



# COITY HIGHER COMMUNITY COUNCIL

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

## Annual Report 2022/2023

As Chair of the Community Council, I am pleased to introduce Coity Higher Community Council's Annual Report covering 2022/2023.

This year represented many firsts for Coity Higher; the newly elected council's first year, the first year that the council had 13 councillors representing the 3 wards and a fairer distribution of seats in each ward; it was also the first time all 3 borough councillors, who are also community councillors, represented the 3 wards and not one specific one. So, 2022/2023 was a year of change and to move forward and make plans for this council's tenure.

However, during this time our work has continued. The project in partnership with Ramblers' Cymru was finished, including a walks leaflet, bench installations along the river path in Litchard and the planting of a community orchard in Pendre. We've been in discussions with V2C regarding working in partnership to renew benches and plant flowers at Llys Gwyn, made 3 applications to BCBC's Town and Community Council grant funding scheme for projects in Litchard and Coity, re-fenced Coity Castle play area and continued to improve our floral displays, daffodil planting and Christmas lighting displays and donations to community groups, organised community awards and donated gifts for all primary school children for the King's Coronation.

In addition, we've continued our work to asset transfer Pendre Fields, Litchard Fields and Coity Higher Community Centre with condition and pitch surveys carried out and agreed the Heads of Terms of the transfer. The working group's work continues to move forward and a Business Manager is now on board.

Outstanding matters at Parc Derwen continued to be discussed with regular meetings with Persimmon, our discussions regarding a pavement for Heol Spencer continued with BCBC and we continued to represent the community regarding planning matters and the proposed expansion of Coety Primary School.

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

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

### **2022/2023:**

The council has achieved much this year and has reallocated budgets to meet revised plans.

As mentioned above in the Chair's introduction, the council has continued to lobby for road safety and community access interventions throughout the community.

Safety bollards were installed at Litchard Cross and the council continues to campaign for a pavement along Heol Spencer.

### **Look Ahead to 2023/24 and Beyond:**

The budget agreed in December 2022 provides guidance as to the priorities for the year ahead and can be seen on the Finance page of our website. The council intends to complete its project with Ramblers Cymru 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 13 councillors who were all elected in May 2022 and are all independent councillors. 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. As mentioned in the Chair's introduction above there have been some changes this year.

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. In 2022/23 a Community Asset Transfer working group was set up to take forward the council's Expression of Interest to BCBC on asset transferring both Pendre Fields and Litchard Fields including Coity Higher Community Centre. This group meets as needed and feeds back to the full council. The group has been allocated a Business Project Manager from the Coalfields Trust to guide the council through this process.

Councillors do not receive a salary but are entitled to claim a one-off annual payment of £156 per year to cover admin services and a one-off annual payment of £30 attendance allowance. They can elect not to receive either of the payments. 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 make decisions 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 and is the Chair of the Finance Committee.

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  
PO Box 357  
Bridgend  
CF31 9NT

Tel: 07949451690

Email: [clerkcoityhighercc@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:clerkcoityhighercc@hotmail.co.uk)

Website: [www.coityhighercommunitycouncil.co.uk](http://www.coityhighercommunitycouncil.co.uk)

### **Precept and Income:**

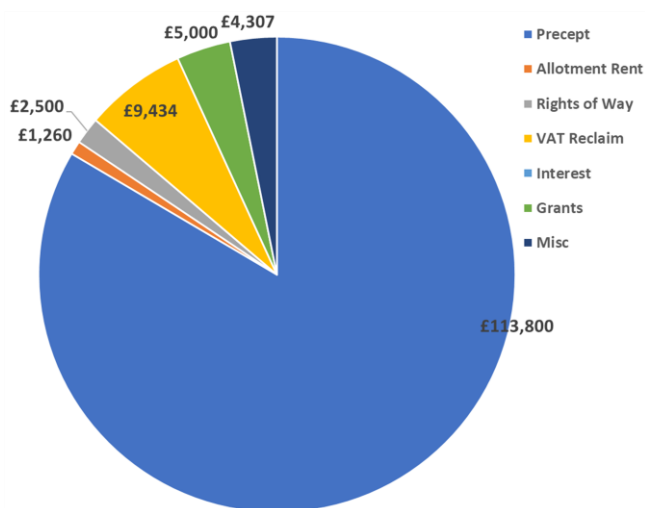
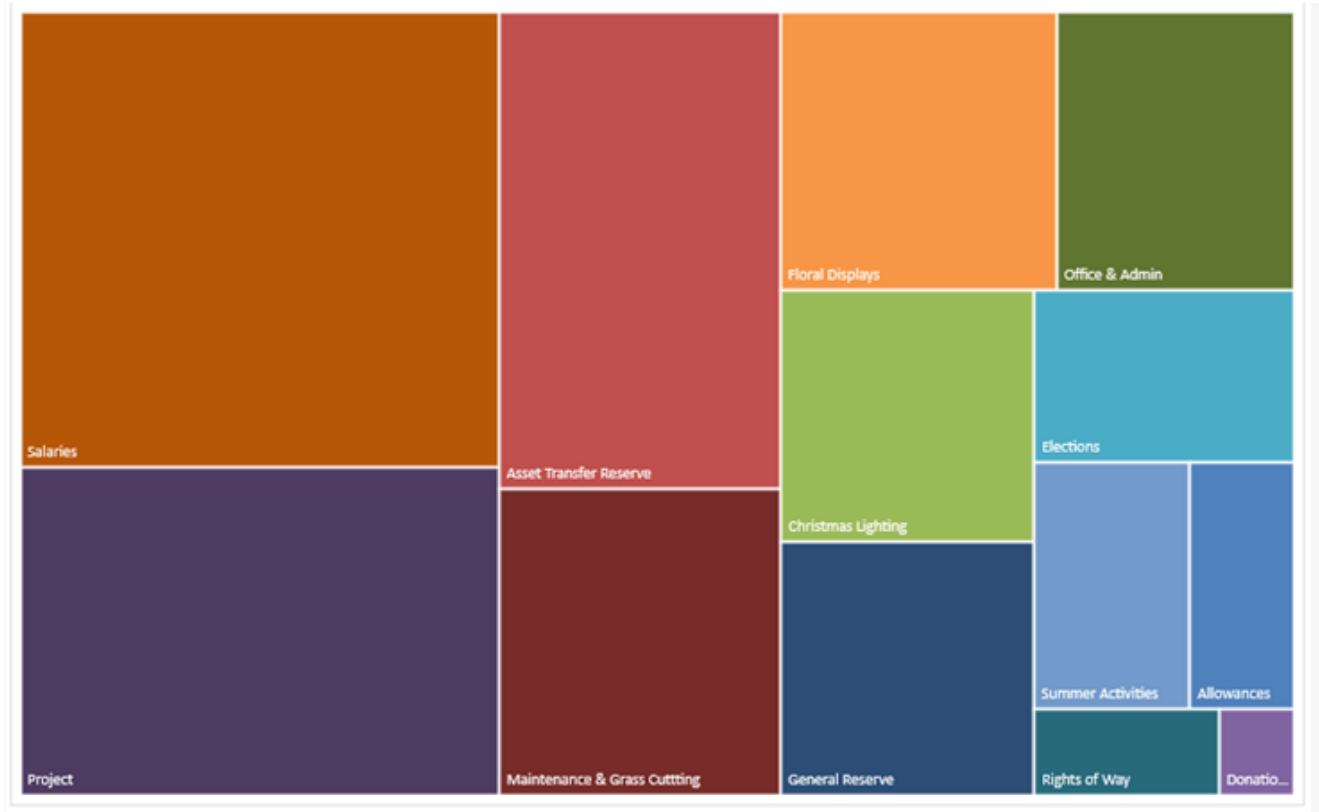
The council's income is made up of its precept - in 2022/23 this was £113,800. In addition, it received other income, from VAT reclaims, allotment garden rent, Rights of Way footpath maintenance funding via a Rights of Way Agency Agreement with Bridgend County Borough Council and a little bank interest. During the year as projects evolve it also applies for grant funding.

[Here is the link to the last signed Audit Statement the Community Council received for 2021/2022 or it can be viewed on our website on the Finance page.](#)

### **Budget and Expenditure:**

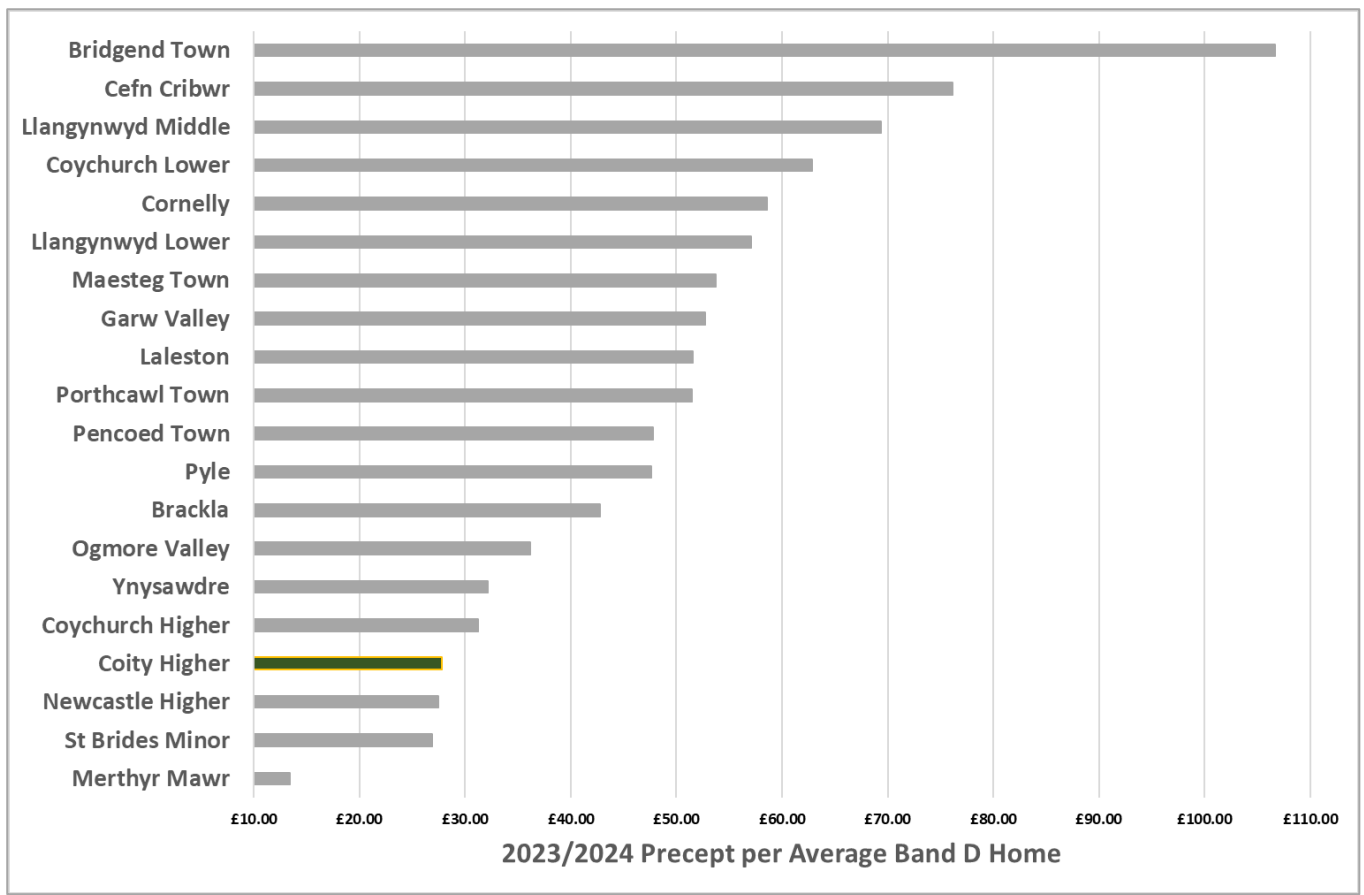
Most of the community council's income is raised through its precept, which is a portion of your council tax. There are three elements to council tax, BCBC, Police and Community Council. Budget setting starts at the beginning of the financial year. The Council's finance committee reviews the budget regularly and recommends any amendments to the full council. In November the finance committee produces a draft budget for the following year which takes into account the council's agreed plans, a forecast to year end and any external pressures. This budget is agreed by full council in December and submitted to BCBC.

The budget for the financial year 2022/23 was set at £155,800. The chart below gives a breakdown of the budget by category. Reserves make up a significant part of the budget. General reserves are to cover unforeseen events. We also have an earmarked reserve to help fund the transfer of playing fields and the community centre from BCBC. The budget is reviewed regularly and funding is reallocated if circumstances change during the year.



The chart to the left shows the breakdown of the community council's income during 2022/23. The total income was £136,301, with £113,800 generated through the council tax precept. The difference between the amount generated and the budget was funded by reserves and efficiencies.

Careful financial management has enabled the community council to continue maintain low precept levels in comparison to the other 19 Town and community councils in the county borough. In December 2022 we set a budget for 2022/23 that maintained the equivalent Band D precept at £27.84 per dwelling.



**Internal and External Audits:**

Each year the council’s accounts undertake and 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 2021/22 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 on the Finance page and is dated and signed by the Auditor Wales 16/5/23. The Council’s Internal Audit also raised no issues and was dated 26/6/22.

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

The Community Council’s 2022/23 budget were the objectives for the year. The budget shown here is the one set at the start of the financial year in April 2022 and differs to the precept budget shown on the previous page as the precept budget is set in December and the balance carried forward is forecast for precept setting, but the final balance carried forward is not known until 31<sup>st</sup> March in the following year.

<b>BUDGET 2022/2023</b>	
EXPENDITURE	
Salaries	£34,000.00
Office Costs	£2,000.00
Member Allowances	£4,000.00
Elections	£7,000.00
Insurance	£1,500.00
Training	£1,000.00
Memberships/Registrations	£2,000.00
Audit	£750.00
Donations	£1,000.00
Community Award	£250.00
General Maintenance	£6,500.00
Allotments	
Floral Displays	£12,000.00
Footpaths - Rights of Way	£2,500.00
Grass Cutting Play Areas	£7,000.00
Christmas Lighting	£10,000.00
Communications	£2,800.00
Summer Activities	£6,000.00
Community Action Plan	£15,000.00
Planters & Baskets	£5,000.00
Coity Park Fence	£3,000.00
Annual Report	£1,500.00
General Reserve	£39,069.91
CAT Transfer Reserve	£21,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>£184,869.91</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.