



## **COITY HIGHER COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD ON THURSDAY 12<sup>th</sup> JUNE 2025 AT 7.00 0 PM AT LITCHARD PRIMARY SCHOOL AND VIA ZOOM**

Present: Councillor M Williams(Chair)

Councillors: S Bletsoe  
Y Walton-Davies  
N Deere (via zoom)  
G Langdon (via zoom)  
L Lewis  
L Richards  
P Robinson  
A Wathan  
A Williams (via zoom)  
J Williams  
D Wingar

Apologies: Councillor L Jeffreys

Public: 7 (up to item 4)  
2 (correspondence and planning items only)

**Minute 16/25-26**

**17/25-26    DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor	Item	Minute	Interest	Speak/Vote
Steve Bletsoe	BCBC Matters incl. Electoral Boundary Review	All relevant incl. 20/25-26	Member	No/No
Yvonne Walton-Davies	St Brides Minor CC	None relevant	Member	No/No
Gareth Langdon	Parc Derwen	All relevant	Resident	No/No
Lisa Lewis	Brackla CC	None relevant	Member	No/No
Peter Robinson	Parc Derwen	All relevant	Resident	No/No
Alan Wathan	BCBC Matters Parc Derwen Bridgend TC	All relevant All relevant All relevant	Member Resident Member	No/No No/No No/No
Amanda Williams	BCBC Matters incl Electoral Boundary Reivew Coety Primary School  Proposals by M Williams Brynteg School	All relevant incl. 20/25-26  All relevant incl. 29/25-26 All relevant All relevant	Member  Chair of Governors Wife Governor	No/No  No/No No/No No/Yes
John Williams	Parc Derwen	All relevant	Resident	No/No
Martin Williams	BCBC Matters incl. Standards Committee Proposals by A Williams	All relevant  All relevant	Member  Husband	No/No  No/No

**18/25-26    TO RECEIVE THE COMMUNITY AWARD WINNERS FOR 2024/2025**

The Chair welcomed Mr Hugh Stillman to the meeting to be presented with a shield and small gift for being the winner of the Community Shield for 2024/25. Mr Stillman's partner was presented with a floral gift.

The Chair also welcomed Rhys Fairchild and his family to the meeting to be presented with an award and small gift for being the winner in the Under 18 category. One of Rhys' guests, Mrs C Fairchild, was presented with a floral gift.

**19/25-26     TO RATIFY THE MINUTES OF THE MAY 2025 ANNUAL AND ORDINARY MEETINGS**

The Minutes of the May 2025 Annual and Ordinary Meeting were presented for approval.

**Resolved:** The Minutes were accepted and approved as a true record of the meeting, with the addition of Councillor A Wathan's attendance on the Ordinary meeting minutes, and were signed by the Chair.

**20/25-26     MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MAY ANNUAL AND ORDINARY MEETINGS**

**Annual:** no matters arising

**Ordinary:**

**Minute 4/25-26 Matters Arising from the April Ordinary Meeting**

**Electoral Boundary Review** - this is due to be discussed at a future BCBC full council meeting

**Minute 6/25-26 South East Wales Regional Transport Plan**

The Clerk had submitted a statement prepared by Councillors W-Davies and A Williams to Mr Ken Skates at the Welsh Government and to the information email on the consultation.

**Minute 7/25-26 1<sup>st</sup> Rough Draft Spring 2025 Newsletter**

This had now been signed off and printed. All the copies have been delivered to the delivery person who would deliver them asap. Delivery costs have increased slightly to £800 due to the number of additional houses in Coity Higher.

**Minute 13/25-26 Correspondence**

The Clerk has found a contractor to clean the obscene graffiti off the play equipment at Pendre Fields and he kindly completed the work free of charge.

**Resolved:** All information was noted. The generosity of the graffiti cleaner was gratefully received. The increase in delivery costs for the newsletter were accepted and authorized.

**21/25-26     DRAFT BENCH POLICY**

A draft bench and plaque policy had been circulated with the meeting papers and this was discussed.

**Resolved:** It was agreed to accept the policy in principle and when the CAT for Great Western Avenue and Litchard Fields is complete the council will decide if the policy will be implemented as at the moment the council does not manage or own any suitable land to be used for this purpose.

**22/25-26 DRAFT VEXATIOUS COMPLAINANT POLICY**

A draft habitual or vexatious complainants policy had been circulated with the meeting papers and this was discussed.

**Resolved:** It was agreed to accept, approve and adopt the policy with a change in title to Habitual or Vexatious Complaints Policy.

**23/25-26 SPRING BULB ORDER**

**Resolved:** Following a discussion on the bulbs it was agreed not to plant any in 2025/26.

**24/25-26 MOTIONS FOR OVW AGM 2025**

Member councils were invited to propose a maximum of two motions for debate at the AGM which must arrive no later than noon on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2025. A motion must reflect a national issue or problem.

**Resolved:** No motions were proposed to put forward.

**25/25-26 LEASE COITY CASTLE PLAY AREA**

The representative of Dunraven Estates had sent the Clerk their terms of instruction to their estate solicitors and this was discussed. There were two points of concern.

Point 4: Access - as usual for joint access arrangements there will be a contribution towards maintenance in common with other users

Point 8: Break - a tenant break on giving 12 months' notice

Point 11: Reinstatement - on the termination of the lease for whatever reason the play equipment including footings shall be removed and the site left safe.

Point 12: Costs - the council to pay both legal and surveyors costs

In addition, the Clerk had received two quotes from the council's solicitor to conduct the council's legal work.

1 - to review the document and provide the council with a report on the terms and risks involved at a cost of £850 plus VAT

2 - to provide a full-service including negotiations, providing thoughts and a report, taking instructions for any amendments, agreeing the lease, dealing with completion of the lease and post comp a cost of £1,550 plus VAT

**Resolved:** It was unanimously agreed to accept option 2 from the council's solicitor at a cost of £1,550 plus vat. It was also unanimously agreed to ask the solicitor to consult with the landowner's solicitor regarding points 11 and 12 on their terms of

instruction on the lease. The council does not accept point 11 as the area was a play area when the council took over the management of the play area 'as the landowner's representative's email dated 6<sup>th</sup> November 2019 confirms that the playground has been in place for something like 70 years'. The council does not accept point 12 as the amount has not been specified and since taking over its management the council has fully refurbished the play equipment, resurfaced the ground with all weather ground cover, replaced the fencing and gates and maintained it with play area assessments, repairs, management signs, grass cutting etc. all at great cost to the council and requests that Dunraven Estates pays its own legal and surveyors costs. The council also requests that there is wording in the lease regarding a material breach. Points 4 and point 8 need further discussion.

#### **26/25-26 PARC DERWEN UPDATE**

A Parc Derwen update had been circulated to Members earlier in the month. Councillor A Williams gave a few small additional updates including landscaping. Complaints about the woods were discussed.

**Resolved:** The information was noted. It was resolved to change this standing item to read Developer Update

#### **27/25-26 REVISED FINANCIAL REGULATIONS**

The revised financial regulations which include reference to the Procurement Act 2023 and the Procurement (Wales) Regulations 2024 had been circulated with the papers.

**Resolved:** The revisions were unanimously accepted and approved and the Clerk would make the amendments to the council's Financial Regulations.

#### **28/25-26 FINANCE & ACCOUNTS INCLUDING INTERNAL AUDIT AND AUDIT STATEMENT**

##### **1.Payment of Cheques**

Authority was requested for the payments of all the invoices listed on the expenditure sheet and on the additional sheet as agreed for inclusion by the Chair.

##### **2.Budget Monitoring, Accounts & Budgets**

The Asst. Clerk ran through the budget monitoring sheet and answered any questions raised.

##### **3.Internal Audit and Audit Statement**

The Internal Audit Report and Audit Statement had been sent out to members with their meeting papers. The Finance Officer read through the report and audit statement. A discussion followed on whether to include the full cost of the Owl on the Fixed Asset

Register and the council's insurance as the purchase cost had been shared with two other councils; all had paid a third.

#### 4.Coity Wallia Board of Conservators Contribution

The Clerk asked for authority to release the £500 contribution agreed for 25/26 to the Board of Conservators.

**Resolved:** Authority was given for the payments for May 2025 and the budget monitoring sheet was accepted and approved. The Internal Audit Report and Audit Statement were approved and accepted and the Chair and Clerk signed the Audit Statement. The External Audit will now be prepared and submitted. It was agreed to include the full cost of the purchase of the Owl on the council's records and insurance. It was unanimously agreed to release the contribution to the Coity Wallia Board of Conservators.

#### **29/25-26     CLERK'S REPORT INCLUDING PROJECT UPDATES**

##### **CAT UPDATE:**

**Updated Business Plan:** A response to the updated Business Plan had been received from the CAT Office saying that she'd be happy to take this to the next CAT Steering Group meeting and will give an update after it has taken place.

In the meantime the Officer had had discussion with the corporate landlord and legal department and they are in the process of preparing a standard lease to send to CHCC so that CHCC can review the lease and highlight the clauses CHCC would like removed/updated and provide a justification for each of these. The information will be considered by the necessary departments and an updated lease prepared as appropriate.

**REACH Funding:** following the release of further REACH Community Feasibility funding the Clerk had submitted an EOI for funding for Great Western Avenue, followed by a full application for the funding to a design to reconfigure the pitch, improve pitch conditions, create an additional footpath pitch, improvements to the existing changing rooms and design an allotment. The funds applied for were between £15,000 and £25,000.

A letter has been received to say that the application has been deferred to potentially be considered by the Grant Approval Panel later due to the high level of application received exceeding the total allocated funding. It says the elevation of the full application has indicated that the project has merit to be supported in a future round of and the Clerk had confirmed that it's agreeable to the council.

## PROJECT UPDATES:

**Footpath Castle:** The Clerk reported that work will start week commencing 23<sup>rd</sup> June and that Centre Great have been booked to install the solar lighting week commencing 7<sup>th</sup> July. The Rights of Way Manager will put a temporary footpath closure notice in place for a month beginning 19<sup>th</sup> June.

**Solar Lighting:** Work to install a solar light at each of CHCC's managed play areas has been completed.

## OTHER MATTERS:

**T&CC Grant Funding Applications:** The Clerk had met with the CAT Officer and Group Manager to discuss the council's unsuccessful applications. It was a positive meeting and the main issue seemed to be that they say it as two applications not one. Going forward they are happy for CHCC to resubmit them as separate applications and suggested that CHCC provides letters of support for the Heol West Plas project so that the application aligns with BCBC's priorities of making people feel valued and heard.

**Footpath Maintenance:** A contractor has not yet been found to carry out this work; Councillor Deere said he would help.

**Grass Cutting:** A few complaints had been received for the Tanyrallt play area. The Clerk had visited the site after a cut and discussed it with the new contractor and he had re-cut it straight away.

**Allotment Gardens:** The Clerk had submitted two applications to the Allotment Support Grant Funding pot for the school allotment footpaths and the roadway at Heol West Plas. Unfortunately the grant was oversubscribed and so a quick decision on which to prioritise had to be made in discussions with the Chair and Vice-Chair. The school project was prioritised and both projects will be resubmitted for T&CC grant funding as discussed above.

**VJ Day 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary:** The Clerk noted that CHCC's planters had been planted with red, white and blue flowers and they look stunning. She asked if Members wanted to mark the VJ anniversary?

**Risk Assessment:** The Clerk asked if any Members were risk assessed trained to check any risk assessments provided by contractors.

**Tree Risk Assessment:** The Clerk asked for authority to obtain a condition survey for the trees at the Allotment Garden and trees on the green space next to Joslin play area.

**Electricity Supply Castle:** The Clerk had received a bill from SSE for £485.94 of unpaid electricity. She had queried this with SSE and explained that no correspondence had been received from them since Coity Village Association gave them the last meeting reading before CHCC took over responsibility for the electricity on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2024. This was discussed including the cost of standing charges.

**Resolved:** All information was noted. It was unanimously agreed to write to the Leader to say that the council is extremely dissatisfied with the process and to ask for a senior negotiation to take this forward. It was unanimously agreed to confirm that the REACH offer is agreeable to council. A member put his name forward to check risk assessments, it was unanimously agreed to organise the tree risk assessment and to light a beacon at the castle on VJ 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary day of 15<sup>th</sup> August. The Clerk was asked to write to SSE to request a copy of the contract as CHCC has not agreed to use SSE as their electricity supplier and no electricity has been used prior to the meeting and have not signed a contract with them.

### **30/25-26    MEMBER REPORTS**

Councillor Walton-Davies had attended a Local Access Forum meeting and gave some updates.

**Resolved:** The information was noted.

### **31/25-26    BOROUGH COUNCIL UPDATES**

**Councillor A Williams:** had visited the prison to meet with the new Director and informed members that a public meeting will be arranged. Some matters at Oakwood View had been dealt with and residents appeared happy that these had been addressed.

**Councillor M Williams:** had been dealing with litter bin issues amongst many other matters.

**Councillor A Wathan:** had nothing to report

**Resolved:** The information was noted.

**NOTE:** Councillor Alan Wathan left the meeting when the resident spoke on the solar light and a decision was made.

### **32/25-26    CORRESPONDENCE**

All correspondence was noted. With the permission of the Chair some additional correspondence received since the papers were distributed to Members were included.

The Clerk drew Members' attention to the following:

- Maesteg Town Council - invitation to the Chair and Consort to their Civic Service on 20<sup>th</sup> July.
- Awen Cultural Trust - an introduction to the work of B-Leaf and Wood-B



- Resident Parc Derwen - 5 items of correspondence regarding grass cutting, FOI and play areas, black bags, Footpath 17 and anti-social behaviour in the woods off Footpath 17
- Prestige Acrobatics and Dance - a financial request from the fundraising team for a donation to support 8 dancers (2 from Coity Higher) who have been selected to represent Wales at the prestigious Dance World Cup in Spain in July 2025.
- Bridgend Samaritans - invitation to the Chair to attend their AGM on 10<sup>th</sup> July.
- Resident - complaint ref. solar light at Coity Castle play area (resident had requested to speak at the meeting)
- Post Office - a consultation on the changed to Pendre Post Office comments to be submitted by 4<sup>th</sup> July
- Girlguiding Central Glamorgan - the Chair had received an invitation to attend an event on 2<sup>nd</sup> July at Litchard Primary School

**Resolved:** The correspondence was noted. The Chair nor Vice-Chair are able to accept the invitation extended by Maesteg Town Council to their Civic Service. The correspondence from residents had been shared with Members and the information noted. The financial request was considered and it was unanimously agreed to donate £100. The Chair accepted the invitation from Bridgend Samaritans to attend their AGM on 10<sup>th</sup> July. Following the resident speaking about anti-social behaviour concerns with the solar light it was agreed that the Clerk would make enquiries to see if a timer could be installed on it so that it would switch off 2 hours after dusk in the winter and off at 9.00 pm on other evenings during the year. The Chair is not able to accept the invitation from Girlguiding Central Glamorgan.

NOTE: Councillor Alan Wathan did not take part in this next item.

### **33/25-26 DEVELOPMENT CONTROL AND PLANNING MATTERS**

6 planning applications had been received, along with 8 decisions and 0 appeals and 2 items of correspondence from Planning Aid Wales. The planning applications were discussed.

One member of the public was present and asked permission to speak on application T/25/17/TPO an application regarding tree works at HMP & YOI Parc

In addition items of correspondence had been received on P/25/320/FUL objecting to the application which the Clerk had provided to Members.

Other planning matters - a pre-application proposal at HMP Parc had been received and included in Members meeting papers. Responses were due by 13<sup>th</sup> June. Acknowledgement of the council's comments to a section 16 application to common land at Cefn Hirgoed & Hirwaun had been received from PEDW and PEDW had written with the applicants comments on the council's on the section 38 application for Mynydd y Gaer Common acknowledging the council's comments and inviting comments on the applicants statement by 1<sup>st</sup> July.

**Resolved:** The council unanimously agreed to object to T/25/17/TPO on the following grounds:

- Black pine no 591, 530, 593, 594, 686, 595, 503, 537, 540, 541. All recommended for felling due to decline and suspected root decay. All these trees are described as OM overly mature.
- Very little justification given for this recommendation which was based upon a visual inspection from ground level and an un-investigated opinion that roots may be infected. Whilst there may be needle loss to tree crowns no indication is given as to how many years this would take to progress down the tree to a level of significant danger. It is likely these trees were planted when the hospital which previously occupied this site at the end of the 19th century. Woodlands Trust say Black Pine can live for over 500 years
- Scots Pine no 2991 Report says consider felling potential failure due to wound. No further justification provided. Woodlands Trust says these trees may reach 700 years.
- No consideration has been given to the environmental value to this site. Which due to its proximity to the prison is mostly undisturbed by human intrusion. Particularly it is likely to be an important site for bat habitation. Evidence of them is frequently seen on fine summer evenings locally.
- BCBC has declared a nature emergency and sites such as this one with undisturbed with a variety of native trees are extremely rare.

Regarding application P/25/230/FUL the council unanimously agreed to write to the planning department to say that the council has received 3 objections from residents and to ask that this application is considered by the Development Control Committee if officers are minded approving it.

The council unanimously agreed to comment on the pre-application consultation for development proposals at HMP Parc as follows:

- We have concerns regarding the increased traffic along Heol Spencer for not only with the additional staff, but also additional visitors.
- The last traffic report confirmed that Heol Spencer is at capacity and without a pavement it remains unsafe. Any S106 money from development in the area should be used for a pavement.
- There is currently no safe walking route to a bus stop from the prison. With no pavement along Heol Spencer you cannot walk safely to the bus stop in Parc Derwen. With no crossing point on the 50 mph road by Sainsburys there is no safe walking route to that bus stop.
- Residents have complained about noise and are concerned that this will increase the noise.

- There have been many concerns regarding safety in the prison and crime such as drugs being flown in by drones. An increase in prisoners will increase the crime.
- Finally it appears that free felling has already commenced on trees that are low risk, despite planning not yet being granted.

NOTE: Standing Orders were suspended at 9.00 pm

**34/25-26     ITEMS FOR THE JULY 2025 ORDINARY MEETING**

**Resolved:** It was agreed to keep the agenda open to include urgent items that may arise during the month.

- Christmas 2025
- Allotment Garden Rent 26/27
- Developer Update

**The next Ordinary council meeting will be held on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2025 at Litchard Primary School and via Zoom.**

The meeting closed at 9.04 pm.