

Blaengwrach Community Council

Cyngor Cymuned Blaengwrach

Draft Minutes of the Finance and Audit Committee held on Thursday 31st July 2025. This was a Hybrid Meeting held at the Welfare Hall, Heol y Felin, Cwmgwrach and via Zoom at 5.45 pm

Present: Cllr P Rudd (Chair of the Finance and Audit Committee) and Cllr J Bulman

Council Employees Present: Clerk/RFO L Evans

Chair PR started the meeting. The meeting is held as a multi-hybrid meeting in accordance with The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 & the Council Standing Order 3 (b)

Members of the Public Present: No members of the public were present at this meeting

71/25 Apologies for Absence: There were no apologies at this meeting.

72/25 Declarations of Interest: There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

73/25 To Receive the Public Observations on Agenda Items at this Meeting: There were no public observations received at this meeting.

74/25 Matters Arising from the Meeting held on Thursday 24th April 2025

Minute 53/24 b) Council Bank Signatories – Item will be carried forward to the next meeting with no update.
RESOLVED

Minute 94/24 b) Medium-Term Financial Plan - Paperwork will be carried forward to the next meeting with no update.

Minute 17/25 – Agenda Item b) Five Year Financial Plan - The report from the company responsible for the MUGA repair was examined and discussed. While currently fit for purpose, the surface and surrounding areas are in poor condition. The estimated cost for replacing just the pitch is £40,000, whereas a complete project, including fencing and lighting, would cost £100,000. The council should begin exploring options for replacement within the next two years, or at least establish a plan for the subsequent council to implement.
RESOLVED

75/25 Agenda Items:

- a) Quarterly Budget – Clerk presented the prepared documents for the meeting to examine: Quarterly Budget Summary Q1, April to June Bank Reconciliation along with Bank Statements. Items below and above budget were discussed and explained:

Cemetery Budget:

Half of the allocated maintenance budget for the cemetery (£650) has already been expended. This amount primarily covered the servicing and repair of the sit-on and petrol lawnmowers, with the full cost being shared with the Park and Open Spaces budget.

Additionally, a goodwill payment of £200.00 for the return of two full burial plots was included in this expenditure. This specific cost should be reallocated from "No Defined Cost Centre" as such expenditure was not budgeted under the Cemetery. Burial fees exceeded expectation, with a total income of £1,400 which represents 460% over budget.

ACTION: Consider budgeting for a replacement sit-on lawnmower in the coming years, at an estimated cost of £800. An increase of £100 to the maintenance budget next year and in subsequent years should be considered to account for this replacement.

No Defined Budget:

Expenditure includes subscriptions to OVW and Clerks SLCC - A list of subscriptions, including those to OVW and SLCC, along with publications to be included for 2025/26 financial year in future. This year it will be covered within the training fees. With the Internal Auditor and General Insurance fees paid it has resulted in a 77% over-budget spend this quarter. This significant expenditure is expected to balance out over the year.

Income is limited to interest accrued on the reserve account.

Office/Administration Budget:

Expenditure was 59% under budget, primarily due to minimal spending on stationery and the monthly Zoom subscription.

No Income.

Park and Open Space:

Expenditure was 46% under budget, despite including the cost of MUGA repairs and half the cost of lawnmower repairs.

Blaengwrach Community Council Cyngor Cymuned Blaengwrach

Income solely consisted of lock-up rental. The budget was 35% under due to outstanding leases that had not been issued. The committee reviewed current lease costs and will discuss at full council meeting.

Staff Salaries, Pension Contributions and HMRC Contributions:

Expenditure 13% under budget.

An anticipated overspend in the next quarter is attributed to the additional three months of assistance required for summer jobs.

Members inquired about the park signage in conjunction with the painting of the park gates, a job earmarked for completion. Specifically, they asked about the installation of new signs and the removal or cleaning of existing ones. Clerk will ACTION.

No income.

Welfare Hall:

Expenditure was within budget.

Income was 12% over budget. The Clerk reported that several clubs had cancelled using the hall. Members discussed the possibility of establishing a grant under Section 111 of the Local Governments Act 1972, to facilitate the objective to encourage new groups and therefore increase revenue for the Hall. This grant would aim to encourage new groups to hire the hall, offering a set amount with a community benefit objective. Committee Members will present this proposal to the Full Council at the next meeting.

RESOLVED The Committee accepted the Quarterly Budget and will take to the September Ordinary Meeting for Full Council to approve.

Cllr. P Rudd reviewed paid invoices, including those for hall hire, and verified bank reconciliations against statements.

Capital Spend of £1000 2025/26 for new recycling bins - total cost £1185.60 Inc. VAT - delivery expected in August.

76/25 Set Date, Time, Venue and Proposed Agenda Items for the Next Finance and Audit Committee Meeting – Agenda Item 2st Quarter Budget, Thursday 16th October at the Welfare Hall and Zoom, to commence at 5.45 pm

Meeting closed at 7.10 pm

Accepted as a true record

Signed:

Councillor: Date: