

ONE VOICE WALES

**Meeting of the Monmouthshire & Newport Area Committee held online at 7pm
on Thursday 9 January 2025.**

Minutes

Present: Members

Councillor Philip Bowyer	Abergavenny Town Council
Councillor John Davies	Bishton Community Council
Councillor Jim Mac Taggart	Chepstow Town Council
Councillor Dominic Power	Chepstow Town Council
Councillor Janet Robins	Goytre Fawr Community Council
Councillor Jenny Carpenter	Llanbadoc Community Council
Councillor Matthew Cleeve	Graig community council
Councillor Graham Rogers	Llangybi Fawr Community Council
Councillor Cath Davis	Marshfield Community Council
Councillor Christine Roberts	Marshfield Community Council
Councillor Matt Sidwell	Mathern Community Council
Councillor Tom Kirton	Mitchel Troy Community Council
Councillor Gaynor Connor	Mitchel Troy Community Council
Councillor Tom Kirton	Monmouth Town Council
Councillor Phil Ellwood	Rogiet Community Council
Councillor Lynne Parker	Wye Valley Community Council

Present: Clerks

Sandra Rosser, Clerk	Abergavenny Town Council
Jay Shipley, Deputy Clerk	Abergavenny Town Council
Jonathan Lazenby, Clerk	Goytre Fawr Community Council
Jacqueline Ford	Langstone Community Council
Beverley Young, Clerk	Portskewett Community Council

Apologies for Absence: Members

Councillor Gareth Wilde	Abergavenny Town Council
Councillor Kay Swift	Caerwent Community Council
Councillor Donna James	Magor with Undy Town Council
Councillor Carol Carne	Portskewett Community Council

One Voice Wales: Officers in attendance

Maria Mulcahy: South Wales Development Officer

M&NAC 2025/01 Chair's Address

Chair Cllr Tom Kirton welcomed members to the meeting.

M&NAC 2025/02 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence as set out above.

M&NAC 2025/03 Declarations of Personal Interests

It was **Resolved** any declarations of interest should be stated during, the course of the meeting.

M&NAC 2025/04 To receive a presentation –

Carl Williams, Gwent Police Chief Superintendent and Head of territorial policing for Gwent sent his apologies and a presentation was received from Superintendent Jason White.

Key points of the presentation:

- Gwent Police are currently going through operating changes in the force. This is due to changes in demand, increased public expectation and diversity. Mark Hobrough has been appointed as the new Chief Constable of Gwent.
- Throughout the presentation Jason emphasised that the police rely on community intelligence as well as collaboration with partners and businesses to deter, prevent and investigate offences.

If anyone sees any unusual activity or has any information it can be provided to the police by simply phoning 101, messaging them on their social media or reporting it online. Always dial 999 in an emergency. The police also, monitor etc intelligence information through local surgeries, Crimestoppers, local stakeholders and local councillors.

Jason emphasised once the police have information to act upon, it is unfortunately difficult for the police to sometimes keep people up to date with what is happening.

- Since Welsh Government have ceased funding for PCSOs and Community liaison there has been a sizeable reduction in the number of PCSOs. Due to the funding costs the police have had to look at new approaches for liaising with communities and schools. Schools have now been absorbed into their neighbourhood and policing teams.
- Councillors personal safety – The superintendent advised that individuals have to take responsibility for their own safety but Gwent police had delivered safety training to Newport Community councillors during a Newport City Council liaison meeting. The superintendent will contact Monmouthshire County Council in

order to see whether or not safety training can be delivered to the Monmouthshire Town and Community Councillors.

- The police have a new social media platform which has gone live and there is an increase in people looking at it
<https://www.facebook.com/gpnewport>

The Chair asked whether or not it is still possible for larger councils to part fund PCSOs for their area as he is aware that it happened previously in the Chepstow area.

Jason – If it has happened before then it is probably still on the table.

The Chairman thanked Jason for the presentation and he left the meeting.

It was **Resolved** that MM would forward a copy of the presentation to members which can be shared with their councils.

M&NAC 2025/05 Minutes of the meeting held on 24 October and 5 July 2024

It was **Resolved** that the minutes are approved as a correct record subject to the minutes of the July meeting stating that Cllr Davies (Bishton CC) had submitted his apologies.

M&NAC 2025/06 Matters arising in respect of the above minutes, not otherwise on the agenda.

MM advised that she is in contact with Chris Harris at the RSPB. One Voice Wales has offered to hold a meeting so that information about the Living Levels Successor project can be shared with the member councils that will be involved in the new project. Information about the meeting will be shared with relevant members as soon as possible.

It was **Resolved** that the information is noted.

M&NAC 2025/07 To discuss representation on the National Executive Committee

No nominations received. MM advised members of the importance of having representation on the committee and

asked members to give consideration to becoming a representative.

It was **Resolved** that the information be noted.

M&NAC 2025/08 To appoint a representative to sit on the Monmouth GAVO committee

MM awaiting further information from GAVO as they are looking at the number of meetings etc.

Resolved that the information be noted.

M&NAC 2025/09 To appoint a representative to sit on the Newport GAVO committee

MM awaiting further information from GAVO.

Resolved that the information be noted..

M&NAC 2025/10 The Wye Valley National Landscape (AONB) JAC - To receive a report from Cllr Lynne Parker.

Lynne attended the meeting on 4 November 2024 and found it quite interesting especially after viewing some of the backing documents.

- Lynnes village has already benefitted from 2 of the initiatives
 - Dark Skies - a workshop was held in Llandogo
 - The Village Hall received a survey and lighting upgrade
- The Wye Valley National Landscape Team hosted a Climate Action Network event, in Llandogo which was quite inspirational, mainly attended by groups and bodies from England but MCC officers supported it as did Gwent WI groups, as well as community councillors.
- Whitestone Woods above Llandogo were one of the locations used in relation to accessible paths - a variety of mobility scooters etc were available for trial on the forestry paths.

It was **Resolved** that the information be noted and a copy of Lynnes report highlighting the key issues be shared with members.

M&NAC 2025/11 Developments in Relation to Charters/Devolution of Services/Asset Transfers

Charters

Newport – No updates.

Bishton CC -Community Councils in Newport have raised concerns with Newport City Council about difficulty in finding out who owns land ie grass maintenance. Difficulties have arisen since the housing stock transfer to Newport City Homes.

Marshfield CC – The Council has been advised that churches will be asking community councils to take over responsibility for church graves once the cemeteries are full.

Monmouthshire – No updates

Councils were invited to give a brief description of developments that were being planned or had been implemented. Examples reported are set out below:

Chepstow Town Council – The Drill Hall in Chepstow is now managed by the Town Council

It was **Resolved** that the information be noted.

M&NAC 2025/12 Senedd Inquiry in relation to the role, governance and accountability of the community and town council sector

It was **Resolved** that this information be noted

M&NAC 2025/13 Report of the Democratic Health Task and Finish Group

It was **Resolved** that this information be noted

M&NAC 2025/14 Councillor Training programme and Consultancy Services

Details of the training programme are circulated to all councils. One Voice Wales continues to deliver a broad range of training opportunities with bursaries available to eligible councils.

It was **Resolved** that this information be noted

M&NAC 2025/15 Development of Good Practice Guidance

Since the last meeting, One Voice Wales had produced guidance on the following topics:

- Naming domains and websites
- Email and procurement
- Cloud storage

One Voice Wales welcomes any feedback on the notes as well as any suggestions of topics for future notes.

It was **Resolved** that the information is noted

M&NAC 2025/16 The draft minutes of the National Executive Committee (NEC) held on 13 December 2024

MM highlighted that all member councils are encouraged to attend and participate in the One Voice Wales AGM which is being held online on Tuesday 11th March 2025 at 2pm.

It was **Resolved** that the information is noted.

M&NAC 2025/17 Guest speakers for Future Meetings

- Newport Democratic and Electoral Services Manager
- Natural Resource Wales - South East Wales – Lead Specialist Advisor Waer Quality- Steve Morgan.
- A representative from Warm Wales.

Members were advised that unfortunately the dates for the April and July meetings had to be rescheduled.

It was **Resolved** that the next meeting should be on 3rd April and the July meeting be held on 3rd July.

M&NAC 2025/18 Conferences: One Voice Wales National Awards Conference in Builth Wells

Members were advised that the date had been changed to 30 April 2025. All councils irrelevant of their size can be nominated. These awards are an opportunity for your Council to showcase the services it provides for its community, and an opportunity for councillors, clerks and staff to receive the recognition they deserve.

It was **Resolved** that the information is noted.

M&NAC 2025/19 One Voice Wales Cost of Living Crisis Project

An update about the work that the team are doing had been circulated with papers for this meeting

It was **Resolved** that the information is noted.

M&NAC 2025/20 Digital Maturity Assessments – Update

Members were reminded of the importance of completing the assessment and checking with their councils that the assessment had been submitted.

It was **Resolved** that the information is noted.

M&NAC 2025/21 Correspondence and Consultations.

MM gave a brief summary of the information that had been circulated by One Voice Wales since October and this included reminding councils about an email which was circulated on 2.12.24 -

In conjunction with One Voice Wales, researchers from Aberystwyth University are undertaking a study as part of a Local Policy and Innovation Partnership. They wish to build a complete data set of community resilience in Wales in relation to local economies, climate change, culture and wellbeing that can be used by policymakers and stakeholder organisations to improve the quality of life in Welsh Communities. They have extended the deadline to 31st January to give more time for community and town councils to respond.

It was **Resolved** that the information is noted.

M&NAC 2025/22 Matters for Referral to NEC

It was **Resolved** that the following information be sent to the NEC:

Members would like NEC to reconsider the quorum for area committees as decisions cannot be made unless quorate.

M&NAC 2025/23 News and Reports from Councils

Councils were invited to give a brief description of initiatives that were being planned or had been implemented. Examples reported are set out below

Monmouth Town Council –

- The council held a good lantern parade in December but it was delayed due to the weather.
- The council have been awarded funding from the UK Government's Shared Prosperity Fund to support the regeneration of Church Street, and nearby White Swan Court that also houses independent shops. They are going to place wrought iron archway welcome signs in order to help promote businesses.

Bishton CC – The council held a well-attended carol service. Caldicot choir sang and a couple of hundred people attended.

It was **Resolved** that the information be noted

M&NAC 2025/24 Any other business at the discretion of the Chair

It was **Resolved** that there was no other business

M&NAC 2025/25 Date of next meeting

It was **Resolved** that the next meeting will be at 7pm on 3 April 2025 at the Sessions House in Usk.