Minutes from the MEETING of RHAYADER TOWN COUNCIL held at: 7.00 pm on the 21<sup>st</sup> March 2023 in the Council Chamber, Cwmdauddwr Community Centre.

The meeting was preceded by a presentation from the Rhayader GP Practice Manager which took the form of a Question and Answer session with Jane Jones (JJ) accompanied by Jane Narborough (JN)

- Q. Rhayader used to have 3 GPs, and for a long time now we have been reduced to one. The people of Rhayader very much voice that recruiting more GPs is crucial for the town. What has Rhayader Surgery been doing in the last 12 months to try secure more GPs?
- A. The practice has not had 3 GPS since 2006. There are currently 2 GPs however Dr Hartley is on Maternity Leave and will not return until the end of August or September. The position was advertised for a "salaried" doctor but only received one applicant who was unsuitable as they were not registered to practice in the UK
- Q. How many Locums does Rhayader GP have available on a daily basis? In the interim of there not being enough doctors what is Rhayader Surgery doing to ensure that we use more Locums until that gap is filled?

  A. Last year Dr R King covered for 2 days a week, now can only cover 2 days per month as he is busy with his own surgery. Tried to get one from Hereford but he was unable to commit the time. Currently no permanent locums are available.
- Q. What is the process for recruiting a GP?
- A. Advertised in the British Medical Journal and via the Powys Health Board. Practice Managers meet and share their requirements so vacancies are also advertised via word of mouth.
- Q. If a GP is interested, what do they have to commit to, for example do they have to buy into the practice financially?
- A. No, they don't have to become a partner, last time it was advertised as either a salaried position or the option to buy into the practice. Applicants were not forced to buy into the practice.
- Q. If this is seen as a barrier, what are the alternatives?
- A. This is not a barrier, see reply above.
- Q. What response has been received so far?
- A. As above, only one applicant who was not eligible to work in the UK
- Q. What are the barriers noted by any applicants?
- A. See answer above.
- Q. Is the shortage of GPs the only challenge you face?
- A. Yes, there is a practice nurse and advanced nurse practitioner to triage patients
- Q. Does the practice have enough nurses?
- A. Yes. Rowena is reducing her hours so Maria is doing more triage and a new nurse is starting in April working for 3 days a week and will cover more clinics. Maria is currently completing a course to become a senior nurse practitioner.
- Q. Is there any support the Town Council can provide?
- A. Continue the work in conjunction with Rhayader 2000 to promote Rhayader as a fantastic place to live and work.
- It should be noted, there is a problem if a GP wants to apply but their partner then has to try and find work in the area.

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- Q. If someone contacts the surgery with a medical problem, what is the process they need to go through before they can be seen by a GP?
- A. They will be contacted via telephone by the nurse first, if necessary, they will then be seen by a nurse. If the patient insists, they will be given a face to face appointment with the GP. It should be noted, as there is only one GP it is difficult to arrange lots of face to face appointments.
- Q. What are the internal guidelines / target times between someone ringing with a problem and potentially being seen by a practice nurse and then GP?
- A. Usually the patient will be called back the same day. If they ring the surgery in the afternoon, the call back may be the following morning. A face to face appointment with the GP may take up to 2 weeks if non-urgent.
- Q. In what circumstances would you recommend someone goes to the Pharmacy instead?
- A. The pharmacy can deal with most common ailments listed under the Common Ailments Scheme. Under this scheme, the pharmacist can prescribe certain medications free of charge. There is now a permanent pharmacist in Rhayader.
- Q. Under what circumstances will the GP make a home visit?
- A. If a patient was completely unable to visit the surgery, a home visit would be offered.
- Q. If someone believes they really need to speak to a GP after being dealt with by a nurse or is not confident in the treatment proposed by the nurses, what action should the person take?
- A. Ring back and ask for an appointment with the GP. If any problems, refer to the Practice Manager.
- Q. Do people have a right to insist on being escalated up to a GP?
- A. Yes, every right.
- Q. If someone is unhappy with the service or treatment they receive, what is the correct process to follow to lodge a complaint?
- A. Contact the Practice Manager. This can be done over the phone but ideally in writing via letter or email with as many details as possible.
- Q. What reassurance can you give that if a complaint is made, this will not be held against them in any way?
- A. This would not be held against the person, the practice is more than happy to hear from patients.
- Q. What is the process for Referrals? What confirmations can you offer to a Patient that such a referral has been made, and when it has been made?
- A. Under the current process, after the consultation with the GP, the referral request is sent to Anna who types it up, usually the same day, and sends it electronically to the relevant department. Patients are welcome to contact the surgery to make sure the referral has been sent and to get an idea of how long they might have to wait.
- Q. In regard to test results (X rays, blood etc), what is your current process for ensuring all Patients are informed of results in a timely manner? Is the onus placed on the patient to chase the surgery for such results?
- A. There is currently a huge volume of tests to be carried out, there is waiting list for Blood tests. Once these tests are carried out the patient will usually be given an indication of how long they will have to wait for the results. The samples are sent to Hereford to process. When the test results come back whether blood, X rays or others, the patients are notified but only if there is some sort of anomaly or problem. If the results are normal, the surgery will not contact the patient.

Patients are welcome to contact the surgery it they don't hear anything and want to check on their results..

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DD thanked Jane for answering the questions and reiterated RTC's willingness to support in any way it can before opening the floor for discussion.

AD asked: regarding test results if "no news is good news", what if the tests have been missed? JJ explained there is a system in place that double checks results have been logged correctly, if there were a potentially serious issue, Herford would have flagged it up with the surgery straight away.

JS asked: what is the ideal number of GPs and is the surgery still advertising? JJ advised 2 full time is ideal, the position it is not currently being advertised. It costs £2,000 to advertise, therefore the surgery want to wait and advertise in conjunction with Llandrindod Wells who will be looking for 3 GPs

JS suggested there should be adverts out there now and it should be on the practices own website.

DT clarified his understanding of the situation: there are no adverts currently in the BMJ, the last advert was placed in August 2022, there is only one GP currently and this will continue until Dr Hartley returns in Aug/Sept. There is no advert on Powys Health Board, but is due to be placed in the near future. Could there be a more proactive approach? Could social media be used to help promote the vacancy?

With regards the referral system, it seems the onus is completely on the patient to check to see if tests results or referrals have been done. There is no active notification that referrals have taken place or that blood and other test results are back. JJ explained that with 3,500 patients there is not time to contact people, GDP prevents automatic emails going out but the surgery will email people if specifically asked to.

JS noted that the local dentist and chiropractor sends out messages, could there not be a way to utilise technology to help with this and give patients an "opt in" choice? The surgery currently emails to re-confirm appointments, could this expanded? To be considered.

RT: It's been confirmed Dr Hartley is in a salaried position, is Dr Thompson the only partner, is he full time? It was clarified that he currently works for 10 sessions but wants to reduce this to 8 sessions as he did when Dr Hartley was in place.

Does the practice get complaints about the GP. JJ confirmed that there had been complaints from time to time.

It was clarified the building is owned by Mrs Buchan and Mrs Joy. Dr Thompson bought into the practice and is currently the only partner. Dr Hartley has a young family so did not want that level of commitment. If another GP wants to buy into the business, they could take a 49% share with Dr Thompson holding 51%

CW asked how many staff were employed:

1 GP, 1 Advanced Nurse Practitioner, 1 Practice Nurse with an additional Practice Nurse joining in April, 1 Secretary, 1 Receptionist and pharmacy, 1 Receptionist, 1 Health Care Assistant, 1 person part time to process letters from hospital and updating records. Ideally looking to recruit a pharmacist for the practice 1 day per week.

It was noted that patients should have an annual review but the surgery are behind with this It was clarified Llandrindod Wells have a population in the region of 10,000. Although there appears to be a lot of GPs, a number work part time on a job share basis

It was clarified that there did not appear to be any issues with the location of the surgery, parking etc.

AD has the surgery App and explained its benefits. RTC could help promote this, JJ provided leaflets for the Cllrs.

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JJ explained blood tests usually come back quite quickly, but explained patients are usually informed when the tests are expected so they can choose to follow up.

GPs salaries were discussed, it appears salaries are set. Locums can dictate their level of salary. Agency staff cost around £250 per day more than the usual locums

JJ was asked if a relocation package is offered: No, not at this time. Should this be considered? Powys Health Board used to offer a relocation scheme but this is no longer in place.

It was noted Dr King is planning to set up a private practice in Crossgates.

The question of hospital provision was raised, JN explained that with a population of this size , it does not warrant a hospital

JN noted the lack of GPs is not just a local issue, nationally 158 surgeries have closed in England as they cannot recruit GPs there. Locally, the surgery used to get a number of 6<sup>th</sup> Form students from outside the area visiting the surgery. There is still some interest but fewer are coming forward.

Closed 7.25pm

DD thanked Jane J and Jane N for their time and for providing answers to all the questions raised and re-iterated the offer for RTC to support in any way it can.

1122/01	The ordinary meeting opened at 7.30pm
	ATTENDING: D. Davies (DD) Chairing.
	Cllrs. A. Davies (AD); V. Jones-Davies (VJD); C. Walton (CW); J. Stuart (JS); D. Lloyd (DL); D. Thomas
	(DT); D.O. Evans (DOE); R. Thomas (RT); K. Cronin (KC) and J. Stephens (Clerk) C. Hamer (CH) from 7pm
	APOLOGIES: Cllrs W. Davies (WD); L. Lloyd (LL);
	Remote access attempted by C. Evans (CW); V. L. Garwood - Responsible Finance Officer (VLG) but
	were unable to join due to technical issues
	There were no public requests to attend.
1122/02	<b>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST:</b> Members were requested to declare any personal and/or prejudicial
1122/02	interests they may have in matters to be considered at the meeting. <b>None declared</b>
1122/03	CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS:
,	a. The chairman thanked AD, RT and CH for representing the council at the recent opening of
	Devils Gulch, he was unable to make the event himself
	b. Noted a high turnout at the recent Round the Lakes Race, with numbers up on last year.
1122/04	MATTERS FOR DISCUSSION UNDER URGENT BUSINESS: raised since the issue of the agenda:
	(see 1122/16)
	AD: Cwmdauddwr School Garden, PCC Quarterly Meeting, Smithfield Trustees, Speed Watch Group
	RT: Use of Teams
	CH: Grazing
	Clerk: Asset List, Recycling enquiry
1122/05	MINUTES:
	a) The Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on the 21 <sup>st</sup> February 2023 were approved.
1122/06	MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES NOT ON THE AGENDA:
1122,00	a) Bryn Blaen: AD advised The Trunk Road agency pay for repairs, not PCC. Welsh Government
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employ Jones Bros. b) AD confirmed the issues with the Trunk Road by the Leisure Centre, outside the Library and Church Street had all been reported to PCC c) Cost of Mugs (see 1122/09d) d) Clerk to re-circulate the copy of the Church Lease with the Leisure Centre to RTC e) DD has been working actively with the Sports Association to explore opportunities for the Weirglood Site, there is potential for development of the site into a key Sports Venue for Mid Wales. Representation has been made at the Senedd with further meetings planned via Teams. 1122/07 **COMMITTEES, SUB-COMMITEES and WORKING GROUPS:** a) Minutes from the Allotment Committee meeting held on the 8<sup>th</sup> February 2023 were approved. b) Minutes from the Asset Committee Meeting are being updated with comments from CE. Clerk to re-circulate when complete for approval INFORMATION AND UP-DATES FROM THE LOCAL COUNTY COUNCIL MEMBER. 1122/08 See attached notes with updates from Cllr. Davies 1122/09 **PROJECTS AND COMMUNITY ISSUES** a) Disposal of Clinical Waste: DT explained he had been approached by a distressed resident who is experiencing difficulties with the disposal of personal / clinical waste. KC explained the difference between clinical and non-clinical waste. Residents can request a Refuse and Recycling review by PCC, a Waste Awareness Assessor will visit the household and advise on options which may potentially result in a larger waste bin. DT to notify the resident. b) Clerk explained the police had been in touch to notify RTC their investigation into the Arson Attack was now closed. c) Library: As CE was unable to attend via Teams, CW provided a short update on the Asset Committee Meeting. Approval to go ahead with the transfer was re-stated with agreement that the MoU was key. RT keen to move forward and identify funding opportunities and sees the venue as a useful community hub with potential for "hot desking". AD thanked Clare for her eloquent explanation on the benefits of moving forward. The amount of work undertaken to reach this point by CE was noted with thanks. With support from LL as required, CE to present a revised draft MoU d) Coronation Plans: JS reiterated proposed plans to include: A Picnic or BBQ at the Groe on Saturday, a free concert by the Rhayader Players at the Leisure Centre on the Sunday evening, arrangements are in hand. RTC to pay for the hire of the Hall. And a Day of Action at Waun Capel on Monday. RT asked if it was possible to hold a Street Party, DD confirmed this had already been discussed and rejected although residents could be encouraged to organise their own local events in their homes or estates. JS asked if it was possible to hold a Church Service on the Sunday morning. Clerk to write to the Vicar and ask. A discussion was held to assign responsibilities for organising the events at the Groe and Waun Capel. JS is away so cannot assist on this occasion. Of the remaining Events Committee members, LL was not at the meeting so could not comment and DT is too busy with work commitments but stated he is part of the Remembrance Committee not the Events Committee. It was agreed DL would speak to the Groe Trust and VJD would speak to the Waun Capel Trust at their next meetings to gauge their willingness to undertake some of the organisation. VJD provided details of quotes for the Mugs, £586 for 252 Mugs. Quote was accepted, Clerk to Liaise with VLG to organise payment in advance and ensure Mugs are delivered directly to the school. KC to produce a Poster to promote the Coronation Plans. CW expressed his disappointment at the lack of actions and proposed roles be reviewed at the AGM. Clerk to

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	<ul> <li>add to the AGM agenda. JS noted that the role of the council appears to have changed with more time being spent resolving wider matters potentially at the expense of local actions.</li> <li>e) Lobbying MPs re Leisure Centres. AD has taken action to Lobby in support of the Swimming Pool where appropriate. AD clarified the current funding commitment from PCC was to keep both Leisure Centres and Pools open. It was disappointing to note FL and PCC were still not willing to share figures despite earlier assurances they would be forthcoming. CW noted a concern that with Brecon being awarded £3.5Million, there would be less available to cover other centres. DL and CW both noted FL assign operational targets with LC staff, but they are unattainable as they exceed the number of actual residents / children. RT asked everyone to encourage people to swipe their cards when visiting the LC to help ensure stats are accurate. It was noted FL have taken the positive step to publicise a number of anniversary events for the weekend of the 25/26 March. RTC to help promote this as widely as possible. DOE felt FL had missed an opportunity to share memories of the old social events that used to be held at the LC. Clerk to ask Theresa to ensure details of events are shared with local schools and include memories of old social events where appropriate.</li> <li>f) Community Awards Event: KC explained her ideas for a Community Awards Event. The Clerk shared thoughts from the last RTC meeting. KC to draw up a proposal for consideration at</li> </ul>
	the next meeting
	HIGHWAYS AND PCC MATTERS:
1122/10	Highways:
1122/10	a) Trunk Road condition; RT shared concerns that businesses are potentially losing trade every
	time the A470 floods. Noted
	PCC Matters
	None
1122/11	PUBLICITY and EVENTS:
,	a) JS asked Clerk obtain a copy of the advert for the GP vacancy and ask Karen Compton to
	publicise
1122/12	PLANNING: .
	<ul> <li>a. 23/0248/HH: Partial rebuilding, extension and alteration to existing outbuilding at Greenland's, East Street, LD6 5DR. AD left the room during the discussion. No objections were raised. Clerk to notify Planning.</li> </ul>
	b. AD explained the importance of presenting objections or raising queries on contentious
	applications in the correct format. Using this format to provide a comprehensive and
	coherent argument carries more weight with the planning committee. AD encouraged Cllrs.
	To undertake the training offered which can be invaluable. AD to share information on
	forthcoming training, DL keen to attend.
	c. JS and DT asked if there had been any further information on the query regarding the
	development at Rock Cottage. Nothing listed on the Planning Portal
1122/13	FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE: Presented by the Clerk on behalf of VLG
	HSBC Account balances and payments to be approved 21/03/2023
	A bank reconciliation was circulated. It noted the following cash in hand per Bank Statements:
	0.00 Petty Cash
	52,219.92 Recycling
	0.01. Allotment SAVING
	19,473.15 Bryntitli
	136.57 Allotment A/C
	4,897.26 Toilet A/C
	58,389.29 Current (precept a/c)
	Less unpresented payments £2,050.00

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### Total Bank Balance all accounts £133,066.20

The balances supported by bank statements were approved along with the following payments (VJD/JS):

### **Internal Transfers to approve: None**

#### **Invoices for payment: PRECEPT**

Clerk Mar 2023 time sheet to be approved by DD	TBA (IB)
HMRC Mar 2023 as approved by DD	TBA (IB)
RFO Mar2023 time sheet to be approved by DD	TBA (IB)
Office Solutions Wales inv 2721	11.99 (IB)
Office Solutions Wales inv 2681	45.36

### **TOILETS - Invoices for payment:**

Info JAT (cleaning MAR) excludes HMRC	413.96 (IB)
Adcocks Inv 226951	163.37
For info Brit gas HYB	13.46
For Info Brit Gas Triangle	34.24
For info Brit Gas Triangle	34.24 Credit
For Info Brit Gas Triangle	27.00
For info Brit Gas Dark Lane	120.82
For info Dwr Cymru Triangle	164.69

## **ALLOTMENTS - Invoices for payment:**

For Info Dwr Cymru 22.46

**RECYCLING - Invoices for payment: NONE** 

Midway Plants 2022 A/C 204.21

# **BRYNTITLI - Invoices for payment: NONE**

## **GOVERNANCE**

- a) Members were reminded to complete any outstanding Records of Members Interests and Training Needs Assessments and return these to VLG
- b) Applications for funding were considered. After discussion it was agreed: Macmillan Cancer Support, award £100 (JS/AD). Clerk to notify VLG. Marie Curie, award £100 (VJD/DD) Clerk to notify VLG. Yes Cymru. Award denied on political grounds. Welsh Ambulance. Carry forward request to the next meeting. Clerk to double check which organisation this is from.
- c) The External Audit is underway but not yet complete, VLG has provided answers to queries raised and is waiting to hear back from the Audit Wales Office.
- d) Information on 2023/2024 Payments to Cllrs was shared. All Cllrs present completed an Opt Out Form. **CE, WD and LL to complete a form at the next meeting**
- e) Following an observation from the External Auditor, VLG and DD have drafted a job description and contract for the Toilets Caretaker.

## 1122/14 | CORRESPONDENCE:

Correspondence received via email has been circulated and is summarised in the Correspondence List.

1122/15 **COMMUNITY ISSUES AND MEMBER DISCUSSIONS:** 

None raised

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1122/16	URGENT ITEMS NOT ON THIS AGENDA to include items received between the date of the agenda and			
	the date of the meeting and also those proposed to and approved by the Chairman at the start of the			
	meeting:			
	a. AD asked who to write to regarding issues with the Cwmdauddwr School Garden and Plaque.			
	This falls outside the remit of RTC. AD was advised to write to KC in her capacity as Secretary			
	of the Hall Trust.			
	<b>b.</b> AD reminded Cllrs. of the PCC Quarterly Town and Community Council Meeting scheduled for			
	the 27 <sup>th</sup> April at 6pm. It is important that Rhayader is represented at this key meeting. <b>Clerk</b>			
	to issue a reminder closer to the meeting date.			
	c. AD explained PCC are undertaking an audit to check on insurance for Trustees. Smithfield			
	Trust are yet to respond but RTC should be aware that without insurance, individual trustees			
	could find themselves personally liable for any issues. Clerk to check RTC insurance to see if			
	this covers Cllrs who are trustees of other organisations. Clerk to write to the Smithfield			
	Trust to seek assurances that trustees are insured and indemnified.			
	d. AD advised the Speed Watch Group had now been able to obtain 2 lots of equipment from			
	elsewhere			
	e. CE and VLG were unable to join the meeting via Teams, RT stated the IT set up must be			
	reviewed and problems resolved. DT does not have the time to do this. Keith Fielding is to be			
	asked to undertake this work. (CE & RT) <b>Clerk to contact Keith</b>			
	f. CH has been asked to check on the grazing arrangements for Cwmdauddwr Common. It was			
	understood there were no grazing rights but some are now grazing stock there. <b>AD to</b>			
	investigate with PCC and ask if rights have been changed.			
	g. Asset List: Clerk explained the Asset list is out of date and asked for assistance to check and			
	correct the information. RT to help with information on Defibrillators, VJD to help with			
	information on Benches. Clerk to circulate to all Clirs for review and feedback.			
	h. Recycling email enquiry. Noted by RTC, <b>Clerk to respond</b>			
1122/17	i. JS noted part of the Riverside Walk has fallen away. AD to raise this with PCC  EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS DUE TO THE CONFIDENTIAL NATURE OF THE FOLLOWING			
1122/17	BUSINESS ITEMS under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 (3) it was resolved to			
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	exclude members of the public during discussion of the following agenda items:  None discussed			
1122/18	<b>DATE OF NEXT MEETING:</b> The next meeting will be held on <b>Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> April 2023</b> at Cwmdauddwr			
1122/10	School (subject to remote access arrangements and prevailing COVID-19 restrictions at the time of the			
	meeting).			
	Clerk to ask PAVO to present at the next RTC if possible			
CLOSE	The meeting closed at 9.05 pm			
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## **Action Points carried forward from previous meetings:**

- Town Clock/ War Memorial. CW to continue to discuss possible works on the posts
- Outstanding Training Needs Assessment and Members Interest Forms to be sent to VLG
- Grant Guidelines: Clerk to note suggested changes to the document, re-circulate for consideration
- Church Lease: Clerk to re-circulate a copy of the Lease to RTC

## **Action points from March meeting:**

- Asset Committee Meeting notes, Clerk to update and re-circulate for approval
- Clinical Waste query, DT to report back finding to the local resident
- Library MoU, CE to produce a revised version with support from LL as required
- Civic Service, Clerk to contact the Vicar to arrange for a Civic Service on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> May
- Groe Trust Coronation activities, DL to ask the Trust if they would be willing to undertake some of the activities

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- Waun Capel Coronation activities, VJD to ask the Trust if they would be willing to undertake some of the
  activities
- Mugs, Clerk to liaise with VLG to organise payment and delivery
- Promotion of Coronation plans, KC to produce a poster when details are confirmed
- Councillors roles, Clerk to add to the AGM agenda
- FL open weekend, Clerk to ask Theresa to share details with schools and share memories of old social events as appropriate
- Community Awards Event: KC to put together a proposal for consideration. Clerk to add to the Agenda
- GP vacancy, Clerk to ask for a copy of the advert and ask Karen Compton to help publicised
- Planning application, Clerk to notify planning department there were no objections
- Planning Training, AD to share information on forthcoming training. DL keen to attend
- Marie Curie funding application, VLG to organise payment of £100
- Macmillan Cancer Support funding application, VLG to organise payment of £100
- Welsh Ambulance funding application, Clerk to check organisation and carry forward to next agenda
- Opt Out Forms, CE, LL and WD to complete at the next meeting
- Smithfield Trustees; Clerk to check if RTC insurance covers Trustees. Clerk to write to Smithfield Trust to seek assurances on liability cover.
- IT, Teams issue. Clerk to contact Keith Fielding to ask him to set up properly
- Grazing Rights Cwmdauddwr Common, AD to check on current status with PCC
- Asset List, Clerk to forward to councillors for review and feedback
- Recycling email enquiry, Clerk to respond
- Riverside Walk subsidence, AD to raise with PCC
- Presentation at next meeting, Clerk to contact PAVO

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