

Community of Abergavenny

Abergavenny Town Council

Peter Johns – Abergavenny Town Council Clerk

1. Abergavenny Town Council has considered the terms of reference of the review and feels that there is a case for a fairly radical look at the way in which communities are organised in Monmouthshire. Currently there are 33(?) Communities which vary widely in population and size, and although this is to be expected to some extent in an area with extensive rural hinterland surrounding the towns, the current tendency is to look at moving services down the structural chain and the big question is whether the local councils are fit for that purpose.
2. Fitness for purpose can infer that the council has the will and the administrative resources to take on services which may not otherwise be carried out in the locality, thereby disadvantaging the local population. There is a point of view that by keeping its activity low and its costs down a Community Council is behaving appropriately, but if it is not doing anything useful for its community, it is questionable if that argument holds water.
3. Financial resources will also play a part in this. If the council does not have a significant number of properties it will not be able to precept sufficient finance to benefit from the economics of scale that larger councils can have. The logical conclusion to this is that either several small councils will need to collaborate very closely to achieve the desired outcome, or there should be some movement to merge some of the smallest councils with their neighbours. History suggests that collaboration between smaller councils is not a natural thing, so that unforced collaboration is not very likely.
4. Community of interest also plays a part in any deliberations. In some areas the local people can be confused with the different levels of local government and will assume that the larger councils representing the towns also cover their areas. In those cases it is not unreasonable to consider changes that reflect the public's expectations.
5. Taking the above points into account and applying them to Abergavenny, we believe that there are opportunities to alter community ward boundaries as follows:
 - a) Include LF3 Llanwenarth Citra into the AB2 Grofield ward of Abergavenny. The river presently separates it from its parent community. This will bring the electorate in the Grofield Ward nearer the required average.
 - b) Consider adding Llanfoist LF2 to Abergavenny as an additional ward. The development on that side of the river looks to Abergavenny as its local centre, and it is suited to inclusion as development of urban character. The projected electorate in that ward would be close to the average required of an urban ward when current developments are occupied.

- c) For similar reasons, the LP1 Croesonen East and LP2 West Wards of Llantilio Pertholey CC area could also be considered to be part of Abergavenny, and a 3 member ward could be added to the Town to accommodate it. It would be logical to include the LP3 Mardy ward as well, but it might be necessary to relocate elements of it into the adjoining wards of AB3 Castle, AB5 Priory and AB4 Lansdown rather than as a separate unit, leaving some of the more rural parts to be relocated into adjoining communities.
 - d) If these suggestions were to be agreed, it would add 2 wards with 6 members in total to the current 5 wards and 15 members of the Town Council.
 - e) The effects that these changes have on the two communities of Llantilio Pertholey and Llanfoist Fawr could be mitigated by looking outwards to other adjoining communities such as Crucorney and Llanover respectively.
6. Given the probability that the tendency for the County Council to divest itself of services will continue, and the additional powers, including the power of Well-being being promoted in the Local Government Wales Measure will add to the work commitments of local councils, these alterations would help the Town Council to deliver in its locality in a uniform way for local people.
 7. The Review Group are respectfully asked to consider these logical representations as part of their review.

Representations received which also refer to this community:

- [Llanfoist Fawr Community Council](#)
- [Llantilio Pertholey Community Council](#)