



Abertillery and Llanhilleth Community Council

Annual Report
2023-24



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Message from the Chair

As Chair of Council, I am pleased to share with you all the achievements we have made this year. It has been a period of significant growth, marked by the welcoming of new members, the addition of two new members of staff, and notable strides in expanding our services and operations.

One of our primary goals this year was to strengthen ties within our community. We have increased our communication with Gwent Police, hosting sessions at our offices for residents to engage with a Community Support Officer and establishing ongoing dialogues between the local police and our Councillors. We have also made connections with the Abertillery Learning Community by providing their Pupil Parliament with the opportunity to hold meetings in our chambers, and to receive support from our staff and Councillors.

Our community events were a great success this year, with our annual Party in the Park event welcoming over a thousand attendees and our carol concerts raising over £850 for charity.

We also hosted the first Swffryd Viaduct Run this year, which was hugely successful in bringing the local community together.

This year also brought about some exciting changes, including the introduction of a new Christmas lighting contractor, Blachere Illuminations, who provided some beautiful lighting that received great public feedback. We also hired two new Deputy Clerks to help manage the growing responsibilities of the Council, and we co-opted two new Councillors to fill vacancies in the Cwmtillery Ward.

In addition to our community-focused endeavours, we have made significant efforts this year to improve the overall organisation and structure of the Council. We have strengthened our financial procedures, ensuring accountability and transparency in our stewardship of public resources, and have acted on feedback from previous internal audits to introduce important policies and improve existing ones.

Reflecting on the past year, I am filled with pride and gratitude for the dedication and hard work demonstrated by our council members, staff, and community. I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to all who have contributed to the success of our endeavours this year.

It is truly an honour to serve as Chair of Council, and I am committed to continuing our collective efforts to improve our community going forward.

Warm regards,

Tracey Dyson

Chair of Council

About This Report

The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 introduced a new measure requiring local Council authorities in Wales to publish an Annual Report detailing the Council's priorities, activities and achievements from the year. This new legislation came into place as of April 1st 2022. This report is intended to increase transparency and give an insight into the work done by the Council throughout the 2023-2024 financial year. It has been produced by Molly Jones, Deputy Clerk.

About Us

ABERTILLERY AND LLANHILLETH COMMUNITY COUNCIL (ALCC) represents people in the local area at the grass roots level, from Swffryd in the South, through Llanhilleth, Brynithel, Aberbeeg, Six Bells, Abertillery and Cwmtillery, to Bournville in the North.

What does the Council do?

- Represents the views of local people and makes decisions on their behalf.
- Awards grants to a variety of local organisations for the benefit of the community.
- Funds important youth work in the area.
- Provides and maintains life-saving defibrillators throughout the area.
- Arranges local events, such as the Fun Run, Christmas Carol Concert and Party in the Park.
- Provides financial support to Ffrindiau Tyleri to host events like Springfest and Winterfest.
- Provides Christmas lights and floral displays in the area.
- Maintains the Abertillery War Memorial.
- Presents its views on local issues (e.g. planning applications, crime, health services etc) to other agencies such as Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, the Police and the NHS.
- Is represented on local school governing bodies and other organisations.

Full Council meetings are typically held on the last Wednesday each month, except August when Council does not meet, and December when Council meets earlier. ALCC also delegates responsibilities to committees to lead certain projects. Meetings take place in the Council Offices on Mitre Street, Abertillery, and remotely via Zoom.

Councillors

ALCC is comprised of 19 seats split across 5 different Wards. At the Annual Meeting on May 24th 2023, Cllr Tracey Dyson took over from Cllr Nick Simmons as Chair of the Council, and Cllr Joshua Rawcliffe became Vice Chair of the Council.

Abertillery Ward <i>5 seats</i>	Llanhilleth Ward <i>3 seats</i>	Aberbeeg Ward <i>3 seats</i>	Cwmtillery Ward <i>5 seats</i>	Six Bells Ward <i>3 seats</i>
Nick Simmons Tracey Dyson Rob Phillips Chris Hill Mariola Walters (resigned June 2023)	Ben-Owen Jones Barrie Page Deborah Pitt (resigned Sept 2023)	Graham White Michaela Assiratti Joshua Rawcliffe	Glyn Smith Bernard Wall Mark Lewis Ralph Henderson (co-opted 30 th Sept 2023) Wayne Lewis (co-opted 28 th Feb 2024)	Peter Adamson Steve Bard Allen Rees (resigned July 2023)

Staff

The Council Offices on Mitre Street were staffed by two officers: a Clerk (Mr David Cartwright) and a Deputy Clerk (Mr Stephen Edwards). In September 2023, Mr Stephen Edwards became the Clerk when Mr David Cartwright left. Two new Deputy Clerks were then hired in October 2023 – Erika Davies and Molly Jones. The Clerks are responsible for implementing Council decisions, ensuring decisions are made lawfully, taking minutes from Council meetings and performing many other duties for the Council. The Clerks can be contacted at: clerk@abertilleryandllanhilleth-wcc.gov.uk

Budget

At the Full Council meeting on January 25th 2023, Council agreed its 2023-2024 budget and precept request. The budget is shown here, alongside the budget from 2022-2023:

	Budget 2022/2023	Budget 2023/2024
Salary Costs (including National Insurance and Pension)		
Clerk NJC Spine Point 34/25 (25 Hours per week)		£38,119
Deputy Clerk NJC Spine Point 23 (23 Hours per week)		£25,879
TOTALS	£54,452.66	£63,998

Training and Subscriptions		
2 memberships to the Society of Local Council Clerks	£400	£449
Training budget for officers	£500	£500
Training budget for members	£2,000	£1,000
TOTALS	£2,900	£1,949

Administration		
IT equipment for Councillors	£13,900	£0
IT Support	£0	£200
Zoom	£175	£120
Vimeo (video-hosting)	£70	£290
Cloud-based accounting system hosting	£360	£0
Rialtas accounting system	£250	£1,000
Bank Charges	£400	£400
Insurance	£800	£1,300
Professional fees	£10,000	£0
One Voice Wales membership	£0	£2,600
Printing and photocopying	£700	£700
Internet & phone (BT)	£500	£550
Web hosting - Vision ICT	£250	£285
GOV.UK domain registration/licencing	£0	£2,300
Stationery and postage	£750	£740
Payroll	£600	£0
Information Commissioner	£50	£35
Internal audit	£1,000	£1,200
Travel & mileage	£250	£250
External audit (Audit Wales)	£1,000	£1,200
Welsh Water (factory unit)	£155	£180
Election costs	£5,000	£0
Other	£0	£250
TOTALS	£36,210	£13,600

ABERTILLERY AND LLANHILLETH COMMUNITY COUNCIL
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Grants and Members Allowances		
Council grants	£10,000	£17,000
£200 per member - Ward grants	£3,800	£3,800
Chair's allowance (IRP Determination 49)	£1,500	£1,500
Deputy Chair's allowance (IRP Determination 50)	£500	£500
Specific Responsibilities allowance (IRP Determination 43 5*500)	£2,500	£2,500
Members allowance (19*156)	£2,850	£2,850
Attendance allowance (£30 per member per meeting)	£11,400	£12,060
TOTALS	£32,550	£40,210

People and Communities Committee		
Christmas lights central contract	£30,000	£30,000
Christmas lights overhaul/maintenance	£0	£15,000
Llanhilleth TRA Christmas lights	£3,000	£3,000
Brynithel Community Centre Christmas lights	£1,500	£1,500
Swffryd Community Centre Christmas lights	£1,500	£1,500
Bournville Community Centre Christmas lights	£1,500	£1,500
Aberbeeg TRA Christmas lights	£0	£1,500
Pentref Tyleri Christmas lights	£0	£1,500
Christmas lights electricity costs	£1,800	£1,800
Christmas lights extension - Somerset Street	£1,500	£0
Remembrance Day	£2,500	£3,000
Development of War Memorial	£5,000	£0
Maintenance of War Memorial	£1,500	£2,500
Loneliness Project	£5,000	£5,000
Community Fun Run (moved from PlaCE)	£0	£5,000
Summer Cinema events	£10,021	£10,000
Party in the Park	£15,000	£20,000
Concert Costs	£500	£1,000
Grant funding to Abertillery Rock and Blues Festival	£1,000	£2,000
Community Council website project	£10,000	£0
TOTALS	£91,321	£105,800

Planning, Commerce and Environment Committee		
Town in Bloom	£14,500	£18,000
Halloween event, car boot sales, Shop Local events	£13,000	£0
Grant funding to Ffrindiau Tyleri for town centre events	£2,000	£2,500
Council activities for town centre events	£2,000	£3,000
Allotments	£600	£650
Defibrillator maintenance and additional units	£6,000	£7,500
Environmental projects	£0	£10,000
Community transport	£0	£8,500
Community Fun Run	£5,000	£0
TOTALS	£43,100	£50,150

Community Empowerment Committee		
BGCBC Detached Team	£35,000	£54,500
OffTheStreets	£44,000	£44,244
Youth-led projects	£0	£2,000
TOTALS	£79,000	£100,744

Total Budget	£339,533.66	£376,451
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Funding

This year, Council had a £376,451 budget. Council requested that £289,000 of this budget be funded by precept. This funding comes directly from Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, who collect it via council tax. The rest of the budget is funded via previous years underspend.

Accounts

Our annual returns, financial statements and internal audit opinions can be found on our [website](#).

Training Plan

In the Full Council meeting on January 31st 2024, Council agreed the following training plan. To view the full training policy please see our [website](#). Section 67 of The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 requires community councils to make and publish a plan for training provision for its members (even though it is not mandatory for community councillors to undertake any training).

All Members are offered the opportunity to complete the training modules shown, as well as Planning, Health & Safety, Equality and Diversity and other courses offered by One Voice Wales. The completion dates are shown below:

	New Councillor Induction	Code of Conduct	Local Gov't Finance	Local Gov't Finance - Advanced	Chairing Skills	The Council Meeting	The Council as an Employer	Understanding the Law
Ben Owen-Jones		Nov-21						
Barrie Page		Nov-21			Feb-23		Feb-23	
Steve Bard		Mar-24	Aug-23		Aug-23			
Glyn Smith	Jul-17	Aug-17						
Graham White	Jul-17	Aug-17						
Joshua Rawcliffe	Oct-22	Nov-22	Nov-22	Aug-23	Aug-23		Nov-23	
Chris Hill		Jan-24						
Michaela Assiratti			Nov-19					
Nick Simmons		Aug-17	Nov-19	Dec-19				Nov-18
Peter Adamson		Nov-17	Feb-24					
Rob Phillips		Nov-21	Nov-19				Mar-23	
Ralph Henderson		Feb-24						
Tracey Dyson	Jul-17	Nov-23	Nov-19		Nov-19		Feb-24	
Bernard Wall	Jul-17	Aug-17	Nov-19					
Mark Lewis	Jul-17	May-17	Feb-24					
Wayne Lewis	Apr-24	Apr-24						

 = Due to be completed in the 2024-2025 financial year.

Grants

ALCC awards council grants and ward grants to a variety of local organisations, projects and community groups. To view the criteria or to apply for a grant, please see our [website](#).

Groups Supported This Year (via Grants)		
Abertillery and District Museum Society	Chillax (Abertillery Learning Community)	Abertillery BG RFC
Clwb Llan	Mr Phillip/Aiden Collings	Six Bells Tennis Club
Llanhilleth RFC	Abertillery Rugby Club	Gwent and Powys Army Cadets
Abertillery Piranhas Swimming Club	Rotary Christmas Hampers Project	Abertillery Excelsiors Juniors AFC
Six Bells Over 50s Club	Abertillery Bluebirds Youth FC	K-Style
Pauline Park Child Group	Ebbw Fach Community Group	Friends of Bethany
Llanhilleth Tenants and Residents	Abertillery Rock and Blues Festival	The Kings Arms
Ebenezer Chapel	Cwmtillery Angling Club	Off The Streets
Gelli Crug Allotments	Hospice of the Valleys	

Solar Farm Grants

Each year ALCC receives £35,000 from the company that runs the Hafod-y-Dafal Solar Farm to distribute as grants to community groups. Council decides which groups to award these grants to, and how they wish to divide the amount. In the Full Council Meeting on the 29th of November 2023, the Council considered seven Solar Farm Grant applications, totalling to roughly £105,000. The Council resolved to award the following grants:

Llanhilleth RFC <i>Requested: £20,000</i> <i>Awarded: £20,000</i>	Ebbw Fach Community Group <i>Requested: £18,256.96</i> <i>Awarded: £15,000</i>
<p>For the provision of an accessible and welcoming 'Community Gathering Space' for local residents. The space will have a retractable roof covering so it can be used in any weather. It will be accessible for community groups and youth-based activities. It aims to offer equal access to the RFC, and the club will welcome volunteers to facilitate this project.</p>	<p>For the provision of a small, modular outdoor building for a Happy Café project. This project began as a coffee morning to support community wellbeing and mental health. The new building will provide a warm, private space for one-on-one counselling sessions. The grant will also fund a small sheltered area outside to allow access to the community garden and serve as a safe space.</p>

To read the full grant applications and the decision-making process, please see the [minutes on our website](#).

Projects

People and Communities Committee

Chaired by Tracey Dyson

Party in the Park

Saturday 10th June 2023

ALCC hosted its annual Party in the Park at Abertillery Park this year, with a budget of £20,000. This was a family-friendly event with free entertainment, food vans and shopping stalls. A range of acts performed on the main stage, such as The Kiltics, Drunk Education, Disney Dance Disco and the Abertillery Town Band. Other entertainment included inflatables from A1 Bounce, arts and crafts with Head4Arts, geocaching with Gwent Wildlife Trust and crafts with Off The Streets.



Loneliness Project

The Loneliness Project was set up to help tackle the issue of loneliness in the community.

With a £5,000 budget, the project provides grant funding to groups striving to combat loneliness. On October 10th 2023, two £1,000 grants were awarded: one to Six Bells Tennis Club to provide heating, cleaning and beverages, and one to Zion Miners Chapel to provide food for their various activities. A £420 grant was awarded to Friends of Bethany on January 30th 2024, for the provision of Twilio (a service which allows people to join services run by Bethany Church via a telephone line) and refreshments for their coffee mornings and choir.

The Loneliness Project budget will be increased to £7,500 next year to provide further support in the community.

Summer Cinema Events

A series of free Summer Cinema Events were hosted by ALCC throughout the six-week holiday in 2023. Three sessions were held each week at The Metropole Theatre, Abertillery. Some were supervised by local youth charity Off The Streets, others were supervised by the Blaenau Gwent Youth Service, and some were unsupervised Autism-friendly showings for families to attend. A variety of films were shown, including two Sing-Along films, and the sessions were positively received.

Swffryd Viaduct Run

Sunday 9th July 2023

Led by Cllr Ben-Owen Jones, in collaboration with Islwyn Running Club, Cwtch Media and Off The Streets, the People and Communities Committee hosted a Swffryd Viaduct Community Run this year. The event had a £5,000 budget and included a 5k run, with an entry fee of £5 which was donated to Swffryd Primary School's wellbeing and community projects, and a free family fun run. Swffryd Community Centre hosted the runners afterwards for awards, entertainment and refreshments. The event was a huge success and will return next year.



Photo credit: *Off The Streets*

Community Christmas Carol Concert

Sunday 17th December 2023

This year's Christmas Carol Concert was held in St Michael's Church, Abertillery. £500 was budgeted for concert costs this year. Ticket and raffle sales raised £664.83 for the Chair's Charity (building toilets in the Church). The line-up featured these local acts:

Abertillery Town Band
Abertillery Orpheus Male Choir
Abertillery Ladies Orpheus Choir
Ebbw Fach Choir
Abertillery Youth Drama and Music Society

St. David's Day Concert

Friday 1st March 2024

The annual St. David's Day Celebration Concert was held in St Michael's Church, Abertillery. Proceeds were raised for the building of toilets in the Church. Ticket and raffle sales raised £186. The concert was comprised of the following local acts:

Abertillery Town Band
Jordan Mills
Abertillery Orpheus Male Choir
Abertillery Ladies Orpheus Choir
Abertillery Amateur Dramatic and Musical Society
Abertillery Youth Drama and Music Society

ALCC also supported the Abertillery branch of the Royal British Legion to host a Poppy Concert on Friday November 10th 2023, in St. Michael's Church, by creating programmes for the event.

War Memorial

This year, the Council budgeted £2,500 towards the maintenance of the Abertillery War Memorial, as well as £3,000 towards Remembrance Day (to cover costs for wreaths, road closures and staff training).

At a People and Communities Committee meeting on January 30th 2024, the Committee resolved to delegate to officers to put out a two-part tender regarding the railings and paving in the War Memorial. The aim is to repair and repaint the railings and gate, and to replace the slippery and uneven flint paving. A tender went out in March 2024 to repair the railings, since the budget would not cover repairing both at once.



Photo credit: Green Fingers Tree Surgery and Grounds Maintenance

Christmas Lights

ALCC provides seasonal Christmas lighting throughout the area every year. An annual budget line of £30,000 covers this central contract, and £1,800 was set aside for the electricity costs this year. A new 5-year contract was awarded to Blachere Illuminations in June 2023. ALCC also gives yearly grants to local communities for their own lighting, with £3,000 going to the Llanhilleth Tenants and Residents Association (TRA), and £1,500 going to the community centres in Swffryd, Bournville and Brynithel, Pentref Tyleri in Cwmtillery and Aberbeeg TRA.



Photo at Caffi Tyleri, from Pentref Tyleri



Photo of Llanhilleth High Street, from Llanhilleth TRA

Planning, Commerce and Environment Committee (PlaCE)

Chaired by Nick Simmons

Town in Bloom

The Town in Bloom project provides planted displays throughout the area. This year, its budget was increased from £14,500 to £18,000, funding a £14,450 contract with The Willows in Usk, who supply and maintain the planters. The other £3,550 in the budget was allocated for community involvement, as groups can adopt planters and receive an allowance from Council to cover the costs. In February 2024, a new Town in Bloom tender process began, and at a PlaCE meeting on March 27th 2024 the tender was awarded to Tillery Action For You, beginning a three-year contract with a yearly budget of £14,000.

Allotments

As part of the 1908 Small Holdings and Allotments Act, it is the Council's duty to provide sufficient allotments according to demand. Therefore, ALCC supports 6 allotments in the area: Gelli Crug, Adam Street, Bishops Street, Gwastod, Brynithel and Pant-Y-Pwden. At the Full Council meeting on January 31st 2024, Council resolved to suspend allotment rent charges for the 2023-2024 financial year, due to ongoing issues regarding lease agreements.

Car Scheme

The PlaCE Committee budgeted £8,500 this year to investigate the possibility of setting up a Community Transport scheme which would provide transport to those needing to get to medical appointments, and those out of reach from public transport. Whilst investigating the feasibility of this scheme, it was discovered that a Blaenau Gwent Car Scheme already existed. This scheme is part of the Bridges charity in Monmouthshire, and its volunteers provide transport throughout Blaenau Gwent without the high cost of a taxi. The Committee met with the project coordinator for this scheme on January 17th 2024, where it was resolved for the Clerks to organise a leaflet drop to help recruit more volunteers for the Blaenau Gwent Car Scheme. The leaflet distribution is set to begin on April 8th throughout most of the ALCC area.

Defibrillators

As part of their commitment to providing life-saving defibrillator units for the public, ALCC budgeted £7,500 for defibrillators this year. This covered maintenance costs for the 10 defibrillators managed by ALCC, and the costs of installing two new defibrillators. Unfortunately, ALCC has not been meeting its target of two new defibrillator units being installed each year, and no new units have been installed since November 2021. This is due to difficulties finding suitable locations. At a PlaCE Committee meeting on March 13th 2024, this issue was discussed and it was agreed that the committee would begin the process of seeking locations for defibrillators to be installed next year.

Environmental Projects

The PlaCE Committee budgeted £10,000 for environmental projects this year for the potential greening of small pieces of land, expenditure on and grant funding for other potential environmental improvements and the procurement of a feasibility study into the potential community asset transfer of a mosaic mural in Abertillery. This budget was unspent.

Ffrindiau Tyleri Events

ALCC provides grant funding to Ffrindiau Tyleri to help them host a series of town centre events throughout the year. These include Winterfest, Springfest, Aberfest and a Halloween event. The events include a variety of entertainment, including live music and mascots, food vans and shopping stalls. Each event offers something different, and they are attended by thousands each year. The Clerks also participated in a Springfest litter pick in Abertillery town centre. This was organised by Ffrindiau Tyleri and in collaboration with the Abertillery Learning Community and the litter picking team at Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council. A total of 62 bags of rubbish were filled over the course of 90 minutes.



Stilt-walkers at Winterfest



Springfest stalls: photo from Ffrindiau Tyleri

Community Empowerment Committee

Chaired by Barrie Page

Blaenau Gwent Detached Workers

This year, a £54,500 budget funded the provision of three Blaenau Gwent detached youth workers for the community. These youth workers are available within the community four evenings every week, and they have established a strong social media presence and ties with many young people.

Between April and October 2023, the detached team engaged with over 1,200 young people.

Off The Streets

A further £44,244 supported Off The Streets, a charity providing activities and support for young people. These funds covered the wages for three youth workers. Off The Streets have expanded their sessions from four to twelve per week, in three areas across the community. They have also begun providing sessions specifically for children with additional learning needs. Over the six-week Summer holiday in 2023, Off The Streets engaged with 100+ young people each week.

Youth-led Projects

The Committee budgeted £2,000 to fund the provision of opportunities that would otherwise be unavailable to many young people in the area, such as educational visits. This budget was unspent.

Finance Committee

Chaired by Steve Bard

The Finance Committee is responsible for monitoring, reviewing and assisting in the effective financial management of the Council. This year, the Committee made several recommendations to Council to improve its financial management, and also met with the chairs of other committees to scrutinise their budget proposals for next year. The Committee has also established a critical friendship with the internal auditor, and has actively worked with them to improve the governance and procedures of the Council. Following recommendations from the Finance Committee this year, Council has amended its:

Financial risk register
Standing orders
Financial regulations
Bank reconciliation processes
HR Committee terms of reference

Human Resources Committee

Chaired by Tracey Dyson

The HR Committee monitors and reviews the performance of the Council's officers and assists them to ensure proper management of the Council's business.

Full Council Key Actions

- On June 28th 2023, Council resolved to authorise officers to transfer Council’s bank accounts from Natwest to **Unity Trust Bank**. This transfer was completed in November 2023.
- On November 29th 2023, Council resolved to agree a new **Financial Risk Register** for 2023.
- On November 29th 2023, Council resolved to make initial enquiries about purchasing a **Wetherspoons** venue in Abertillery to convert into a community hub. On January 31st 2024, a report on this investigation was presented to Council, where it was resolved that this project would not go ahead, as it would not be financially feasible.
- On March 20th 2024, Council met with PS Dan Wise and CSO Luke of **Gwent Police** to discuss issues in the local area. Further meetings are due to take place to address the issue of anti-social behaviour in the area.
- On February 28th 2024, Council resolved to begin publishing a **newsletter** on its website, social media and on notice boards throughout the area. The **first edition** was approved at this meeting and published at the beginning of March.

Personal Alarms

On November 10th 2023, the Chair of Council hosted an event with Gwent Police at the Council Offices on Mitre Street. The event offered citizens the opportunity to raise concerns with the police, and free personal safety alarms were handed out. The demand for these alarms was greater than anticipated, and so on November 29th 2023, Council resolved to authorise officers to purchase alarms, up to the value of £2,500. As a result of this, 2,200 alarms were purchased. Along with offering alarms to those that had requested them after the first event, they were also given to the following organisations to distribute:

Abertillery Library	Ffrindiau Tyleri	Lions Club	Pentref/Caffi Tyleri	Tyleri Travel
Blaenau Gwent Community Centre	Six Bells Community Centre	Brynithel Community Centre	Swffryd Community Centre	Aberbeeg Community Centre
Six Bells Tennis Club	Hospice of the Valleys	Llanhilleth Miner’s Institute	Pen Y Bont Scouts	Bournville Community Centre

Telephone Kiosk

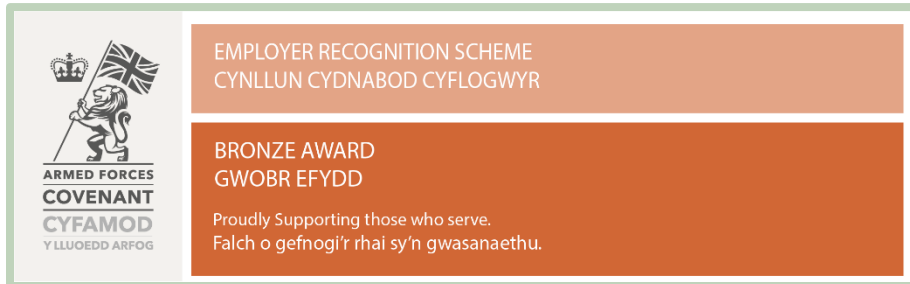
On January 31st 2024, Council resolved to write to BT opposing the proposed removal of a traditional red telephone box situated on Bridge Street in Six Bells. This decision was made after Council received a lot of support for the phone box being kept in working condition. Council have yet to receive a response from BT regarding this issue.



Artwork of the phone box, drawn by local resident Emily Clatworthy

Armed Forces Covenant

On January 31st 2024, Council resolved to sign the new Armed Forces Covenant, a formal commitment showing that Council supports those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces, and their families. Council was then awarded the Bronze Award from the Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS). The ERS recognises commitment and support from UK employers for defence personnel.



Youth Council

On November 29th 2023, Council resolved to investigate setting up a Youth Forum and co-opting two youth Councillors. Following discussions with Abertillery Learning Community, the Clerks hosted an agenda-setting workshop with some of the school's established Pupil Parliament on February 19th 2024. On February 28th 2024, a meeting of the Pupil Parliament was hosted in the Council Chambers. The Chair of Council attended to provide coaching, and the Deputy Clerks facilitated the meeting and assisted the Pupil Parliament clerks with notetaking. Another meeting is due to take place in April 2024.

"Our 3-16 Pupil Parliament were given the fantastic opportunity of holding their most recent meeting at the Council chambers. Our Chair and Secretaries all received specialised training from the very accommodating representatives and the meeting was a HUGE SUCCESS!!"
-Quote from the Abertillery Learning Community Newsletter (8th March 2024)



Photos from the Abertillery Learning Community Newsletter (8th March 2024)

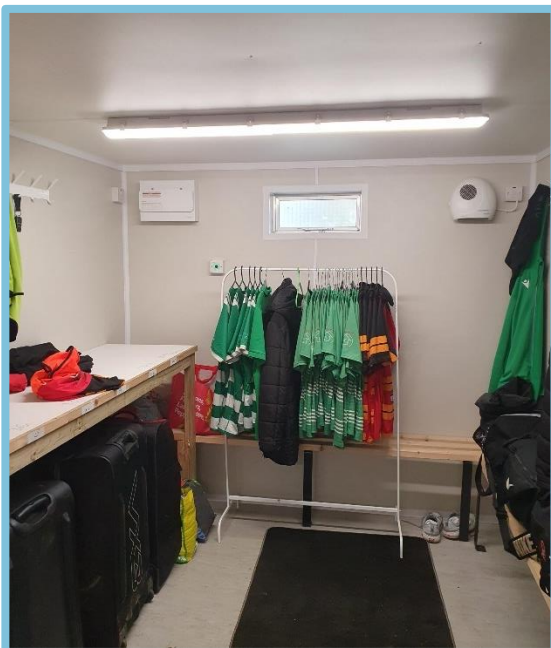
Abertillery BG RFC Grant

At the Full Council meeting on September 20th 2023, Council resolved to award a Council grant of £7,500 to Abertillery Blaenau Gwent RFC for the building of a new medical facility at the club. Abertillery BG RFC posted the following on Facebook:

“We at Abertillery BG RFC are extremely proud to show you our renovated changing room with additional medical room! We are very grateful to Abertillery and Llanhilleth Community Council for giving us the funding to add the much needed medical room to our facility. This not only benefits our rugby endeavours but also the many events that we hold at the park!

Thanks again!”

-Quote from Abertillery Blaenau Gwent RFC Facebook (10th January 2024)



Plans for 2024-2025

PlaCE Committee

- Continue investing in the Town in Bloom project to beautify the area.
- Provide grant funding to Ffrindiau Tyleri for their range of town centre events like Winterfest and Springfest.
- Continue discussions with Blaenau Gwent CBC about the possibility of a community asset transfer of the Abertillery Subway Mural.
- Maintain existing defibrillators and get back on track to provide new ones in the area.
- Continue providing support to Blaenau Gwent Car Scheme to help them recruit more volunteers, including a leaflet drop due to start in April 2024.

People and Communities Committee

- Continue providing Christmas lighting throughout the area.
- Continue maintaining the War Memorial to a high standard, including repairing and repainting the railings and replacing the paving.
- Continue hosting local events like concerts, Summer Cinema Events, the Fun Run and Party in the Park, and striving to improve the offerings at these events.
- Provide a greater amount of grant funding in the community as part of the Loneliness Project.

Community Empowerment Committee

- Continue supporting the important work done by Off The Streets and the Blaenau Gwent detached youth workers.
- Begin distributing regular newsletters to advertise the work being done by the Council.
- Continue taking steps towards establishing a Youth Council.

Finance

- Continue improving the financial processes of Council, including acting on the points raised in the Internal Audit Report.