



GARW VALLEY COMMUNITY COUNCIL
CYNGOR CYMUNEDOL CWM GARW

**MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD AT THE RICHARD PRICE CENTRE
AND VIA ZOOM ON MONDAY 17th NOVEMBER 2025 AT 6.30 pm**

Present: Councillor M Lewis (Chair)

Councillors:

G Andrews
D Davies
W Davies
H Griffiths
C Lloyd
G Lloyd
N Harwood Scorer
L Thomas (from 6.40 pm)
M Trowbridge
G Walters (via zoom)
D Williams

Apologies: Councillor J Coles

Also Present: 4 members of the public (3 up to items 3,4 & 5 and 1 up to item 17), R Thomas (up to item 17) and A Harris (Clerk & RFO

118/25-26 Apologies (as above)

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119/25-26 - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor	Item	Interest
D Davies	Christmas Gifts for Schools Director	Vice-Chair Tynyrheol School Governors Richard Price Centre
H Griffiths	Ffaldu Primary School All BCBC Matters incl. planning Ysgol Cymunedol y Dderwen	Chair of Governors Borough Councillor Governor
M Lewis	All Bridgend County Borough Matters Calon y Cwm CIC	Member Director
C Lloyd	Tynyrheol Primary School	Governor
D Williams	Awen Cultural Trust	Volunteer at Blaengarw Workmen's Hall

120/25-26 TO RECEIVE REPRESENTATIVES OF AWEN CULTURAL TRUST

The Chair welcomed Richard Hughes, CEO Awen Cultural Trust to the meeting.

Richard explained how Awen came into being, that they deliver cultural services in the borough, gave updates on what they do and in particular an update on Blaengarw Workmen's Hall. Richard answered questions from the councillors on Bettws Life Centre, the Café, Function Room hire, youth services, premises licence, the possibility of working with the Boys & Girls Club and community adult learning. Councillor Maxine Lewis said it's nice to see BWH open and in use again.

Resolved: The Chair thanked Richard Hughes for attending.

121/25-26 TO RECEIVE REPRESENTATIVES OF GARETH KIDDIE ASSOCIATES REF. THE REACH PROJECT

The Chair welcomed Gareth Kiddie to the meeting. Gareth explained the consultation they had been asked to carry out for REACH regarding the PC Lan work hubs, pump track and MTB trail. Gareth explained his background, where the consultation is at, what it will include and who they will be taking to in the valley. Gareth answered questions from the councillors on adequate Wi-Fi for the work hubs, if the MTB trails could link into the Afan Valley, the bad state of repair of the pump track, how the consultation will reach young people, Menter Bro Ogwr, Garw Men's Shed, local WI and offered support for consultations.

Resolved: The Chair thanked Gareth Kiddie for attending.

122/25-26 TO RECEIVE JASON FROWEN, BCBC's T&CC LIAISON OFFICER

The Chair welcomed Jason Frowen, the new Town & Community Council Liaison Officer to the meeting.

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Jason introduced himself, explained that he has been employed to improve the relationship between BCBC and the Town and Community Councils, he explained his working background, how he is available to help with funding applications, to update the Charter Review, that he's set up a working group with representative Clerks which includes the Garw Valley CC Clerk etc. Jason answered questions from the councillors about BCBC investment in RP Centre which Jason said he'd find out and report back via the Clerk, the T&CC Forum and how items will be fed through via council meetings to the Clerk to pass on.

Resolved: The Chair thanked Jason Frowen for attending the meeting.

123/25-26 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER ORDINARY MEETING

The October 2025 Ordinary Meeting minutes were presented for approval.

Resolved: The Minutes of the October 2025 Ordinary Meeting were approved and signed by the Chair.

124/25-26 TO CONSIDER MATTERS ARISING FROM THE OCTOBER 2025 ORDINARY MEETING

Minute 102/25-26 Consider Matters Arising from the September 2025 Ordinary Meeting

Bettws Font: the Clerk's query on the issuing of a licence for 6 months had been answered. This is an initial 6 months to allow the work to be completed then it can be extended. The Clerk has asked the Warden to visit the land and deal with the remnants of the bramble removal and see if further treatment is needed.

Correspondence: the Clerk asked if permission had been received by the Calon y Cwm CIC to use the land in Pontycymer to plant a community orchard?

Borough and Ward Reports: the Clerk is waiting on Councillor Deb Davies to provide the previously requested information to enable the Clerk to write to Cllr M Jones, Cabinet Member for Education at BCBC.

Minute 104/25-26 Christmas 2025

The Clerk has requested a digital copy of the Christmas Concert a few times and it has not been received. The Clerk made the request again.

Minute 105/25-26 The Strand Project

The Clerk had not yet obtained any quotes and will ensure they are obtained in December.

Resolved: All information was noted. The explanation for the short licence was accepted. Permission to use the land in Pontycymer will be granted at a cost of £250 for a licence. The Clerk was told it will be a consideration for 2026/27. The information and digital poster will be sent to the Clerk.

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125/25-26 CRIME FIGURES OCTOBER 2025

The crime figures had been circulated with the meeting papers. There was no PCSO present to explain the figures.

Resolved: The information was noted.

126/25-26 CHRISTMAS 2025 (BETTWS CONCERT AND CHRISTMAS GIFTS FOR SCHOOLS)

Concert: Councillor Trowbridge gave an update on the event. It was agreed that on the night Councillors C Lloyd and W Davies would be on the door, Councillors N Harwood Scorer and Lloyd Thomas would be responsible for the refreshments, Councillor G Lloyd will purchase the mince pies and Councillor H Griffiths will buy the gifts for the Musical Director, Accompanist and Teacher Choir Leaders. Seats need to have reserved signs on them for dignitaries. The Clerk had invited BCBC's Leader, Deputy Leader, the Deputy First Minister, Chris Bryant MP, Revered Burman, BCBC's Mayor and Deputy Mayor. Councillor Michelle Trowbridge will oversee the event and ensure all runs smoothly. Councillor Trowbridge was waiting on confirmation of the songs to enable Councillor D Davies to produce the programme and print. Tickets have been printed and given to Councillor Trowbridge to give to the two schools to sell and the Clerk will send out the electronic poster for all to share on their social media pages and local hubs. It was agreed to encourage all to dress in the Christmas spirit. All were reminded by the Clerk to keep receipts for any expenditure.

Gifts: The Chair thanked everyone who turned out to help pack the Christmas gifts for the primary schools. It had been a team effort. All had been delivered except the Tynyrheol batch. The Clerk has spares and has informed the schools.

Resolved: The Clerk was asked to invite BCBC's new CEO, Jake Morgan too.

127/25-26 PROJECT IDEAS FOR THE 2026/27 DRAFT PRECEPT

Councillors had been asked at the October meeting to consider project ideas for inclusion in the draft precept for 2026/27, suggestions were made and a discussion took place.

Resolved: It was agreed to include provision for community projects in the budget which will be decided in the new financial year.

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128/25-26 FINANCE & ACCOUNTS

Payments: Authority was requested for the payments for November presented totalling £20,036.11. The balance carried forward is £103,973.41.

Income: No income had been received in the month.

External Audit: No conclusion of audit had been received and no questions asked to date.

Financial Request: A financial request had been received from Awen Cultural Trust seeking support for the third year of Blaengarw Light Garden to be held in PC Lan. All application papers had been included in the meeting papers for consideration. Councillor D Williams informed the meeting that the event has been cancelled. The Clerk had not been informed. This was not discussed or considered.

Resolved: All information was noted. Authorisation was given for all payments on the sheets presented. The budget monitoring sheets were approved.

129/25-26 BOROUGH AND WARD REPORTS

Councillor M Trowbridge: said local children had helped with the tulip and daffodil bulb planting.

Councillor N Harwood Scorer: the flooding in Bettws continues to be an issue outside the old Bettws Club site.

Resolved: All information was noted. Also noted was that the Pontycymer daffodils have not been collected and this is because of a lack of assistance to plant.

Councillor Griffiths asked if the Pontycymer ward members wanted her to ask Ffaldau Primary School for help and this was agreed. The bulbs are being stored at PC Lan and need to be collected.

130/25-26 CHAIR'S REPORT

Councillor Maxine Lewis thanked the councillors who had responded to feedback on the Warden and Clerk's appraisals. Councillor Lewis has attended a working group party on a proposed Community Bus Route working in partnership with adjacent community councils. The next step is to conduct a consultation in Pontyrhyl and feedback to the next working group meeting to be held on 14th January 2026.

Councillor Lewis had also laid a wreath on behalf of the Community Council at the Remembrance Service held on 9th November in Pontycymer.

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Resolved: The information was noted.

131/25-26 CLERK'S REPORT incl. WARDEN'S REPORT

The Warden's report had been included in the meeting papers.

SLA Working Group: the Clerk had attended the first meeting today where a Draft Terms of Reference for the meeting was discussed, a draft communications protocol, the Charter Review and work to be undertaken by the next meeting to be held in January 2026.

Christmas Trees and Column Motifs: these had now been installed and the Clerk asked if there were any issues.

T&CC Grant Funding: a notification had been sent out to all regarding the new rolling fund and how the fund will run. Applications will be considered on an ad hoc basis, the current funding pot is £150,000 and £50,000 will be added in the next financial year.

Annual Leave: the Clerk reminded councillors of her annual leave dates in early December.

Resolved: The information was noted. There were no issues with the Christmas trees and column motifs.

131/25-26 CORRESPONDENCE

All correspondence had been sent out to Members since the last meeting and with the Chair's consent an additional sheet had been distributed for items received after the papers were distributed.

The Clerk highlighted the following:

- WG - Consultation on the changes to local government elections rules in Wales
- BCBC - letter from the Leader on the Review of the Community Arrangements of the County of Bridgend
- BCBC - Annual Mayor's Citizenship Awards 2026 (deadline 16th January 2026)
- SW Fire & Rescue Service - Annual Improvement Plan and invites to feedback
- GV Brand RBLI - thank you for attendances at the remembrance service within the valley
- WG Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru - Consultation on the Draft Annual Remuneration Report 2026/2027 (closes 18th November 2025)

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- National Grid Communications - updates on their plans and approach to the statutory phase of consultation before their submission in early 2026 including crossing part of the common at Mynydd Llangeinor. The letter offered to meet with the council to share information on the project and consultation plans.
- One Voice Wales - free councillor training
- BCBC - consultation launch 'Bridgend Net Zero Strategy'
- Local Access Forum - letter from Councillor Unwin ref Quiet Lanes Survey
- Eisteddfod yr Urdd Ynys Mon 2026 - financial request

Resolved: All information and closing dates were noted. There was two actions to defer the Eisteddfod yr Urdd financial request to March 2026 and to respond to the Local Access Forum letter asking for the Shwt Road to be changed to 20 mph all along its length instead of 20 in parts and 30 in others.

133/25-26 PLANNING MATTERS

All planning information had been sent out to Members since the last meeting.

2 planning requests had been received and there were 3 decision and 0 appeals. Planning Aid Wales had sent out 2 items of correspondence via email.

Additional information had been sent on the proposed 12 no x 1 bedroom flats on the former Royal Hotel site in Pontycymer. This was discussed. Councillor Lewis had spoken to the agent about the proposal and asked for further information on the proposed tenants saying it was important to keep people within their communities.

Resolved: All information received was noted.

134/25-26 STAFF CONFIDENTIAL

The Clerk updated members on the progress made with the on-going Staff Confidential matter.

Resolved: The information was noted.

135/25-26 URGENT ITEMS FOR THE DECEMBER 2025 PRECEPT MEETING

- Community Bus Webinar Feedback (DW) to be included as a January 2026 agenda item.

Resolved: The agenda would be kept open for items to be added in the month.

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The date for the next Precept Meeting is Monday 15th December 2025 and will take place at 6.30 pm at Tanio, Bettws and via zoom.

The meeting closed at 8.37 pm