

## ABERTILLERY AND LLANHILLETH COMMUNITY COUNCIL

**COUNCIL**  
**22 MAY 2022**

### **COUNCILLOR VACANCIES**

Cllr Ben Owen Jones has tabled a motion that “*This Council instructs its officers to immediately inform the Returning Officer of five vacancies on the Council and to request to begin the process for co-options immediately.*”

#### **Purpose of report**

To inform the Council of the options available to it for addressing current vacancies on the Council.

#### **Background**

Following the elections held on 5 May 2022, the Council now has 14 Members. With 19 potential places on the Council, this leaves five vacancies as follows:

Abertillery	1
Cwmtillery	2
Llanhilleth	1
Six Bells	1

#### **Issues**

- the Council is permitted to seek to fill the five vacancies, when it wishes to do so.
- As long as the Council has sufficient Members to remain quorate during Council meetings, there is no legal requirement to seek to fill the vacancies. However, the community council has been allotted 19 councillors because that is the number deemed necessary by Blaenau Gwent Council under the Local Government Act to carry on the business of the Council and to fully represent the interests of the local community.
- If the Council decides to seek to fill vacancies, there is no requirement for it to seek to fill all the vacancies at once.
- the process of seeking to fill vacancies is covered by law. Under normal circumstances, the electorate must first be given the opportunity to call for an election to fill any vacancies. As the vacancies have arisen because there were insufficient candidates at a very recent election, the Council may be given dispensation to forego this requirement.
- If no election is called (or if the Council is given dispensation to forego an election), the Council may co-opt members of the public to fill the vacancies.
- The Council has an existing policy that has regards to best practice on advertising for and selecting candidates.
- The Council could consider the provisions of The Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 which allow for the appointment of up to two community youth representatives (aged 16-25) by community councils. The Council could seek to appoint these representatives in addition to, or in place of, full Members.
- The Council’s existing policy for co-option and the process that this Council followed in autumn 2021 are attached below.

### **Policy and resource Implications**

The process for seeking to fill vacancies is covered by law and so certain costs may be unavoidable (e.g., if contested elections are required). However, the Council should consider not only whether it wishes to co-opt members but also, if so, when; how many to co-opt; and how to advertise for and select candidates.

### **Risks**

There are risks in not seeking to fill vacancies, in terms of the lack (or perceived lack) of representation of local communities and in terms of having sufficient Members to fulfil the Council's own plans that were presented in the meeting that set the Council's budget for 2022-23.

### **Matters for consideration**

The Council should consider:

- (1) Whether to seek to fill its Council vacancies straightaway;
- (2) If not, when the Council wishes to reconsider the matter (Standing Order 7a states that "*A resolution shall not be reversed within six months...*" If Council resolves NOT to seek to fill the vacancies at this time but wishes to reconsider the matter within the next six months, an amendment should be tabled to that effect.)

If the Council seeks to fill its vacancies straightaway, the Council should consider:

- (3) how many vacancies it will seek to fill and whether it wishes to specify the vacancies by ward;
- (4) Whether to seek to appoint community youth representatives and, if so, how many;
- (5) Whether it will amend the recruitment process from that of autumn 2021 (as attached below).

David Cartwright  
Clerk

May 2022

## **Abertillery and Llanhilleth Community Council Policy and procedure for co-opting a new Councillor**

This procedure is based on NALC Legal Briefing L15-08 – Good practice for selection of candidates for co-option to local Councils.

Community Councils are permitted to exercise the power to co-opt a person on to the Council to fill a casual vacancy when the requirements to hold an election have not been met (i.e., the vacancy has been the subject of a public notice and fewer than ten registered electors have requested an election by a deadline date specified by the District Returning Officer) or the Council has been given dispensation to co-opt without publishing a Notice of Vacancy.

Although seeking “expressions of interest” is not a legal requirement, the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) recommends that Councils always give public notice of vacancies because this makes the process of co-option open and transparent and should attract more potential candidates.

Whenever the need for co-option arises, Abertillery and Llanhilleth Community Council will consider advertising the vacancy to seek and encourage ‘expressions of interest’ by a specified date from anyone living or working in the ward where the vacancy has occurred or within three miles of its boundaries who is eligible to stand as a Community Councillor. All potential candidates will be requested to put their request for consideration by completing an application form (See Appendix).

Please note it is a condition of a Councillor that a means of contact by telephone and e-mail will be public information. A Council email address will be provided. A Declaration of Interests Form must be completed and will be published.

At the next Full Council meeting after applications for co-option have been received:

- i. Clerk to confirm that each candidate is qualified to become a Councillor and is not disqualified from being a Councillor as set out in the Local Government Act 1972 s79 and s80;
- ii. Chairman to offer opportunity for debate on the order of priority to offer co-option
- iii. If the number of candidates exceeds the number of vacancies advertised, Council will vote on the acceptability of each candidate for co-option, utilising the ‘person specification’ criteria set out below and any personal statements requested from and provided by candidates. An absolute majority vote is required for each candidate from all members present and entitled to vote (LGA 1972 Sch. 12. Para 39) (The applicant with the fewest votes cast will be eliminated and the vote taken again until the number of candidates equals the number of vacancies);
- iv. Vote to select the order in which acceptable candidates (decided by the vote at iii above) should be approached to offer co-option on this occasion.
- v. The Clerk to approach and offer co-option to candidate(s) after the meeting in the order of priority determined by the vote at iii above. If the first choice does not accept the post, then the second is to be approached and so on until the ranking list is exhausted.
- vi. If there is more than one vacancy and the number of candidates is equal to or fewer than the number of vacancies, then all the vacancies can be filled by a single composite resolution

The Clerk to notify Electoral Services of the new Councillor appointment, initiate ‘acceptance of office’ paperwork and ‘registration of interests’ on the Council website.

Assuming that the co-option position is filled and all paperwork completed the successful applicants will become Councillors. If no one accepts the vacant post(s), the whole process is to be repeated when new individuals expressing interest are identified.

## **CO-OPTED COUNCILLOR PERSON SPECIFICATION**

### Personal Attributes

- Sound knowledge and understanding of local affairs and the local community.
- Forward thinking
- Can bring a new skill, expertise or key local knowledge to the Council.

### Experience, Skills, Knowledge and Ability

- Ability to listen constructively
- A good team player
- Ability to pick up and run with a variety of projects
- Solid interest in local matters
- Ability and willingness to represent the Council and their community
- Good interpersonal skills and able to contribute opinions at meetings whilst willing to see others views and accept majority decisions.
- Ability to communicate succinctly and clearly.
- Ability and willingness to work closely with other members and to maintain good working relationships with all members and staff.
- Ability and willingness to work with the Council's partners (e.g. voluntary groups, other Community Councils, principal authority, charities).
- Ability and willingness to undertake induction training and other relevant training.
- Experience of working or being a member in a local authority or other public body
- Experience of working with voluntary and or local community / interest groups
- Basic knowledge of legal issues relating to town and Community Councils or local authorities □  
Experience of delivering presentations

### Circumstances

- Ability and willingness to attend meetings of the Council (or meetings of other local authorities and local bodies) at any time and events in the evening and at weekends.

To: The Clerk  
 Abertillery & Llanhilleth Community Council  
 Council Offices  
 Mitre Street  
 Abertillery  
 NP13 1AE

Tel: 01495 217323  
 email: clerk.alcc@gmail.com

**APPLICATION FOR THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY COUNCILLOR  
 ON ABERTILLERY AND LLANHILLETH COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

Full name	
Home address incl. Postcode	
Telephone number	
Mobile number	
Email	
Which ward do you wish to represent	

It is a condition of being a Community Councillor for Abertillery and Llanhilleth that your phone number and email address (official email address will be supplied) be made public via notice boards and website.

**LEGAL QUALIFICATIONS FOR BEING A COMMUNITY COUNCILLOR QUALIFICATIONS**

**(To qualify you must be able to answer 'Yes' to both of the questions below)**

Are you a British citizen, a Commonwealth citizen or a citizen of a European Union country?	Yes / No
Are you 18 or over?	Yes / No

**(To qualify you must be able to answer 'Yes' to at least one of the questions below)**

Are you on the electoral register for a ward within the Abertillery & Llanhilleth Community Council area?	Yes / No
Have you lived either in the Abertillery & Llanhilleth Community Council area, or within three miles of its boundary, for at least a year?	Yes / No
Have you been the owner or tenant of land in the Abertillery & Llanhilleth Community Council area for at least a year?	Yes / No
Have you had your only or main place of work in the Abertillery & Llanhilleth Community Council area for at least a year?	Yes / No

**DISQUALIFICATIONS**

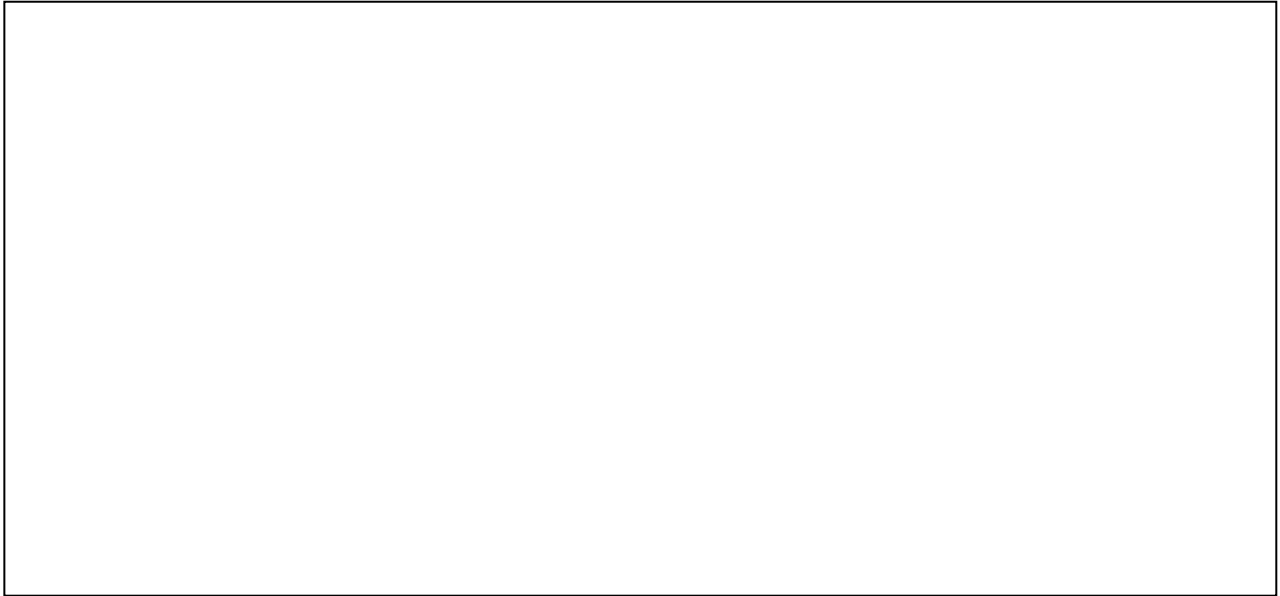
**(You must be able to answer No to all of the questions below to be eligible to serve as a councillor)**

Are you the subject of a bankruptcy restrictions order or interim order?	Yes / No
Have you within the last five years been convicted of an offence in the UK, the Channel Islands or the Isle of Man which resulted in a sentence of imprisonment (whether suspended or not) for a period of three months or more without the option of a fine?	Yes / No
Are you disqualified by order of a court from being a member of a local authority?	Yes / No

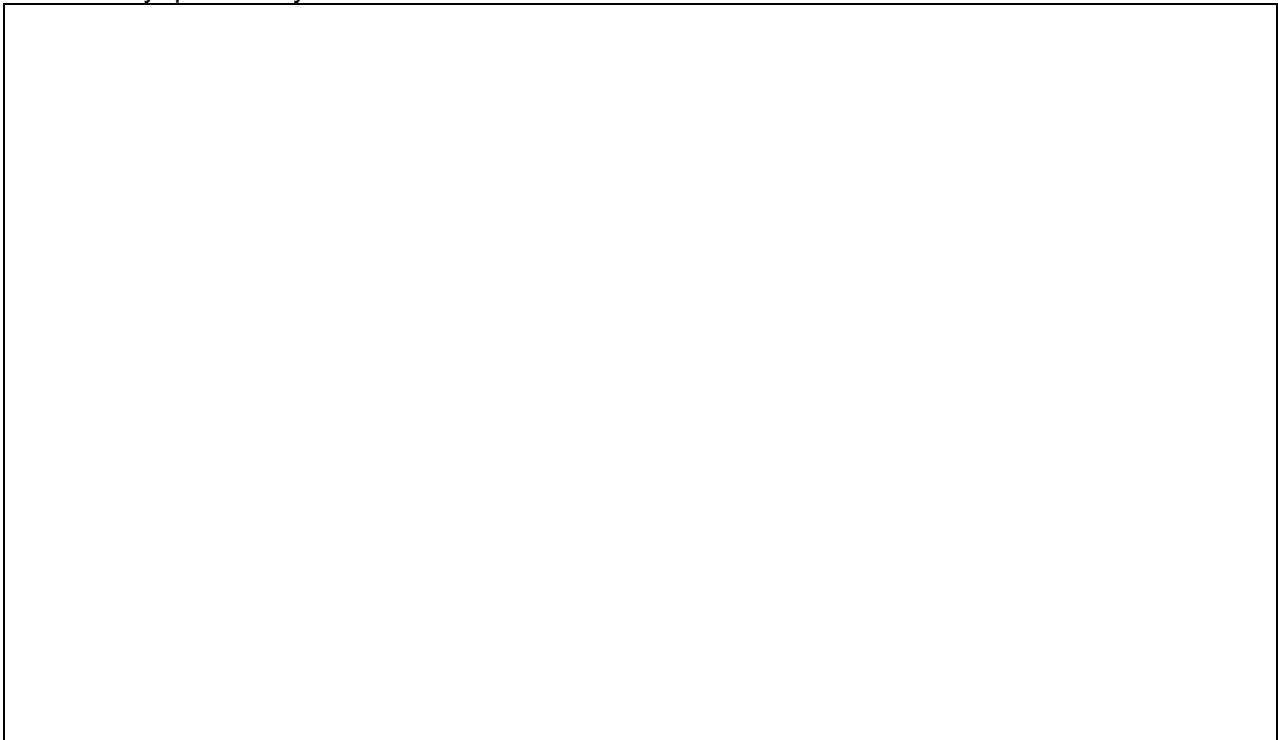
Please briefly outline of why you are interested in being a community councillor.

Please tell us something about the life experience you will bring to the Council, for example, previous local government experience, work in the voluntary or charitable sector, business or trade union experience.

Please tell us something about the skills you feel you will bring to the Council, for example, professional qualifications, financial or project management expertise.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the respondent to write their skills and expertise.

Are there any questions you would like to ask the council?

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the respondent to write any questions they have for the council.

### Single-Use Plastic Policy.

The amount of plastics in our oceans has become one of the most concerning environmental challenges we face in our world today. Every day, approximately eight million pieces of plastic pollution find their way into our oceans. It is estimated that every mile of beach in the UK is littered with approximately 5,000 items of plastic. Much of this debris does not biodegrade but becomes micro-plastics that are then absorbed by not only marine wildlife but throughout the food chain from birds and other animals to humans.

Single-use plastics are items designed to be used only once e.g., some plastic bags, bottles, plastic packaging in parcels, wet wipes, plastic drinking cups, straws, plastic utensils, plastic food packaging.

The Council will strive to minimise the use of single-use plastics across its operations and will actively encourage the reduction in single-use plastics in the activities and organisations we support or work with.

To these ends:

- The Council shall select non-single use plastic alternatives, as far as is reasonably practicable and appropriate in the circumstances, when procuring products (e.g., office supplies, furniture etc) or services for the council.
- Where the use of single-use plastics is unavoidable, the Council shall select biodegradable alternatives, as far as is reasonably practicable and appropriate in the circumstances.
- The specification for the supply of goods, materials, services or the execution of works in any invitation to tender shall include a request for the tender to include costings for non-single use plastic alternatives, as far as is reasonably practicable and appropriate in the circumstances.
- Where the use of single-use plastics is unavoidable, the Council shall request costings for biodegradable alternatives, as far as is reasonably practicable and appropriate in the circumstances.
- Where the Council decides to use or purchase single-use plastics when a non-single use or biodegradable alternative was available, a note shall be made by officers and this shall be reported to the next meeting of the Planning, Commerce and Environment (PlaCE) Committee.
- Where the Council receives a request for grant funding for the supply of goods, materials, services or the execution of works, the Council shall ask the group or organisation making the request to supply costings for non-single use plastic alternatives or, where the use of single-use plastics is unavoidable, biodegradable alternatives, as far as is reasonably practicable and appropriate in the circumstances.
- The Council support action (e.g., litter-picking activities) by local community groups that are likely to reduce the impact of single-use plastics on the local environment.





## Aberthillery and Llanhilleth Community Council (ALCC)

### Council Grant Application

(see criteria and process attached before applying)

Name and Address of group, organisation or project:

Brynithel RFC PLC

Group Contact name: Lynne Bates

Role in the group: Treasurer

Telephone number: 01495 214672

Email: Dawn@browner@aol.com

What are the aims of your project? funding for the Queens Platform, tables and help for people an opportunity to help the growth of the pub

How does your project benefit the Aberthillery and Llanhilleth area or its residents? it will help and provide the community to get together

Approx number of beneficiaries 100 people

Details of project costs:

A. Project costs met by group (include match funds)		Amount (inc. VAT)
		£ 500.00
		£
		£
	Sub Total	£
B. Costs requested from ALCC		Amount (inc. VAT)
		£ 799.20
		£
	Sub Total	£
C. Total project costs (A + B) TOTAL		
		£ 1299.20

Is the organisation a: Charity/community group/sports club/company/not for profit business/other (explain and provide evidence)  
 Brynithel Rugby Club PLC

Payee name: Lynne Bates

Name of person making the application: Dawn Gravenor

Print Name: 26.4.22 D. Gravenor

Signed: 26.4.22

Date: 26.4.22

Please return this form with any relevant supporting documents (group constitution, financial statements, letters of support etc.) to: Town Clerk, Abertillery and Llanhilleth Community Council, Mitre Street, Abertillery, NP13 1AE or to [clerk.alcc@gmail.com](mailto:clerk.alcc@gmail.com)

## Council Grant Application

### Brynithel RFC

#### Further details

Although Brynithel RFC is a public limited company, the club's legal construct was adopted to enable it manage and run community facilities. It is a non-profit making organisation run by volunteers, with any financial surplus being reinvested back into the facilities for which the club has responsibility.

Although the club's grant application form mentions "the pub," this is a reference to the rugby club's bar, which is one of the club's main sources of income but which has struggled financially since re-opening post-Covid.

The rugby club's Platinum Jubilee event will take place from 3pm on Saturday 4 June 2022 and will be open to people of all ages from throughout the local community.

The afternoon event will be taken up by activities for children including a fancy-dress competition and games followed by an outdoor children's disco (weather permitting). The club aims to present a Platinum Jubilee commemorative mug and gifts to up to 45 children.

The evening will see a disco for adults, which will take place outdoors if weather permits. A hog roast (for which patrons will be required to pay) will be available.

The costs of the event are:	£
10 table cloths @ £5.99	59.90
11 packets of disposable plates @ £3.99	43.96
10 lengths of bunting @ £4.95	49.50
200 balloons @ £12.95	12.95
4 Union Flags @ £12.95	51.80
Decorative party pom-poms @ £30	30.00
45 Commemorative Platinum Jubilee mugs @ £5.95	267.75
Other commemorative gifts and prizes for children	460.00
Hire of disco	160.00
Plastic furniture	63.34
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<b>Total</b>	<b>1299.20</b>