

# *Vale of Montgomery Rural Cluster*



## **VMRC MINUTES OF QUARTERLY MEETING 9th OCTOBER 2023 HELD AT SARN VILLAGE HALL**

**PRESENT:** Cllr. C Seal (Chair- Kerry): Cllr. V Wildish (Kerry): Cllr. G. Jones (Abermule with Llandyssil): Cllr J. Matthews (Abermule with Llandyssil): Cllr. P. Bettley (Berriew): Ria Roberts (Clerk – Kerry Community Council): Eve Meredith-Jones (VMRC Clerk)

**MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC/VISITORS:** Cllr. Jeremy Brignell-Thorpe

1. The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced the speaker Cllr. Jeremy Brignell-Thorpe.
2. Cllr. Jeremy Brignell-Thorpe gave an outline account of Home Support & Elderly Care at home. PCC have piloted this scheme starting in 2017. It is a “light touch” free to join scheme delivered in the domestic environment for the 50+ age bracket it is neither medical or nursing and uses a pool of paid carers. Examples of what the scheme can offer are help with are shopping, prescription collection, minor emergencies and falls. Currently four areas, Rhayader, Presteigne, Llanidloes and Builth Wells are operating with 600 people signed up. Originally funding came from the Rural Infrastructure Fund this was then transferred to Core Funding for future schemes The plan is for Welshpool/Newtown to be next. A cluster of 5-10K population is needed to justify a scheme. Ideally a collaboration between the local authorities, social services and an organisation such as PAVO operates a scheme using one manager with 4 to 5 carers on the road to facilitate the care. A leaflet for East Radnorshire Home Support was passed round the meeting which introduced the scheme with contact details.

The information supplied raised concerns which were

- Overall shortage of carers
- Handling of necessary DBS/CRB checks
- Two carers needed for visits in some cases.
- Funding
- Distances involved due to the widespread population in Powys

- The need to work with medical practices, GP involvement would be very important.

Moving forward it was suggested.

- Peter Lathbury be invited back possibly via a Zoom meeting.
- PCC Town & Community Councils online meeting were suggested as a means of looking at the subject
- Could community connectors be involved
- Facilitation of the volunteering schemes used during Covid lockdowns.
- Adverts for the scheme in community newsletters

3. **APOLOGIES**: Gareth Evans (Kerry) & Debbie Albury- (Berriew).

4. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**: There were no declarations of interest.

5. **MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING ON 3<sup>RD</sup> JULY**:

Berriew – Cllr. Kent – “work has started on the community brochure” should read “work has started on the community garden”.

“The community garden area is quite steep and is mobility friendly.” should read “The community garden area is quite steep and is not mobility friendly”.

AwL - There are three playgrounds in the AwL area – one in front of Abermule School and two in Llandyssil” should read “There are three playgrounds in the AwL area – Two in Abermule and one in Llandyssil”.

“There is to be further consultation regarding the Abermule Recycling Depot as NRW have again refused a licence” should read “There is to be further consultation regarding the Abermule Recycling Depot as NRW have refused a licence for black bin bag waste”.

After noting the corrections, the minutes were **APPROVED**.

6. **APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIR**: Phil Bettley agreed to be vice chair on temporary basis as cover should the Chair be absent.

7. **FINANCES/BANKING UPDATE/WEBSITE**:

**FINANCES/ BANKING** There have been issues relating to the change of bank account. It took approx. 5 weeks instead of the expected period of 2-3 weeks. The bank tried to deny having received a copy of the form, the Chair firmly refused to redo the paperwork and then it was completed in 4-5 days. Ria Roberts, clerk for Kerry Community Council has produced accounts for VMRC using Scribe which was set up free of charge. The banking has been reconciled. Ria has invoiced for 4 hours work at £14.70 per hour. It was **AGREED** to pay the invoice. Ria will invoice VMRC half yearly with a maximum budget of £100 per annum. Cllr. Phil Bettley requested the figures be checked by Kerry Community Council Auditors at the end of each financial year.

**WEBSITE**: Member Community councils to provide a link. Cllr. Phil Bettley pointed out this would have to be done through Berriew Community website. VMRC minutes are to be available to all Community Councils.

8. **BIODIVERSITY**:

Kerry – There are issues with grass verge cutting (PCC cut only three times a year). PCC will not allow self-cutting because of Health & Safety issues. Cllr. Matthews queried the need to cut. It was explained the issue is the long grass on a steep slope opposite the village shop/Post Office In the centre of the village. Seeding with wildflowers would need a licence. Cllr. Matthews suggested

talking to PCC Biodiversity or MWT. The area could be scraped to the sub soil and seeded with a long strong grass but this could cost £3.5K just to strip it.

AwL – Cllr. Jones reported that in Llandyssil that the wild flower garden the grass was short in some and long in others. There is an issue with dog fouling.

Berriew – Cllr. Bettley mentioned a speaker on biodiversity called Ezra Tattershall. Cllr Matthews to arrange biodiversity plans and ask Ezra for advice on moving forward and developing common themes to work on as a cluster.

## **9. REPORTS FROM EACH COUNCIL AREA:**

BERRIEW – The toilet block was initially in two phases. Funding of 25K for Phase One was acquired, Phase Two was a different grant and thanks to match funding by PCC the two phases have been combined and the toilet block completed with it in a clean and tidy condition.

The Woodland Walk is progressing well with benches installed and the school involved.

AwL – Cllr. Updated the meeting on the play areas in Abermule and Llandyssil, the MALT playground in Abermule is closed and grants are being applied for to renew it. The fence in Llandyssil is down but the planned benches are now in position. Kerry will send Abermule their public consultation questionnaire with reference to play equipment choices.

KERRY – The newly built disabled unit and refurbished public toilets are up and running. However, vandalism by young people may lead to the closing of the disabled unit during rowdy functions. The new playground is coming along well with a new fencing and kerbing. There are hedge-cutting issues and plotting out of the cemetery is in progress. Funding for Brynllwarch School may be going to Newtown.

## **10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING/VENUE/ AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS:**

15<sup>th</sup> January, 2024 – to be held at 7.30pm, Hafren Room, Abermule Community Centre.