (Confidential)
To discuss the applications and proceed to a vote to fill the casual vacancy.

Brett Davis left the room. Councilors voted on his application

Proposed acceptance: Cllr Watts. **Seconded**: Cllr Sayer. **Voted**: Unanimously in favour.

Brett Davis returned to the room and was congratulated on being voted onto GCC (Bassaleg). Brett read the declaration in order to become part of the Graig Community Council and signed the appropriate paperwork.

17. Next Meeting

Wednesday 27th May 2026 at 19.00 – Annual General Meeting - Graig Community Centre and via Zoom.

The meeting closed at 21:12 hrs.