

Youth Engagement proposals 2023-24

Since May 2022, members of the Youth Engagement Working Group (which now reports to the Community Empowerment Committee) have been working hard to establish what the Council funds, what the Council-funded youth engagement projects do and how we can work better with them.

Some of the information about the projects' work that had been used by the Council turned out to be vague and insufficiently defined. The Youth Engagement Working Group was, therefore, forced to go back to the beginning to re-establish the Council's original reasons for funding youth engagement work and its *raison d'être* for continued funding.

Evaluation

As I'm sure the council is aware, the Community Empowerment Committee is responsible for oversight of the biggest expense in the Council's entire budget at a time when inflation is putting increased strain on public spending and household budgets alike. We, therefore, embarked on our appraisal of Council-funded youth engagement work with a critical eye. But, as my fellow working group members and I have seen, without this Council maintaining, continuing, supporting and funding the detached youth teams, our area would be left with a massive void. As recent news from other areas has shown, cutting support for youth work is likely to fuel apathy, disenchantment and, quite possibly, unrest amongst our young people and our communities. The Council initially agreed to fund youth engagement work to combat the rife anti-social behaviour that had descended on the community council area. It is evident that, since the Council began funding this work – many years before my time as a Member of the Council – the projects have been toiling away in the background and have been successful in achieving substantial reductions in anti-social behaviour. From the depths of apathy and disenchantment, the groups we support have helped to create a much-needed dialogue with many of the area's young people, who had felt somewhat forgotten, neglected and tarred with the brush of negativity associated with anti-social behaviour.

The members of the Community Empowerment Committee's Youth Engagement Working Group have been fortunate enough to have met some of the young people who have benefited from the Council-funded work and have seen first-hand the difference these projects make in our communities. In addition, the Youth Engagement Working Group have been reaching out to local schools to raise awareness of the Council's work and the ways in which anyone can contribute to building brighter futures by getting involved in the work of our Community Council. A primary concern for the Youth Engagement Working Group is to let the public know that the funding they provide through the Community Council supports such vital projects.

Evidence

But it's not just the views of our working group that need to be taken into consideration. Since the Council started funding this work, anti-social behaviour in our area has dramatically fallen by more than fifty percent. When we met with the Blaenau Gwent detached team, they reported that local Police Community Support Officers have also noted a visible difference in the behaviour of young people. The Council's Town In Bloom contractor has also commented that there has been a reduction in vandalism and damage to floral displays.

Funding proposals

Below are the reports we have received from the Council-funded detached teams, as well as their funding requests for 2023-24.

The Blaenau Gwent Youth Service has proposed two separate options. The Community Empowerment Committee has recommended that the Full Council agrees to Option 2. This level of staffing (one full-time and two part-time staff) was agreed by Full Council in 2021 but was never implemented because of Covid-19 restrictions.

Community Empowerment Committee



Off The Streets Detached Project Proposal 2023-2024

Off The Streets saw a huge increase in the number of children and young people attending our provision in 2022-23. We have been working with children as young as three years of age and young people up to the age of 18, as well as members of the wider community in the Southern Ebbw Fach Valley. We have been able to provide a host of activities and events ourselves and also to support larger events.

During the year, we remodelled our program to suit the community's needs, working, not as just youth workers, but also as play workers and community development officers. The people we have worked with have reported positive impact back to us and would like us to continue working in this way going forward.

Our proposal for 2023-24 is similar to the past year in the sense that there will still be three members of staff working across the South Ebbw Fach Valley, but we would like to add into the proposal this year that we widen our support to include not just children and young people but also their families. This will allow us to work with on early intervention and to provide preventative measures.

This year we have continued our work with local police, Clwb Llan, Soffryd Community Centre and Ffin Dance, but have also gained a number of other key partners including Soffryd Primary School, Victory Church Soffryd, Llanhilleth RFC, Llanhilleth Bowls Club and Brynithel Welfare and Community Centre. Our sessions this year will run from Llanhilleth, Soffryd and Brynithel and we plan to work on developing further key partnerships during 2023-24 and beyond.

This year we will continue to focus on reducing risk-taking behaviours within the communities, as well as working on skills such as listening and social interaction, mental health and wellbeing, building positive communities and community cohesion and development in all three areas. We are looking for the Community Council to provide us with the funding to be able to continue this much needed work within the communities during 2023-24.

The costings for a 12-month program run within the South Ebbw Fach Valley are shown overleaf.

Requirement

12 Months: April 2023-March 2024

Staffing

- 1 x Senior Worker
- 1 x Lead Worker Practitioner
- 1 x Youth Worker

= £31,824

Other costs

- Training: £1,000
- Activities for children and young people: £5,400
- Insurance: £540
- Car insurance business add-on: £280
- Food budget: £3,120
- Venue hire: £2,080

= £12,420

Total = £44,244

Notes

Two new items have been budgeted for in 2023-24: a separate food budget and an amount for venue hire.

In 2022-23, food costs were included within the 'activities' budget line. With the cost-of-living increase and the fact that we feed all children and young people at each session, we have noticed that it has eroded a large part of the project's activity budget. Our average spend on food now averages £60 per week, so we feel we need to make separate provision for this in order to ensure that our activities programme can still run to the high standard it has been running at for the last few years.

The Off The Streets project originally operated out of The Space Youth Café in Abertillery but became peripatetic when the café closed during the Covid-19 epidemic. During 2022-23, we discussed with the Youth Engagement Working Group that we would work with communities in order to find indoor venues to run our sessions. We have now found both an indoor venue in Soffryd and in Brynithel and the proposed 'venue hire' budget line will enable the project to cover the cost of hiring these settings so that we can run sessions safely.

Off The Streets Youth Team



Blaenau Gwent Youth Service proposal to Abertillery & Llanhilleth Community Council

Background

in 2019/20, Blaenau Gwent Youth Service – along with other organisations – were approached to work through a multi-agency approach in addressing concerns and provide increased services for young people in order to tackle increased incidents of youth-related anti-social behaviour within Abertillery town centre and surrounding areas.

It was mutually agreed by all members to initiate a detached youth work model as it would not only complement existing provision, but also enhance opportunities to engage more young people who did not attend any youth provision, while also having a visible presence on the streets to act as a deterrent from anti-social behaviour.

Blaenau Gwent Youth Service, were commissioned by the Community Council to provide a detached youth service for five evenings a week.

Current position

Blaenau Gwent Youth Service has successfully delivered the agreed work that was commissioned. Initially, the service utilized temporary staff but now employs three members of staff specifically for the roles on twelve-month fixed-term contracts.

Proposal

The proposal is for Blaenau Gwent Youth Service to continue to be commissioned to deliver a detached youth service within the Abertillery area.

It is worth noting that the Blaenau Gwent Youth Service provides a number of additional beneficial factors that are not funded directly by any grant. These include management structures in place to support staff, supervision, appropriate mechanisms to ensure all staff are qualified at appropriate level and registered with the Education Workforce Council, on-going Continuing Professional Development, access to other professionals – such as psychologists – and a full range of policies and procedures, links with various partnerships and the ability to draw upon additional staff, resources and funding if required.

Based on current demand and need, it has been identified that the current level of service (three evenings a week with three staff per evening) is recommended to continue. However, we propose that the current part-time 18-hour post should be developed into a full-time post from 2023-24 onwards.

The National Association of Local Councils salary scales for local government staff rose significantly following the settlement of two outstanding pay claims in 2022. Negotiations have begun over the pay claim for 2023-24. The proposed salary costs (shown overleaf) include provision for salary increases.

Costings

Options	Number of staff	Total cost for 12 months
1	2 x 9 hours per week 1 x 18 hours per week	£47,080
2	2 x 9 hour per week 1 x 37 hour full-time post	£64,114
	Resource budget	£1500

Total costs

Option 1: **£48,580**

Option 2: **£65,614**



THE COMMUNITY COUNCIL OF ABERTILLERY & LLANHILLETH
CYNGOR CYMUNED ABERTYLERI A LLANHILLEDD

Council Offices
Mitre Street
Abertillery, Blaenau Gwent, NP13 1AE

Swyddfa'r Cyngor
Stryd Meitre
Abertyleri, Blaenau Gwent, NP13 1AE

The accounts listed hereunder are presented at the 22 March 2023 Council Meeting
(Finance Order No 1 –January 2023 to March 2023)

Payments made and cheques presented between 1 January 2023 and 15 March 2023
(Table 1)

	Cheque No	£
Currys	Debit card	450.00
Currys	Debit card	0.48
One Voice Wales (Member training)	8046	70.00
Aberbeeg Tenants and Residents (Christmas lights)	8047	1,500.00
Abertillery Excelsiors (Ward Grant)	8048	200.00
Friends of Six Bells Park (Ward Grant)	8049	200.00
VisionICT (website domain fee)	8050	78.00
Centregreat (Christmas lights central contract)	8051	8,544.00
Microshade (web application hosting)	8052	102.60
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council (recycling)	8053	18.59
Llanhilleth Institute (Council Grant – Clwb Llan)	8054	450.00
Wales Air Ambulance (Council Grant)	8055	500.00
Nat West (bank charges)		20.00
Zoom (annual fee)	Debit card	143.88
AR Digital (printing and photocopying)	Direct Debit	61.89
Secret Garden (plants – Town in Bloom)	8056	150.00
Willows Garden Centre (floral planters – Town in Bloom)	8057	1,080.00
Willows Garden Centre (annual fee – Town in Bloom)	8058	14,400.00
Society of Local Council Clerks (membership)	8059	187.00
EE Dykes (allotment – annual lease)	8060	585.64
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council (staff costs Q3)	8061	16,869.63
Nat West (bank charges)		7.70
AR Digital (printing and photocopying)	Direct Debit	54.42
AR Digital (software)	Direct Debit	126.00
AR Digital (office supplies)	Direct Debit	75.24
Information Commissioner's Office (annual registration)	Direct Debit	35.00
Six Bells Tennis Club (Solar Farm Grant)	8062	20,000.00
Green Room Power (Stage deposit – Party in the Park)	8064	1,500.00
Loosemores (Professional charges and Land Registry fee)	8065	503.60
The Defib Shop (defibrillator supplies)	8066	259.20
BT (telephone and broadband)	Direct Debit	260.86
Nat West (bank charges)		10.33
Total		68,444.06

Cheques and payments that have been issued but not yet presented as at 15 March 2023
(Table 2)

	Cheque No	£
Abertillery BG RFC (Solar Farm Grant)	8063	15,000.00
Six Bells Nursery (plants – Town in Bloom)	8067	116.22
Peter Adamson (expenses)	8068	25.00
Microshade (email migration)	8069	545.03
One Voice Wales (Member training)	8070	105.00
Capita (road closure application – Community Fun Run)	Debit card	136.10
Total		15,927.35

Invoices received or expected, or Council decisions made but payments not yet issued.
(Table 3)

	£
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council (staff costs Q4)	16,869.63
Six Bells Community Centre (Council Grant)	680.00
Bournville Social Institute (Council Grant)	300.00
Total:	17,849.63

Grant etc applications received but not yet approved
(Table 4)

	£
Off The Streets	44,244.00
Blaenau Gwent Youth Service	65,614.00
Six Bells Crafts (Ward Grant)	200.00
Total:	110,058.00

Income 1 January 2023 to 15 March 2023
(Table 5)

	£
Awen Trust (The Met: Christmas carol concert – Chair's Charity Appeal)	603.89
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council (precept Q4)	72,250.00
Community Green Energy (Solar Farms Grants)	35,000.00
Cash (Christmas carol concert – Chair's Charity Appeal)	126.15
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council (Remembrance Sunday wreathes)	137.50

Summary

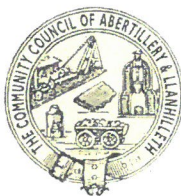
£

Current Account balance as at 03/03/23	199,753.72
Issued cheques (Table 2):	15,927.35
To be issued (Table 3):	17,849.63
Grants etc, if approved (Table 4):	110,058.00
Chair's Charity Appeal	730.04

Accounting balance **55,188.70**

Reserves

Reserves currently stand at **£117,018.20** of which **£9,000** is earmarked for external auditor costs for 2014-15 to 2022-23.



Abertillery and Llanhilleth Community Council (ALCC)

Ward Grant Application

(see criteria and process attached before applying)

Name and Address of group, organisation or project:

SIX BELLS CRAFTS
SIX BELLS COMMUNITY HALL.

Group Contact name: MIKE KELLY

Role in the group: TREASURER

Telephone number: 07709 192808

Email:

What are the aims of the group or project? ARTS + CRAFTS

How does the group / project benefit the Abertillery and Llanhilleth area or its residents?

..... ENABLE THE GROUP TO EXPAND ITS
..... RANGE OF CRAFTS

Approx number of beneficiaries

Is the organisation a:

Charity/community group/sports club/company/not for profit business/other (explain and provide evidence)

..... COMMUNITY GROUP

Amount requested: £ 200

Payee name: SIX BELLS CRAFTS

Name of Councillor making the application:

Print Name: A. D. REES

Signed: A.D. Rees

Date: 2/3/23

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