

CYNGOR CYMUNED TAWE UCHAF COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Thursday 15th May 2025

Present: Councillors Stephen Davies (Chairman), Susan Pyart, Arlene Jones, Sandra Howard, Gail Hopkins-Williams, Marjorie Jopling (All over ZOOM)

In attendance – Vincent Goodwin Active Travel Manager PCC and David Allday PCC

Observers; None

Due to the closure of the A4221 Councillors were unable to get to Coelbren Welfare Hall. The meeting was held over ZOOM.

- 1. Apologies for absence** were accepted from Councillors Alun Thomas, Monique Craine, Huw Williams, Ann Watkins, Sandra Clayton, Geoff Woods and County Councillor David Thomas.

- 2. Declarations of interest** – No declarations made.

ZOOM discussion with Mr Vincent Goodwin Active Travel Manager PCC.

The Council welcomed Mr Goodwin and proceeded to outline the outstanding issues on the cycle track, where replies had not been received from PCC.

These are, the large gates across the cycle path had been left open, the open gates had allowed access to the cycle path by off road motor bikes and the use of the cycle track as an access by heavy coal lorries.

Mr Goodwin apologised for not replying sooner and explained to the Council that the cycle track ran across land leased by PCC from GCRE and landowners towards Ystradgynlais. If any of the landowners determined physical changes such as leaving the gates open then PCC did not have the power to challenge the decision of the landowners which could prejudice the use of the cycle track. Mr Goodwin would contact GCRE to establish if there were reasons for leaving open the large gates across the cycle path. Further he would try to establish what permissions, if any, had been granted for coal lorries to use the cycle path as access. The use of off road motor bikes on the cycle track will be referred to the Police. Councillor Susan Pyart asked if the A gate at Caehopkin could be modified to allow access to an adapted bicycle used by a disabled person. In response he agreed to ask the local highway depot to inspect the gate in question to establish if the gate could be changed. However, the issue to allow disability access and at the same time prevent access by off road motor bikes was a difficult issue that arose across Wales. In response to the Council's request Mr Goodwin agreed to respond to the Council on all matters raised by the next meeting of the Council on the 19th June, 2025.

- 3. Police Matters** – The Police were not in attendance

- 4. Finance**

- a) Income/Expenditure Report** – The report had been circulated. The Council approved the report.

- b) **Budget Update** – The budget update for April had been circulated. The Council approved the report.
- c) **May Payment Register** – The May payment register was approved.
- d) **Council InsuranceRenewal** – The Council approved the renewal of the Council insurance with Gallagher at the cost of £1188.34. The Council agreed to accept the three year binding agreement offered by Gallagher.
- e) **To approve amendment to 2025/2026 Budget** – The Council approved the virement of £850.00 from the unused reserves budget to the Employer's NI budget line. The budget will be amended.
- f) **Coelbren Welfare Hall Centenary** – Following a brief discussion surrounding planned events for the Hall Centenary celebrations the Council agreed to make the donation of £1000.00, included in the Council's budget, to Coelbren Welfare Hall.
- g) **Internal Audit Report 2024/2025 FY** – The Internal Audit report was presented for the 2024/2025 financial year. The Council adopted the Report.
- Annual Return** – The Council approved the annual return for 2024/2025. The Chairman duly signed and dated the annual return.
- 5. **Planning – Ref 25/0598/OUT Land Adjacent to Brynawelon, Coelbren** – The Council considered the application for outline planning for the erection of a bungalow, formation of access and all associated works. The Council was aware planning consent had previously been granted on the site and required clarification. The Council agreed to comment as follows;
 - a) The Council is unable to comment at this time; The Council requires clarification from the Planning authority on previous planning decisions on this site and if those matters remained outstanding.
 - b) The Council will respond to the application when the planning authority issues clarification on previous planning matters for the site.
- 6. **Footpath/Maintenance**
 - a) **Footpath/Playground Maintenance 2025** – The Clerk reported discussions with Matthew Thomas for footpath and playground maintenance. No price increases had been applied for many years. A request for a 5% increase on net prices charged last year was made to cover Employer's NI costs. The Council agreed the request. Purchase Orders to cover the work had been raised. The Council approved the actions of the Clerk
 - b) **Penycae Playground New Signs** – The Council received a report via PCC on the presence of dogs in the Penycae playground. The Clerk inspected the playground and placed temporary signs. PAT also placed temporary signs that dogs were not allowed. The Clerk ordered permanent signs installed by Matthew Thomas. The Chairman and Clerk were present. The Council approved the actions of the Clerk in providing new signs. The cost of the signs will be reclaimed in the Q1 office costs claim at the end of June.
 - c) **PAT Request to plant new tree** – A discussion was held with PAT following a formal request to plant a new Christmas tree in the Penycae playground. The

Chairman and Clerk identified a location for a new tree subject to approval by the Council. The Council agreed permission for PAT to plant a new Christmas tree in the playground.

PAT also confirmed the date of their village carnival in 2025. The date is the 14th June. Insurance cover will be provided by PAT to cover three days to include set-up, carnival day and to remove all equipment. The Council approved the request

7. Correspondence

- a) Electoral Review Programme 2025** – The Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru has published its Policy and Practice document in preparation for the 2025 Electoral Review Programme.
 - b) BBNP Local Development Plan 2025-2045** – The BBNP has prepared a draft delivery agreement document in relation to the replacement of the local development plan. The Council noted the document and comments on financial unsustainability.
 - c) Section 6 Environment Report** - In response to a question, from the Council, Rachel Carter at OVW has advised the Council should update its report during the year with new actions and publish at the end of the year.
 - d) Bus Shelter near former Coelbren School** – In response to the Council's request for a seat in the bus shelter Gethin Davies of PCC had advised highway's had no budget to install a new bench. The matter had been forwarded to Sarah Leyland-Morgan passenger transport manager to see if they could help. A response is awaited.
 - e) Powys County Council Highway Trees** – Nigel Davies of PCC has circulated the Powys Highways strategy of managing risk from trees. As each County Council area is inspected a short report of the findings will be sent to the local elected member for the area together with the local Community/TownCouncil. PCC will be required to send legal notices to landowners with trees on their land to reduce the risk from trees that legally are at a level of risk to people or property. Should private landowners contact the Council about the notices they should be signposted to newly created webpage <https://cy.powys.gov.uk/CoedPriffyrdd>
- 8. County Council Update** – County Councillor David Thomas was unable to attend due to other commitments. In a written communication to the Council he advised PCC will commence an engagement exercise on post 16 education in Powys.
- 9. Casual Vacancy Coelbren** – The notice of vacancy had not received any request to hold an election. Therefore, a notice of co-option had been published on the 8th May.
- 10. Minutes** – The minutes of the previous meeting on 17/4/25 were signed as a true record.

11. Matters Arising – Relocation of SID – The Abercrave Highways depot will relocate the SID from Penycae to Craig y Nos when manpower became available.

12. Member Issues

a) **Penycae Playground** – Councillor Gail Hopkins-Williams advised that she had seen dogs in the Penycae Playground since the new signs had been put up. However, she did not stop as she was the owner of a neighbouring licenced premises. Councillors would continue to monitor the situation. Any person with a dog in the park will be politely asked to remove the dog from the park.

b) **Council Land at Craig y Nos** – Councillor Gail Hopkins-Williams advised that during farmer's market events at Craig y Nos, vehicles were parking on Council owned land at Craig y Nos. Vehicles were parking between the trees on the Council land. The Council agreed to explore providing a sign to request motorists not to park on private land. Local Councillors for Penycae will arrange to visit the Country Park and Craig y Nos to make the management aware of the parking issues to prevent the use of the land for parking. The Clerk will also make the Police aware and request if they could place bollards to prevent cars accessing the land.

13. Date of Next Meeting – Thursday 19th June, 2025.