

Community of Llanfoist Fawr

Llanfoist Fawr Community Council

Melanie Mercer – Llanfoist Fawr Community Council Clerk

Please note the following comments / representations from the Llanfoist Fawr Community Council:-

Llanfoist Fawr Community Council welcome a review of the number of Councillors per ward - due to exceptionally large amounts of housing being built in the Llanfoist Ward the ratio of Community Councillors per elector is currently not fully balanced between the wards.

The Council would ask that Llanellen retains 2 community councillors and feel this is the right number as the community is both very "rural" and "mixed" population - the ratio would be approx. 1 cllr for 200 electors.

Llanwenarth Ultra ward - again this is a large area with a "rural" and "mixed" population and therefore the council would request that the number of Councillors is maintained - the ratio would be approx. 1 cllr for 190 Electors.

Llanwenarth Citra Ward - this ward has had historical links with Llanwenarth Ultra / Llanfoist Fawr for many centuries and is a totally rural area. The Llanfoist Fawr Community Council have noted the submission by Abergavenny Town Council that this ward should be added to the Grofield Ward and feel that this is totally unacceptable. The Ward has no links with Abergavenny Town - it's residents would certainly feel affronted at the thought that they were going to be represented by a Town when they have so obviously chosen to live in a very beautiful rural location. The town is the town - not the countryside around the town - it is a totally rural community with not even a "mixed" area - i.e. no hamlets /village - it does not fit in any way into the classification of the Grofield Ward in Abergavenny. The planning applications for this ward are all through the Brecon Beacon National Park (as are a significant number of others for the Llanfoist Fawr Community Council Area) and it is believed that currently Abergavenny Town Council deal only with Monmouthshire County Council planning applications. (The two planning authorities do have very different views on planning matters and totally separate Local Development Plans, planning meetings, etc.). All the links forged with the Brecon Beacon National Park Authority for this community would be lost - and this goes beyond just planning to include tourism, forestry, environment and other matters. The ward has 1 very longstanding and valued Community Councillor (currently Vice-Chairman) and this represents a ratio of 1 cllr for 139 electors - very close to the ideal of 150 that is suggested for a rural ward. Please leave this ward in the Llanfoist

Fawr Community Council with the current arrangement of 1 Councillor as this is how best to represent locally the small rural community.

Llanfoist Ward - this is the ward with all the development - some already completed, some "in progress" and some with planning approval. It currently has only 3 Community Councillors and this is short of the number required for what is a "mixed" community. The forecast for 2017 is 1,568 Electors that should be represented by 6 Community Councillors - this increase would give an excellent chance for new Community Councillors to be sought in the new housing areas. The Electors of Llanfoist Ward pride themselves on being in an active attractive village (not a part of Abergavenny Town as has been suggested by Abergavenny Town Council).

To sum up - the Llanfoist Fawr Community Council wish to remain as 4 wards but with a review of the number of Councillors in the Llanfoist Ward.

If members of the panel looking into this review require any further information Llanfoist Fawr Community Council would be only too happy to assist / liaise.

Additional Representation from Llanfoist Community Council

Dear Sir / Madam,

Please find below the further comments of the Llanfoist Fawr Community Council regarding the review of Communities and Electoral Arrangements. I would be grateful if you can ensure that these comments are noted prior to any recommendations on this matter.

Llanfoist Fawr Community Council object strongly to the proposal put forward by Abergavenny Town Council to integrate the Llanfoist Ward into a larger Abergavenny Town ward. It must be noted that no consultation regarding this proposal has been even mentioned to members of Llanfoist Fawr Community Council - despite appropriate forums in existence for such matters- let alone discussed within the spirit of mutual co-operation.

Our objections are grounded in the following reasons:

Llanfoist is geographically separate to Abergavenny with the river forming an obvious boundary. It also feels itself to be a rural community despite Monmouthshire County Council's attempts to double the population with new housing developments at Gypsy Lane and the old Coopers filters site. It has a very distinctive and separate identity to Abergavenny which those who live in the ward have fought hard to maintain and develop over many years. The argument put forward by Abergavenny Town Council that those who live in the new development near the bridge consider themselves to have more affinity with Abergavenny than Llanfoist is not founded in reality.

The increase in population once all proposed housing is occupied ensures that the existing Llanfoist Fawr Community Council area remains a viable and extremely effective community

council with members who have developed good working relationships over many years with the electorate, with each other and with the planning authorities at Monmouthshire County Council and Brecon Beacon National Park. The ward has its own County Council representation which we would be loath to lose.

Llanfoist is the gateway to the Blaenavon World Heritage Site and there has been considerable work within the village in collaboration with the Forgotten Landscapes Project and the World Heritage Site to promote the distinctiveness of Llanfoist and the important role the village played in the industrial development of the area and its continuing development as a tourist attraction. Whilst there is much to ally us with Abergavenny in this respect we feel it would be detrimental to the identity of Llanfoist to be incorporated into Abergavenny Town Council; our needs as a rural community are very different to those of the town.

Llanfoist Fawr Community Council recognises the need to work collaboratively and imaginatively with other community /town councils to achieve the best possible outcomes for the electorate and does not feel that the proposals for a larger Abergavenny ward are an appropriate way forward.

It is further noted that Llanfoist residents would have to suffer an increase in council tax due to the considerably higher precept of the Abergavenny Town Council V Llanfoist Fawr Community Council - indeed for 2013/14 Llanfoist Fawr Community Council have reduced the burden on householders by maintaining the same precept despite an increase in the number of dwellings.

Abergavenny Town Council use the argument that as Llanwenarth Citra Ward is on the town side of the river it should be included in the town council area - a matter previously disputed by Llanfoist Fawr Community Council. They then put forward a recommendation to have the whole of Llanfoist Ward - which is wholly the "wrong" side of the river - is this not a case of not knowing their own identity and just trying to make up ward numbers from any direction ?

Llanfoist Fawr Community Council would not be "**Llanfoist**" Fawr Community Council without the Llanfoist Ward - it would leave a ridiculous situation whereby the other wards are totally disjointed with a large geographical gap in the middle that could not be joined up by annexing other Community Council's Wards as suggested by Abergavenny Town Council and Llanfoist Fawr Community Council are sure that Llanover Community Council would not appreciate this suggestion being even considered without full and proper public consultation.

Llanfoist Fawr Community Council formally request that this matter is struck from consideration as it is not an appropriate suggestion and for all the above reasons.

Once again the Llanfoist Fawr Community Council would like to re-iterate their offer to discuss matters further with the review panel or if helpful to provide and further information required.

Yours Sincerely

Melanie Mercer

Clerk of the Council
Llanfoist Fawr Community Council

Representations received which also refer to this community:

- [Abergavenny Town Council](#)