

Blaengwrach Community Council Cyngor Cymuned Blaengwrach

Draft Minutes of the Finance and Audit Committee held on Thursday 15th April 2026. This was a Hybrid **Meeting held at the Welfare Hall, Heol y Felin, Cwmgwrach and via Zoom at 5.30 pm**

Present: Councillors P Rudd (Chair of the Finance and Audit Committee) and 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

01/26 Apologies for Absence: Councillor M Mortimore had sent her apologies.

02/26 Declarations of Interest: There were no declarations of interest made at this meeting.

03/26 To Receive the Public Observations on Agenda Items at this Meeting: There were no public observations received at this meeting.

04/26 Matters Arising from the Meeting held on Thursday 15th January 2026

Minute 53/24 b) Council Bank Signatories – Item currently on hold **RESOLVED**

Minute 17/25 – Agenda Item b) Five Year Financial Plan - Matters Arising from the Meeting held on Thursday 15th January: It was previously recorded that the risk assessment reserve was established at £10,000, with a scheduled review for the April Q4 Meeting. In light of the increasing cost of living and rising energy expenses, it was considered prudent to increase the risk assessment reserve to £15,000 as funds are available. **RESOLVED.**

05/26 Agenda Items:

- a) To receive the RFO's report on the Q4 Budget - The Clerk reported a misallocation of expenses regarding the Christmas Tree and Lights, which were incorrectly assigned to a "No Defined" cost centre instead of Parks and Open Spaces. Following this adjustment, the final budget remained well within the allocated limits.

The Clerk presented the quarterly budget, leading to a discussion regarding solicitor fees and the fact that leases had not been issued due to the ongoing discussions. Members deliberated on the necessity of reviewing these leases, particularly concerning the amounts due should the council find itself unable to "gift the land". To discuss further when the Clerk has more information from the Charity Commission. **RESOLVED**

Members deliberated on the scheduled painting of the hall. Work has been delayed as the groundsperson is currently occupied with outdoor tasks. While expectations have been set and the public informed, members suggested that the project should be completed within a dedicated week rather than being drawn out over several weeks. This approach accounts for concerns regarding the smell of paint and ensures the hall is finished efficiently. Improving the hall's appearance is a priority, as it currently feels bare and cold. Clerk to discuss possible start dates with the Groundsperson and inform all Members. **RESOLVED**

Councillor P Rudd initiated a discussion on enhancing the invoice authorisation process, inquiring about the feasibility of preparing a budget forecast for outgoing payments. The proposal included establishing clear expectations for documentation, such as quotes and a "crib sheet," to provide a robust audit trail. The Clerk noted that the implementation of the new Scribe Finance package is underway. Once the busy month of May concludes, the Clerk will explore what reporting can be provided for F&A Committee oversight and will facilitate member access to the finance pages within Scribe. This will support the committee in developing financial forecasts and gathering necessary data for monthly payments and future budgeting. **RESOLVED**

Members noted that rising petrol and energy costs are expected to impact expenses, necessitating a review of current spending to ensure costs do not overtake forecasted budgets. Concerns were also

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raised regarding the financial pressure on road-transported food supplies during this difficult period, and the cost of living for everyone. NOTED

A review of Cemetery and Hall fees is required, as this was not addressed in January. While the Hall fees remain competitive and are in line with other local hire rates, the Cemetery fee structure specifically needs to be re-evaluated. Clerk to compare current cemetery rates to other cemeteries in the local area. RESOLVED

The Committee Members resolved to approve the Q4 and Year-End Budget. This proposal will now be submitted to the full council meeting for final approval.

- b) Annual Report 2025/26 Review - Members are satisfied with the Annual Report and will recommend that the full council accept it. RESOLVED

06/26 Set Date, Time, Venue and Proposed Agenda Items for the Next Finance and Audit Committee Meeting – Agenda Item Quarter 1 Budget on Thursday 16th July 2026, at the Welfare Hall and Zoom, to commence at 5.30 pm. RESOLVED

Meeting closed at 6.21 pm

Accepted as a true record

Signed:

Councillor: Date: