

**MEETING OF THE FULL COUNCIL OF ABERTILLERY AND LLANHILLETH  
COMMUNITY COUNCIL (ALCC) HELD ON 25 June 2025 AT 7:00 pm in the  
Council Chamber at Council Offices, Mitre Street, Abertillery.**

**PRESENT**

**Councillors:** Josh Rawcliffe (Chair), Lucy Harmer (Vice Chair), Peter Adamson, Steve Bard, Ivor Beynon, Ralph Henderson MBE, Chris Hill, Bruno Góes Maciel (via video-link) Barrie Page, Rob Phillips, Nick Simmons, Mike Whatley.

**Youth Representatives:** None

**Absent:** Frankie Baker, Tracey Dyson, Ben Owen-Jones Mark Lewis, Graham White and Bernard Wall. Youth Reps: Jackson Powell and Sophie Townsend

**Officers:** Steve Edwards (Clerk), Erika Davies (Deputy Clerk) and Molly Jones (Deputy Clerk)

The Chair opened the meeting by expressing everyone's appreciation for the many years of public service by Glyn Smith following on from his resignation from the Council

**40. Apologies for absence**

Apologies received from Frankie Baker, Tracey Dyson and Mark Lewis

**41. Declarations of Interest and Dispensations**

Ivor Beynon declared an interest being involved with Ebenezer Baptist Church but on the advice of the Clerk there was no interest as Ebenezer are not in receipt of an Annual Grant from the Council.

Peter Adamson declared an Interest and then withdrew that declaration.

Chris Hill (Chair) from Six Bells Tennis Club

Barrie Page as (Treasurer) of Llanhilleth Tenants and Residents Association,

Rob Phillips (Secretary) and Nick Simmons (Chair) of Ffrindiau Tyleri.

All for agenda item 12. "Council Annual Grants"

**42. Minutes 21 May 2025 and 28 May 2025**

The Council **RESOLVED** to amend minute 20 from 21 May so that "pass the button" now reads "pass the baton"

The Council **RESOLVED** to amend minute 32 from 28 May so that "K-Style/AYDMS" reads "Pentref Tyleri"

(Note: It was discovered after the meeting that the minute numbers for the draft minutes of 28 May were incorrect and should have started at 30, these have been amended prior to Chairs signature)

**43. Committee Vacancies**

The Council **RESOLVED** to co-opt Tracey Dyson onto the HR Committee

There were no nominations for the vacancy on the Finance Committee, so this will be held in abeyance until a nomination is received.

#### **44. Annual Return 2024/25**

The Council **RESOLVED** to accept the RFO's report, Peter Adamson suggested that future reports should contain information about the precept and its payments. The Council **RESOLVED** to agree the Annual Return and authorise the Chair to sign on behalf of the Council.

The Council noted the very good Internal Audit report. Steve Bard thanked all the members of the Finance and Governance Committee for the hard work that has got the Council into a secure Financial position.

#### **45. Council Grants.**

The Council **RESOLVED** to give the following grants

1. Friends of Bethany - £591.93 to cover the cost of buying printed t-shirts, team game equipment and snacks towards the provision of a summer holiday club at Bethany Baptist Church. (Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 s.19). It should be stated to the group that the money should only be used for secular activities and not for any religious reasons
2. Abertillery Ladies Darts - £500 to help run a family darts day to include trophies, prizes, food, music and games. (Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 s.19).

#### **46. Insurance Renewal**

The Clerk explained that the premium had been reduced from £1,521.86 to £1,158.14 because in the reduction of the Insurance cost to replace the War Memorial. We are also now covered for 160 wooden tubs that form part of the Town in Bloom project. It should also be noted that we are covered for any number of events that the Council put on as long as the numbers do not exceed 2000 at any one time at the event.

The Council **RESOLVED** to authorise the payment of the Insurance Renewals premium of £1,158.14.

#### **47. Detached Youth Workers**

Barrie Page gave a detailed update on the work of the detached youth work at Off the Streets and BGCBC Youth services. (The full reports are available to any members who wishes to read them). The Council's view is that this is vital work that is being done. In answer to a question from Nick Simmons Barrie Page replied that the Council was not funding the Youth Van that is used throughout Blaenau Gwent, including the Abertillery area.

The Chair thanked Barrie Page for his update

#### **48. Hospice of the Valleys**

The Council **RESOLVED** to approve £500 sponsorship funding for the Hospice of the Valleys Christmas festive concert (Local Government Act 1972 s.145)

#### **49. Cash Machine Access**

The Council considered the letter received from Mr Thomas Langley-Noel

The Council **RESOLVED** that the Officers should write to Note Machine Ltd and Cardtronics UK Ltd to ask them to supply free cash machines in the Abertillery area, and to contact the banking hub to ask about a free cash machine at that site.

We should also consider Cash Machine Access in the Six Bells and Swffryd areas.

## **50. Remembrance Sunday Wreath**

It was established that there was no request from Ebenezer Church for Council funding for the Sunday school to lay a wreath and it is a matter for the Royal British Legion to agree who will lay wreathes on Remembrance Sunday

## **51. Council Annual Grants**

Chris Hill, Barrie Page and Nick Simmons left the meeting at 8:10. Rob Phillips was given leave to stay and to speak for the motion

**“that the recipients of an annual block grant awarded by this council have these funds transferred directly to that organisations bank account on condition that they will submit proof of expenditure of the grant to the council for scrutiny”**

Which overturns the Finance Committee decision of 7<sup>th</sup> February 2025 that organisations in receipt of annual grants would have to send invoices into the Council for the Council to pay direct rather than the organisation receiving a block grant.

Rob explained that Ffrindiau Tyleri had many years' experience in running multiple events and had a high level of financial management. They now felt that they could not be trusted by the Council. Ffrindiau Tyleri also raise the issue about the contractual arrangements for organisations if the Council were paying invoices directly.

The Chair of the Finance and Governance Committee, Steve Bard, stated that the entire grants systems used by Council needs an overhaul and that this was an issue about being transparent in the use of public money, not an issue of trust. That Council was not picking on Ffrindiau Tyleri and that all recipients of annual grants will have to follow this process.

The officers confirmed that the process was already in place and some other organisations had already had moneys paid this way.

The Clerk supported the Chair of the Finance and Governance Committee and further stated that the Council was now a half million pound business and its governance processes needed to reflect that. He also was concerned about protecting Councillors and the Council from criticism if we are not as transparent as we can be about what public money is being spent on.

It was confirmed that the current process did not mean the Council would involve itself in the decisions made by organisations in how they wanted to spend the grants budgeted for, nor was there any intention to cut the funding that had been agreed in the annual budgets. This was purely the financial. process for paying the grant funding.

The Clerk stated that if the new system proved unworkable then the Finance and Governance Committee will review it and bring any recommendations back to Council.

Rob Phillips left the meeting at 8:41 before a vote.

Steve Bard asked for the vote to be recorded.

The motion was defeated by 4 votes to 1.

For: Ivor Beynon

Against: Steve Bard, Bruno Goes, Lucy Harmer and Mike Whatley.

Chris Hill, Barrie Page, Rob Phillips and Nick Simmons returned to the meeting.

**52. Committee Papers**

The Council noted the PlaCE Committee Minutes of 14<sup>th</sup> April 2025

**53. Date of next meeting.**

Wednesday 23 July 2025 at 7pm. Reminder that this is earlier than last Wednesday of the month

The meeting ended at 8:46 pm.

*Minutes produced by Steve Edwards, Clerk.*

Signed as a correct record by the Chair.....

Date.....