

Hirwaun and Penderyn Community Council

Agreed Minutes of Meeting 11th July 2024

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

Attending: N/A

Excused: Cllr Non Thomas

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

2024/136 - Disclosures of Personal Interest

There were no disclosures of interest.

2024/137 - PCSO report

The PCSO provided the following written report:

We are still receiving reports regarding bangs going off by the library however we are yet to ascertain what these are.

SWP have seized one dog (not on the dangerous dogs list).

Off road bikes have been reported in the village with enquiries ongoing.

ASB youths- Identified and ASB referrals submitted for progression.

ASB youths lighting fires- Identified- to be progressed.

Theft from Co-op and Best One- Male arrested and file sent to CPS for charging decision.

2024/138 – Defibrillators

Cllr Adrian Harford provided an update on the defibrillators for Hirwaun. He advised that the defibrillator at the YMCA has now been installed, that the Station Road defibrillator is due to be installed shortly, and that the Fairview site location is still to be confirmed. An update was given on the costs and funding on the replacement pads. Cllr Colin Woodley proposed that the Community Council forms a partnership with RCT Heart Hero's to help Save a Life Cymru raise the funds for replacement pads. Heart Hero's will be the guardians of the defibrillators with our Community Cllrs acting as wardens to check the machines. Cllrs agreed to this proposal. It was agreed that electricity costs for the running of these defibrillators will be dealt with on a case by case basis. CBC Karen Morgan raised concerns about the defibrillators being managed within the community, and would prefer a reserve on supply so that the guardians can replace the pads within 24 hours. Cllr Colin Woodley advised that RCT Heart Heros keep a small stock in reserve for these instances. It was agreed that we would arrange with RCT Heart Hero's to hold defibrillator training for Cllrs and the community. **Action 1**– Cllr Adrian Harford to continue to liaise in respect of the installation of the defibrillators, and to arrange a Defibrillator training session at Hirwaun Village Hall for September.

2024/139 – County Borough Cllr reports

The County borough Cllrs provided the following written report:

Hirwaun and Penderyn report- 11/07/2024 Facebook- Hirwaun and Penderyn and Rhigos Matters

Future Valleys

- Following our report of the South Rhigos roundabout light tower being off, Future Valleys investigated and fixed the issue.
- Asked if the cycle path from Rhigos roundabout to the industrial estate roundabout can be swept.
- Shared concerns to RCT on behalf of residents who have been experiencing noise pollution and vibrations outside of agreed working hours:
Redhill Close Oakland Close Meadow Close
- Upcoming works:
Overnight closure of westbound on-slip at Rhigos junction- 15 and 16 July, 20:00 to 06:00.
Overnight closure of eastbound A465 between Glynneath and Rhigos- 17, 18 and 19 July, 20:00 to 06:00.
Overnight closure of Penderyn Road. Diversion will be signposted through Hirwaun- 17 and 18 July, 20:00 to 06:00.
- Requested Future Valleys to share the full plans of the Brecon Road re-opening in advance of the public meetings.
- Future Valleys progress update meetings- July 15th, 2pm and 6pm in Hirwaun's St Therese of Lisieux Catholic Hall. We encourage as many residents to attend. There will be an opportunity for questions and answers.

Highways

- Temporary traffic order, Rhigos Mountain Road. Necessary for netting remediation works. Full closure, 22nd July-10th December. We expressed to the Council the outrage from residents and regular users. This route is very important to both sides of the mountain. The target completion date is to the end of October. Officer, "If these works are not carried out as planned, there is significant risk of an urgent and unplanned closure at some point in the future, which the resultant closure would cause longer disruption."
- Reported potholes:
Cae Felin Parc, Hirwaun- Officer, "I have attended to inspect Cae Felin Parc and all actionable defects have been identified and marked up for repair."
Near the turn off to Ystradfellte, by the fingerpost, just after Penderyn.
- Asked if it was possible to have more dropped curbs in Cae Felin- Officer passed to senior officer, "Please can you consider this location request for additional crossing points on similar future footway schemes."
- Reported graffitied 20mph signage in Hirwaun.
- Rhigos Road sign fixed following multiple e-mails.
- Queried the possibility of introducing residential parking for the road outside the houses opposite Penderyn Primary School.

Footpaths

Shared concerns on the surface of the Mineral Line to the BBNPA. Asked if anything could be done from their side. Over time, walkers and horses using the Line have been gradually improving the surface.

Streetcare

- Reported overgrowth at the following locations:
Footpath from John's Lane to Swansea Road Footpath from Maescynon to the Cefndon
Footpath from Merthyr Road to Tramway Beginning of Auburn Rise
Station Road, overgrowth from church grounds and opposite side of the road
- Update on maintenance of Pontpren bench- Officer, "I attended to inspect the bench yesterday and again it is not defective, I can only reiterate that we don't carry out such maintenance as the painting of street furniture at Highways." He passed to cleansing.
- Reported glass on High Street, Hirwaun (junction to Cross street).
- Shared concerns with the pavements in Cae Felin Parc- Officer, "Some sections of the footpath are in poor condition but within our safety defect criteria. These footpaths are monitored on my scheduled inspections and the conditions are noted on my overall assessments which are also monitored by infrastructure."
- Reported fallen dog fouling bin on Long Meadow Close, Hirwaun.
- Footway works are scheduled for Oakland Close and Meadow Close.
- Shared concerns with clearance work taking place at the rear of Glannant Street, Hirwaun.
- Following multiple reports, the Council has decided to fix the loose handrail which is on private land between the High Street and Brecon Road (behind Co-Op).

Public transport

The Council will again be offering cheaper bus travel between July 22-September 1. We encourage everyone to use our public transport. It would be great to see bus transportation extended in the evenings.

Playgrounds

- Reported glass in the Tramway playground.
- Following our report of a damaged wall and fallen stones in the Cefndon playground- Officer, "I am writing to inform you that the stones from the stone wall have been removed from Cefn Don play area. The damaged section of fence where access was gained to the damaged wall of the adjacent property has been repaired."

Afon Cynon

- Requested the Council to have a look at the bridge on Merthyr Road/Swansea Road, Hirwaun as there seems to be big cracks appearing.
- Notified Natural Resources Wales of water pollution, coming from the direction of Merthyr Road.
- Reported a fallen tree under the bridge on Merthyr Road/Swansea Road.

Penderyn Quarry

- Queried when the Council sends out their road sweeper to clean the stretch outside the quarry and WD Lewis. Officer, "Sweeper goes through there on a Monday and Thursday."
- Shared blasting notifications.

Biodiversity

Hirwaun has a few new biodiversity areas. We took part in a walkabout with RCT's biodiversity team and the Hirwaun & Penderyn Community Council's Grass Verge Working Group to identify the areas. We are happy to join residents and the Community Council in identifying areas in Penderyn too. A good example of group working.

RAAC in Hirwaun

- We sent a Freedom of Information request to the Council on behalf of residents. Unfortunately, we had an unhelpful response with most answers being- "No recorded information is held." We did have it confirmed that Aberdare Urban District Council was the council that approved the construction of the "Gower estate".
- We have submitted the same questions to Trivallis.

Eisteddfod

We contacted the Council to ask if they will be placing any signage promoting the Eisteddfod in our villages. Officer:

"There are a number of Town Centre lamppost banners going up in our principal town centres that are focused on welcoming people to the towns... The Eisteddfod work with community groups and organisations to develop the "Harddu", the local authorities do not get involved in this apart from approving the location of such items if positioned in a location where it could impact the highway."

We encourage residents, community groups and schools to help in promoting the Eisteddfod.

Schools

- As governors in the three local primary schools we join with NAHT members in opposing the charge for childcare element which was clear to RCT Council that parents as well opposed. RCT should listen to educators and parents who would be dealing with this day-to-day.
- From September 2024, the free primary breakfast club administration will be digitalised, and you need to apply for a place on-line. It is important that this application is completed in advance of the child(ren) attending breakfast club.

Council

The RCT Labour Cabinet is to decide if waste should be collected in black bin bags rather than wheelie bins. We do have concerns with this proposal but we would like residents to share their views on this with us. In June, we queried the possibility of this and received no confirmation that this proposal was being considered.

Recognitions

We would like to thank everybody who participated in the election process and all those who were willing to speak to us on the doors. Many expressed the need for a change in our politics. As your Plaid Cymru councillors we will do our best to represent you all. From observing the results in Merthyr on election night, we appreciate the huge support that Plaid Cymru had in Hirwaun, Penderyn and Rhigos.

The following matters were reported to the CBC's:

Cllr Ceri Woodley reported the uneven surface on the arcway. The Executive Officer update Cllrs on the works being done by BBNP to deal with this issue.

Cllr Margaret Amos reported that there were chunks missing out of the pavement at Bryn Onnen.

Cllr Rhys Howells raised the proposals by RCT to switch to black bag refuse collections. Cllrs acknowledged that there may be savings on vehicle costs moving forward but raised concerns in relation to bags being ripped open, issues with the disposal of dog waste and broken glass, and the elderly and disabled who would not be able to carry the bags. Concerns were also raised in relation to waste left at communal housing areas.

Cllr Howells then went on to raise the WIFI issues at Croesbychan with the phone and broadband cutting out for days at a time. He was advised to contact the main companies to report a Not Spot and to ask for an additional mast in that area. CBC's Adam Rogers and Karen Morgan confirmed that they would provide a supporting letter on behalf of residents.

Cllr Zoe Goss asked if RCT could improve the skate park at the Welfare Ground, and asked if there was scope to add a dirt track there.

CBC Karen Morgan thanked the Community Council for their well wishes and flowers, and to CBC Adam Rogers for keeping things in order in her absence.

2024/140 – Walking Festival

It was agreed to move this agenda item to the September meeting. **Action 2** - Executive Officer to add this to the September agenda.

2024/141 – Minutes of Previous Meeting.

The minutes of the Meeting of 13th June 2024 were proposed to be true and accurate by Cllr Margaret Amos, seconded by Cllr Ceri Woodley and agreed nem con.

Matters arising from the previous meeting:

2024/142 – Old Fire Station Lease

Cllr Adrian Harford provided an update and the technical difficulties with the document were discussed. **Action 3** - Executive Officer to continue with this.

2024/143 – Cyber Security Awareness Training

The Executive Officer advised that this was ongoing. **Action 4** – Executive Officer to continue with this.

2024/144 – National Cyber Security Centre Membership

The Executive Officer advised the Community Council is now a member.

2024/145 – Flag Clips

The Executive Officer advised that this is ongoing. **Action 5** – Executive Officer to purchase.

2024/146 – Village Green Project

The Executive Officer advised that contact had been made with the group and that they would be invited to a meeting after the summer recess. **Action 6** – Executive Officer to continue with this.

2024/147 – Bank Signatory

The Executive Officer advised that the bank forms were in the process of being completed. **Action 7** - Executive Officer to continue with this.

2024/148 – Hirwaun & Penderyn in Bloom

The Executive Officer advised that there were insufficient entries submitted to the competition to date. Cllrs agreed the minimum number of entries required. **Action 8** – Executive Officer to continue to advertise the competition.

2024/149- Planning Applications

1. Single storey extension – 3 Devonshire Drive, Hirwaun.
2. Removal of the conservatory to be replaced with a two storey side extension – Glan Yr Afon, 29 Pontpren, Penderyn.
3. Demolition of storage buildings and the construction of 2 detached 4 bed dwellings and one office unit/store with associated parking and landscaping – MGR Builders Merchants, Foundry Road, Hirwaun. – Cllrs raised concerns in relation to the potential for noise complaints against the adjacent public house. Concerns were also raised in relation to road access, and that the building works may disturb rats at the river. **Action 9** – Executive Officer to submit the comments to RCT.

2024/150 - Community Councillors reports:

Cllr Zoe Goss advised that she had attended the Road Safety working group meeting.

Cllr James Woodward advised that he had attended the Grass Verge Working Group with the biodiversity officer from RCT, he had manned our stall promoting the Garden Show at Hirwaun Primary's Summer Fair, he had updated the designs on the Hirwaun & Penderyn in Bloom vouchers and had taken posters for the Garden Show to put up locally.

Cllr Rhys Howells advised that he has undertaken the Code of Conduct training.

Cllr Lynley Gregory advised that she had undertaken the Council as an Employer training, and the Butterfly Conservation webinar.

Cllr Adam Rogers advised that he had completed the Basic Online training modules, had attended the grass verge working group meeting and the traffic safety working group meeting. He then raised a question on behalf of a resident asking why we removed the D-Day 80 poppy wreaths after 10 days. It was advised that the workmen carrying out repairs to the Clock had removed them, and that the Community Council always leaves the wreaths in place for 1 month after the ceremony.

Cllr Wendy Donovan advised that she had completed the Basic Online training modules, had attended Hirwaun Primary's Summer Fair to work with the children using wildlife cameras and had attended the Traffic Safety working group meeting.

Cllr Adrian Harford advised that he had undertaken the advanced finance training, has been working on the defibrillators for Hirwaun, had competed a litter pick in the village, and had attended both the Grass Verge working group and Traffic Safety working group meetings.

Cllr Ceri Woodley advised that she had attended the Village Hall's Table Top Sale.

Cllr Marguerite Courtney-Solbach advised that she had attended the Grass Verge working group meeting.

Cllr Margaret Amos advised that she had taken the children from Penderyn Primary out litter picking and to carry out weeding and planting at the wooden planters in Penderyn. She also advised that she had undertaken the Finance and Governance Toolkit training.

Cllr Colin Woodley provided Cllrs with an update following the Heads of the Valley liaison meeting advising of the re-opening of the Brecon Road and the traffic diversion through the village whilst the work on the bypass is completed.

2024/151- Community Youth Representative Report:

There was no report for this month.

2024/152 – Hirwaun Cllr Vacancy

Cllrs discussed the applications received. Cllr Adam Rogers put forward a proposal to accept one of the applicants. This was seconded by Cllr Margaret Amos. Cllr James Woodward put forward a counter proposal to accept another applicant. This was seconded by Cllr Ceri Woodley. Cllr voted on the two proposals with the successful applicant being voted in 8 votes to 3 votes. **Action 10** – Executive Officer to contact the successful applicant.

2024/153 – Climate Emergency

Cllrs Rhys Howells and James Woodward put forward the proposed declaration of the climate emergency. Cllrs agreed the proposed wording. It was agreed that i) Cllr Adam Rogers would double check that RCT has not declared a climate emergency, ii) that a template action plan from another Community Council would be adapted for our own use, iii) that our Community Youth Representative would be asked to be involved with our Climate Action challenges. **Action 11** – Cllrs Rhys Howells and James Woodward to continue with this. Executive Officer to publish the declaration of the climate emergency and to add the Climate Emergency to the September agenda.

2024/154 – Tree Planting and Biodiversity in Hirwaun

Following on from the work of the grass verge working group, Cllrs discussed the options available for tree planting and wildflower verges in the village. The Executive Officer also provided an update following their meeting with RCT's Tree Officer. Cllrs agreed to ask RCT to plant wildflowers at the large grass verge on Rhigos Road, and that trees would be planted in the smaller areas, along with on the roundabout adjacent to The Havens. It

was agreed that we would try to find a more cost effective tree suppliers. It was agreed that the trees would be chosen by the grass verge working group. Cllr Zoe Goss also flagged up the free tree packs from the Woodland Trust. **Action 12** – Executive Officer to apply for the grant from BBNP to cover the cost of 4 planters, and that we would purchase trees out of the remainder of the funds.

2024/155 – Right of Way Access on High Street

Cllrs discussed the gates being installed on High Street stopping people cutting through from the car park, noting that residents are unhappy with this. Cllrs agreed to work towards declaring the access as a public footpath, noting that statements would be required from residents stating that they had freely used this footpath for at least 20 years. **Action 13** – Cllr Zoe Goss to take this forward.

2024/156 – Garden Show

It was advised that the working group was due to meet. It had been agreed that Cllr Marguerite Courtney-Solbach would lead the working group and that Cllr Margaret Amos would act as cash holder.

2024/156 – Executive Officer's report

Print Partnership - £6.05

Daisy Communications - £91.31

Consultations:

1. RCT Draft adult services strategy.
2. Welsh Government Draft priorities for Culture 2024-2030.

It was agreed that Cllrs would respond individually to these consultations.

The Council had received the following correspondence:

1. Sight Loss Cymru – letter regarding becoming a Sight Friendly Town. Cllrs asked for more information before a decision could be made.
2. Free Local Places for Nature top up packages available. It was agreed to apply for a top up package to top up our butterfly garden at Hirwaun public toilets. Cllr James Woodward advised that the YMCA were no longer able to help with the repair of the planter here. **Action 14** – Executive Officer to apply for this. Community Planting Day to be organised to tidy up the flower beds and cut back the shrubs.
3. BBNP Local Access Forum invitation – Cllrs to put themselves forward if they wish to sit on it.
4. Email from Ron Bailey MP re Safety of Lithium-ion batteries and e-bikes and scooters. **Action 15** – Executive Officer to send a letter of support on behalf of the Council.
5. Email from resident regarding grass cutting from Maescynon to Cefndon Tce. It was advised that this has been referred to RCT and the County Borough Cllrs.

Other:

1. Eisteddfod Spotlight on Hirwaun and Penderyn. The Executive Officer suggested a Facebook campaign using High Street business to try to draw people in en route to the Eisteddfod. **Action 16** – Executive Officer to publish campaign.
2. Thank you card from Hirwaun Scouts to thank us for their grant.
3. A grant application has been made to Pen Y Cymoedd Micro Fund for the purchase of the Welcome to Penderyn signs.
4. The Christmas lighting application to RCT is currently being dealt with.
5. An update on the audit was provided.

2024/157 - Urgent items at the Chair's discretion

None.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 8.50pm.

Agreed