

CYNGOR CYMUNED TAWE UCHAF COMMUNITY COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT APRIL 2021 – MARCH 2022

Introduction	Welcome to the first annual report of Tawe Uchaf Community Council. The Council is now required by Welsh Government legislation through the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 to prepare and publish an annual report. This report covers the financial year from April 2021 to March 2022.												
The Council	<p>The Council has 3 electoral wards represented by 13 Councillors. The Councillors in each ward are listed below;</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Coelbren Ward</td> <td>Penycae Ward</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Stephen Davies (Chairman)</td> <td>Ann Watkins</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Arlene Jones</td> <td>Alun Thomas</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Auriol Graham</td> <td>Selwyn Fyfield</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Carol Williams</td> <td>Clare Parker</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Robert Alan Jones</td> <td>Vacancy</td> </tr> </table> <p>Caehopkin Ward Susan Pyart (Vice Chair) Huw Williams Gail Hopkins-Williams</p> <p>The Council employs a part-time Clerk Elwyn Gwilym</p>	Coelbren Ward	Penycae Ward	Stephen Davies (Chairman)	Ann Watkins	Arlene Jones	Alun Thomas	Auriol Graham	Selwyn Fyfield	Carol Williams	Clare Parker	Robert Alan Jones	Vacancy
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The Community	<p>The Community of Tawe Uchaf is located at the top of the Swansea Valley within the County of Powys. Part of the Community also sits within the Brecon Beacons National Park. Tawe Uchaf is an area of outstanding natural beauty that includes major national tourist attractions, The National Showcaves of Wales, The Henrhyd Waterfall, The Craig y Nos Castle and Country Park. The Council area includes the villages of Coelbren, Caehopkin, Ynyswen, Penycae. The above attractions together with agriculture provide employment.</p> <p>To the South the Community sits within the geological boundary of the South Wales Coalfield. Coal Mining has been a major employer during the 20th century. The dominance of the coal industry as an employer is now diminishing and new employment opportunities will be required.</p>												
Council Objectives	<p>The Council's objective is to represent its residents effectively. Local Councillors are the first point of contact where local residents can raise their concerns. Concerns raised are dealt with in a number of ways. The Council offers help and advice; The Council has a close working relationship with the local County Councillor, who attends Council meetings. The close working relationship means local concerns can be referred quickly to Powys County Council where required. The Ystradgynlais Police also attend Council meetings, as resources allow, to provide local updates and receive any local concerns requiring Police help and advice.</p>												
Council Priorities	<p>The key priorities of Tawe Uchaf Community Council are listed below;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Represent the electorate of Tawe Uchaf – in partnership with the local County Councillor Effective management of Council Finance and Budget complying with Governance and Audit requirements Traffic calming solutions to reduce speeding traffic on the A4067 from Ynyswen to Craig y Nos; 												

	<p>To investigate installing Interpretive panels at strategic points across the Community;</p> <p>To hold discussions with Celtic Energy to consider a tree planting scheme on the International Tip to include a Footpath</p> <p>To safely manage Council playgrounds and land;</p> <p>To maintain Community footpaths network</p> <p>To comply with requirements set out in the Welsh Government Local Council Toolkit.</p> <p>Councillor Training</p>
Well Being in Tawe Uchaf	Tawe Uchaf Community Council is committed to following the Well-being goals set by the Welsh Government of a prosperous, resilient, healthier, equal, cohesive, a vibrant culture and thriving welsh language and globally responsible;
	The seven well-being goals as set by the Welsh Government Act 2015 are set out below
A more prosperous Wales	Innovative, productive low carbon society, recognising the limits of the global environment and the use of resources efficiently and proportionately (including acting on climate change) and which develops a skilled and well educated population in an economy which generates wealth and provides employment opportunities, allowing people to take advantage of the wealth generated through decent work
Prosperous Community	<p>The Council works in partnership with the local County Councillor, who attends Council meetings, developing a partnership approach to all local issues and matters raised by residents.</p> <p>Covid -19 has impacted on all aspects of life in the Community; Covid regulations affected commercial businesses, education, travel and local social activities,</p> <p>The Council will support inward investment initiatives with the potential to provide sustainable local employment opportunities;</p> <p>The Council supports development initiatives by local tourism businesses</p> <p>The Council has a representative on the following bodies associated with safeguarding the environment and its communities and with managing tourism to maximise benefits to the communities.</p> <p>Waterfall Country Cymru Charitable Incorporated Organisation;</p> <p>Forest Fawr Geopark Management Group</p> <p>Local representation and knowledge has contributed to a recent development of a new temporary car at Coelbren. The additional seasonal temporary car park for Henrhyd Waterfall will provide overflow parking and reduce traffic congestion from road side parking by visitors to the area. Local residents of Coelbren have been involved at all stages of the development to provide their views at locally convened site meetings and will continue to be invited to further review meeting as they occur.</p> <p>The Council will support green energy generation initiatives;</p> <p>The Council comments responsibly and consistently on planning consultations from Powys County Council and Brecon Beacons National Park</p>

	<p>The Council provides financial support for village halls to maintain social fabric</p> <p>Provide financial assistance to local voluntary organisations and sport clubs to support local activities</p> <p>The Council has established a Climate Emergency sub-group. The Council sub-group is exploring opportunities for tree planting in the Community</p>
A Resilient Wales	A nation which maintains and enhances a biodiverse natural environment with healthy functioning ecosystems that support social, economic and ecological resilience and the capacity to adapt to change
Resilient Community	<p>The Council is proud, protective and caring of the rich bio-diversity in the Community. A Councillor is a member of The Brecknock Botany Recording Group and is able to help and advise the Council on bio-diversity matters. Some rare plant species exist within the Community;</p> <p>To further protect the bio-diversity of the area the Council and County Councillor are maintaining a dialogue with Officers at Powys County discussing the mowing of verges on the cycle path to protect and avoid the mowing of wild flowers;</p> <p>The Council applies this knowledge to considering the impact on local bio-diversity when commenting on planning applications for developments in the Community;</p> <p>The end of coal production will impact employment in the Community;</p> <p>There is a Welsh Government proposal to develop a Global Centre of Rail Excellence; The development will change the industrial landscape providing a change in employment opportunities;</p> <p>A grant application by BBNPA/PCC is planned, aiming to improve community facilities in Coelbren and to manage tourism to Henrhyd Falls to increase its benefits to the community. Local Councillors are involved and public comment will be invited;</p>
A Healthier Wales	A society in which people's physical and mental well-being is maximised and in which choices and behaviours that benefit future health are understood
Healthier Community	<p>The closure of the local Health Centre at Coelbren has created difficulty in accessing healthcare; Maintaining local bus services is essential to access healthcare;</p> <p>The Council promotes a healthy Community and provides local amenities and services to promote a healthy community;</p> <p>The Council provides three children's play parks located at Cefnbyrle Road, Coelbren at Caehopkin and Penycae.</p> <p>The Council carries out regular safety inspections of the playgrounds;</p> <p>The playgrounds are also inspected annually by RoSPA. The Council takes action on safety recommendations contained in the annual RoSPA report;</p> <p>The Council has recently installed a new slide at Cefnbyrle Play park following adverse safety comments made by RoSPA on the suitability and safety of the old slide;</p> <p>The Council actively maintains the local footpath networks providing access for exercise and enjoyment for local walkers and visitors; The Council works closely with the County Council Rights of Way staff where significant repair and maintenance is required.</p> <p>The national cycle route 43 runs through the Community and is well used and enjoyed by both walkers and cyclists;</p>

	<p>The Council has provided defibrillators in the village of Coelbren, Caehopkin and Ynyswen and has contributed towards a defibrillator at Penycae and the Craig y Nos Country Park;</p> <p>The Community falls within or adjacent to the boundary of the Brecon Beacons National Park. The Park provides a wide range of activities, easily accessible, such as hill walking, pony trekking, Country parks and the National Showcaves of Wales.</p> <p>The Council is discussing options with Powys County Council to reduce speeding on the A4067 to improve road safety and air quality for residents who live alongside the highway;</p>
A more equal Wales	A society that enables people to fulfil their potential no matter what their background or circumstances (including their socio economic circumstances)
Community equality	<p>The Council supports the County Councillor with efforts to maintain local bus services to allow residents to access employment, commercial and health services located outside the Community;</p> <p>Digital connectivity in the remote areas of the Community is a problem. The roll out of provision by Openreach continues but may not reach all properties;</p> <p>The Council maintains the local footpath network for access to local people to use and enjoy.</p>
A Wales of Cohesive Communities	Attractive, safe, viable and well-connected
Cohesive Community	<p>The Council supports the local County Councillor's initiatives to maintain sustainable public transport links with Coelbren to maintain and provide access to employment, access to commercial services and access to health care services; maintaining local public transport links is a major challenge to maintain connectivity;</p> <p>The Council strives to ensure its residents have the connectivity and access to commercial services;</p> <p>The availability of public transport is critical to the Community in maintaining links and access to services</p> <p>The Council continues its campaign to reduce the speed of traffic through villages on the A4067 improve public safety, road safety and environmental improvements;</p>
A Wales of Vibrant Culture and thriving Welsh language	A society that promotes and protects culture, heritage, and Welsh Language and which encourages people to participate in the arts and sports and recreation
Vibrant Community	<p>The Council supports and encourages the use of the Welsh language;</p> <p>The Council provides financial support to local village halls and local voluntary groups such as local OAP groups and sport clubs;</p> <p>The Council has provided financial support to organisations supporting Covid 19 initiatives, Ystradgynlais Food Bank and Stitching for Heroes;</p>
Globally responsible Wales	A nation which, when doing anything to improve the economic, social, environmental and cultural well-being of Wales, takes account of whether doing such a thing may make a positive contribution to global well-being
Responsible Community	The Council is committed to preserving the rich biodiversity in the Community;

	<p>The Council is protective of the rich bio-diversity including rare plants; The Council has taken ownership of an overgrown parcel of land at Craig y Nos and transformed it by clearing the land, planting trees and undertaking an on-going programme of regular ground maintenance</p>										
Community Environment	<p>The Council is caring of its environment and is involved in campaigns and strategies to make Tawe Uchaf an attractive destination for visitors; An active Campaign, is being pursued for speed cameras on the A4067 to improve road safety, air quality and prevention of road traffic accidents; The Council is actively campaigning making representation to Powys Highways and the Assembly Members for the provision of speed cameras along the A4067 from Ynyswen to Craig y Nos. The Council campaign is based on road safety in villages and personal safety of people living in properties alongside the road; in addition the nature and characteristics of the road have been explained in detail highlighting the many road junctions and dangerous bends and blind spots; Members of the Council are part of a local Community speed watch group The Council aims to develop a climate change strategy aimed to create local awareness; The Council protects the rich bio-diversity in the Community including rare species of wild flowers The Council has restored land at Craig y Nos returning the land to its original beauty by planting trees and regularly mowing the grounds; Further improvement is envisaged when a complimentary ground clearance is completed by a public utility company. The Council in partnership with the local County Councillor has campaigned successfully for significant improvement work on the FP 1 (Bog Path) at Coelbren while protecting the local bio-diversity of the area Fly tipping is a problem for the Community; The Councillors monitor and report fly tipping occurrences within their Wards; The partnership with the local County Councillor is an advantage in resolving fly tipping problems wherever possible;</p>										
Finance	<p>The Council annual budget is approximately £40,000; The Council prepares and approves a responsible and sustainable budget based on the following cost headings; Administration and office costs, payroll and insurance, website support, IT support, Annual Audit fees, GDPR Footpaths strimming and clearing to maintain and provide clear access Playgrounds regular inspection, maintenance and mowing Donations to local village halls, local voluntary groups and sports clubs to maintain the social fabric of the Community; The finance reports together with the Annual Return and Audit opinion are available to view on the Council website www.taweuchaf.co.uk The Council received an unqualified audit report from Audit Wales for 2020/2021 financial year; The key expenditure under the budget headings are;</p> <table border="0" data-bbox="496 1839 1023 2022"> <tr> <td>General Administration</td> <td>£9789</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Councillor Training</td> <td>£ 551</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Footpath Maintenance</td> <td>£3000</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Playgrounds, Land and Benches</td> <td>£3339</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Donations</td> <td>£6300</td> </tr> </table>	General Administration	£9789	Councillor Training	£ 551	Footpath Maintenance	£3000	Playgrounds, Land and Benches	£3339	Donations	£6300
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