

CYNGOR CYMUNED GELLIGAER ~ GELLIGAER COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Minutes of the **ORDINARY COUNCIL MEETING** held on **Wednesday 23rd September 2026** at **7.00pm** at Gelligaer Community Council Office in a **MULTI-LOCATIONAL** format in accordance with the provisions of the **Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021**.

PRESENT

Councillors: Cllr C Moss, Cllr W Matthews (Chair), Cllr M James, Cllr A McCarthy, Cllr R Bevan (Vice Chair), Cllr T Parry, Cllr H Pritchard, Cllr J Pritchard, Cllr S Thomas Butler.

Clerk: I. Miliukaite

In Attendance: Mr. Matthew Davis (Penallta RFC / Chargers Girls Rugby)

** denotes remote attendance.*

Chair Cllr Wyndham Matthews welcomed everyone to the meeting.

58. Apologies. Apologies were received from Cllr G Bruford, Cllr A Wood, and Cllr A Angel.

59. Declarations of Interest Councillors and Officers were reminded of their personal responsibility to declare any personal and/or prejudicial interest(s) in respect of any item of business on this agenda in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution, and the Code of Conduct for both Councillors and Clerk.

- i. **Cllr J Pritchard** declared a personal/prejudicial interest in **Item 77** (*Planning Application for building five houses on Hospital Road*).
 - ii. **Cllr H Pritchard** declared a personal/prejudicial interest in **Item 67 (v)** (*Annual grant application for Cascade Youth Club as Vice Chairman*).
 - iii. **Cllr T Parry** declared a personal/prejudicial interest in **Item 77** (*Planning Application for former Lloyds Pharmacy - Ystrad Mynach - Subdivision*).
 - iv. **Clerk I. Miliukaite** declared a personal/prejudicial interest in **Item 67 (iii)** (*Financial grant request for King's Hill Allotment Society as Secretary*) and **Item 75** (*Employer approval for participation in the RCT Local Pension Scheme*).
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60. Public Participation

- i. **Presentation:** The Council received a presentation from Mr. Matthew Davies regarding the community grant previously awarded for a local girls' rugby team (formerly affiliated with Penallta RFC).
- ii. **Background & WRU Regulations:** Mr. Davies explained that under Welsh Rugby Union (WRU) pathway rules and mixed squad registration policies, the team was unable to be recognized or operate as a standalone girls' team at Penallta RFC without mixed squad restrictions. To preserve the group and ensure regular fixtures, the team relocated to play under the Chargers badge based in Newbridge. It was

- highlighted that almost all registered players remain local residents from the Community Council area (including Cascade, Penybryn, and Ystrad Mynach).
- iii. **RESOLVED:** It was unanimously agreed to continue supporting the financial grant as originally approved, confirming that funds be allocated toward the branded dry robes and subsequent shirt sponsorship.
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61. Police Update for St Cattwg, Hengoed and Ystrad Mynach Wards

The Council received and screened the latest local crime and statistics report submitted by Gwent Police.

- i. **Crime Statistics and Seasonal Trends:** Members reviewed the latest Gwent Police crime report, noting a minor seasonal increase in figures over the summer holiday period while distinguishing recorded crime from general anti-social or nuisance behaviour.
 - ii. **Off-Road Bike Concerns:** Attention was drawn to local concerns regarding the nuisance of electric off-road bikes operating in the area.
 - iii. **Community and Tool Marking Initiatives:** Police engagement efforts were highlighted, including a successful community bike-marking event and ongoing crime-prevention sessions outside local suppliers (e.g., Screwfix) to mark equipment for tradespeople in response to commercial van break-ins.
 - iv. **Abandoned Vehicle Referral:** A specific concern was raised regarding a van apparently dumped on Church Road Gelligaer (between Nos. 23/24 and 25), with vehicle registration details taken to pass to local police for follow-up and removal.
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62. Chair's Announcements None.

63. Minutes The Minutes of the ORDINARY COUNCIL meeting held on 29th July 2026 were received, approved and signed as an accurate record.

64. Matters Arising

- i. **Memorial Slabs (Minute 49):** It was confirmed that the repair work to fix the slabs at the war memorial had been successfully carried out.
 - ii. **Area grass cutting (Minute 55):** The grass-cutting work outside the Gelligaer Community Council office assigned to a council member was reported as fully completed.
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65. Finance

- i. **Balance of Funds & Financial Dashboard Review:**
 - o *Presentation of Enhanced Financial Dashboard:* The Council received a report and presentation from Ingrida Miliukaite, Clerk / RFO, introducing a newly developed smart spreadsheet and interactive financial dashboard.
 - o *Key Features & Functionality:* Selecting a specific month automatically populates the dashboard with monthly income, expenditure, net cash

movement, and projected year-end closing balances. The system also tracks year-to-date totals, pending items, separate VAT registers, and visual financial trend charts to streamline internal auditing and annual reporting.

- *Budgeting & Audit Control:* The dashboard provides an effective tool for monitoring cash flow, maintaining reserves, and informing future multi-year budgeting.
- The 'Balance of Funds' document for July and August 2026 was received, approved and signed as an accurate record.
- ii. **Reconciliation:** The Reconciliation document was received, approved and signed as an accurate record.
- iii. **Bank Statements:** Bank statements for the period were inspected and verified, specifically statements 134 and 135 (noting an initial printing correction from statement 131) alongside Lloyds statements 87 and 88.
- iv. **Chair's Civic Allowance:** The Chair's Civic expenditure report was deferred.
- v. **Closing the Account:** The council formally confirmed that administrative action to close the Civic Account was in progress, following the decision made previously.

66. Chair's Annual Report Deferred.

67. Financial Assistance/Grants 2026/27

- i. **Eisteddfod Y Cymoedd / Valleys Eisteddfod (No 16):** RESOLVED: Members agreed to grant **£500**.
- ii. **Vicarage Allotment Association – Community Defibrillator – Cedar Way, Ystrad Mynach (No 17):** The council agreed in principle to support providing the defibrillator, subject to confirming an accessible public location (so it is not locked behind private gates) and establishing ongoing maintenance responsibilities.
- iii. **King's Hill Allotment Society (No 18):** RESOLVED: Members agreed to grant **£350**. *(Clerk declared a prejudicial interest as Secretary of the allotment).*
- iv. **Urdd National Eisteddfod 2027 (No 19):** RESOLVED: Members agreed to grant **£500**.
- v. **Cascade Youth Club 2027 (No 20):** RESOLVED: Members agreed to grant **£1,600**. *(Cllr H Pritchard declared a prejudicial interest as Vice Chairman of the club).*

68. Eco Officer Update

- i. **The Greenhill Gelligaer Project & Handover Ceremony:**
 - *Status:* Project has been completed successfully.
 - *Handover Ceremony:* The formal handover ceremony was set for **Thursday, 8th October 2026 at 1:30 p.m.**

- *Additional Expenses Approved:* Retrospective/additional expenses totalling **£600.29** were approved (£268 for gloves, £67.01 for timber, and £265.28 for garden supplies).
- ii. **Wildflower Areas & Reseeding:**
 - *Reseeding Plan:* Because thistles and teasels grew back in place of colourful flowers after council contractors mowed designated strips, the Eco Officer will reseed missing biannual (such as poppies) this autumn.
 - *Placards:* Quotes are being obtained for information placards to mark and explain the wildflower areas to residents.
- iii. **Three New Project Proposals Approved:**
 - **Proposal 18 (Ty Gwyn Raised Planter - £884):** Clearing an overgrown raised brick plinth near the Waun Rhydd complex and planting it with wildflowers.
 - **Proposal 19 (Autumn Spring Bulbs - £1,976.99):** Purchasing spring bulbs to reseed and populate various public spots across the community.
 - **Proposal 20 (Cefn Hengoed Community Centre Grounds - £2,500):** Creating a wild garden and orchard with seating/benches within the community centre grounds, benefiting site users and the local food bank.

69. Projects 2026/27

- iv. **Project Summary 2026/27:** Deferred. Work is underway to compile a fully updated master list of all ongoing community projects for review at the next meeting.
- v. **School Dog Fouling Project:** Colourful artwork entries have been received from local primary schools to raise awareness against dog fouling, with additional submissions expected prior to printing signage.
- vi. **Golden Phone Box Ystrad Mynach:** Progress is ongoing to fit printed Perspex panels for damaged glass and install an explanatory plaque detailing why the phone box was painted gold.
- vii. **Penallta RFC Girls Rugby:** Noted that this application/project was fully considered and approved during Public Participation earlier in the meeting.
- viii. **Christmas Pantomimes 2026:**
 - *Performance Dates & Allocations Announced:* Performance dates and venue ticket allocations were announced and confirmed.
 - *Ticket & Poster Progress:* Progress on promotional materials was presented to the Council, including sample ticket designs and event posters showing performance timings.
 - *Ticket Pricing Agreed:* Members formally agreed to maintain ticket pricing at **£1** per ticket.
- ix. **Remembrance Day 2026 (Sunday, 8th November 2026):**

- *National Anthems & Service Protocols:* Members agreed to speak directly with Pastor Steve Derby to ensure both anthems are formally included on the service order.
- *Wreath Laying & Member Allocations:* Assigned representatives to attend local services: Gelligaer St. Cattwg's Church (Wyndham, Catrin & Judith); Glyngaer primary School (Haydn); Tir-y-Berth (Roger & Adrienne); Cefn Hengoed (Sophie & Anthony); Ystrad Mynach (Alan & Mandy).
- *Poppies, Banners & Display Schedule:* Wreaths ordered; stock check authorized for lamp post poppies and replacement banners. Fixed schedule agreed across all villages: Installation Date: Sunday, 25th October 2026 (two weeks prior); Removal Date: Wednesday, 18th November 2026 (10 days following service).

x. **Christmas Lights 2026:**

- *Contractors & Preparatory Work:* Noted that Centregreat (alongside Ellsbury) remains one of two approved contractors for council lamp posts. Centregreat has commenced preliminary checks on lamp posts and figurines.
- *Penybryn Display Upgrade:* Attention drawn to Penybryn, where old wooden lamp posts were replaced with new metal lamp posts equipped with electrical connection boxes.
- *RESOLVED:* (1) To formally approve a budget of **up to £10,000** to replace damaged features and purchase new light displays for the newly installed metal lamp posts in Penybryn. (2) To continue engagement with Centregreat to deliver the 2026 seasonal display.

70. Training for 2026/27

- i. **One Voice Wales (OVW) Training Dates:** Members received a calendar and email outlining upcoming One Voice Wales training modules and dates for review.
- ii. **Code of Conduct Training:** Cllr S. Thomas Butler reported that she needs to complete her Code of Conduct training and plans to attend the online session on **Wednesday, 14th October 2026.**
- iii. **Clerk Training & SLCC Qualifications:** An SLCC (Society of Local Council Clerks) event on **18th November 2026** was noted.
- iv. **Innovate Practice Conference:** Members considered attendance at the upcoming Innovate Practice Conference in Builth Wells and agreed to explore attendance for the Clerk or a representative.

71. Co-option for Council Vacancy

- i. **Withdrawal of Application:** It was formally reported that candidate Anthony Cook had officially withdrawn his nomination for the vacancy.
- ii. **Consideration of Application:** The Council reviewed the single remaining application for the community councillor vacancy.
- iii. **RESOLVED:**

1. To accept the remaining candidate Osian Cheverton and formally co-opt him to fill the Community Council vacancy.
 2. That the newly appointed member attend the Council office to execute the Declaration of Acceptance of Office prior to taking up official duties.
 3. That the new member will be asked to enrol on the online Code of Conduct training scheduled for **Wednesday, 14th October 2026**.
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72. Events

- i. **OVW Event Mid Wales:** Attendees confirmed.
 - ii. **Wales in Bloom Awards Ceremony:** Consideration of representation at the annual Wales in Bloom Awards Ceremony scheduled for mid-October 2026 in Mid Wales. It was confirmed that David (actively involved with Wales in Bloom) and his wife Sandra will formally represent the Community Council at the ceremony.
 - iii. **OVW RCT, Merthyr and Caerphilly Area Committee Meeting (7th October 2026):** Cllr C Moss was confirmed to represent the community council at the meeting.
 - iv. **JOINT One Voice Wales / SLCC Event (Wednesday 18th November 2026):** The Council agreed and encouraged the Clerk (Ingrida) to register and attend the session, with a member checking availability to join.
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73. Motions for 2027 Annual General Meeting – One Voice Wales It was confirmed that Councillor Catrin Moss will represent the Community Council at the AGM.

74. Business from AGM / School Governors

- i. **Ysgol Gynradd Penalltau:** The Council unanimously agreed that Cllr C Moss should continue as the Community Council's representative on the Ysgol Gynradd Penalltau governing body.
 - ii. **Ystrad Mynach Primary School:** Members nominated Cllr A. McCarthy as the Community Council's representative on the Governing Body of Ystrad Mynach Primary School following the departure of the previous representative.
 - iii. **Action:** The Clerk was instructed to notify Caerphilly County Borough Council Governor Services of both appointments.
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(The Clerk declared a personal interest in the next item and stepped out of the meeting room. Cllr H Pritchard took the minutes for the meeting in her absence.)

75. Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) Enrolment for New Clerk The RCT pension authority required a formal copy of approved council minutes confirming members' authorization for enrolment.

- **RESOLVED:** Unanimously agreed to approve the Clerk's enrolment in the RCT Pension Scheme, with a certified copy of this minute to be supplied to the RCT Pension Fund.

(The Clerk re-entered the meeting following the resolution.)

76. Caerphilly County Borough Communities Order 2026 – Community Boundary Transfers

The Council received the Caerphilly County Borough (Communities) Order 2026 regarding proposed community boundary transfers affecting Gelligaer wards and neighbouring community boundaries. It was agreed not to read through individual boundary shift descriptions line-by-line as members had already reviewed the order maps and documentation.

77. Any Other Business (AOB)

- i. **Public Defibrillator Management:** Reviewed maintenance arrangements across sites. Agreed that the Council act as primary contact/adopter for alerts, purchase replacement battery and pads for Cascade unit, and explore relocating or upgrading the box for the Ystrad Mynach Library unit (moving to the public toilets location for better sunlight/battery warmth). Ongoing dialogue maintained regarding the Fox & Hounds unit in Penybryn.
 - ii. **Office Furniture Upgrade:** RESOLVED to authorize expenditure of **up to £500** for an additional workstation desk and chairs to enable two people to work simultaneously in the office.
 - iii. **One Voice Wales Biodiversity Grant:** Agreed that the Eco Officer (Andy King) prepare and submit a grant bid for One Voice Wales biodiversity packs (bird/insect boxes and wild plants for the field near the football pitch) for the November application deadline.
 - iv. **Community Centre Waste Agreement:** Agreed to contribute towards the Cascade Community Centre's weekly commercial waste contract (paying approximately half) to handle office refuse and recycling, avoiding a separate commercial contract.
 - v. **Tour de France / Velothon (2027) Community Plans & Presentation:**
 - o *October Meeting Presentation:* Received a request from Rebecca Barrett and Team Manager Paul Hudson to present detailed operational plans and funding requests. Agreed that the presentation will take place at the next ordinary Community Council meeting on **Wednesday, 28th October 2026 at 7:00 p.m.**, open to public.
 - vi. **Seasonal Fayres' Grant Support:** Reviewed funding requests from organizers for upcoming community fayres. Confirmed dates: 5th December 2026 (Christmas Fayre), 6th March 2027 (Spring Fayre), and 4th December 2027 (Christmas Fayre with library lantern workshops). RESOLVED to approve grant support of **£1,000 for the Spring Fayre** and **£1,000 for the Christmas Fayre**.
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78. Planning Applications The Council reviewed and considered local planning applications as follows:

i. 26/0574/FULL

Subdivision of Old Pharmacy (Ystrad Mynach High Street) -: Application for internal/external works to subdivide the former pharmacy into two separate retail shop units with new shopfronts — **No objection**.

(Cllr T Parry declared an interest).

ii. **26/0585/HH**

Garage Conversion (Tir-y-Berth) -: Application to convert an existing residential garage into living accommodation — **Comment submitted:** Requesting that adequate off-street parking be maintained on site to prevent overspill onto the shared driveway/road.

iii. **26/0521/COU**

Conversion of Gambling Establishment / Amusement Unit (Ystrad Mynach High Street): Application to convert former gambling unit to residential housing — **Formally supported.**

iv. **26/0526/FULL**

Hospital Road Housing Development (5 Residential Houses): Proposal for 5 residential dwellings on Hospital Road — **Welcomed and supported** as a positive scheme that removes heavy scaffolding trucks and Welsh Water vehicle movements through the village.
(Cllr J Pritchard declared an interest).

79. Next Meeting Date The next meeting will be the **Ordinary Council Meeting on Wednesday 28th October 2026 at 7:00pm.**

Meeting closed at 9:30 pm

Signed by Chair: _____

Date: 28th October 2026