

# Blaengwrach Community Council

## Cyngor Cymuned Blaengwrach

**Draft Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2025 at the Welfare Hall, Heol Y Felin, Cwmgwrach and via Zoom, commencing at 6.30 pm**

Present: Councillors Rhian Williams, Carolyn Edwards, Jennifer Bulman, Peter Rudd, David Jones, Alan Edwards, Amanda Doherty, and Rhian A Williams

Council Employees Present: Clerk/RFO Linda Evans

Members of the Public Present: Councillor Hayley Davies

**29/25 Apologies:** Councillors Andrew Hipsley had sent their apologies.

The meeting started at 6.30 pm, with the Chair welcoming everyone to the meeting. The meeting is held as a multi-hybrid meeting in accordance with The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

**30/25 Declarations of Interest:** There were no declarations of interest at this meeting.

**31/25 County Councillor's Report:**

- The next Aberpergwm Colliery Liaison Meeting, confirmed by Cllr. H Davies is scheduled for June 18<sup>th</sup>; she will share the meeting details with the Clerk. To ensure the nominated Community Councillors receive future invitations, the Clerk will verify the representative details with the organiser.
- A village resident had contacted Cllr H Davies to report that the service bus (Glynneath to Neath) was unable to access the village the previous Saturday. It was suggested this was due to parked vehicles obstructing the High Street but no additional details are available.
- Cllr. C Edwards mentioned that the land in Wenallt Road is in the same condition as previously.

**32/25 Public Observations on Matters Arising and Agenda Items**

There were no public observations made at this meeting.

**33/25 To Approve the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2025 and the Minutes of the Finance and Audit Committee Meeting held on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2025.**

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of both meetings be approved as true record of the meetings.

**34/25 Matters Arising from the Ordinary Meeting held on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2025**

- Further to minute 04/25 Public Observations on Matters Arising and Agenda Items; Councillors who attended the VE 80 Celebrations in the Hall and Park, reported a good turnout. They commended the event, particularly highlighting the excellent exhibits and photographs, along with the ration kitchen. The Scouts planted the tree and installed the plaque. The new village book "Reflections of a Bygone Age" was on sale at the event, with many copies sold. The Council **RESOLVED** to extend their congratulations and thanks to the organisers.
- Further to minute 117/24 Finance – Celtic Wildflowers (agenda item 53/24); NPTCBC has informed the Clerk that SWTRA will need to be contacted for permission to turn the verge on the roundabout into a "bee friendly" area. Councillors asked the Clerk to confirm with SWTRA as they would like to proceed with the request. **RESOLVED**
- Further to minute 07/25 b) Critical Bleed Kits; Due to Heartbeat Wales unable to access the Defib Cabinet, so the installation was postponed. The Clerk will reach out to the ambulance service to obtain the updated code and confirm its registration for emergency use. **RESOLVED**
- Further to minute 07/25 d) Damage to the Astro-Turf; Approval has been granted for the £1140 quote provided by South Wales Sports to repair the astro-turf following their assessment. The area will remain locked. Signage will be discussed as part of the agenda at this meeting. **RESOLVED** Given the claim amount, policy excess, and risk of increased premiums, the members decided to not make an insurance claim for the repair expenses and instead cover them directly.

**35/25 Agenda Items:**

- a) Future Park Projects; To explore future park projects, Councillor R. Williams suggested forming a dedicated park committee, which was approved. Councillors R. Williams, P. Rudd, and J. Bulman volunteered as initial members. The committee remains open for additional councillors to join; interested parties should notify the next meeting. Areas that need considering were highlighted - The playground equipment on the top field needs redevelopment. Many pieces have been in place for more than 12 years and are now broken (not in use) or damaged. Discussions also included upgrading pathways, installing new lighting, and providing equipment suitable for all age groups. Funding will be necessary. The Selar Fund has limited resources left, allocations were made to the

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Glynneath skate park, serving the residents of Blaengwrach and Cwmgwrach. Potential alternative funding avenues include Pen y Cymoedd and the National Lottery. **RESOLVED** for further discussion.

- b) Park Signage; Damage to the MUGA's astro turf necessitates upgrading the park signage. Currently, the area is secured and will remain so until new signage is installed. Approval for "No Scooters/Bikes" signage to be installed was agreed. The signs will also warn that CCTV footage will be examined and any damage found will be reported to the Police – the reporting will be done in compliance with GDPR. New "No Dogs Allowed" should be placed on the playground areas. **RESOLVED** Clerk will gain quotes for the signage for approval. **RESOLVED** The Clerk will produce a report detailing the damages and the cost of repairs. This report will also include details regarding the new signage and that any future damages will be reported to the police. Once completed, the report will be published on the Council's Facebook page and website.
- c) Town and Community Standards Committee Chairs Meeting; In a recent Chairs and Vice Chairs meeting for the Neath Port Talbot area, Councillor C. Edwards conveyed that C. Griffiths presented on the code of conduct and the standards committee's operations, with the committee outlining their responsibilities. The meeting also facilitated the exchange of best practices, including the example of a council that reviews the code of conduct at the start of each session. **RESOLVED** The Chair and Clerk will endeavour to attend the next meeting.
- d) Remembrance Service 2025; It was agreed that this years' service would be conducted bilingually, incorporating the entire Welsh section as outlined in the booklet. The Chair will explore the arrangements for this, and the Clerk will send out the customary invitations. The Council will provide refreshments. The Clerk will purchase additional poppies from the Royal British Legion (RBL) for the lamp posts. Finally, a donation of £50, in lieu of a wreath, will be made to the RBL from the Council.

### **RESOLVED**

**36/25 Planning:** There were no planning applications to discuss at this meeting.

### **37/25 Crime and Policing**

**RESOLVED** and the following noted:

The Local Police Website shows 16 Crimes reported in the Blaengwrach and Glynneath West Area for **March** 2025; 4 Anti-Social behaviour; 1 Drugs; 3 Criminal Damage and Arson; 2 Other Theft; 6 Violence and Sexual Offences. 4 of these were reported in the Blaengwrach/Cwmgwrach Area alone – 2 Violence and Sexual Offences; 1 Other Theft; and 1 Anti-Social Behaviour.

### **38/25 Finance and Finance and Audit Committee Report - Quarter 4**

**RESOLVED** the following payments were scrutinised and approved:

#### Clerks Report - Monthly P&R 18th April to 22nd May 2025

Payments Made	18/04/2025 to 22/05/2025	Amounts
Nest	Staff Pension Scheme (5 weeks)	£84.70
Leighton Collins	Grounds-Man's Wages (4 weeks)	£915.75
Linda Mogford-Evans	Clerk's Salary/RFO Salary (4 weeks)	£1,005.53
Julie Raine	Hall Attendant's Wages (4 weeks)	£1,148.55
HMRC	Tax and NI 06/03/25 to 05/04/25	£274.18
NPTCBC	General Rates - Hall	£398.00
NPTCBC	General Rates - Cemetery	£20.00
Welsh Water	Water Rates for Welfare Hall	£151.00
Welsh Water	Water Rates for Cemetery	£21.50
Utility Warehouse Ltd	Electricity @ Welfare Hall	£200.25
British Gas	Hall Usage	£400.53
EE	Hall Wi-Fi	£58.30
Zoom	On-Line Meeting Platform	£15.59
Welsh Water	Cemetery - Meter Reading	£24.63

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KAF	Cemetery Plots x2	£200.00
WH Smith	Office Supplies - Paper/Ink/Files	£88.35
One Voice Wales	Yearly Subscription	£216.00
MW	Section 137	£182.00
NPTCBC	6 Monthly Trade Waste	£542.88
Zurick Municipal	Council Insurance	£3,071.73
Heartbeat Trust	Critical Bleed Kit	£95.00
Post Office	2nd Class Stamps	£6.96
Viking Direct	Hall Mop Heads	£41.76
	<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b><u>£9,163.19</u></b>

Income Received	18/04/2025 to 22/05/2025	
SRCC Stores Ltd	Monthly Rental of Shed in the Park	£35.00
TSB Bank	Monthly Interest on "Reserve" Saver	£34.27
VIEW (Glynneath) Ltd	Hall Hire Yoga April	£28.00
Celtic Archers	Hall Hire April	£168.00
Empower	Singing for the Brain Hall Hire March	£84.00
NPTCBC	Flying Start Hall Hire April	£112.00
NPTCBC	Messy Play - Hall Hire April	£56.00
Cwmgwrach OAP	Hall Hire March	£112.00
Class Act Tutoring	Hall Hire March and April	£84.00
Sion Lee's Danzfit	Zumba Hall Hire March	£42.00
A H Lewis Funeral Directors	Burial Plot	£500.00
NPTCBC	1st Precept Payment	£26,800.00
	<b>Total Income</b>	<b><u>£28,055.27</u></b>

Account Balances	As at 22/05/2025	
General Account		£3,162.92
Reserve/Saver Account		£41,886.11
	<b>Total Account Balances as at 22/05/2025</b>	<b><u>£45,594.48</u></b>

- a) Chair of the Finance and Audit Committee Cllr. P Rudd, presented a summary of the Quarter 4 budget meeting held on April 24th - The council's financial situation at the close of the 2024/25 financial year displayed an improvement compared to the previous year. This year, £10,000 is available for park and hall improvements due to the absence of significant maintenance expenses the previous year. The committee proposes allocating this £10,000 towards capital spending for the current financial year, in addition to the £6,000 income that exceeded the budget forecast. The recommendation was unanimously approved by all members present. The committee has recommended increasing the Financial Risk reserve from £6,500 to £10,000. This proposal received approval from all committee members. Cllr. P Rudd stated the committee's aim was to develop a comprehensive five-year financial plan. Members then considered potential projects to include, such as replacing or repairs to the park wall, lighting and refreshing the Hall's paintwork. The Christmas Celebrations budget balanced last year, and we expect it to remain stable given the single panto performance schedule for this year.

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The Finance and Audit Committee recommended that the Quarter 4 Budget be approved by Full Council **RESOLVED** and approved

- b) The Full Council approved the Accounting Statement and Annual Governance Statement received from the internal auditor. The Clerk/RFO and Chair signed the Statement, confirming its acceptance. **RESOLVED**
- c) A request for free-of-charge use of the Hall for two hours to a Thursday morning Toddler Group was not approved. **RESOLVED**

**39/25 Correspondence & Section 137 Request:** None at this meeting

**40/25 Set Date, Time & Proposed Agenda Items for the next meeting; ...**

The next meeting of the Council will be held on **Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> June at 6.30 pm**. Vehicle access to the Rear of High Street is an Agenda Item put forward by Councillor R A Williams so far for this meeting.

Notices for the meetings will be posted at least three working days before they are due to take place.

Meeting closed at 7.50 pm

Accepted as a true record

Signed:

Councillor – Chair Person