

CYNGOR CYMUNED TAWE UCHAF COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Council Meeting held on Thursday 27th November 2025

Present – Councillors Stephen Davies, Susan Pyart, Arlene Jones, Sandra Howard, Geoff Woods, Gareth Hayton, Ann Watkins, Sandra Clayton

Observers - None

The Chairman welcomed members to the November meeting of the Council. The meeting had been put back by a week to accommodate a Sustainable Powys meeting on the 20/11/25.

- 1. Apologies for absence** were approved from Councillors Marjorie Joplin, Gail Hopkins-Williams, Alun Thomas County Councillor David Thomas,
- 2. Declaration of Interest** – None submitted.
- 3. Police Matters** – The Police were unable to attend. An update had been provided in writing. There had been an attempted burglary in Coelbren in the early hours of 4th November. An appeal for information is current. Three Officers from the roads policing unit have been allocated to Ystradgynlais and surrounding areas. The roads policing officers have been made aware of the Councils concerns, raised at previous meetings, of speeding at Penycae and Craig y Nos and the request for speed checks on the A4221 at Cefnbyrle. The use of motorbikes on the cycle path continued to be monitored.
- 4. Finance**
 - a) Income/Expenditure Report** – The income/expenditure report to 31/10/25 had been circulated. The Clerk summarised the report. A discussion ensued on the balance in the current account and the impending precept income in December. It was noted the invoices for Footpath and Playgrounds Maintenance had not been received. The Council approved the report.
 - b) Budget Update** – The budget update to 31/10/25 had been circulated. The Clerk summarised the report. The Council approved the report.
 - c) To approve the November Payment Register** – The November payment register had been circulated. The Council approved the payments.
Delegation of December Payments - The Council agreed the following resolution, to be subject to discussion on the date of the next meeting at item 16 on the agenda. If the Council does not meet in December, responsibility for the December payments be delegated to the Chairman Vice Chairman and Clerk.
 - d) To approve the Clerk's Salary Review** – The Chairman advised a report on the Clerk's salary review had been circulated (see appendix). The review was undertaken by the Chairman, Vice Chair and Clerk. The report of the salary review was considered by the full Council. The Council approved the Clerk's salary review for 2025. The new salary will be paid from 01/04/2026. The next salary review will be in November 2027.

- e) **Council Budget 2026/2027** – An updated copy of the draft budget had been circulated. The amendments approved at the last meeting had been included. Decisions remained outstanding on Interpretive panels and the removal of white poplar trees at Caehopkin playground. The matters will be discussed under items 6 and 8 of the agenda. The decisions agreed will be included in the draft budget.

5. **Planning** – BBNP planning had advised the application in respect of Abercrave Church had been withdrawn.

Unauthorised Development – The Council was made aware of a possible unauthorised development adjacent to land owned and maintained by the Council. The Council agreed to refer to the BBNP Planning Enforcement Department.

6. **Footpath/Playgrounds**

Footpaths – The final round of footpath maintenance had been delayed and was due to complete at the end of November. The invoices will be submitted in December.

RoSPA Playground Reports 2025 – The annual RoSPA playground inspection report had been circulated. The Chairman referred to items identified in the report. The single point swing at Penycae Playground and wear on swing chains at Caehopkin Playground. The items raised will be monitored by the playground inspection team during regular inspections.

Trees at Caehopkin Playground – The Chairman advised that four Companies had expressed an interest to quote for the removal of the white poplar trees at Caehopkin playground. The timescales to obtain information and selection of a contractor was relatively short. Information will be required for inclusion in the 2026/2027 budget. The Council agreed to invite the four companies to tender for the removal of the trees. Tender invitations to be circulated immediately with a target return date of 12th December. A report of tenders received will be submitted to the January meeting and a preferred tender approved. The draft budget for 2026/27 will be increased to include the cost of removing the trees.

Replacement Bench at Caehopkin – Susan Pyart requested if the broken bench at Caehopkin could be replaced. The broken bench had been removed. The Council noted the budget for street furniture and agreed to replace the bench. If possible, the location of the bench to be moved nearer to the highway.

7. **To approve the Section 6 Biodiversity Report** – The draft Section 6 report had been circulated. The Chairman suggested the Wales Ape and Monkey Sanctuary be included under tourist attractions. The Council agreed the inclusion and approved the report. The report will be published on the Council website, and a copy will be sent to OVW who will collate reports for the WG. The Council thanked Arlene Jones for her work in the preparation of the

report. The Council was reminded that an action plan would be required in 2026.

- 8. Interpretive Panels** – The Chairman introduced the information circulated by the Clerk on the cost breakdown, provided by three suppliers of interpretive panels. The Council discussed the cost breakdown. The Council unanimously agreed to commence a roll out of interpretive panels in the Community. The panels would commemorate the industrial history and importance of mining and railways. The first interpretive panel will be provided in Coelbren. The Council agreed to include a sum of £5000.00 in the draft budget for 2026/2027. Further discussion on selection of a preferred supplier was deferred to the January meeting. Information on the requirement of bilingual text to be clarified with one of the companies.

9. Correspondence

a) OVW Annual General Meeting – The Council nominated the attendance of the Chairman at the OVW AGM to be held on 21st January, 2026. If required Gareth Hayton will act as substitute.

b) Cost of Living Crises – The Council will respond to OVW advising it does not own any property. Therefore, it is difficult to arrange events.

c) Penrycae Playground – Penrycae Action Team has advised the Council they have insurance cover in place for the switch on of Christmas lights on Sunday 30th December. The Council noted that Insurance cover had been arranged by PAT.

- 10. County Council Update** – County Councillor David Thomas had offered apologies due to a PCC meeting.

The Chairman proceeded by updating the Council on the recent Sustainable Powys meeting on 20th November, attended by himself and the Vice Chair. A resource hub will be set up for use by Town and Community Councils to share ideas and information. A My Powys app is being developed to provide a wide range of information for users to access. Information will include school transport, location of public toilets active travel routes and waste services. The app will also include a link to Travel line Cymru providing access to bus routes and timetables across Wales. A bus fare promotion was being trialled for students and young people. A single fare would cost a £1 with similar reductions applied to return fares. In conclusion he reported on a recent asset transfer agreement between PCC and Llandrindod Town Council, The Town Council had employed a part-time worker to do litter picking and some grass cutting essential to maintain a tidy environment.

- 11. Councillor Training** – The Clerk had circulated a revised Councillor training document as recommended in the audit report. The Chairman invited comments. The OVW training module The Councillor on 11/12/25 was discussed. Gareth Hayton indicated he would like to attend. The Council agreed to the attendance of Gareth Hayton. The Clerk will inform OVW.

- 12. Councillor Vacancy Ynyswen/Penycae Ward** – A further co-option notice had been published on 3rd November. To date no expression of interest had been received.
- 13. Minutes** – The minutes of the previous meeting on 16th October had been circulated. The Council approved the minutes.
- 14. Matters Arising** – No matters raised.
- 15. Member Issues – Llech Trail Audio Points** – The Chairman reported on his attempts to repair audio points on the Llech Trail. The audio points were old and spares are not readily available and prone to break down. He suggested the Council agree to a feasibility study involving the use of QR codes. Walkers will scan a QR code and would hear the audio commentary. The Council agreed for the Chairman to undertake a feasibility study to determine wi-fi connectivity is available at the location and how the technology could be deployed. The Council agreed a contingency sum could be included in the 2026/2027 budget if the proposal could be developed.
- Gates on Cycle Path** – In response to a question the Clerk advised a meeting with the Active Travel Manager and GCRE remained outstanding. At the time GCRE had no resource available to attend a site meeting.
- 16. Date of Next Meeting** – Following discussion the Council made the following decisions. The Council will not meet in December, unless an urgent matter arises. The date of the next meeting will be 15th January, 2026. The Council referred to the decision taken under item 4c above, to delegate December payments.

Appendix – Clerk's Salary Review November 2025

Report to Council on Review of Clerk's Salary 2025 The Chair and Vice Chair conducted the salary review with the Clerk. The review was conducted during November 2025. The previous review was held in November 2023. The Clerk's salary is reviewed every two years. The previous review was held in November 2023. The Clerk's salary is currently set on point 10 of the NALC Local Government Services Review pay scales. In 2023 the hourly rate was set at £13.27 p/h The 2024/2025 NALC Local Government Services Review sets the scale point 10 hourly rate at £13.91 per hour. Following discussions with the Clerk it was agreed the Clerk's salary will increase to £13.91 per hour. The increase will take effect from 1st April 2026. The new salary from 1/4/26 will be £13.91p/h The Council budget for 2026/2027 will reflect the salary change. The next review will take place in November 2027. The report is submitted to the Meeting of the full Council on 27/11/25 for consideration and approval.

Stephen Davies Chairman

Susan Pyart Vice Chair
