

RHYMNEY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Monday 18th May 2026 at 6pm.

Present

Cllr. L. Harrison (Chairperson)	Cllr. D. Harse
Cllr. C. Cuss	Cllr. M. Powell
Cllr. L. Gronow	

Apologies

Cllr. D. Bradley	Cllr. L. Pulsford
Cllr. J. Hughes	Cllr. Z. Williams
Cllr. L. Dykes	

In Attendance

Mr. G. O. Williams (Clerk)

01. Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr. D. Bradley, Cllr. L. Pulsford, Cllr. J. Hughes, Cllr Z. Williams and Cllr. L. Dykes.

02. Declaration of Interest

Cllr. M. Powell declared an interest in all correspondence and agenda items relating to Planning, with urgent planning matters having been taken immediately following the Annual General Meeting and recorded within these minutes for completeness.

Elected Members present at the meeting were issued with, and encouraged to complete, the following forms: Members' Interest Stencils and Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

The Clerk advised that an electronic copy of each of the above-mentioned forms would be circulated to those Councillors absent, for completion, return, and display by the next meeting of Council, scheduled for 18 June 2025.

03. Appointment of Chairperson for the Ensuring Year

Cllr. L. Harrison was proposed, seconded and unanimously accepted as Chairperson for the ensuring year.

Cllr. L. Harrison thanked Council for his appointment as Chair for the ensuring year.

Cllr. M. Powell thanked present Councillors for their support through 2025-26.

04. Appointment of Vice-Chairperson for the Ensuring Year

Cllr. L. Dykes was proposed, seconded and unanimously accepted as Vice-Chairperson for the ensuring year.

05. Appointment of Leader of Council for the Ensuring Year

Cllr. D. Harse was proposed, seconded and unanimously accepted as Leader for the ensuring year.

- 06. Appointment of Deputy Leader of Council for the Ensuring Year**
Cllr. Carl Cuss was proposed, seconded and unanimously accepted as Deputy Leader for the ensuring year.
- 07. To consider the appointment of Representatives on the following Committees.**
- | | | |
|----|--|------------------|
| a. | Caerphilly C.B.C & Community Council
Liaison Sub-committee
Proposed and Seconded Cllr. L. Harrison | 1 Plus the Clerk |
| b. | Community & Town Council Liaison Committee
Proposed and Seconded Cllr. L. Harrison | 2 plus the Clerk |
- 08. To consider Council's ex-officio representatives to.**
- | | | |
|----|--|---|
| a. | Rhymney Day Centre Management Committee
Proposed and Seconded Cllr C. Cuss | 1 |
| b. | St David's Hall Management Committee
Proposed and Seconded Cllr L. Dykes | 1 |
| c. | Abertysswg Community Centre
Proposed and Seconded Mrs. L. Gronow | 1 |
| d. | Ael-y-Bryn Community Centre
Proposed and Seconded Cllr. L. Pulsford | 1 |
| e. | Pen Bryn Oer Wind Farm Fund
Proposed and Seconded Cllr. C. Cuss
Proposed and Seconded Cllr. M. Powell
Proposed and Seconded Cllr. L. Harrison | 3 |
- 09. To agree Council's Cheque Signatories for 2026/27**
It was proposed and seconded that Council appoint the following Councillors as signatories.
- Cllr. D. Harse
 - Cllr. C. Cuss
 - Cllr. L. Dykes
- 10. To consider the appointment of Council's Internal Auditor for 2026/27**
It was proposed and seconded that Council reappoint the current post holder – Mrs Julie Richards.
Moved. Clerk to issue letter and terms of appointment.
Moved. It was agreed that fees for Council's Internal Audit should increase with immediate effect to £300.00
- 11. Community Council Budget & Financial Reconciliation**
The Clerk shared with Council a copy of Council's Budget for 2026/27

Following discussion, it was agreed that Council work within the stated values. It was also agreed that the Clerk report quarterly against these indicative budget lines, highlighting where significant under / overspend is likely.

Council acknowledged that, while positive verbal feedback had been received from the Pen Bryn Oer fund, the indicative figure should be treated with caution. Members noted that plans would need to be significantly reconsidered should the final award differs materially from the amount anticipated.

12. Community Council Financial Position Year Ending 31st March 2026

The Clerk provided Council with a high-level overview of the financial position for the year ending 31st March 2026. Within his report, the Clerk advised Council that he projected a carry forward amount of £19,274.23. The Clerk advised Council on several cheques yet to be brought to account.

13. Section 19/137 Grant Aid Awards 2026/27

Following discussion, it was agreed the following values be retained for 2026/27.

- £300.00 Schools (5)
- £050.00 Mayors Appeal
- £100.00 Local Groups (which include Children) i.e. Brownies / Guides
- £075.00 Local Groups (excluding Children). i.e. Community Centres
- £050.00 Out of Area / National Charities (as agreed by Council).

14. Independent Remuneration Panel Recommendations 2026-27

The following determinations were approved / accepted by Council.

Reimbursement for extra costs of working from home

All councils must pay their members £156 a year (equivalent to £3 a week) towards the extra household expenses (including heating, lighting, power and broadband) of working from home.

Reimbursement for consumables

Councils must either pay their members £52 a year for the cost of office consumables required to carry out their role, or alternatively councils must enable members to claim full reimbursement for the cost of their office consumables.

It is a matter for each council to make and record a policy decision in respect of when and how the payments are made and whether they are paid monthly, yearly or otherwise. The policy should also state whether and how to recover any payments made to a member who leaves or changes their role during the financial year.

Moved. Council accepted both these determinations.

Policy decisions.

P01. Council agreed to make reimbursement for extra costs for working at home for the 2026/27 year. Councillors not wishing to receive this payment, must articulate their position in writing to the Clerk by the July 2026 meeting of Council. Councillors not completing their full term of office (April 2026 – April 2027), are expected to repay any proportionate amount i.e. £3 per week for any full weeks, not facilitated as a Community Councillor.

P02. Reimbursement for consumables. Council determined this would be facilitated on a case-by-case basis and paid retrospectively on the provision of appropriate receipts, commensurate with costs of office values. It was acknowledged that in many circumstances these purchases / expenditures would be coordinated via the Clerk's Office.

Further determinations.

Travel and subsistence

It was agreed that Council would reimburse for travel / attendance where Councillors were attending an event / conference / function outside of the Community Council area, when said attendance had been agreed / endorsed by Council.

Costs of care or personal assistance

It was agreed that Council would reimburse for the associated costs, although it was acknowledged this would be unlikely, as Councillors could attend virtually or merely offer an apology.

Chairpersons Allowance

Council agreed not to award a payment in 2026/27

No other determinations were adopted by Council.

15. Governing Body Vacancies

No Governing Body Vacancies / Opportunities were concerned by Council.

16. Community Council Internal Audit 2025/26

Item deferred to the June meeting of Council, owing to the timescales involved with orchestrating Council's internal audit

17. Rhymney Community Council – Annual Report

Council adopted the following annual report, prepared in accordance with Section 52 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

Introduction

Rhymney Community Council is pleased to present its Annual Report for the year ended 31 March 2026. This report outlines the Council's priorities, activities, financial stewardship, and community impact over the 2025–26 fiscal year, demonstrating Council's continued commitment to supporting and enhancing the wellbeing of residents across the communities of Rhymney, Abertysswg, and Pontlottyn.

Governance and Membership

The Community Council comprises fourteen Councillor positions, of which ten seats were active during 2025–26, with four vacancies available for appointment through the co-option process. Councillors continue to serve in a voluntary capacity, contributing considerable time and expertise to local governance, community representation, and partnership working.

Financial Overview

For the 2025–26 fiscal year, the Council operated with a Community Precept of £38,000. The precept is the portion of Council Tax allocated to the Community Council. The precept is collected by Caerphilly County Borough Council on our behalf and provides the core funding that enables the Community Council to deliver local services, support community groups, and undertake statutory responsibilities.

The Council remains committed to prudent fiscal management, ensuring that public funds are allocated responsibly and transparently for the benefit of the community.

Education and Support for Local Schools

Rhymney Community Council continues to play an active role in the local education landscape. Several Councillors serve as Minor Authority Governors across local Primary Schools and at Idris Davies 3–18 School, ensuring strong links between the Council and the education sector.

During 2025–26, the Council contributed £1,500 to support extra-curricular activities across local schools. This funding helped enhance opportunities for children and young people, supporting enrichment programmes that extend learning beyond the classroom.

Commitment to Early Years and Youth Provision

The Council remains committed to supporting early years development and accessible community activities. In partnership with Sport Caerphilly and In House Entertainment, the Council helped develop and deliver a programme of summer scheme activities throughout August. These sessions provided safe, structured, and enjoyable opportunities for children and families during the school holidays, reinforcing the Council's focus on wellbeing and early years engagement.

Community Safety and Partnership with Gwent Police

Rhymney Community Council continues to function as a key conduit between residents and colleagues at Gwent Police, with a standing agenda item and regular attendance from local Officers at monthly Council meetings. This ensures that community concerns, trends, and insights are shared promptly and constructively.

The Council also supports Gwent Police's Community Engagement, Education and Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy, contributing financially to their Easter, Halloween, and Christmas community engagement events. These

initiatives help strengthen relationships between young people, families, and policing teams, promoting safer and more cohesive communities.

Civic Representation and Wider Community Roles

Many Councillors hold dual responsibilities, also serving as elected Members of Caerphilly County Borough Council, or as patrons, trustees, or committee members of local community centres and organisations. This includes stewardship of the Rhymney Trust Fund, which supports local causes and community development.

Councillors also represent the community on the Pen Bryn Oer Community Benefit Fund Management Committee, ensuring that residents benefit from community investment linked to renewable energy infrastructure.

Community Defibrillators and Public Safety

The Community Council owns and maintains six public-access defibrillators, strategically located across the community area. These devices provide vital emergency support during cardiac incidents, reinforcing the Council's commitment to safeguarding the health and wellbeing of residents. Regular maintenance and monitoring ensure that each unit always remains operational and accessible.

Commitment to Remembrance

The Council continues to take responsibility for the organisation of Armistice Sunday road closures, associated planning requirements, and the provision of lamppost poppies across the community area.

Councillors attend and lay wreaths at each of the four annual remembrance services held in Princetown, Rhymney, Abertysswg and Pontlottyn, ensuring that the sacrifices of past generations are honoured with dignity and respect.

During 2025–26, the Council also supported VE80 commemorations in May 2025, contributing to organisational arrangements at the Rhymney War Memorial and providing commemorative displays across all three community areas.

Christmas Activities and Seasonal Engagement

The Council delivered a full programme of festive activity during December 2025, including the provision of forty-four lamppost-mounted festive streetlights, illuminating the community throughout December and early January.

Working in partnership with South Wales Fire and Rescue Service, the Council again supported the popular 'Santa on a Fire Engine' community engagement event, bringing festive cheer to families across the area.

In addition, the Council provided part-sponsorship for the Parent Network's annual festive trip for disadvantaged young people, and a Community Pantomime held in Abertysswg.

These initiatives help ensure that all families, regardless of circumstance, can share in the joy of the festive season.

Conclusion

Throughout 2025–26, Rhymney Community Council has continued to deliver meaningful, community-focused activity, collaborating with partners, schools, emergency services, and local organisations. The Council remains committed to transparency, responsible fiscal management, and the ongoing wellbeing of residents across the community area.

The Council looks forward to building on this work in 2026–27, continuing to serve with dedication, integrity, and a keen sense of community.

18. Planning Applications

(Time limited and required clearance ahead of the June 2026 meeting of Council)

Planning Ref: 26/0286/FULL

Location: Land at Bryn Heulog, Westville, Abertysswg, Tredegar.

Proposal: Erect detached dwelling at land at Bryn Heulog, Westville, Abertysswg, Tredegar. Grid Ref. 313096 (E) 205451 (N)

Moved. There were no objections to this proposal.

Planning Ref: 26/0300/LBC

Location: 14 Lower Row, Bute Town, Rhymney, Tredegar, NP225QH.

Proposal: Replace boiler flue at 14 Lower Row, Bute Town, Rhymney, Tredegar, NP225QH.

Moved. There were no objections to this proposal.

Planning Ref: 26/0294/NCC

Location: Land at former Aldi Store, Tre-Edwards, Rhymney.

Proposal: Vary condition 2 (time to submit reserved matters) of application 23/0059/OUT (Erect up to 23x residential unit and associated, highway, drainage and landscaping.

Moved. There were no objections to this proposal.

Planning Ref: 26/0332/FULL

Location: Land at former Royal British Legion, Heol Uchaf, Rhymney, Tredegar.

Proposal: Erect 2 No. detached dwellings at land at former Royal British Legion, Heol Uchaf, Rhymney, Tredegar. Grid Ref. 311086 (E) 209021 (N).

Moved. There were no objections to this proposal.

Planning Ref: 26/0320/OUT

Location: Land within curtilage of Lord Nelson, Heol Wynne, Pontllytyn, Bargoed, CF81 9PQ.

Proposal: Erect 2 No. detached four bed houses in the rear garden and associated works with all reserved matters at land within curtilage of Lord Nelson, Heol Wynne, Pontllytyn, Bargoed, CF81 9PQ.

Moved. There were no objections to this proposal.

Planning Ref: 26/0341/COU

Location: 58-59 High Street, Rhymney, Tredegar.

Proposal: Convert basement storage area to a one-bedroom flat at 58-59 High Street, Rhymney, Tredegar.

Moved. There were no objections to this proposal.

Meeting Closed at 7pm.

APPROVAL OF COMMUNITY COUNCIL CHEQUES

Date of Meeting

Monday 18th May 2026

Minute Number

AGM

Cheque No.	Nature of Payment / Payee	Amount
4201	Salary / Mr. G. O. Williams	£00,677.42
4202	Sundries / Mr. G. O. Williams	£00,048.28
		£00,725.70