

CYNGOR CYMUNED TAWE UCHAF COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Thursday 19th June 2025

Present: Councillors Stephen Davies (Chairman) Susan Pyart, Ann Watkins, Gail Hopkins-Williams, Sandra Howard, Gareth Hayton, County Councillor David Thomas

Observers - None

1. **Apologies for absence** were accepted from Councillors Huw Williams, Arlene Jones, Geoff Woods, Sandra Clayton and Alun Thomas
The Council agreed a leave of absence request for Councillor Williams due to ill health.
2. **Co-Option of Councillor** – The Chairman reported one expression of interest had been received following the publication of the Notice of Co-option. The expression of interest had been received from Mr Gareth Hayton. Mr Hayton was in attendance as an observer and left the meeting. The Council considered the expression of interest and unanimously agreed to co-opt Mr Hayton as Community Councillor for the Coelbren Ward. Mr Hayton signed the Declaration of Acceptance and attended the meeting.
3. **Declaration of Interest** – None received.
4. **Police Matters** – The Police could not attend and forwarded an e mail report. The report will be circulated to the Council.
5. **Finance**
 - a) **Income/Expenditure Report** – The income/expenditure report to the end of May had been circulated. The Clerk summarised the report advising there had been a delay with secondary approval of the May payments due to the late arrival of a banking card from Barclays. The payments were approved in early June. The Council approved the report.
 - b) **Budget Update** – The budget update at the end of May had been circulated. The Clerk summarised the report. The Council approved the report.
 - c) **June Payment Register** – The Council approved the June payment register.
6. **Planning**
 - a) **Planning Ref 25/0598/OUT Land Adjacent to Brynawelon** – Outline application for erection of a bungalow; - The Council considered the matter and agreed the following comments.
 1. The Council is very concerned that several trees will need to be removed to develop this site; The Council will object to the removal of trees.
 2. The Council respectfully requests that the requirements of section 6 of the Environment (Wales) Act are respected to protect the biodiversity of the area.
 3. The Council consistently comments on the resilience of the sewage system in the Coelbren area.

4. The Council has commented several times that any proposed access development off Brynawelon, Coelbren will not work; Brynawelon is a very narrow road with cars parked outside resident's dwellings.
5. Brynawelon will be totally unsuitable to allow the delivery of building materials; Large delivery trucks will not be able to access the site.
6. There is an alternative access agreed into the site off Heol Cefnbyrle, for a development on a previously approved site for housing.

7. Footpath/Playgrounds – Following the first round of FP Maintenance Matthew Thomas had drawn the Council's attention to a number of issues that will require attention as follows.

Footpath Moriah to former residential home

Black Path Caehopkin - Blocked Culvert; Brambles at the lower end;

Landowner's Boundary Fence falling into the path.

Station Road Caehopkin – Steps leading to Cycle Path

Hedge at 18 Morgan Street

The Council agreed that the Chairman and Clerk meet Matthew Thomas to visit the sites to discuss each item and agree costs. The costs will be presented to the Council for approval. The steps leading to the cycle path will be discussed with GCRE at a site meeting.

Countryside Volunteer Programme – Sian Barnes of PCC has written to all Community and Town Councils on the launch of new working arrangements for the Powys Countryside Volunteer Programme. The volunteer programme would be set-up to manage rights of way in each area. The new arrangements are based on the Sustainable Powys locality areas. Meetings will be convened on a locality cluster. The Council agreed to invite Sian Barnes to a meeting to continue discussions on the re-opening of the rights of way over Mynydd y Drym.

Playgrounds – Penycae Playground Basket Swing – Wicksteed Leisure has responded to the Council's enquiry to service the universal joint. The Clerk has provided a full postal address, and a quote is now awaited.

8. Correspondence

a) Cycle Track 43 – Vincent Goodwin, the travel officer at PCC has responded to the questions raised by the Council over ZOOM at the last meeting as follows.

1. GCRE do not know who is leaving the gates open. It is incumbent on all users of the track to close gates after use.
2. The owner of the property using coal lorries on the track has a historic right of access and is lawfully allowed to take vehicles up and down the track to access their land. They appreciate this is not ideal, but it is not possible to prevent the lorries from using the track legitimately.

3. We continue to raise the issue with the Police. In the meantime, if there is an incident this needs to be reported at the time to the Police so they may respond accordingly.
4. The local depot has been asked to inspect and repair the A gate as necessary.

The Council noted the replies provided by Mr Goodwin and agreed to the suggestion to convene a site meeting with GCRE to discuss the issues. The Clerk will reply and ask Mr Goodwin to arrange a site meeting.

- b) Seat at Bus Shelter** – The Clerk advised correspondence had been progressed with Andy King passenger transport officer at PCC. A google maps image had been provided to allow PCC to review if it is possible to provide a new shelter with a seat. In a further response Andy King has requested details for the owner of the former school. The Clerk will provide details.
- c) Request for Financial Assistance** – The Council has received a request for financial assistance from Tilly Jones of Caehopkin, who has been accepted to by a college in Tanzania, East Africa, through United World Colleges, to study an international baccalaureate. The Council considered the request and the Councils budget position. The Council considered the educational opportunity provided to Tilly Jones. The Council unanimously agreed to make a donation of £500.00 to Tilly Jones.
- d) Councillor Training** – OVW has published the training programme for June to September. A decision on a training module was deferred to the next meeting.
- e) Resignation of Councillor** – Councillor Monique Craine had written to advise her intention to resign as a member of the Council with immediate effect. The reason was due to workload pressure. The Clerk will advise electoral services at Powys CC to agree a timetable for public notices of the vacancy.
- 9. County Council Update** – County Councillor David Thomas provided the following update. The recent consultation on public transport had been reviewed. The outcome of the consultation had positive results for Tawe Uchaf. The X62 service has been retained; The T6 Traws Cymru service will continue as will the X8 service into Coelbren
PCC was currently consulting on Post 16 education in Powys. The consultation contained suggestions on proposed locations of post 16 colleges that might impact on pupils in the Ystradgynlais area.
PCC had launched the anti-poverty fund. An amount of £5,000.00 was available to be shared in his ward. The Council agreed to a suggestion of a joint meeting with Ystradfellte Community Council to discuss how to share the fund. A date will be suggested, and the Clerk will set up a ZOOM link for the meeting.

10. OVW Area Committee Meetings – OVW had written to all Community Councils to survey reasons for poor attendance at Area Committee meetings. The Council discussed the matter and agreed the following responses. Councillor Stephen Davies and Gareth Hayton will be the Council representatives on the Area Committee.

The Council requests OVW to provide the option of hybrid meetings to improve attendance.

The Councillors expressed a reluctance to travel late at night on poorly maintained roads into mid Wales. The Clerk will communicate to OVW.

11. Minutes – The minutes of the previous meeting on 15th May were signed as a true record.

12. Matters Arising

Parking at Craig y Nos – Councillor Ann Watkins reported she was in regular contact with the Manager of the Country Park and has discussed the issue of parking on Council land. Councillor Watkins will monitor the situation and if necessary, will ask for bollards to be placed along the verge of the A4067 to prevent access.

13. Member Issues – Penrycae Carnival – Councillor Gail Hopkins-Williams advised that Alpacas had been present, in the playground, at the recent Penrycae Carnival and whether the Council had been made aware that Alpacas would be present. The Chairman advised he and the Clerk had discussed the Carnival with a member of PAT. The discussion was about the use of the playground by PAT over three days and that insurance cover was in place. The Council had not been informed of the presence of Alpacas. The Council agreed that future discussions with PAT in relation to the Carnival should include details of stalls. The Council questioned the legal status of licenced livestock movements. The Clerk was asked to check with the Council insurers.

14. Date of Next Meeting – Thursday 17th July 2025.