

Blaengwrach Community Council

Cyngor Cymuned Blaengwrach

Draft Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Thursday 17th July 2025 at the Welfare Hall, Heol Y Felin, Cwmgwrach and via Zoom, commencing at 6.30 pm

Present: Councillors Rhian Williams, J Bulman, A Doherty, and D Jones. Councillors C Edwards and A Edwards joined online.

Council Employees Present: Clerk/RFO Linda Evans

Members of the Public Present: Councillor Hayley Davies joined online

58/25 Apologies: Councillors P Rudd, M Mortimore, Andrew Hipsley and R A Williams 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.

59/25 Declarations of Interest: There were no declarations of interest at this meeting.

60/25 County Councillor's Report:

- Councillor H. Davies (Cllr H Davies) raised the matter of the Coal Tip Safety Improvement (Cwmgwrach) letter, received on July 17th, for discussion this evening. The Clerk, who was copied into the email, had already forwarded it to the Members.

The letter, addressed to the Network and Programme Manager at NPTCBC from Natural Resources Wales (NRW), concerns the mobilisation of works that began on July 14th. It clarifies the necessity of large vehicles for transporting materials and personnel to the site above Cwmgwrach, following a survey of vehicle access through the village, including Heol y Graig.

Cllr H Davies raised significant concerns, stating she had immediately written upon receiving a copy of the letter. She had been informed via email that a meeting about the work had already occurred that day. Cllr Davies expressed a desire to have attended the meeting and lacked knowledge of who was present, who was involved, or the meeting's subject matter. Concern was raised regarding vehicles turning around the tight bend over the bridge and at the bottom of Heol y Graig. Additionally, issues were noted concerning dust levels and the absence of prior notification about the work to be carried out.

Cllr C Edwards raised concerns about the existing poor condition of Heol y Graig and the potential impact of four months of heavy traffic. She questioned who would be responsible for repairing any damage, given that it is an unadopted road. It was suggested that photographs be taken to document any damage caused.

Cllr. A Doherty suggested arranging a meeting with NPTCBC, NRW, and the Councillors to gather information and express the Council's concerns. It was unanimously agreed that this was a good idea. Cllr H Davies offered to contact those involved via email to make the necessary arrangements.

Members affirmed their understanding of the critical nature of the work to stabilise the coal tips and expressed their satisfaction that this essential work would proceed. Their primary concerns revolved around vehicle access, size and residents' safety. A Facebook post informed residents about the upcoming work, prompting numerous questions and clearly indicating their concern.

ACTION: The Clerk will maintain contact with Cllr H Davies and inform all members of any scheduled meetings. **RESOLVED**

62/25 Public Observations on Matters Arising and Agenda Items

There were no public observations made at this meeting.

63/25 To Approve the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Thursday 19th June and 26th June 2025

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

64/25 Matters Arising from the Ordinary Meeting held on Thursday 19th and 26th June 2025

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- Further to minute 117/24 Finance – Celtic Wildflowers (agenda item 53/24); SWTRA has proposed planting native, year-round wildflowers on behalf of the council, in response to the council's request. The Clerk will inform members of any final decision.

65/25 Agenda Items:

- a) Rear Access for High Street Residents via the Park - Councillor RA Williams, who proposed this item, was not present to discuss it with members. Therefore, the concept of full access to the back of residents' properties was discussed in general terms.

Concerns were raised regarding:

Risks to park users: This was a significant concern.

Proper surfacing: A proper surface would be required; this would need funding from the Council.

Safety: A fence would need to be erected for safety reasons again a cost to the Council.

Vehicle access: The need for vehicles to reverse in and out onto the main road was highlighted.

Gate security: The gates not being locked was a concern, although members understood that access is needed for exceptional circumstances and for the rented lock-up.

The Clerk will conduct a full risk assessment to address these concerns. **RESOLVED**

- b) Summer Fete – The Clerk had previously informed members about the Fete organisers' plans. Members raised no objections and wished them a successful day. A Section 137 request will be discussed in Correspondence. **RESOLVED**

- c) Christmas Lighting 2025 - For Christmas 2025, the council will retain the services of the usual lighting contractor. The council expressed disappointment that the street lamp lights it had purchased and stored were missing from the warehouse. The Clerk will investigate this situation, as the lights represent a cost to the council.

It was proposed and decided to install the usual banner, street lights, and a tree at the entrance to the Villages. An additional tree and lights outside the Hall, as in previous years, are also proposed. The cost of this additional tree will be required before a final decision can be made. **ACTION:** Clerk will contact Centergreat to obtain a cost. **RESOLVED**

- d) Meeting with the Scouts and Rugby Club – Discussed in Closed Session. **RESOLVED**

66/25 Planning: There were no planning applications to discuss at this meeting.

67/25 Crime and Policing

RESOLVED The Local Police Website shows 24 Crimes reported in the Blaengwrach and Glynneath West Area for April 2025. Paper for Noting no discussion held.

68/25 Finance and Finance and Audit Committee Report - Quarter 4

RESOLVED the following payments were scrutinised and approved:

Clerks Report - Monthly P&R 20th June to 17th July 2025

Payments Made	20/06/2025 - 17/07/2025	Amounts
Nest	Staff Pension Scheme (3 weeks)	£50.82
Council Staff Wages	Groundsperson/Caretaker and Clerk (4 weeks)	£2623.77
HMRC	Tax and NI 06/03/25 to 05/04/25	£316.25
J Herring	Garden Services	£195.30
L Collins	Reimbursment - Petrol	£17.92
L Collins	Reimbursment - Tools	£15.24
NPTCBC	General Rates - Hall	£398.00
NPTCBC	General Rates - Cemetery	£20.00
Welsh Water	Water Rates for Welfare Hall	£170.00
Welsh Water	Water Rates for Cemetery	£32.00
Utility Warehouse Ltd	Electricity @ Welfare Hall	£202.50
British Gas	Hall Usage	£131.33

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EE Ltd.,	Hall Wi-Fi	£58.30
Leafield Env. Ltd.,	Recycling Bins for Park and Hall	£1,185.60
SLCC	Clerk Membership	£190.00
Small Plant Machinery Services	Service Lawnmowers	£95.00
Small Plant Machinery Services	Repairs/Parts Lawnmower	£210.00
Playsafe Ltd.,	ROSPA Report and Inspection - Park Equipment	£158.40
Westward	Hall Gas Boiler - Annual Service/Inspection	£276.00
	Total Expenditure	<u>£6,346.43</u>
Income Received	20/06/2025 - 17/07/2025	
SRCC Stores Ltd	Monthly Rental of Shed in the Park	£35.00
TSB Bank	Monthly Interest on "Reserve" Saver	£44.34
VIEW (Glynneath) Ltd	Hall Hire Yoga June	£56.00
Celtic Archers	Hall Hire June	£112.00
Empower	Singing for the Brain Hall Hire June	£84.00
Cwmgwrach OAP	Hall Hire May	£84.00
Glynneath Judo	Hall Hire May	£28.00
Savage Danzfit	Zumba Hall Hire April	£28.00
R Taylor	Martial Arts Hall Hire June	£84.00
	Total Income	<u>£555.34</u>
Account Balances	As at 17/07/2025	
General Account		£1,683.63
Reserve/Saver Account		£32,481.60
	Total Account Balances as at 17/07/2025	
	£	<u>£34,165.23</u>

69/25 Correspondence & Section 137 Request:

- Party in the Park Section 137 Request received from M Winter on behalf of Cwmgwrach Village Community Events - £100 towards advertising the event – this was **approved** as the event is aimed and inclusive to all village residents. **RESOLVED** Clerk to complete the necessary payment.
- NPTCBC email regarding the disposal and recycling of plastic waste – Noted and Clerk has already communicated the details to the Caretaker and Groundsperson. **RESOLVED**
- Legionella Risk Assessment email from J & D Water Consultants Ltd., - offer to complete a full risk assessment on the Welfare Hall – Clerk to gain a full cost before a decision is made **RESOLVED**
- Letter from Ken Scates AS/MS to Jeremy Miles MS regarding the concerns raised by the Council regarding the uncompleted work on the A465 – All Members **Noted**.
- Letter "Work set to begin on coal tip safety improvements in Cwmgwrach" – discussed in item 60/25.
- Invitation to Share Our Plans for Nyth y Wrach – An email was received from C. D. McLean concerning a local initiative. The sender requested a discussion about the project with the Council. The Council expressed interest in learning more about the project and extended an invitation to the next meeting. **RESOLVED** Clerk will send the invitation.

70/25 Set Date, Time & Proposed Agenda Items for the next meeting; ...

The next meeting of the Council will be held on **Thursday 18th September at 6.30 pm**. No items were proposed so far for this meeting.

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

The Council resolved to enter Closed Session under Section 100 of the Local Government Act 1972 & the Council Standing Order 3c to Discuss Personnel Issues. NOTE: ANY DISCUSSIONS/ETC WHICH TAKE PLACE IN "CLOSED SESSION" MUST REMAIN IN "CLOSED SESSION" AND NOT BE BROUGHT INTO THE PUBLIC DOMAIN (MINUTES) UNLESS AGREED BY THE FULL COUNCIL AT A FUTURE MEETING

Meeting closed at 7.45 pm

