

# *Vale of Montgomery Rural Cluster*

## **DRAFT**

### **Minutes of VMRC Quarterly Meeting 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2025 – Abermule Community Centre**

**Present:** Cllr. Carmen Seal (Chair-Kerry) : Cllr. Susan Robertson (Kerry) : Cllr. Jane Rees and Cllr. Gwyneth Jones (Abermule with Llandyssil) : Cllr. Phil Bettley and Cllr. Debbie Kent (Berriew) : Cllr. Jules Lock (Montgomery) : Cllr. Veronica Wildish – Minute Taker - Kerry) :

**Members of the Public/Visitors:** Cllr. Mike Whittall – (Churchstoke CC)

**1. Welcome:** Cllr. Seal welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Cllr. Whittall attending on behalf of Churchstoke Community Council.

**2. Apologies:** Cllr. Eve Meredith-Jones (Clerk VMRC) Sarah Brian (Montgomery)

**3. Declarations of Interest:** None,

**4. Minutes and Matters Arising:** The Minutes of Meeting which took place on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2025 were proposed as correct by Cllr. Bettley, seconded by Cllr. Lock and unanimously agreed. There were no matters arising.

**5. Invited Speaker:** PCC's Director of Economic Development and Growth, Diane Reynolds, sent her apologies as she was unable to attend. It was agreed that a further invitation be extended to Ms Reynolds for her, or a member of her team, to attend VMRC's next meeting.

**ACTION: Cllr. Bettley**

**6. Footpath Update:** PCC's Footpaths Officer, Calum Carr, confirmed that he had no objection to the proposed appendices to the MOA and it was unanimously agreed that this document is now adopted. Cllr. Seal confirmed that the MOA is not a legal document. She also provided a brief outline of the work and responsibilities of the Montgomeryshire Footpath Volunteers.

Councillors reported on outstanding issues awaiting response/resolution.

Cllr. Rees advised that equipment belonging to the Footpath Volunteers is stored in a shed in Abermule which is shortly due to be demolished. Cllr. Seal will advise Brett Kibble.

**ACTION: Cllr. Seal**

**7. Biodiversity Event 2025 and Section 6 Reports:** It was agreed that the Biodiversity Event should be held bi-annually and a small committee formed to facilitate this. Various ideas were considered – whether individual Councils held them in their own areas or whether a joint event at a single venue might be appropriate. Councillors were asked to bring ideas and suggestions to the next VMRC meeting.

**ACTION: All**

**Section 6 Reports** – Rachel Carter from One Voice Wales will assist Councillors with reports. Funding is available from ‘Keep Wales Tidy’ for biodiversity projects.

**8. Finances/Banking Update/Website:** A number of documents including invoices and bank statements were circulated prior to the meeting. Ria Roberts is no longer Clerk to Kerry Community Council but she remains as RFO for KCC and will continue as RFO for the VMRC. A second bank account has been opened with £2000.00 at Unity Bank. The interest earned should cover the cost of the Current Account charges.

**9. Revised Standing Orders and Terms of Reference:** the proposed changes were circulated prior to the meeting. Each amendment was read out by the Chair and all were agreed subject to the following:

The geographical area etc... ‘New members of the partnership may only join with the agreement of all current members. Additionally, new members must agree to accept all existing terms and conditions.’ (CS to check T’s&C’s)

3. Meetings – 3a The partnership will elect a Chair and Vice-Chair annually. The officers may be re-elected for a further one-year term. A full term defined as a maximum of two years. Subsequent officers may not be appointed from the same Council as the outgoing term-served officers.

#### **10. Reports from each Council:**

**Montgomery** - Cllr. Lock - (i) concerns raised due to lack of infrastructure to support a planning application for 54 new houses. (ii) Preparations for the May Fair gathering pace. (iii) A successful afternoon tea event had been held for senior citizens with entertainment provided by a group from Bishops Castle.

**Abermule with Llandyssil** – Cllr. Rees – (i) Recreation Association working with CC to obtain grant funding for new playground equipment. (ii) AwL now has an Assistant Clerk. (iii) The issue of black bag waste being taken to the recycling depot is being taken back to PCC Planning Department.

**Kerry, Dolfor, Sarn** – Cllr. Robertson – (i) Grant funding has been received from the Garreg Lwyd Hill Wind Farm Fund towards the cost of repairing substantial damage to the riverbank and Grade II listed bridge in Dolerw Park.

**Berriew** – Cllr. Bettley – (i) CC has leased land in the centre of the village for a circular woodland walk. A grant of £17,000 has been received from TNL ‘Awards for All’ for hard-standings and benches. Cllr. Kent hopes to create a Dragon Walk or story trail for children. (ii) It is planned to produce QR codes telling the history of Berriew via a walking tour. (iii) Black Bridge which crosses the Rhiew has been condemned and requires £500,000 to replace it.

**Churchstoke** - Cllr. Whittall – (i) A disused telephone box has been purchased and is being used as a book swop space. (ii) The graveyard is being maintained with mowing restricted to meet biodiversity targets. (iii) Project work is largely carried out by the residents and the Recreation Group.

**11. Associate Membership Update:** Castle Caerionion declined invitation stating they received adequate support from OVW.

**12. Suggestions for Future Speakers:** PCC Planning Officer.

**13. Date of Next Meeting:** Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> July 1925. **Venue:** - \_Montgomery Institute

**Agenda items for future meetings to be submitted to VMRC Clerk**