



COITY HIGHER COMMUNITY COUNCIL

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

Annual Report 2023/2024

As Chair of the Community Council, I am pleased to introduce Coity Higher Community Council's Annual Report covering 2023/2024, a year of moving forward with the community council's plans to further improve the 3 wards of Coity, Litchard and Pendre.

Our work to asset transfer Pendre Fields, Litchard Fields and Coity Higher Community Centre has continued and is the council's focus and the working group continues to move forward with the assistance of a Business Manager, discussions with the community, local football teams and the FAW.

Regular meetings with Persimmon continue to discuss ongoing matters at Parc Derwen.

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

Alan Wathan
Chair Coity Higher Community Council

2023/2024:

Some of the council's achievements in 2023/24 were:

- The replacement of Coity Castle play area fence
- The continuing support of matters of concern in Parc Derwen
- The redesign of the pitches at Litchard Fields as part of our asset transfer
- On-going discussions with Persimmon regarding the transfer of some green spaces on Parc Derwen
- Continued provision of floral displays in planters, hanging baskets and spring bulb planting
- Continued provision of Christmas trees, lights and column motifs in all 3 wards
- The management and upkeep of our play areas at Great Western Avenue, Litchard Park, Joslin Terrace and Coity Castle.
- The management and upkeep of the allotment garden off Heol West Plas
- Continued provision of litter bin emptying in the wards and on Parc Derwen
- Continued provision of dog waste bags

- The completion of its partnership with Ramblers Cymru in producing a new walk leaflet, installation of benches, bird boxes, bat boxes, wildflower seed planting, a community orchard, 400 saplings, the creation of a bug hotel, new waymarkers along our rights of way etc.

Look Ahead to 2024/25 and Beyond:

The budget agreed in December 2023 for 24/25 provides guidance as to the priorities for the year ahead and can be seen on the Finance page of our website. The council completed its project with Ramblers Cymru and continue to pursue asset transfer opportunities where they add value to Coity Higher.

Some of the projects planned for completion in 2023/24 were delayed due to circumstances beyond our control, but the finance was put into the Community Council's reserves and Coity Higher CC continues to move them forward. These include the replication of Coity recreational field along the black path in Litchard, the resurfacing of the footpath between Coity Castle and St Mary's Church and the creation of an infant play area at Llys Gwyn.

The all weather ground cover at Coity Castle play area, assisted by match funding from BCBC's Town and Community Council grant should be completed by the end of July 2024.

The asset transfer of Coity Higher Community Centre continues to be our focus to ensure the residents of our community have a central hub where they can hold social events, classes etc as well as a home for our local football clubs.

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 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. Coity Higher CC's Community Asset Transfer working group continues to take forward the council's focus on asset transferring Pendre Fields and Litchard Fields including Coity Higher Community Centre. This group meets as needed and feeds back to the full council. The group is steered by a Business Project Manager from the Coalfields Trust and are currently working with a group of architects, engaged through funding from REACH, to draw up plans for the Community Centre.

Councillors do not receive a salary but are entitled to claim a one-off annual payment of £156 per year to cover admin services a one-off annual payment of £30 attendance allowance and a one-off annual payment of £52 for consumables. 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:

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Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer to Coity Higher Community Council
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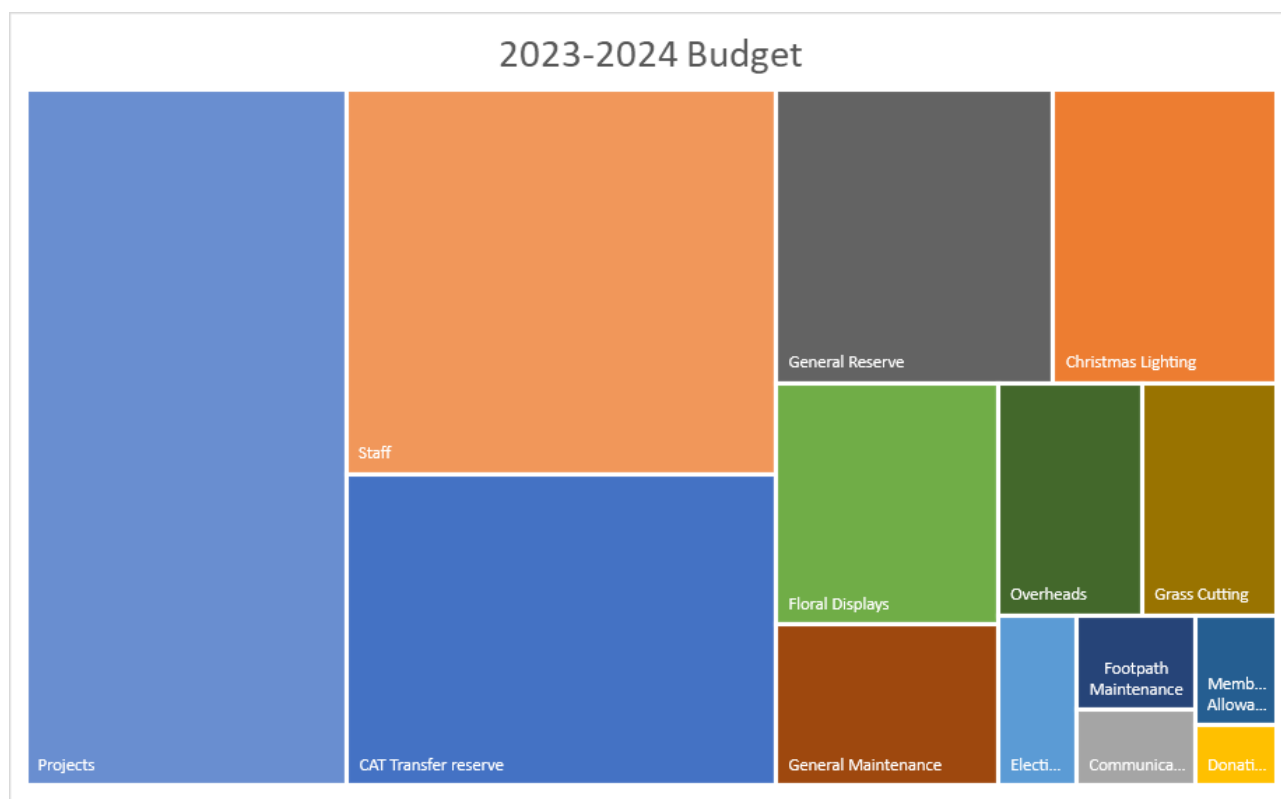
Precept and Income:

The council's income is made up of its precept - in 2023/24 this was £114,934. 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, grants and miscellaneous income.

The Council's last signed Audit Statement the Community Council received for 2022/23 can be viewed on our website on the Finance page and the News page.

Budget and Expenditure:

The CAT transfer reserve is being carried forward until the CAT is agreed and £43,000 of project budget has been carried into 24/25 due to delays.



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 2022/23 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. The Council's Internal Audit also raised no issues.

Key Objectives for the Year and Progress:

The Community Council's 2023/24 budget were the objectives for the year. The budget shown here is the one set at the start of the year, but is revised and was amended during that year:

Budget April 2023/2024

Salaries	£37,000.00
Office Costs	£2,000.00
Chair Allowance/Civic	£1,500.00
Member Allowances	£3,000.00
Elections	£3,000.00
Insurance	£1,500.00
Training	£1,000.00
Memberships/Registrations	£2,000.00
Audit	£1,000.00
Donations	£1,000.00
Community Award	£250.00
General Maintenance	£15,000.00
Allotments	-----
Floral Displays	£12,000.00
Footpaths - Rights of Way	£2,500.00
Grass Cutting Play Areas	£7,000.00
Christmas Lighting	£12,000.00
Communications	£2,000.00
Summer Activities	£6,000.00
Black Path	£5,000.00
Coity Field Path	£5,000.00
Benches	£5,500.00
Playpark Refurbishment	£15,000.00
CAT Transfer Reserve	£30,000.00
General Reserve Year End	£17,875.87
Coity Fence Reserve	£7,187.20
Total:	£195,313.07

How the council engaged with the community:

The Community Council engages with the community via their website and social media. When possible, it also produces a newsletter which is 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 and they also add information onto local social media hubs.

The Council also supports the community through donations, in 2023/24 it donated to Pride in Coity, Bridgend Carers, Wales Air Ambulance and Coity Festivals.

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. It engages with the local PCSOs and works with them on local matters including mobile speed monitoring, vandalism, anti-social behaviour etc. The Council is due to update its Community Access Plan.

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.