



GARW VALLEY COMMUNITY COUNCIL
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MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD AT HALO LEISURE, PONTYCYMER
AND VIA ZOOM ON MONDAY 20th APRIL 2026 AT 6.30 pm

Present: Councillor M Lewis (Chair)

Councillors:

G Andrews (via zoom)

J Coles

D Davies (via zoom)

W Davies

H Griffiths

C Lloyd

G Lloyd

M Trowbridge (via zoom)

D Williams

G Walters (up to 7.30 pm)

Apologies: Councillors L Thomas and N Harwood
Scorer

Public: None present. GVCC Warden Karl
Luxford present

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204/25-26 Apologies (as above)

Following the apologies for absence the Clerk read out a resignation email received from Councillor Lloyd Thomas. This was accepted.

In addition, the Clerk read out a letter from Councillor Neal Harwood Scorer who had not been able to attend meetings for the last 5 months due to work commitments, asking the council to accept his apologies and reasons for absence and to enable him to continue as a councillor following six months absence after 17th May 2026. This too was accepted.

205/25-26 - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor	Item	Interest
D Davies	Richard Price Centre	Director
H Griffiths	Ffaldau Primary School Coleg Cymunedol y Dderwen	Governor Governor
M Lewis	All Bridgend County Borough Matters Calon y Cwm CIC Tyn yr Heol Primary School	Member Director Governor
C Lloyd	Tyn yr Heol Primary School	Governor
D Williams	Awen Cultural Trust/Blaengarw Workmen's Hall	Volunteer at Blaengarw Workmen's Hall

206/25-26 TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE MARCH 2026 ORDINARY MEETING

The March 2026 Ordinary Meeting minutes were presented for approval.

Resolved: The Minutes of the March 2026 Ordinary Meeting were approved and signed by the Chair.

207/25-26 TO CONSIDER MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MARCH 2026 MEETING

Minute 190/25-26 Consider Matters Arising from the February 2026 Meeting

Lakes: the first weekly report from the contractor is due this week to inform council and public of any progress made. It was noted that heavy rain caused issues the previous week and signage had been requested to be put up on all blocked access points to explain why it was blocked. Both the Warden and Councillor Coles gave updates too.

Lone Worker App: the Clerk had received a demonstration of the app which is called Safety Culture and explained some of the features of it. It is £240 for an annual licence for each employee; the Clerk is due to receive a more in depth demonstration of it and

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another free app called Hollie Guard Extra has been suggested which is a personal safety app. The Clerk asked for authority to look into both in more detail and report back at a future meeting.

Minute 195/25-26 Deferred Financial Requests

Thank you letters had been received from both charities.

Minute 201/25-26 Correspondence

The Clerk had spoken to Educulture about the provision of apple trees and it was agreed that it is now a little late to plant them and they will be kept until the autumn for us.

Resolved: All information was noted and actions approved. Authority was given to feed back on the apps at a future meeting and it was agreed that Blaengarw Primary, Bettws Primary and Ffaldau Primary schools would be offered an apple tree each.

208/25-26 CRIME FIGURES MARCH 2026

There were no SW Police PCSOs at the meeting.

Resolved: The crime figures were noted.

209/25-26 PC LAN USE FOR GENDER REVEALS

Councillor D Williams had offered to research gender reveal guidelines and report back to council. Members had received a written guide to what a gender reveal party can include, its purpose, its distinction from a baby shower and common activities. A list of local places that host them had been provided along with information on biodegradable confetti and other items that may be used.

Resolved: The Clerk was asked to draft a policy around the use of PC Lan for gender reveal parties.

210/25-26 REFRESHMENTS PARC CALON LAN

Councillor David Williams and Heather Griffiths suggested to open up the Visitor Centre on weekends to enable park users to access a toilet and to provide teas and coffees; this had been something raised in the REACH consultation.

Resolved: Full council agreed with the proposal and Councillors D Williams, H Griffiths, C Lloyd and M Lewis would make the arrangements and run the refreshments during the six weeks school summer holiday weekends if the weather were amicable. It was agreed that it would need to be self-funding.

211/25-26 UPDATE ON PROPOSED EVENT IDEAS

Following the recent purchase of equipment for the Events Committee, Councillor D Williams had sent out information with the meeting papers about the games available. Councillor Williams said he would like to start promoting them as a community council event and Councillor D Davies expressed an interest in it for the RP Centre and Councillor M Trowbridge was interested too.

Resolved: The council unanimously agreed that it is a promising idea but more information on how it would work, how charges would be made etc need to be clarified. This would be included for further discussion on the May 2026 ordinary meeting agenda.

212/25-26 FEEDBACK ON DRAFT LONE WORKER POLICY

Members had been asked to compare two lone worker policies and feedback their comments at this meeting to create a first draft policy.

Resolved: There had been no feedback to the Clerk so this would be an agenda item in May 2026.

213/25-26 PIPIF LARGER FUND UPDATE

The council were due to hear if their EOI application had been successful in phase 1 on 27th March, however the Clerk had received an email saying there had been so many applications that we wouldn't hear until after the Easter break. To date no feedback has been received and the date for submission for phase 2, if successful, was 17th April which has also now passed.

Resolved: The information was noted.

214/25-26 COMMUNITY AWARDS 2025/26

A draft notice had been included with the meeting papers. Nominations are to be received no later than 12th May 2026, with notification after the ordinary meeting on 18th May and an invite extended to the recipients to attend the 16th June Ordinary Council Meeting for a presentation.

Resolved: The notice and dates were accepted. A copy of the notice and the application form will be sent out to all councillors to share on their social media pages and the Clerk will publish the notice on the council's website and in the council's noticeboards.

215/25-26 FINANCE & ACCOUNTS

Payments: Authority was requested for the payments for 15th to 31st March and April 2026. Budget monitoring sheets and a list of payments for both were presented. March 2026 £20,129.23 and April 2026 £4,858.34. The unaudited balance carried forward to April 2026 was £61,411.93.

Income: received in March 2026 was:

£5,250.00 Rights of Way claim for 25/26 including community route

£208.57 banked following the Christmas Concert following payment of expenses for refreshments etc.

£30.00 received from St Brides Minor CC in payment for a storage room hire for Oct, Nov and Dec 2025 shared with GVCC and Coity Higher CC.

In April 2026 income received was £10.00 court compensation fees for an incident in PC Lan.

Year End Explanation: the Clerk gave explanations for the reason the unaudited balance carried forward is higher than forecast in December 2025 and what needed to be earmarked in reserves for 26/27. These included CAT containers, The Strand project railings, the Meadow Street project steps and some ward funding which was spent but the invoices were not received in time for year end. A total of £24,015.

Cambridge Building Society: the Clerk asked for authority to withdraw £10,000 from the Cambridge Building Society and deposit in the HSBC current account to ensure funds for invoice payments due before the precept for 26/27 is received at the end of April.

VAT Reclaim 2025/26: the Clerk had submitted a VAT reclaim for April to September 2025 and will reclaim the rest prior to audit submission.

Resolved: All information was noted. Authorisation was given for all payments on the sheets presented. The budget monitoring sheets were approved, the income was noted, the year end explanation was approved, authority was given for the £10,000 withdrawal from the Cambridge Building Society and the partial VAT reclaim was noted.

216/25-26 BOROUGH AND WARD REPORTS

Councillor H Griffiths: noted that the lights on Oxford Street and the Squirrel are now working, that some bins are missing again and that the work needed to the road, trees and fencing along the road to Brynmenyn have been reported.

Councillor D Williams: gave an update on land ownership, funding and the May Blaengarw newsletter. The Blaengarw Councillors wished to hold a public meeting to address some of the issues raised in the REACH consultation especially in relation to the dog mess issue.

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Councillor J Coles: gave an update on the installation of the dog mess signs purchased for PC Lan.

Councillor G Walters: said that following the site visit at Hill View he had spoken to many of the residents who were happy with the proposed ideas.

Councillor M Trowbridge: said lots of the pot holes in Bettws had been fixed and gave updates on site visits by BCBC Councillor M Jones regarding highways, the green at Shwt and a defibrillator.

Resolved: All information was noted. It was unanimously agreed that the Blaengarw Ward Public Meeting is a good idea.

217/25-26 CHAIR'S REPORT

Resolved: The Chair had nothing to report.

218/25-26 CLERK'S REPORT incl. WARDEN'S REPORT

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

Site Visit Hill View Land: 5 councillors and the Clerk had visited the site and some ideas for the land were suggested.

Bin Pontyrhyl: BCBC are looking into the removal of the council's bin. The replacement dog poo bin is being used for general litter.

Repairs to Benches Blaengarw: the ward funds for 25/26 had been used to order wood to repair benches in the ward. The Clerk has sent a list of benches to BCBC for approval and permission to repair the benches with the Warden's supervision.

Bin Audit: BCBC have asked the council for a list of bins in their ownership. It would be useful to have a bin audit and councillors for each ward volunteered to carry this out: Heather Griffiths (Pontycymer), David Williams (Blaengarw), Graham Lloyd (Bettws) and Chris Lloyd (Llangeinor). They will not each bin, its type, condition, ownership and location and feedback to the Clerk.

Plaques in the Park: the Warden asked what the council's wishes are about some of the plaques in the park.

Plant! Site behind the Co-op: the repairs needed to the fence along the road, the replacement gates and posts were noted.

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Steps Bottom Site Bettws: a response has been received from V2C regarding the council's request for lighting to be installed: the reply is that there is no scope or budget for the work.

Plaque the Strand: the Calon Lan plaque has been installed.

Bench Meadow Street: the Clerk is still waiting on the licence and approval to move the bench further along the pavement. In addition the Pontycymer Ward has purchased a bin for that area out of their 25/26 ward funds and a request has been made for a licence.

Steps Meadow Street: BCBC have informed the Clerk that they are sending a surveyor to check the side walls of the steps.

Railings the Strand: The Chair and Clerk have met with a second contractor to obtain a quote. The quote has been received along with a request for a deposit of £3,600 if the works goes ahead.

Zoom: the Clerk informed Members that one of the council GVCC shares the zoom payment with is changing to Teams and asked if GVCC is happy to change too

Resolved: The information and action of the Clerk was noted. Councillor M Lewis will make enquiries to BCBC about the land at Hill View and the Clerk will make enquiries about moving a war memorial. The Clerk will pull together the bin information into a document and sent to BCBC. The Clerk will obtain quotes for the work to the Plant! site. Two of the councillors were not enthusiastic about moving from Zoom to Teams but it was agreed to change from May.

219/25-26 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:

- One Voice Wales - launch of the Civility and Respect Pledge
- OVW - larger council's meeting 15th April 2026
- Free training places for Councillors 26/27
- REACH - letter ref pre planning advice for the Pump Park
- Standards Committee BCBC - report following attendance at the March meeting

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- Pontycymer Bowls Club - request for financial support for 100 year anniversary but not returned a completed application form
- Wales Air Ambulance - thank you for the recent donation
- Marie Curie - thank you for the recent donation
- Common Orbit CIC - request for financial support for this year's provision but not stated how much
- Ray of Light Cancer Support - financial request
- Llangollen International Eisteddfod - financial request
- Internal Audit offer of support 26/27
- Councillor L Thomas - resignation letter
- Ynysawdre CC - Cancellation and reschedule of T&CC Chairs & Clerks Meeting
- Councillor N Harwood Scorer - letter ref apologies for absence

Resolved: All information was noted. The OVW Civility & Respect Pledge will be included on the May 2026 agenda, Councillor M Lewis had been unable to attend the larger council meeting but Vice-Chair C Lloyd had attended on her behalf. Councillor D Williams has taken up the offer of free training places. The pre planning letter and the Standards Committee report are welcome. The Clerk will prompt the Pontycymer Bowls Club and Common Orbit CIC for further details for consideration at the May 2026 meeting. The two thank you emails had been noted in minute 207/25-26. Councillor L Thomas and N Harwood Scorer's correspondence had been accepted in minute 204/25-26 and it was unanimously agreed to not take up the offer of the Internal Audit.

220/25-26 PLANNING MATTERS

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

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

Resolved: All information received was noted.

221/25-26 ITEMS FOR THE MAY 2026 ORDINARY MEETING

- OVW Civility and Respect Pledge
- Community Award Nominations
- Feedback on Lone Worker Policy (All)
- Update on proposed event ideas
- Community Asset Transfers (JC)

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- Staff Confidential

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

The date of the next Ordinary Council meeting is Monday 18th May 2026 and will take place at 6.30 pm at Halo Leisure, Pontycymer and via zoom. The Annual Council Meeting will take place before the Ordinary Council Meeting at the same venue at 6.00 pm

The meeting closed at 8.10 pm