



# COITY HIGHER COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Chair: Councillor Alan Wathan  
Vice-Chair: Councillor Martin Williams

## **Annual Report 2021/2022**

As Chair of the Community Council, I am pleased to introduce Coity Higher Community Council's first Annual Report covering 2021/2022.

2021/22 was again impacted by COVID albeit to a lesser extent. But there was disruption to the council's plans due to COVID and other external influences. The summer activity schemes in Coety and Litchard Schools were unfortunately cancelled by BCBC. Plans were further disrupted when the asset transfer of Heol Mair/Penylan play park was halted due to land and other BCBC issues. There have also been delays to the Great Western Avenue playing field transfer due to land title issues.

The following report will give you further details of that year.

**Alan Wathan**  
**Chair Coity Higher Community Council**

### **2021/2022:**

Despite the challenges mentioned in the Introduction above, the council has achieved much this year and has reallocated budgets to meet revised plans. The council completed the asset transfer of the play park and associated green space in Joslin Road directly from the developer Llanmoor. We also completed our largest project to date, the reconstructed footpath from Heol Spencer to Pant y Pwllau which was funded by a BCBC grant. Further projects which have been commissioned this year include a further speed actuated warning sign on Heol Spencer and the installation of an outdoor fitness trail in Coity field.

In addition to these larger projects the council has resolved to install commemorative benches to mark the Queen's platinum jubilee, bins & dog waste bag dispensers, notice boards and an additional public access defibrillator.

The council is jointly working with Ramblers Cymru to develop a series of 8 footpath route maps which will be published in 2022/23. This relationship has yielded significant

funding for a number of associated features including new way marker posts, benches, gates, bat & bird boxes and wildflowers.

The council has continued to lobby for road safety and community access interventions throughout the community. As a direct result of our Community Access Plan Welsh Government funding has enabled the construction of a new pavement and speed actuated sign in Heol Simonston and improvements to the safe walking route between Great Western Avenue and Pendre. This latest investment means that approximately £ ½ million of Welsh Funding has been forthcoming as a direct result of the council's community access work.

Another achievement has been to address the longstanding democratic imbalance on the council with seats not reflecting the relative population of each ward. The council lobbied BCBC (the principal authority with responsibility for community boundaries) to enable a change in advance of the May 2022 elections. As a result of this the council has increased by two members to thirteen with a fairer distribution of seats in each ward.

### **Look Ahead to 2022/23 and Beyond:**

2022/23 is an election year and as such plans for the year ahead are subject to change. The budget agreed in December 2021 provides guidance as to the priorities for the year ahead, but this is subject to the approval of the new council. Assuming the priorities remain aligned to previous years the council intends to deliver its project with Ramblers Cymru, revise the Community Access Plan and continue to pursue asset transfer opportunities where they add value to Coity Higher.

### **Councillors, Committees and Key Contact Information:**

Coity Higher Community Council serves three wards - Coity, Litchard and Pendre and is served by 11 councillors who are either elected or co-opted. A local election takes place every 4 or 5 years. Once elected councillors cannot act as a councillor until they've signed a formal declaration of acceptance of office form. They undertake to abide by the Code of Conduct that has been adopted by the Council and must undertake training on this subject. At present this is the only mandatory training they must undertake. The number of councillors will increase in 2022/23 due to the growth in housing the Coity ward.

The Council has four committees - Finance & Resources, Staff & Disciplinary Committee, Allotment Gardens Appeals Committee and Community Access Plan Standing Committee. The Finance & Resources Committee meets quarterly, the other committee meetings are held on an ad hoc basis.

Councillors do not receive a salary but are entitled to claim a one-off payment of £150 per year to cover admin services. They can elect not to receive the payment. A list of payments made each year is published on the council's website.

Councillors must also individually make Declarations of Interest and must leave a meeting if an issue being discussed is of personal or prejudicial interest. When summoned to a meeting councillors will be provided with an agenda, minute of the last meeting and relevant reports or papers associated with the items being discussed to enable them to prepare for a meeting properly as they are acting on behalf of the electorate and represent the views of the community in discussions. No single councillor can decide on

behalf of the council.

The Chair is elected by the members at the annual meeting held in May each year and holds the position for a year. The Vice-Chair is also elected at that meeting and holds the position for the same length of time.

The Clerk & RFO and the Assistant Clerk/FO are employed by the council to carry out its administration, financial management, asset management, project management, health & safety and other professional duties. Coity Higher Community Council does not employ any other members of staff. The staff take instruction from the whole council and not individual members. The Clerk is the council's 'Proper Officer' and all correspondence should be sent to the Clerk.

### **Council Contact Details:**

Ann Harris  
Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer to Coity Higher Community Council  
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### **Precept and Income:**

The council's income is made up of its precept - in 2021/22 this was £111,200. In addition it received other income, from VAT reclaims, allotment garden rent, Rights of Way footpath maintenance funding via a Rights of Way Agency Agreement with Bridgend County Borough Council and a little bank interest.

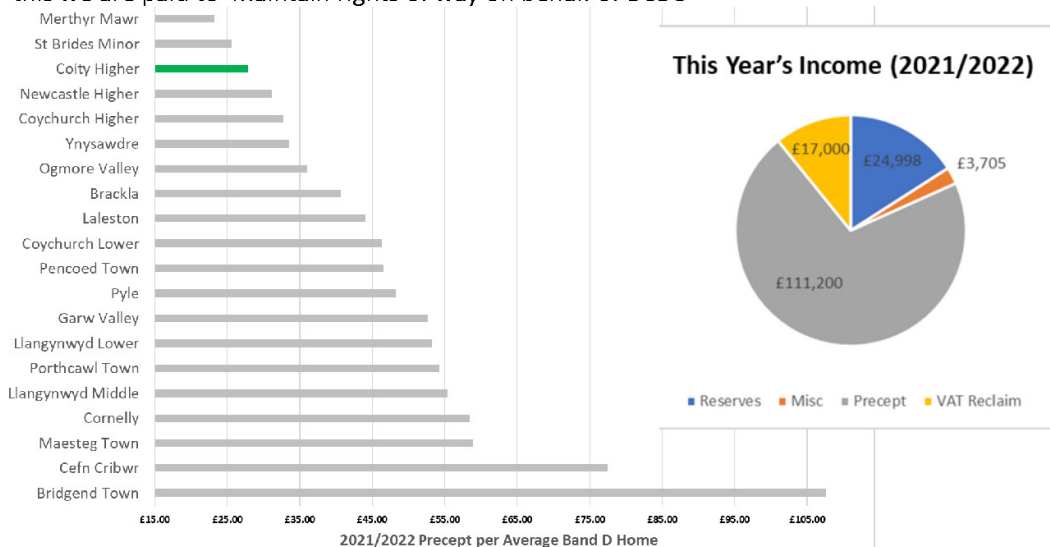
[Here is a link to the last signed Audit Statement the Community Council received for 2020/2021.](#)

## Budget and Expenditure:

Most of the community council's funding is raised through council tax collected by BCBC on our behalf. The council also applies for grant funding where available to support specific projects.

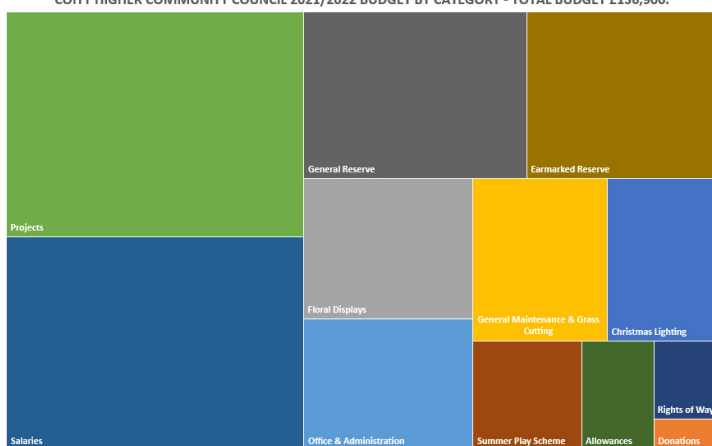
Budget setting starts in the autumn. A draft budget is developed by the Finance & Resources committee that estimates expenditure for the next year and forecasts the proportion to be funded through taxation. This is known as the 'Precept'. The full council agrees the final budget in December's meeting.

The council also receives modest revenue from the allotments to cover general maintenance. In addition to this we are paid to maintain rights of way on behalf of BCBC



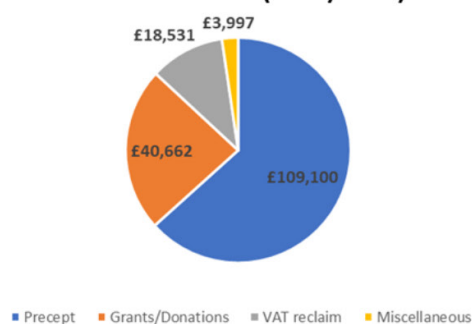
The budget for the current financial year is £157,000 funded by £111,000 precept, £17,000 reclaimed VAT, £4,000 miscellaneous funding and £25,000 from reserves. **At £27.84 per Band D property Coity Higher has the third lowest precept in the Bridgend County Borough** meaning that if you live in Coity, Litchard or Pendre your overall council tax will be less than most equivalent properties in the BCBC area.

COITY HIGHER COMMUNITY COUNCIL 2021/2022 BUDGET BY CATEGORY - TOTAL BUDGET £156,900.



A copy of our budget can be seen on the community council's website along with audit reports, councillor's allowances and minutes of the Finance & Resources meetings. The chart on the left summaries how this year's budget will be broken down. General reserves provide insurance against unforeseen expenditure. Earmarked reserves are for specific projects or to ensure funding for projects to continue if grant funding is unavailable.

**Last Year's Income (2020/2021)**



The budget is reviewed at every council meeting. Prudent management has ensured that the council's auditors have given the council a clean bill of health. The clerk will actively seek grant funding for projects and services through the year. As a result of this in 2020/2021 only 64% of income was generated by taxation with a further £45,000 derived from external sources.

### **Internal and External Audits:**

Each year the council's accounts undertake an Internal and External Audit. The Internal Audit is carried out by an auditor appointed by the council and the External Audit is carried out by the Wales Audit Office. In 2020/21 the council received an unqualified audit from the Auditor General for Wales who raised no concerns or issues with the council's accounting process and accounts. The full audit statement is published on the council's website and is dated 22/12/2021. The Council's Internal Audit also raised no issues and was dated 23/06/2021

### **Key Objectives for the Year and Progress:**

The Community Council's 2020/21 budget are the objectives.

### **BUDGET 2021 2022**

<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>£</b>
Salaries	£32,000.00
Office Costs	£2,000.00
Member Allowances	£4,000.00
Elections	0.00
Insurance	£1,500.00
Training	£1,000.00
Memberships/Registrations	£1,600.00
Audit	£650.00
Donations	£1,000.00
Community Award	£250.00
General Maintenance	£4,000.00
Allotments	0.00
Floral Displays	£12,000.00
Footpaths - Rights of Way	£2,500.00
Grass Cutting Play Areas	£7,000.00
Christmas Lighting	£9,000.00
Communications	£2,800.00
Summer Activities	£6,000.00
Community Action Plan	£15,000.00
Play Area Refurb	£15,000.00
Footpath Leaflet/Map	£600.00
Oakwood View	£2,900.00
Annual Report	£1,400.00
General Reserve	£18,702.41
Election Reserve	£4,000.00
CAT Transfer Reserve	£12,000.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£156,902.41</b>

### **How the council engaged with the community:**

The Community Council engaged with the community via their website, which includes copies of their regular newsletter which are hand delivered to every household within the 3 wards of Coity, Litchard and Pendre.

In addition Councillors have their own social media pages which they use to engage with the community.

### **Key services or activities:**

The services of the community council can be summarised as follows:

**Asset Maintenance:** maintaining the council's assets such as the allotments, war memorial, bins, benches & planters, play parks, green spaces and notice boards. The council also maintains Rights of Way on behalf of BCBC and empties bins on behalf of Persimmon in Parc Derwen. The council will carry out ad hoc highway weeding as required.

**Street Scene:** Erection and maintenance of floral displays, daffodil planting and Christmas decorations.

**Community Safety:** Public Access Defibrillators, speed actuated signs and minor road safety projects. Community Access Plan/Safe routes working with BCBC to highlight and develop plans to improve road safety.

**Miscellaneous Services & Projects:** The council will undertake projects and services that arise and are of value to the community. Examples include, summer play schemes, financial support to local community groups, events and charities, construction of footpaths and community awards.