

Hirwaun and Penderyn Community Council

Agreed Minutes of Meeting 9th May 2024

Present: Cllr Colin Woodley (Chair), Cllr James Woodward (Vice Chair), Cllr Adrian Harford, Cllr Marguerite Courtney-Solbach, Cllr Ceri Woodley, Cllr Rhys Howells, Cllr Wendy Donovan, Cllr Zoe Goss, Cllr Adam Rogers, Cllr Margaret Amos, Cllr Lynley Gregory

Attending: N/A

Apologies: Cllr Eryl O'Neill, Cllr Non Thomas, Caitlyn Kochalski – Community Youth Representative

The Chair welcomed Cllr Lynley Gregory to the meeting and introductions were made.

2024/76 – Election of Chair

It was proposed that Cllr Colin Woodley be re-elected as Chair. This was proposed by Cllr Margaret Amos, seconded by Cllr Ceri Woodley and agreed nem con.

2024/77 – Election of Vice Chair

It was proposed that Cllr Adrian Harford be re-elected as Vice Chair. This nomination was proposed by Cllr Adam Rogers and seconded by Cllr Margaret Amos. Cllr James Woodward also put himself forward for nomination. This nomination was proposed by Cllr Ceri Woodley and seconded by Cllr Margaret Amos. Cllr Adrian Harford withdrew his nomination. Cllrs voted on the nomination and it was agreed by 9 votes for, and 2 votes against, with Cllrs Adam Rogers and one other Cllr voting against the nomination. Cllr Woodward was elected as Vice Chair by a majority vote.

2024/078 - Disclosures of Personal Interest

There were no disclosures of interest.

2024/079 - PCSO report

The PCSO did not provide a written report. **Action 1** – Executive Officer to email the PCSO asking for a report to be provided in future.

The following issues were reported to the PCSO:

Cllr Wendy Donovan reported speeding issues in Penderyn. **Action 2** – Executive Officer to report to PCSO.

2024/080 – Defibrillators

Cllr Adrian Harford provided an update on the defibrillators for Hirwaun. A discussion took place on whether the latest defibrillator should be installed at Fairview or Bute Tce. Cllr Wendy Donovan asked for an additional defibrillator to be installed at Penderyn. Cllr Harford advised that this grant funding was allocated to the installation of Hirwaun defibrillators, with the Penderyn defibrillator from this grant award already being installed. It was advised that separate grant funding would be required for any additional defibrillators for Penderyn. **Action 3**– Cllr Adrian Harford to continue with this.

Tower Road to Welfare footpath

- This footpath has unfortunately been closed. The Welsh Government put out this directive as the land is needed to be given back to the landowner. The original plans were to cut off the official footpath and create a temporary alternative, however, there was no plans for an alternative to the temporary alternative path. We have expressed our opposition to the closure. The Countryside & Rights of Ways officer responded, "There may be potential for creating a link path on the southern side of the new road which crosses private land i.e. the Tower Colliery Site, however this alternative route would be much longer and the only safe way to cross the new road and reach Hirwaun would be via a new roundabout. Also, the ground conditions/terrain would be less convenient."
- There are currently 4 temporary closures and 2 proposed closures for footpaths around the Heads of the Valleys. We felt it necessary to contact Senedd Member Heledd Fychan of the closures, a member of her staff has walked the route and spoken to concerned residents with us.

Concerns with the Nant-y-Bwlch watercourse

We have seen how high and powerful the river gets in wet weather, but most importantly, those residents most affected have noticed these issues have got worse these last few years. The relevant authorities need to be pro-active in mitigating the potential increased flooding, rather than expecting residents to pay large amounts of money for works which could be prevented by having their concerns listened to. With the removal of the footpath over the Nant-y-Bwlch and possible developments in this area of Hirwaun, more pressure could be on our watercourses in future. We are happy to share correspondence with residents affected. Ourselves and Senedd Member Heledd Fychan will be following developments and asking questions at our levels.

Rhigos Primary School

The Labour Cabinet have given their final decision on Rhigos Primary, and that is to close. Despite the many concerns that were raised, along with the 1,495 objections, it wasn't enough to keep our school open. Following this decision, with cross-party support we co-signed a call-in to refer the matter back to Cabinet. Our reasons for this included; The need to further scrutinize the decision in light of the objections received and the need to further consider the negative impact of the proposal for pupils and the wider community of Rhigos, especially in line with the requirements of the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. Again, Labour councillors decided that further scrutiny was not needed and that enough has been done to engage with the community. We would like to thank the community for being involved in the process. Whichever school is chosen for your child in the Ward, we know that they will be welcomed and taken care of. We are on the governing bodies of Hirwaun and Penderyn Primary too, so any questions that parents/carers have, we are here to help.

RAAC in Hirwaun

We are continuing to share updates with residents and asking the questions that need answering. A meeting was held for private homeowners and tenants recently, with Trivallis, RCT and Vikki Howell's Office in attendance. Confusingly, it was said that local councillors have not been in correspondence with RCT and Trivallis (which was not true). We have asked again to be a part of meetings which are discussing our residents and making important decisions. We have been told that many questions can not be answered until the results of the structural surveys come back at the end of May. From those results, Trivallis will better understand what needs to be done to their properties to deal with the RAAC. We have asked that the Welsh Government puts aside funding to support the homeowners that are receiving little financial help. Future meetings will be had with homeowners but Trivallis feel they are communicating well with their letter drops to their tenants.

The following matters were reported to the CBC's:

Cllr Adrian Harford referred to the resident email that he has received in relation to biodiversity in the village. A discussion took place regarding mowing regimes and wildflower verges, along with the spraying of weedkiller on the pavements. It was agreed that a Working Group be formed to liaise with RCT to discuss areas to leave wild. It was agreed that the resident would be invited to join the Working Group. It was also agreed to contact the other Community Councils to ask about the mowing regimes in their areas. It was agreed that Cllrs James Woodward, Adrian Harford, Adam Rogers and Marguerite Courtney-Solbach would be part of this group. **Action 4** – Working Group to take this forward. Executive Officer to contact the other Community Councils.

Cllr Zoe Goss asked for an update on the Metro extension to Hirwaun.

2024/082 – Minutes of Previous Meeting.

The minutes of the Meeting of 11th April 2024 were proposed to be true and accurate by Cllr Rhys Howells, seconded by Cllr James Woodward and agreed nem con.

Matters arising from the previous meeting:

2024/083 – Lease – Old Fire Station

The Executive Officer advised that this was ongoing. Issues with the formatting of the document were discussed. **Action 5** – Cllr Adrian Harford to chase.

2024/084 – Canva Training

The Executive Officer advised that this has been completed.

2024/085 – Cyber Security Awareness Training

The Executive Officer advised that this was ongoing. **Action 6** – Executive Officer to continue with this.

2024/086 – National Cyber Security Centre Membership

The Executive Officer advised that this was ongoing. **Action 7** – Executive Officer to chase.

2024/087 – Climate Emergency

The Executive Officer advised that all of the documents from the SLCC website had been forwarded to Cllrs Howells and Woodward.

2024/088 – Social Media Policy

It was advised that this has been added to the website.

2024/089 – Welcome Signage for Hirwaun

An update was provided on the order and installation of the new Welcome signage for Hirwaun. It was advised that separate grant funding would need to be sought for the Penderyn signage, and that BBNP signage would need to be independent of any signage installed by us.

2024/090 – Nature Recovery and Funding Session

The Executive Officer provided an update on the session held by BBNP. Information was given on our Section 6 reporting requirements and how we can help biodiversity. The Nature Recovery grant was discussed with Cllrs agreeing to apply for funding for Welcome planters and trees. **Action 8** – Executive Officer to apply for the grant.

2024/091 – Hirwaun and Penderyn in Bloom

The competition was discussed. It was agreed that Cllr Wendy Donovan would judge the competition if Cllr Howells contact could not help. **Action 9** – Executive Officer to continue with this.

2024/092- Planning Applications

1. Compound area for storage of tools & small plant machinery and siting of two storage units – Rear of 12 to 24 Crawshay Street, Hirwaun,
2. Single storey rear extension, convert existing storage shed into a utility room – 33 Bethel Place, Hirwaun,
3. Residential Development of 41 no. Affordable Dwellings and Associated Works (Hydraulic Modelling Assessment Rec. 25/3/24)(Amended Plans Rec. 11/4/24) – Land adjacent to Bryngelli Estate, Meadow Lane, Hirwaun,
4. Install solar panels to the roof via a rail system – Cwrt Maescynon, Maescynon, Hirwaun,
5. Proposal single storey extension and single domestic garage – 6 Rhoshyfryd, Chapel Road, Penderyn,
6. The conversion of a workshop store and replacement of a blockwork garage to form a single bedroom annex attached to the host dwelling via a discrete glass link – Penyrithyn Farm, Church Road, Penderyn.

2024/093 - Community Councillors reports:

Cllr Ceri Woodley advised that she had attended the Soup Socials and the Garden Show meeting.

Cllr Margaret Amos advised that she had conducted a litter pick with Penderyn Primary School and had attended the Garden Show meeting.

Cllr Marguerite Courtney-Solbach advised that she had attended the Nature Recovery session at BBNP and provided an update from the Area Committee meeting.

Cllr Zoe Goss asked if residents could install memorial plaques on the Arcway benches. It was advised that the current plaques were installed by the manufacturers, and that memorial benches are usually funded by the family involved.

Cllr Rhys Howells advised that he had conducted the Canva training with the Executive Officer, and had attended the Standing Orders Working Group. He advised that he had received contact from a resident, possibly in relation to Penderyn Community Centre. It was advised that the issue was not in relation to Hirwaun Village Hall. Cllr Adam Rogers advised that he had received a similar phone call.

Cllr James Woodward provided an update from the Garden Show Working Group. He also reported issues with the lighting and road layout between the Trewaun and Rhigos roundabouts and the approach from Glynneath. **Action 10** – Executive Officer to report the issues to Future Valleys.

Cllr Adrian Harford advised that he has been dealing with the defibrillators for Hirwaun, and had attended the Standing Orders Working Group. He also carried out a litter pick for Hirwaun.

Cllr Adam Rogers provided an update on the crossing that is to be installed at High Street. He also advised that in his role as County Borough Cllr he will be part of the RCT review of the Community Councils which happens every 10 years.

Cllr Ceri Woodley left the meeting at 7.58pm.

Cllr Colin Woodley advised that he had attended the Standing Orders Working Group, and that he had liaised with BBNP in relation to the Arcway bench installation, and that BBNP had installed the benches free of charge.

2024/094– Community Youth Representative Report:

In her absence, it was advised that Caitlyn Kochalski had carried out a litter pick for Hirwaun.

2024/095 – Cllr Allowances

Cllrs discussed the Community Councillors Allowances as set out by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales:

- The payment of £156 per year to each Cllr for the extra costs of working from home - It was advised that this is a mandatory allowance but can opt out if they wish.
- The payment of £52 a year for the cost of office consumables - It was advised that this is a mandatory allowance but can opt out if they wish.
- The payment of £500 per year to up to 3 Cllrs in a Senior Role – It was advised that this was optional. Cllrs rejected this allowance.
- The Reimbursement to Cllrs for travel costs for attending approved duties – It was advised that this is optional. Cllrs approved this for approved Council duties only.
- Reimbursement to Cllrs for subsistence where a duty requires an overnight stay; - It was advised that this is optional. Cllrs approved this for approved Council duties only.
- Compensation for financial loss. - It was advised that this is optional. Cllrs approved this for approved Council duties only.
- Reimbursement of the cost of care – It was advised that this is mandatory for approved Council duties only.
- Chair/Vice Chair Honoraria. It was advised that this is optional. Cllrs rejected this allowance.

2024/096 – Standing Orders

The Executive Officer advised that this was still ongoing.

2024/097 – Equality and Diversity Policy

Cllrs approved the Equality and Diversity policy. This was proposed by Cllr Rhys Howells, seconded by Cllr Margaret Amos and agreed nem con.

2024/098 – Annual Report

Cllrs approved the Community Council's Annual Report. This was proposed by Cllr Margaret Amos, seconded by Cllr James Woodward and agreed nem con.

2024/099 – Traffic Safety Working Group

Cllrs agreed that the group is set up to deal with all parking issues within Hirwaun and Penderyn, to include pedestrian safety, parking issues, speeding, and to discuss areas where action needs to be taken. It was agreed that Cllrs Wendy Donovan, Marguerite Courtney-Solbach, Adrian Harford and Adam Rogers would be part of this group.

2024/100 – D-Day 80 Ceremony

The Executive Officer provided an update on the ceremony. Cllrs were happy for the ceremony to ahead at 12pm due to the availability of the Clergy, noting that the official guidance did not stipulate an 11am ceremony. **Action 11**– Executive Officer to organise this.

2024/101 – Walking Festival

The Executive Officer advised that BBNP are happy to work with us to lead the walk. **Action 12** – Executive Officer to liaise with BBNP to confirm a date and the practicalities of the walk.

2024/101 – Sight Loss Awareness Training

Cllrs agreed to change the date of the Sight Loss Awareness training to allow more Cllrs to attend. **Action 13** – Executive Officer to organise.

2024/102 – Executive Officer’s report

Print Partnership - £22.91

Daisy Communications - £91.31

Busy Pins and Needles - £56.25

Consultations:

1. Proposal to close Rhigos Primary School with pupils transferring to Hirwaun Primary School – Decision notice – Rhigos Primary to close.

The Council had received the following correspondence:

1. Free Cllrs training funded by WG. These training places were allocated to Cllrs. **Action 14** – Executive Officer to book Cllrs on.
2. OVW Practice Development Note – Members Allowances: Annual Timetable of Actions.
3. OVW Practice Development Note – Annual Report Timetable of Actions.
4. Letter from RCT providing an update on the 20mph default.
5. OVW Biodiversity Seminar. **Action 15** – Cllrs Colin Woodley, Lynley Gregory, Wendy Donovan and Adam Rogers to attend, along with the Executive Officer.
6. BBNP Safety in the Hills navigation course. It was agreed that if Cllrs wished to attend that they would pay for the course themselves. **Action 16** – Executive Officer to circulate the information.

7. It was confirmed that there would be no charge for the Uncontested Election for Hirwaun Ward.

Other:

1. The Executive Officer advised that Cllr Leah Foster has resigned and that the vacancy is being advertised as per the statutory process.
2. An update was provided on the Village Green project. Cllrs agreed to invite the Village Green group to a meeting to discuss the next steps. **Action 17** – Executive Officer to arrange.
3. Issues with burned rubbish/bonfire areas at Hirwaun Village Green have been reported to the PCSO and the County Borough Cllrs.
4. Ladybird benches at Hirwaun Primary School have been vandalised. **Action 18** – Executive Officer to i) report to the PCSO, ii) add a post to the Facebook page, iii) contact the manufacturers to ask how we can repair them.

Cllr Marguerite Courtney-Solbach left the meeting at 8.47pm.

5. The date was set for the Kids Seed Bomb event.
6. Cllrs were invited to attend a High Sherrif Award for a local resident. Cllrs Colin Woodley, Adrian Harford, Adam Rogers to attend.

2024/103 - Urgent items at the Chair's discretion

Grant application made by Hirwaun Scouts. It was advised that the Chair had allowed this to be discussed because of the timescales involved. A grant application has been made towards the cost of the Scouts attending their annual Scout Camp. Cllrs discussed the application and Cllr Adam Rogers proposed a grant of £480 be awarded, which equates to a sum of £30 per child attending. This was seconded by Cllr Margaret Amos and agreed nem con. Cllrs asked if other fundraising avenues had also been sought to cover the full cost? **Action 19**

– Executive Officer to enquire.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 9.02pm.