

COITY HIGHER COMMUNITY COUNCIL



ANNUAL REPORT 2024/2025

11th September 2025

INTRODUCTION:

This Annual Report covers Councillor Alan Wathan's year as Chairperson of the Community Council, supported by Councillor Martin Williams as Vice-Chair, which commenced on the date of the Annual Meeting of the Council in May 2022 and ran for 12 months. This is the Community Council's fourth Annual Report.

A Community Council is a corporate body and its lawful acts, assets and liabilities are its own and not those of its individual members. Any decisions taken by the Community Council are the responsibility of the whole council regardless of voting on a particular issue. The Community Council raises its money through the Precept - a levy which its residents pay through the Council Tax. It has powers which allows it to spend this public money on the services which it provides.

Council meetings are held on the second Thursday of the month at 7.00 pm and meetings are held at Litchard Primary School and members of the public can access face-to-face meetings or they can join via zoom. The exceptions to this are that the council is in recess in August and in May its Annual Meeting takes place at 6.30 pm prior to the Ordinary Council meeting at 7.00 pm. The December meeting, which is a precept setting meeting, is sometimes held earlier in the month as it is a Precept setting meeting. Committee meetings are held on an ad hoc basis and include Finance & Resources, Allotment Gardens Appeals Committee, Community Asset Transfer Working Group, Community Access Plan Committee and Employment & Disciplinary committees.

Apart from the Finance & Resources Committee all are held on an ad hoc basis.

OBJECTIVES:

The council's objectives are:

- To serve the Coity Higher community
- To be a competent council; be open and transparent
- To offer equal opportunities and be inclusive to all
- To be globally responsible and environmentally friendly

COUNCILLORS:

Coity Higher Community Council serves 3 wards - Coity, Litchard and Pendre and is served by 13 Councillors who are either elected or co-opted. The next local council election will take place in May 2027. Once elected or co-opted, Councillors cannot function as a councillor until they've signed a formal declaration of acceptance of office form. They also undertake to abide by the Code of Conduct that has been adopted by the Council and must undertake Code of Conduct training.

>Wards:

The councillors serving Coity Higher Community Council at the end of the financial year ending 31st March 2025 were:

Coity:

- Councillor Nathan Deere (Independent)
- Councillor Yvonne Walton-Davies (Independent)
- Councillor David Wingar (Independent)
- Councillor Amanda Williams (Independent)
- Councillor John Williams (Independent)
- Councillor Martin Williams (Independent)

Litchard:

- Councillor Steve Bletsoe (Independent)
- Councillor Gareth Langdon (Independent)
- Councillor Luke Richards (Independent)
- Councillor Alan Wathan (Independent)

Pendre:

- Councillor Lynda Jeffreys (Independent)
- Councillor Lisa Lewis (Independent)
- Councillor Peter Robinson (Independent)

Note: During 2024/2025 Councillors S Charles resigned as a councillor and only served part of the year. Councillor Peter Robinson was co-opted to the vacancy and only served part of the year.

>Chair:

The Chair is elected by the members at the annual meeting held in May each year and holds the position for up one year. The Vice-Chair is also elected at that meeting and holds the position for one year. The Chair holds a casting vote in the event of a tied vote, but cannot make decisions on behalf of the council.

STAFF:**>Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer:**

The Clerk & RFO is employed by the council to carry out its administration work, financial management, asset management, project management and other professional duties. The Clerk works on a part-time basis.

The Clerk takes 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.

>Assistant Clerk and Finance Officer:

The Assistant Clerk and Finance Officer works on a part-time basis and Assists the Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer with financial management including preparing the internal and external audits, banking, processing invoices preparing documentation for meetings, dealing with insurance and ensuring the publication of documents in the council's noticeboards.

Visual risk assessments of play area equipment are carried out as part of this role.

Risk assessments received from contractors are checked by Councillors N Deere, G Langdon, P Robinson or M Williams. Tree risk assessment and play area inspections are carried out by specialist contractors.

CONTACT DETAILS:

Ann Harris

Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer to Coity Higher Community Council

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Visit us at: [Coity Higher Community Council](#)

Note: All individual councillor contact details can be found on the council's website

MEETINGS:

When summoned to a meeting councillors will be provided with an agenda, minutes 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.

A list of meetings for the year is published on the council's website. The meetings are hybrid meetings (in person or via zoom). If a member of the public wishes to attend a meeting remotely they can contact the Clerk to request the joining instructions.

Members of the public may speak on an item on the agenda within the time limit as set out in the council's Standing Orders which can be found on the council's website. The guidance to request speaking at a meeting is also included in the Standing Orders.

Within 7 days of a meeting being held a summary of the resolutions of the meeting must be published on the council's website, though these are not yet approved as accurate by full council. Once approved by full council the full minutes are published on the council's website.

>Declarations of Interest:

Councillors must individually make Declarations of Interest in items on any meeting agenda and must decide themselves whether to leave a meeting if an issue being discussed is of personal or prejudicial interest. A full list of declarations made for 2024/2025 can be found on the council's website in the Council Business page.

>Councillor Attendance at Meetings in 2024/2025:

Annual, Ordinary and Extraordinary Meetings		
	Expected	Present
Councillor Steve Bletsoe	12	11
Councillor Stuart Charles	2	0

Councillor Nathan Deere	10	6
Councillor Yvonne Walton-Davies	12	11
Councillor Lynda Jeffreys	12	8
Councillor Gareth Langdon	3	3
Councillor Lisa Lewis	12	10
Councillor Luke Richards	12	6
Councillor Peter Robinson	10	9
Councillor Alan Wathan	12	12
Councillor Amanda Williams	12	12
Councillor John Williams	12	11
Councillor Martin Williams	12	12
Councillor David Wingar	12	11

Finance Committee Meetings		
	Expected	Present
Councillor Lynda Jeffreys	2	1
Councillor Lisa Lewis	2	2
Councillor Alan Wathan	2	2
Councillor David Wingar	2	2
Councillor Martin Williams	2	2

Note: no Allotment Gardens Appeals committee, Community Access Plan committee and Employment & Disciplinary committees were held in 2024/2025.

FINANCE & ACCOUNTS:

>Audit:

Each year the council's accounts undertake an internal and external audit. In 2023/24 the council received an unqualified audit from the Auditor General for Wales. The full Auditor General's report can be seen on the council's Annual Return for the year ended 31st March 2024 which is published on the council's website under the Finance tab, sub folder Audits. There were no issues raised by the Internal or External Auditor.

The audit for 2024/2025 will be published on the council's website following the conclusion of audit in early autumn 2025. This year the council is receiving a full audit. This is scheduled every 3 years.

>Budget:

The budget for 2024/25 includes the council's general reserve and some earmarked reserve for resolved matters carried forward. The full budget is published each year on the council's website and is shown below:

Salaries	£39,000.00
Office Costs	£2,000.00
Chair Allowance/Civic	£1,500.00
Member Allowances	£3,000.00
Insurance	£1,500.00
Training	£1,000.00
Membership/Registrations	£2,000.00
Audit	£1,000.00
Donations	£2,000.00
Community Award	£250.00
General Maintenance	£15,000.00
Allotments	£0.00
Floral Displays	1£2,000.00
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
Hybrid Meeting Equipment	£2,000.00
Community Projects	£13,000.00
Black Path Project	£11,000.00
Coity Field Path	£17,500.00
Benches	£5,500.00
Playpark Refurbishment	£9,000.00
Election Reserve	£3,000.00
CAT Transfer Reserve	£25,000.00
General Reserve Spend	£0.00
General Reserve Year End	£27,296.79
Total:	£232,046.79

>Income:

The council's income is made up of its precept - in 2024/25 this was £120,969 - and in addition it received additional income of £30,911.72 giving a total income for 202425 of £151,880.72, broken down as follows:

Item	Amount £
Precept 2024/25	120,969
Grant funding	16,297.12
Allotment rents	1,476.99
VAT Reclaim	4,290.14
Printer (recharged to GVCC and SBM CC)	1,867.36
Bank interest	0.04
Litter Bins (recharged to Persimmon)	6,548.50
Miscellaneous	431.57
Total:	£151,880.72

>Financial Contributions:

Each year the council donates or contributes to services or organisations that benefit the local community. In 2024/2025 the council financed a total of £3,224 to the following:

- 1st Coity Brownies - £240
- Coity Festivals - skip for Jam in the Castle £504
- Community Award vouchers for Litchard and Coety Primary Schools - £100
- School holiday playschemes from Youthworks and Forces Fitness - £2,380

Note: If you'd like to apply for a donation please complete the grant funding application which you can find on the council's website on the Finance page.

>Councillor Allowances:

Councillors do not receive a salary but are entitled to claim a one-off payment of £156 per year to cover general expenses, a one-off payment of £52 per year for consumables (printing ink, copying etc.) and an attendance allowance of £30 per year. They can elect not to receive any payments or to receive all or some of the payments.

The Chair is also entitled to an allowance of £500; there is no allowance for the Vice-Chair.

A list of payments made each year is published on the council's website in the finance section. There is no longer a requirement to publish the names of councillors accepting payments.

In 2024/2025 the following allowances were paid:

No of Councillors	General Allowance £156.00	Consumables Allowance £52.00	Chair Allowance £500.00	Meeting Attendance Allowance £30.00	Other Allowances including mileage	Total
4	£624.00	-	-	-	-	£624.00
4	-	£208.00	-	-	-	£208.00
0	-	-	£0.00	-	-	£ 0.00
4	-	-	-	£120.00	-	£120.00
1	-	-	-	-	£19.80	£ 19.80
Total:	£624.00	£208.00	£0.00	£120.00	£19.80	£971.80

9 councillors declined their allowances.

COMMUNITY ASSETS:

The council currently owns an allotment garden in Coity, the play area at Joslin Terrace and the green space next to it and the recreation field behind St Mary's Church, Coity. In addition, it has leases for 3 play areas at Great Western Avenue, Litchard Park (Tanyrallt) and Coity Castle.

The council has licences with BCBC for the provision of some of the benches, bins and floral displays within the Coity Higher and works in partnership with management company REMUS to install a benches, a defibrillator and noticeboards at Gerddi'r Castell, Trem y Castell and Oakwood View and works in partnership with developer Persimmon to empty the bins at Parc Derwen.

In addition, Coity Higher CC is in the process of asset transferring Coity Higher Community Centre, Litchard Fields and Pendre Fields from BCBC. Discussions are on-going with BCBC's legal department; Coity Higher has plans drawn up ready to upgrade and extend the Community Centre and reconfigure the pitches at Litchard Fields.

Coity Higher has also taken over the licence for the electricity supply at Coty Castle from CADW.

ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2024/2025:

A list of donations made by the council can be seen in the Financial Contributions area of the Finance section above.

The council also provided the following services in the community:

- Installed all weather ground cover at Coity Castle play area
- Installed solar lighting at Pendre Fields, Litchard Park, Joslin Terrace and Coity Castle play areas
- Grass cutting of all play areas, recreational field and allotment gardens
- Footpath maintenance is carried out to all footpaths on the definitive Right of Way map. The council relies on the public to let them know if a footpath is blocked, overgrown or lacking in maintenance as it is impossible to walk all the footpaths very frequently.
- Purchased additional benches for Gerddi'r Castell and Oakwood View
- Installed 3 new noticeboards at Gerddi'r Castell, Joslin Terrace and Oakwood View
- Provided and maintained the hanging baskets in each of the 3 wards
- Provided and maintained the 6 planters the council owns on Coity Road, Litchard Hill and Coity village
- Installed an additional Christmas tree pit and provided a 20ft tree with lights at Heol y Groes, Litchard
- Maintained and emptied 9 litter bins within the 3 wards as well as the 9 bins on Parc Derwen
- Supplied emergency dog waste bags in Coity Higher
- Purchased Lamp Lights of Peace for use during the 80th Anniversary commemorations in 2025
- Maintained the War Memorial in Coity
- Signed an Armed Forces Covenant
- Wrote a Green Spaces Plan
- We were awarded a Level 3 It's Your Neighbourhood award from Wales in Bloom and we will continue to improve and build on this start.

PLANS FOR 2025/2026:

- To succeed in our plans to asset transfer Coity Higher Community Centre, Litchard Fields and Pendre Fields
- To replicate Coity Recreational Field on land next to the black path in Litchard
- To install a small child's play area at Llys Gwyn, Pendre
- To finance and manage the installation of footpaths around the newly built allotment garden for the children of Coety Primary School
- To apply for funding to finish the improvements to the roadway within the allotment garden
- To replace the footpath between Coity Castle and St Mary's Church and add solar lighting
- To continue to fund the activity schemes in the school holidays
- To continue to provide the Christmas lighting in all wards and in 25/26 and to add a Christmas tree and lights at Oakwood View, Pendre
- To install a defibrillator at Oakwood View, Pendre
- To install a bench at Gerddi'r Castell, Coity and Oakwood View, Pendre
- To continue to contribute to provide financial contributions for community events.
- To look at improving the area's biodiversity.
- To continue to hold its annual Community Award and provide the primary schools with their awards
- To continue to represent the community regarding traffic concerns, local developments, planning applications etc.
- To carry out maintenance work to the trees at the allotment garden and the green space at Joslin Terrace
- To consider the creation of a digital footpath map in collaboration with neighbouring councils
- To continue maintaining and improving the play areas, allotment and recreational field the council owns and manages within Coity Higher
- To consider a community bus service in collaboration with neighbouring councils

MEMBERSHIPS AND REPRESENTATIVES:

The council maintains an annual membership of One Voice Wales, the Town and Community Council sector's voice which consults with the Welsh Government. This membership ensures that the council's opinions on consultations by the Welsh Government is heard, it provides appropriate training for staff and councillors, including Code of Conduct training which is mandatory. It also gives the Clerk/council guidance on legislation and procedures and ensures the council is compliant with new legislation.

The council also is a member of the National Allotment Society, Disability Arts Cymru and the Society of Local Council Clerks.

In addition a councillor is representative on the One Voice Wales area committee, the larger council's committee and the national conference.

The council is also represented by one of its councillors on BCBC's Town & Community Council Forum and on Coety and Litchard Primary school board of governors and has two representatives on Coity Wallia Board of Conservators. Some of the community councillors are also LEA representatives on the board of governors.

POLICIES AND GUIDELINES:

New policies are prepared and adopted by full council and new process have been put in place to ensure the council is data compliant.

All the council's policies, guidelines, reports and statements are published on its website.

These include:

- Standing Orders
- Financial Regulations

- Complaints Procedure Policy
- Privacy Policy
- Social Media Policy
- Tree Policy
- Training Plan
- Annual Reports
- Biodiversity Reports

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT:

The council arranges children's activity schemes during the school holidays, contributes to the local primary school children for special public and royal events.

The council also presents two Community Awards - an under 18 award and an over 18 award and the winners are selected from nominees made by the residents of Coity Higher. In addition, the council provides each primary school with £50 of gift vouchers to present at their end of year leaver's service to the child or group of children who have served their community.

The council has good relationships with local organisations including V2C, BCBC and South Wales Police.

The council also provides a Christmas display of decorations, lights and trees in all 3 wards and in 2024/2025 provided additional Christmas trees on Heol y Groes, Litchard and in Coity.

The council is also mindful of the importance of Remembrance Sunday and places two remembrance wreaths each year and takes part in the services at Pontycymer and Bridgend. The council also has Tommy silhouettes displayed in each ward and Lest We Forget benches.

The council provides floral displays throughout the Coity Higher and in recent years has had a daffodil bulb planting scheme throughout the 3 wards.

WEBSITE:

The council's website can be found at: [Coity Higher Community Council](#)

All council documents can be found on the website along with the council's accessibility statement.

TRAINING:

Each year the council must write an annual training plan for council members and this can be found on the council's website.

REMEMBRANCE:

The council manages a war memorial on Heol yr Eglwys, Coity and is mindful of the importance of Remembrance Sunday and places two remembrance wreaths each year at the Coity memorial and Bridgend memorial services.

To commemorate the 80th Anniversaries of VE and VJ day in 2025 the council has written an Armed Forces Covenant and it is published on the council's website. In addition the council has purchased Lamp Lights of Peace which were lit in each ward along with a beacon which was lit at Coity on both anniversary days and planted red, white and blue flowers in the planters throughout the wards to mark the occasions. Large lighting column poppies were purchased for a street event in Litchard.

Each ward also has a Lest We Forget bench installed.

WELSH LANGUAGE:

The council's Clerk & RFO is a Welsh speaker and can respond to verbal and written communication and we have a Councillor that speaks Welsh.

GLOBAL RESPONSIBILITY:

The Council recycles its waste paper and ink and toner cartridges are disposed of responsibly. In addition it has a programme of footpath maintenance and an agency agreement with Bridgend County Borough Council, as well as conducting environmental maintenance of trees and hedgerows grass cutting and it provides floral displays in baskets, planters and flower beds that encourage bees and aid the environment.