

MAELOR SOUTH COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held on Tuesday 2nd September 2025 at 7.00pm
Community Room, Madras School, Penley

Present:

Cllr Alwyn Reay (Chair), Cllr John Griffiths, Cllr John Blanchard, Cllr Keith Owen, Cllr Nick Ringrose, Cllr J Tomkinson

Apologies: Cllr Ian Burdett, Cllr Michelle Edge

Also present:

John Gallanders – Clerk; Cllr J McCusker (Borough Councilor)

Guest: Gareth Stacey (WCBC Play Development Team)

01.09 Chairs Announcements

The Chair opened the meeting and noted apologies and acknowledged the first meeting of MSCC in the new Community Room at Madras School.

02.09 Police Update

No police report was received for this meeting. Clerk informed Members that current speed issues have been logged on the Go Safe website. It is proposed the issue will be discussed at the arranged site meeting on Thursday 4th September outside of the schools. It was highlighted that speed enforcement sites need to be designated and at present WCBC have not identified suitable site.

03.09 County Councillor / WCBC Update

Cllr McCusker noted difficulties with drainage enforcement at Cadney Lane due to tree preservation orders affecting potential remedy drainage work to avoid future flooding. Despite numerous requests for an onsite meeting between WCBC and MSCC one has still not occurred. Clerk to provide Cllr McCusker with recent email traffic from the WCBC Tree Officer and Drainage Team regarding contradictions between TPO and previous enforcement notices.

Members expressed concern that WCBC may be legally liable for property damage should flooding occur given the amount of correspondence already exchanged.

Cllr McCusker confirmed he will attend the site meeting at the school and expressed concerns that WCBC were late nominating a relevant officer. Members confirmed their concerns about the two schools closing at the same

time and now the additional traffic for three – four months due to the closure of the A525 and all traffic being diverted through Penley.

Concerns were raised about missed green bin collections following the recent strike which was called off at the last minute. Some collections were delayed by two weeks, with conflicting messages from WCBC. Clerk to clarify with WCBC Waste Services and publish accurate information on the website for residents.

04.09 Penley Play and Youth Project

Gareth Stacey (WCBC Play Development) attended to present findings from research undertaken by Gloucestershire University on children's play needs in Penley. The extensive report highlighted all current play space opportunities and gaps that children, young people and parents had identified. The study identified strong support for additional space for teenagers beyond the existing playground which was seen as a younger age facility.

The only identified viable land to create a 'young person's space' is on the Maelor School playing field adjacent to Madras School. Maelor School Governors and Headteacher are supportive in principle but require clarity on insurance and management etc. on a site that could be leased at a peppercorn rate.

It was noted that there could be Section 106 funds available for the development of a 'play' facility.

It was agreed in principle that MSCC will support further exploration of a lease arrangement with the school. MSCC Council Youth Club representatives to continue dialogue with WCBC and school governors and report progress at a future meeting.

Clerk identified potential funding sources through the Welsh Government CAFAP programme should once a scheme is developed.

05.09 Minutes of meeting 1st July 2025

Minutes accepted – proposed by Cllr John Griffiths seconded by Cllr John Blanchard

No matters arising not covered by agenda items.

05.09 Village projects and updates

Bettisfield

Office Field

The recent commemoration for the late Cllr Alison Jones was noted as a success with good community attendance. Members discussed replacement of the two

failed fruit trees planted at Office Field. It was agreed to source four replacements in Spring 2026, within the existing budget.

It was noted that CRT have still not responded to requests to reinstate the grass area to the standard prior to the field being used for their machinery when undertaking canal repairs. It was agreed that the Clerk should communicate disappointment and seek a remedy.

The hedge adjoining Cadney Lane was debated again with Members agreeing no further action at present, noting that BT or power companies may intervene if wires are affected which may result in a significant degree of cutting if they became involved.

Defibrillator Maintenance

The defibrillator at Bettisfield Chapel was inspected by the Welsh Ambulance Service and found to require a new cabinet and defibrillator. The unit has been replaced by WAST, but MSCC needs to purchase a new cabinet. Robert Thompson (local resident) has agreed to act as the Guardian for regular checks. Clerk authorised to arrange purchase of a new cabinet and engage local electrician to rewire as required.

Penley

Both agenda items covered under separate items

06.09 Financial Update

The Clerk reported on payments to be authorized. Including grass cutting, play inspections, IT support and SLCC subscription. Three payments were made in August for items previously approved by Members in the budget. After all authorized payments, the balance across accounts stands at £39,999.52 (of which £15,000 remains allocated to the zebra crossing). Members approved transfer of £1,000 from Community Support to IT budget line to cover overspend. It was agreed to proceed with procurement of a new noticeboard for Penley (approx. £900 budget).

07.09 Governance

Despite promoting the two vacancies for Bettisfield and Penley only one person has sought any information. Members discussed the need to promote the role as one that appeals to all age groups within the community. A new poster/ Social Media campaign will be designed emphasising that all residents with an interest in the community are eligible to serve, not just those with professional backgrounds.

IT update: 3 new laptops have been received and will be configured with MS365 accounts for Members. A 12-month support contract has been agreed for 5 laptops.

08.09 Planning Applications

There are no new planning applications – representation has been submitted after the last meeting for the Oswestry Classic Car and Big Green Court housing development. Both applications are currently going through due process with the Planning Department.

09.09 Correspondence

The Clerk circulated a report from the Community Agent. Members noted there was little specific reference to activity in Penley or Bettisfield. It was agreed to invite the Community Agent to the November meeting to provide a detailed update. Clerk to confirm arrangements.

10.09 Meetings Attended

Cllrs reported they will be attending Bettisfield Village Hall AGM.

Future meeting with WCBC Highways arranged for site visit on 4th September.

11.09 Any Other Business

No further business was raised.

Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 7th October 2025 at Community Room, Madras School 6.30 pm.

NOTE earlier to allow for discussion with representatives from BCUHB re the Penley Hospital closure.