

Cyngor Cymuned Blaenhonddan

Blaenhonddan Community Council

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Council held at Cadoxton Community Centre and Online on Monday 19 May 2025 at 6.00pm

Presiding Councillor H Harry
Present In Person - Councillors W Griffiths, J Hale, C Lewis, A M Broom, G Morgan, G T Morgan, J Betts, W Evans, C Heath
Online - Councillor A Burton
Apologies Councillors S Mitchell, C Williams, R Lewis, C Parry

5771 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest at the start of the meeting.

5772 Appointment of Chair

RESOLVED that Councillor H Harry be appointed Chair for 2025/26, and Councillor Harry duly signed the Declaration of Acceptance of the Office of Chair.

5773 Appointment of Vice Chair

RESOLVED that Councillor J Betts be appointed Vice-Chair for 2025/26, and Councillor Betts duly signed the Declaration of Acceptance of the Office of Vice Chair.

5774 Members Code of Conduct

RESOLVED that the Members Code of Conduct be adopted by Council.

5775 Membership of Committees

RESOLVED that Members be elected to the following Committees as indicated, and subject to those not present conveying acceptance to the Clerk –

Resources Committee – Councillors W Griffiths, J Hale, J Betts, G Morgan, R Lewis and C Williams, with Councillors A Burton and H Harry nominated as alternate Members should the need arise.

Environment Committee – Councillors J Hale, C Heath, L Rabaiotti Jones, W Griffiths, W Evans and C Lewis.

Festivals Committee - Councillors W Griffiths, J Hale, A Burton, A M Broom, C Heath, H Harry and L Rabaiotti Jones.

Staffing Committee - Councillors R Lewis, C Heath, G Morgan and A M Broom.

Appeals Committee – Councillors J Hale, G T Morgan, W Griffiths and J Betts.

5776 Membership of Outside Bodies

RESOLVED that Members be elected to the following Outside Bodies as indicated –

Neath Port Talbot CBC/Community Councils Liaison Committee –
Councillor G Morgan.

One Voice Wales, Neath Port Talbot Area Committee and Larger Councils Committee – Councillors J Hale and W Griffiths.

School Governing Bodies – Council to be represented as follows, the Clerk to remind nominees of the need to offer appropriate feedback to Council –

- Bryncoch CIW Primary Councillor A Burton
- Blaenhonddan Primary Councillor A Burton
- Catwg Primary Councillor A M Broom
- Waunceirch Primary Councillor W Griffiths
- Cilffriw Primary Ms J Cook

5777 Income and Expenditure, Bank Reconciliation 2024/25

The Clerk submitted the Income and Expenditure Report and the Bank Reconciliation statement for 2024/25 in advance of their submission for audit. RESOLVED that the accounts be approved.

5778 Annual Investment Strategy 2025/26

The Clerk submitted a draft Annual Investment Strategy for 2025/26. RESOLVED that the Draft Strategy be approved.

5779 Policies and Procedures

RESOLVED that the following policies and procedures be adopted–

- Standing Orders
- Financial Regulations
- Health and Safety Policy
- Freedom of Information Scheme
- Risk Management Plan and Risk Assessment Schedule

5780 Draft Annual Report 2025

RESOLVED that the Draft Annual Report for 2025 be approved.

5781 Applications for Financial Assistance

RESOLVED that all applications for financial assistance be considered at the October and April meetings of Council, and that Council's policy of preferred support for local applications be reaffirmed.

5782 Financial Management Arrangements

RESOLVED that present arrangements be confirmed and specifically that –

- existing financial arrangements as outlined in the Annual Investment Strategy and the Clerk's Report be endorsed
- the following Members be authorised to act as bank signatories on the Council's behalf – Councillors W Griffiths, J Hale
- Council renews the appointment of KLG Internal Audit Services as its Internal Auditor for a three-year period, 2025-28

- Council authorises payments by Direct Debit or Standing Order for utility services, telephone/internet/mobile provision, facility management charges and bank charges, and by Debit Card for occasional purchases as authorised by Financial Regulations
- Council continues to engage the following for reasons of continuity, their ongoing understanding of the Council's land, buildings and their operational systems, and the occasional need for emergency response –
 - M J Sparnon – building maintenance and improvement, advice and specification
 - KLG Internal Audit – internal audit services
 - Platinum Gas – heating and plumbing services
 - CCS Electrics – electrical services
 - The Arb Team and Our Tree Company – tree surveys and maintenance
 - Colin Moses Roofing – roofing services
 - Knight Alarm Services – intruder alarm maintenance
 - Chubb – fire extinguisher inspection and maintenance
 - MSS Acorn Chemical Services Ltd – water risk assessment and inspections.

5783 Member Remuneration

The Clerk indicated that the Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales had been received. He outlined its recommendations and Council's previous practice in its consideration. RESOLVED that –

- The Clerk prepare an “opt out” form regarding Member Payments and liaise with all Members on their personal decisions accordingly
- A Specific Responsibility Payment be made to the Chair but that the Clerk prepare an “opt out” form and liaise with the Chair on her personal decision accordingly
- Travelling expenses and subsistence payments be paid to Members for relevant duties as per current practice, on receipt of a claim form prepared by the Clerk
- A financial loss payment be paid to Members for relevant duties on receipt of a claim form prepared by the Clerk
- The Clerk prepare a form for Members to claim reimbursement of care costs in appropriate circumstances, should they wish to make a claim
- A Chair's allowance in the sum of £500.00 be paid in 2025/26 in accordance with current practice
- No Vice-Chair's allowance be paid in 2025/26
- Requirements with regard to publication be adhered to, relevant payments be made as soon as practicable in the financial year, and payments be recovered on a pro rata basis if any Member ceases to be a Member of Council.

The meeting ended at 6.36 pm.

Signed _____

Dated 16 June 2025

Cyngor Cymuned Blaenhonddan

Blaenhonddan Community Council

Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Council held on Monday 19 May 2025 at 6.40 pm in the Cadoxton Community Centre, Neath and Online

Presiding Councillor H Harry
Present In Person - Councillors W Griffiths, J Hale, C Lewis, A M Broom, G Morgan, G T Morgan, J Betts, W Evans, C Heath
Online - Councillor A Burton
Apologies Councillors S Mitchell, C Williams, R Lewis, C Parry

5784 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest at the start of the meeting.

5785 Matters Raised by Members of the Public

There were no members of the public present.

5786 Minutes of the Monthly Meeting held on 28 April 2025

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Council held on 28 April 2025 be confirmed as a correct record.

5787 Matters Arising

Further to Minute 5759 relating to the Festivals Committee meeting, Members referred to the recently held successful Fun Day and thanked all who contributed to the event. RESOLVED that the Clerk arrange for gestures of appreciation to be conveyed as appropriate to volunteers.

5788 Financial Matters – May 2025

RESOLVED that the Clerk's report on payments and transfer of funds in May be approved.

5789 Planning Applications – May 2025

RESOLVED no objection to the following application –

P2025/0092	Extensions	86 Main Road Bryncoch
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RESOLVED no objection to the following application, subject to the views of the NPT CBC Arboricultural Officer –

P2025/0326	Work to TPO Trees	62 Rowan Tree Close Bryncoch
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5790 Community Centre Management

There were no reports relating to Community Centre Management.

5791 Police Matters

Members provided updates on matters raised within the community. RESOLVED noted.

5792 Reports from Outside Bodies

There were no reports from Outside Bodies.

5793 2024-25 Accounts

The Clerk submitted a report on the Internal Auditor's Final Report, the Annual Return and the Annual Governance Statement in respect of the 2024-25 Accounts. He referred to the unprecedented circumstances that had prevailed in 2024-25 and indicated that auditors were made aware of a number of changes that had occurred. Members were advised of four recommendations made by the Internal Auditor, all of which were anticipated and could be actioned. On completion, the Auditor had signed the Annual Return as required. The substance of the Annual Report was summarised. The link between the Annual Governance Statement and the Finance and Governance Toolkit was highlighted by the Clerk, and Members were advised that further work on the latter was required. Consequently, there would be a need to identify specific actions in the Annual Governance Statement.

RESOLVED that –

- The Internal Auditor's Final Report on the Council's 2024-25 Accounts and actions arising therefrom be noted
- The Chair and Clerk be authorised to sign the Annual Return
- The Clerk initiate further work on the Finance and Governance Toolkit as soon as practicable.

5794 Casual Vacancy, Bryncoch South Ward

The Clerk advised Members that Councillor J Howell had resigned his position as a Member for the Bryncoch South Ward for personal reasons and that a casual vacancy had arisen as a result. He indicated that he would initiate the process for advertising the vacancy as soon as possible. RESOLVED noted.

5795 Biodiversity Duty

Members were reminded by the Clerk of the Council's legal obligations under Section 6 of the Environment Act 2016, and of the requirement to update its Biodiversity Action Plan in 2025. He indicated that it would be beneficial to identify additional entries where the Council has taken action or supported initiatives by others. He also indicated that Council had been chosen to participate in a pilot study on Amenity Grassland Management, given its recent move to introduce "meadow cuts" on its land, and that an existing member of staff with appropriate qualifications had agreed to facilitate work on the study and support other biodiversity activities. RESOLVED that –

- The Council's Biodiversity Action Plan be circulated to Members and any potential initiatives be submitted to the Clerk for consideration
- Participation in the Pilot Study be endorsed and the member of staff involved be reimbursed accordingly for work undertaken on this and any other projects that may emerge.

5796 Public and Press

RESOLVED that further to Subsection (1) of Section 2 of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and press be excluded from the meeting during the following two items, by virtue of the nature of the business to be transacted.

5797 Matters Arising from Exempt Items

Further to Minute 5768 relating to Hybrid Meeting Facilities, the Clerk outlined his discussions with Councillor R Lewis and indicated the nature of a proposal that could be delivered. Members noted that the alternative involved a change to the original specification which Council had explored. RESOLVED that –

- the proposal be set aside for future consideration
- the three companies who previously responded to Council be offered the opportunity to respond to this alternative scenario
- the Clerk present a report to the next meeting of Council based on the responses from the three companies and Councillor R Lewis.

(Councillor C Lewis expressed an interest in the above matter, left the Chamber and took no part in the discussions or decisions taken thereon. The Clerk expressed an interest on behalf of Councillor R Lewis in his absence, in accordance with a verbal request expressed to him by Councillor R Lewis)

5798 Health and Safety

There were no reports for submission to Council. RESOLVED noted.

5799 Correspondence

RESOLVED that the following items of correspondence be actioned as indicated –

1	Amey Consulting	Consultation on Neath Integrated Transport Hub
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Members to offer comments as individuals.

2	Mrs SL	Ynysllynlladd Grazing Licence
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Decision by Mrs SL not to renew Licence be noted, Clerk to secure the site and investigate options for its future use.

3	Asbri Planning	Pre Application Consultation – Demolition of Existing / Construction of new Comprehensive School – Land at Llangatwg Comprehensive School
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Consultation be circulated to Members and consultation arrangements be noted.

The meeting ended at 8.00 pm

Signed

Dated 16 June 2025

