

Blaengwrach Community Council

Cyngor Cymuned Blaengwrach

Draft Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Thursday 19th February 2026 at the Welfare Hall, Heol Y Felin, Cwmgrach and via Zoom, commencing at 6.30 pm

Present: Councillors R Williams (Chair), P Rudd, A Doherty, C Edwards and A Hipsley. Councillor M Mortimore joined the meeting online.

Council Employees Present: Clerk/RFO Linda Evans

Members of the Public Present: Lianne Griffiths NPTCBC Local Area Coordinator

139/25 Apologies: Councillors J Bulman, R A Williams, D Jones and Councillor H Davies (Borough Councillor) had send 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.

140/25 Declarations of Interest: There were no declarations of interest at this meeting.

141/25 County Councillor`s Report:

- Cllr. H Davies had sent her apologies before the meeting but wished to inform the members that the fly-tipping by the canal has been cleared and removed. This had also been reported by Cllr R Williams. RESOLVED and noted.

142/25 Public Observations on Matters Arising and Agenda Items:

- Lianne Griffiths, a Local Area Co-ordinator (LAC) for 2 years, introduced herself and distributed a leaflet with her contact information. Attendees were asked to note the areas she covers and details about her community role. Her work involves identifying needs and connecting people to services, particularly those who do not fall under other existing provisions. She focuses on addressing community gaps such as loneliness and mental health through group initiatives and relationship building.

L G wished to present an initiative and has consulted with the Community Transport Association (CTA) regarding an Upper Dulais Valley community connector transport system.

This proposed system would utilise a minibus to circulate through the communities of the Dulais Valley (including Seven Sisters, Crynant, Resolven etc.) on an approx. 27-minute loop. The aim is to link all the villages, enabling residents to access essential services, community centres, and visit family. Examples of successful similar systems were provided. The representative highlighted that previous local transport initiatives, once initial funding had been secured, became self-sustaining.

The plan involves identifying areas not currently serviced by existing bus routes to provide a wonderful provision for local people. It was stressed that council backing is needed, and discussions may need to address funding access.

Future potential ideas include running trips for younger people. However, it was noted that evening community transport is currently lacking. Collaboration with other groups in the Dulais and Nedd Valley is also being considered. It was discussed that social prescribers be invited to speak about assistance with attending doctor appointments, with Cllr C E raising the difficulty residents face in getting to doctor and hospital appointments, particularly if they are relying on public transport. Cllr A D expressed support for the idea of addressing these transport issues, calling it a "marvellous idea." Cllr. RW asked whether liaison with other councils would be beneficial. Cllr. A H highlighted the broader issue of community connect ability, noting the difficulty in catching a bus around the upper valley areas and believes addressing this is a good idea. Members are in favour of this initiative.

LG is seeking letters of support for the initiative. Although she cannot personally lead this forward, she is collaborating with someone from the DOVE Workshop in Banwen. The aim of this collaboration is to create a blueprint and develop the initiative. DOVE would not be able to fund this project, but external funding is available. Cllr C.E mentioned funding and sponsorship. LG stressed a key priority is to find local people to take ownership of this initiative and will email the Clerk to ensure continuous communication with the members.

- LG left the meeting - 7.07 pm

143/25 To Approve the Minutes of the F&A Meeting and Ordinary Meeting held on 15th January

It was proposed and seconded that the minutes from both meeting were approved.

Councillor P Rudd, Chair of the Finance & Administration (F&A) Committee, presented a brief summary of the Q3 Budget. He reported that the council's financial position was better than in the 2024/25 period. He did note, however, that the replacement of the Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) pitch in the future would require substantial grant funding. The members received the news positively and subsequently accepted the Q3 Budget. RESOLVED

144/25 Matters Arising from the Ordinary Meeting held on 15th January 2026

Further to Minute 112/25 Review and Reorganise Wall Displays in the Hall - The council was asked to consider the colour scheme for the repaint: a cream/biscuit colour for the walls and black paint to cover the existing grey paintwork on the doors and skirting boards, maintaining a similar aesthetic to the current colours.

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The council approved J. Herring, assisted by the Grounds person, to undertake this work. While they are not professional painters, they are willing to complete the task. The same hourly rate will be offered for this work. **RESOLVED** Clerk will make the necessary purchases and discuss start dates for the painting with the Groundsperson and J Herring.

Further to Minute 133/25 d Christmas Celebrations 2025 - G. Sage is able to do a school performance to be held mid-week during the school day. Cllr. CE will discuss and book a suitable date with the Headteacher. Centergreat provided an update to the Clerk regarding the concerns raised by the Council at the previous meeting: The tree was revisited and secured. The visit was recorded. The tree was noted to be slightly angled shortly after installation. Lamppost Lights Issue is a problem likely due to the timers, which can be checked next year and may need replacement. If timers fail or have issues, a full replacement unit is needed. When timers fail, the lights engage on a 24-hour basis rather than switching off (ensuring the lights remain on). The Council initially selected the current Christmas tree location for optimal visibility. However, alternative locations, or a return to a smaller tree outside the Community Centre, can be considered for next year. Centergreat is willing to meet at any time to discuss the feasibility of moving the tree well in advance of the next installation **RESOLVED**: The Clerk is to check who is responsible for the cost of replacements. Cllr R W will contact the Glynneath Clerk to determine their supplier for last Christmas. It was suggested by Cllr A H that a certificate is obtained after the lights are inspected.

145/25 Agenda Items:

- a) Gifting of land to the Scouts and Rugby Club – Closed Session

146/25 Planning:

Application Number: P2025/0098. Applicants Name/Address: Mr P Horgan, 60 Pontneathvaughan Road, Glynneath. Site Location: 1 Heol y Graig, Cwmgwrach, Neath. Proposed Development: Outlined planning permission (all Matters reserved) for the erection of one residential dwelling. **RESOLVED** and Noted – Clerk will forward the planning link to this item to all Councillors for their information.

147/25 Crime and Policing

RESOLVED The Local Police Website shows 13 Crimes reported for December 2025 Blaengwrach and Glynneath West location. The paper was noted.

148/25 Finance

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

Clerks Report - Monthly P&R 16th January 2026 to 19th February 2026

Payments Made	16/01/2026 to 19/02/2026	Amounts
Nest	Staff Pension Scheme (5 Weeks)	£84.70
Staff Wages	Groundsperson and Caretaker Wages (5 Weeks)/Clerk/RFO 4 Weeks	£3785.46
HMRC	Tax and NI 06/01/26 to 05/02/26	£354.14
Welsh Water	Water Rates for Welfare Hall	£190.50
Welsh Water	Water Rates for Cemetery	£42.00
Zoom.Com	Online meeting platform x 2 months	£33.58
Utility Warehouse Ltd	Electricity @ Welfare Hall	£256.13
British Gas	Hall Usage	£383.84
EE Ltd.,	Hall Wi-Fi	£43.20
Amazon	Extension Lead and Hose - Park	£101.62
Argos	Hose	£75.00
Viking	Cleaning Products for the Hall	£56.98
Viking	Printer Cartridges	£81.82
Centergreat	Repair to Christmas Banner	£414.00
Tesco Mobile	Council Phone TopUp	£10.00
	Total Expenditure	<u>£5,912.97</u>

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Income Received	16/01/2026 to 19/02/2026	
SRCC Stores Ltd	Monthly Rental of Shed in the Park	£35.00
TSB Bank	Monthly Interest on "Reserve" Saver	£72.05
NPTCBC	Flying Start - Hall Hire Dec and Jan	£56.00
Celtic Archers	Hall Hire Dec and Jan	£168.00
Empower	Singing for the Brain Hall Hire Jan	£84.00
Glynneath Judo	Hall Hire Jan	£56.00
Glynneath VIEW	Yoga - Hall Hire January	£42.00
Cwmgwrach OAP Group	Hall Hire December	£28.00
A Lewis Funeral Director	1 x Cremation - Existing Plot	£150.00
S Collins	Cinema Club - Hall Hire Dec	£28.00
Arts Academy	Hall Hire January	£140.00
Cwmgwrach Village Events	Christmas Fayre - December Hire	£56.00
Sion Lee's Danzfit	Zumba Hall Hire Sept and October	£84.00
Amazon	Refund for Hose	£52.00
NPTCBC	Stay and Play - Hall Hire January	£63.00
	Total Income	<u>£1,114.05</u>

Account Balances		
General Account		£2,356.87
Reserve/Saver Account		£53,847.85
	Total Account Balances as at 19/02/2026	
	£	<u>£56,204.72</u>

2. Authorise Centergreat Invoice for Christmas Lighting 2025 £ 2628.00 – Approved .
3. Clean Gutters – Clean to the Core – Quote £360 exc VAT initial cleaning. Yearly maintenance £288 exc VAT (20% Discount) – Approved
4. Clerk will need a new printer; display has stopped working. Approved
5. Cllr R Williams spoke about a grant for Community Councils that could be used for the paths and lighting in the park. RESOLVED Clerk will investigate and send the details to the Members
6. Grounsperson has reported that the net for the goals in the MUGA has broken beyond repair. RESOLVED the Clerk is to find a quote for a replacement.

149/25 Correspondence & Section 137 Request:

1. Publication of the Annual Remuneration Report 2026-27 – All Councillors have received a copy of the report. RESOLVED and noted.

150/25 Set Date, Time & Proposed Agenda Items for the next meeting;

The next meeting of the Council will be held on **Thursday 19th March 2026 at 6.30 pm**. No Items so far were put forward for the meeting. Notices for the meetings will be posted at least three working days before they are due to take place.

Meeting closed at 7.55 pm