

**MEETING OF THE FULL COUNCIL OF ABERTILLERY AND LLANHILLETH
COMMUNITY COUNCIL (ALCC) HELD ON 26 November 2025 AT 7.00 pm in the
Council Chamber at Council Offices, Mitre street, Abertillery.**

PRESENT

Councillors: Josh Rawcliffe (Chair), Frankie Baker, Steve Bard, Ivor Beynon, Richard Catlin, Tracey Dyson, Ralph Henderson MBE, Chris Hill, Bruno Góes Maciel (via video-link), Ben Owen-Jones (via video-link), Barrie Page, Nick Simmons, Bernard Wall.

Absent: Peter Adamson, Lucy Harmer (Vice Chair), Mark Lewis, Rob Phillips, Mike Whatley, Graham White.

Officers: Steve Edwards (Clerk) and Molly Jones (Deputy Clerk)

Others: Sgt. Marc Porter (Gwent Police)

112. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Peter Adamson, Lucy Harmer, Mark Lewis, Rob Phillips and Mike Whatley.

113. Declarations of Interest and Dispensations

None.

114. Minutes 29 October 2025

Council **RESOLVED** to amend the draft minutes, point 103 – change ‘Steve Brad’ to ‘Steve Bard’.

Council **RESOLVED** to accept the amended minutes as a true and correct record

115. Public Questions

None.

116. Presentation from Volunteering Matters

The group gave apologies and could not attend the meeting.

117. Police Update

Sgt. Marc Porter (Sergeant for the Brynmawr & Abertillery area) gave an update about scratches reported on the Abertillery subway mural. He confirmed that no further action is being taken, as no evidence was found to confirm it was a result of vandalism. He then welcomed questions from Council.

Cllr Beynon: I reported the damage to the mural as it looked like a sharp object was used.

MP: Thank you for reporting it, it was investigated but is not being pursued further. We are aware of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) issues in the area and are working to combat these. Operation Lockwood is in place, where officers are stationed in set 500m² areas for 2 hours and do not leave the area during that time. In Abertillery, this area covers the mosaic mural. Patrols are in the diary for local shops around closing time, when incidents have been occurring.

Gwent Police have taskforce meetings with Blaenau Gwent CBC every other week to pursue joint action, they also work with the Youth Service and run community engagement projects such as protective marking workshops, gaming van sessions and

hate crime awareness workshops. ASB figures are down from last year, with 156 referrals in 2024/25 and 81 in 2025/26. The peak last year was 20 referrals (June-July) whereas the peak this year has been 13. Reporting of crimes is encouraged to ensure these figures are accurate and so the Police can base operations on important issues.

Neighbourhood Matters is also important for growing communication between the Police and residents. The Police are emphasising preventative and positive action.

Cllr Góes Maciel: How many prosecutions for ASB have there been this year?

MP: ASB covers a range of different crimes and is not a crime itself, so there is no figure for prosecutions.

Cllr Góes Maciel: What relationship does the Police have with local schools?

MP: We have been running Operation Civic, going into schools to educate about road safety. We also run lessons and maintain contact with local schools, including hosting workshops like hate crime awareness for groups of children.

Cllr Owen-Jones: Can you tell us more about Neighbourhood Matters?

MP: Neighbourhood Matters is a way for Gwent Police to communicate with residents. It is completely anonymous and allows residents to have direct contact with us, so they can submit intelligence or let us know about issues in their area. It is not for reporting crimes directly, 999 or 101 should still be used for this. We can also add communications, for example, we recently posted to inform people of increased reports of work vans being broken into. All enquiries submitted via NM will be responded to within 72 hours.

Cllr Owen-Jones: Is there a press release we can share?

MP: We are not currently publicising this scheme on social media, but I am keen to start promoting it as soon as possible.

Cllr Owen-Jones: Have you liaised with Off The Streets for the Llanhilleth, Swffryd & Brynithel areas?

MP: We have not, but would be happy to pursue this if the contact details could be sent over.

Cllr Owen-Jones: Council's officers can send the details. What age range is being engaged with for the hate crime awareness workshops?

MP: Teenagers, secondary-school children.

Cllr Page: There used to be a 'core' of young people causing trouble in the area, is this happening again?

MP: No, we are not finding the same names coming up every time and the figures back this up. We are keen on pursuing referrals when possible and are working on positive action to prevent this from happening.

Cllr Henderson: Why are crimes not being reported?

MP: People often fear reprisal and worry about staying anonymous. Some residents also may not trust the Police, especially if they have had a negative experience in the past.

Cllr Dyson: What is being done about off-road vehicles?

MP: Operation Athena saw 35 vehicles seized in a month, totalling over £250,000 worth of vehicles, many of which were off-road or stolen. 16 arrests were also made. We utilise drones and helicopters, and I have requested more drone training for local officers.

If you see officers not pursuing off-road vehicles, it is not that they do not care, but they must consider the risk to the public, themselves, and the person driving. They also may not have training for pursuits. We encourage everyone to report incidents via Neighbourhood Matters with as much details as possible – vehicle colour, brand, clothing etc. all helps build a bigger picture.

Cllr Beynon: I am co-ordinator for Abertillery Neighbourhood Watch and part of the litter-picking hub at Ebenezer Baptist Church. We have noticed a rise in empty shops having their windows smashed, being broken into and having metal stolen. What is being done about this?

MP: I have not personally dealt with these issues, but would be happy to look into it if you could send some details in an email.

Cllr Hill: Why is there no police station here, yet smaller areas have them?

MP: Unfortunately this is out of my remit. I would advise contacting the Police & Crime Commissioner to request this.

Council thanked Sgt. Marc Porter for attending. He left the meeting at 7:36pm.

118. Annual Report 2024/2025

The Chair explained that several typos had been noted by the Deputy Clerk, which will be corrected before publishing. The Clerk thanked the Deputy Clerk for producing the report, and Council for their work last year.

Council **RESOLVED** to accept and publish the 2024/2025 Annual Report.

119. Training Policy and Plan

Council **RESOLVED** to adopt the new Training Policy & Plan.

120. New Financial Regulations

Council **RESOLVED** to adopt the new Financial Regulations.

121. Bank Reconciliation October 2025

The Chair queried two payees, which were clarified by the Deputy Clerk:

- Marianne Green – recipient of Town in Bloom community tub allowance.
- Lawson Jones – Insurer for Llanhilleth TRA Christmas Lights, as part of their annual grant.

Council **RESOLVED** to approve the October 2025 bank reconciliation and payments.

The Chair thanked the officers and Finance & Governance Committee for their continued hard work on the bank reconciliations and strengthening the financial governance of the Council.

122. Solar Farm Grant Underspend

This item was deferred at the October meeting. The Friends of Blaenau Gwent & Roseheyworth Park reported a £3,541.25 underspend for the Roseheyworth Park project, which received a Solar Farm Grant last year.

Abertillery Learning Community also received a Solar Farm Grant in 2024 for gates and rugby posts. The gates have been installed but there were not enough remaining funds for the posts.

Council **RESOLVED** to award the £3,541.25 underspend from the Roseheyworth Park Project to Abertillery Learning Community for new rugby posts. Officers will pay the invoice and any unspent funds will be reported to Council to decide how they should be spent.

123. Council Grant Applications

Council considered one grant request:

Abertillery Aikido Dojo - £1,000 for annual rent. (Local Government Act 1972, s145)

Councillors expressed that the grant application lacked important details such as membership figures and cost breakdowns.

Council **RESOLVED** to defer the grant request, and for officers to request additional information from the group.

Cllr Frankie Baker left the meeting at 8:01pm.

124. Youth Representatives

Council **RESOLVED** to appoint Jackson and Riley as its Youth Representatives for 2025-2026.

125. HR Committee

As per the Council's Training Policy, Cllr Lucy Harmer should have completed 'Council as an Employer' training within six months of being appointed to the HR Committee.

The Chair clarified that Cllr Lucy Harmer had joined the training but was unable to complete the webinar due to an emergency.

Council **RESOLVED** to grant Cllr Lucy Harmer a further six months to complete the 'Council as an Employer' training.

126. Committee Minutes

The Council **RESOLVED** to note the Finance and Governance Committee minutes from 10 October 2025.

127. Date of Next Meeting

Wednesday 17th December 2025 at 7pm.

The meeting ended at 8:07pm.

Minutes produced by Molly Jones, Deputy Clerk.

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

Date.....