



meeting held at the Village Hall.
Tuesday 8th September 2026, at 7pm.

MINUTES

PRESENT: Cllr J Fforde (Chair), Cllr P Bate, Cllr S Main and Clerk to the Community Council, D Workman.

APOLOGIES: Cllr Crichton-Stuart (Vice-Chair), Cllr J Morgan and Cllr R Wells

IN ATTENDANCE: There were no members of public in attendance.

MINUTES: The minutes from August's meeting were reviewed and approved as a true record.

DECLARATION OF INTEREST: None declared.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL ASSETS: All assets are in good order.

MATTERS ARISING:

1. Natwest Online Banking – Cllrs Fforde and Wells have progressed through various security processes and Cllr Fforde can now access the bank account. Cheque payments will continue until the online arrangements are completed.
2. Annual review of Community Council DRAFT Annual Report and Cllrs expense declarations – Cllrs approved the Annual Report and Cllrs who were present completed the expense declarations.
3. PCC Winter Gritting – Changes to routes – The proposed/revised winter gritting arrangements were discussed at length, following information circulated after August's meeting. Concern was raised about the route between Painscastle and Clyro, including its use by school transport and the potential effect of untreated roads during icy conditions.
Members distinguished between primary gritting and secondary or adopted roads that may only receive treatment in more severe conditions. The discussion highlighted uncertainty about what operational procedure would apply if school buses or other transport could not safely travel. It was noted that local grit bins can be used by residents for localised treatment where appropriate, but this would not resolve the route under scrutiny. Cllr Bate agreed to continue gathering information and report back next month.

MEMBERSHIP:

1. There are three casual vacancies for Cllrs to sit on Clyro Community Council.

COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT:



1. Dan-y-Castell Play Area and Community Garden – this was deferred to October's meeting.
2. 2026 projects – the chair encouraged Cllrs to bring ideas to the next meeting.

**REPORT FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR GIBSON-WATT – Appendix A
CORRESPONDENCE (incl):**

1. Powys County Council Visitors Levy initial engagement, click the link to complete the survey <https://www.haveyoursaypowys.wales/visitor-levy>
2. Annual Pay Award SCP 12 - £15.31 applicable from 1st April 2026
3. Elan City – Extended warranty – The warranty for the councils first SID is due to expire on 28th November. The Community Council have received an extended warranty offer at approximately £200 per year. It was decided to defer this decision until next month when attendance would include Cllrs involved in the operational side of the SID's.
4. Hay Dial-a-Ride – Donation request – this item was deferred to next month when members with knowledge of the budget would be in attendance.
5. Brecon and Radnor Area Meeting – 21st September 2026. The clerk agreed to send the meeting link to relevant Cllrs.

FINANCIAL: Bank balances: Current £6,527.99 (on 4th August 2026) Reserve £1,930.03 (on 4th August 2026). Payments to include BT direct debit 4/09/26 (£55.48 account credit used) and Clerks Salary (£213.58).

BT Account Credit -£309.04

Cllr Bate proposed these payments and Cllr Main seconded. All Cllrs agreed.

1. Audit review and approval – Cllrs had reviewed the audit documentation prior to the meeting and agreed that the information contained within was accurate and a true reflection of the financial position during 2025-26.

A.O.B:

Cllr Main asked for information regarding the Hay Community development meeting that Cllrs were invited to, it was noted that Cllr Wells had attended and that further information was available online. The development discussion was described positively, subject to the issue of securing funding for the project.

The meeting was closed at 7.40pm

Members of the public are invited to attend council meetings and to contribute at the end of business. Minutes and agenda available on request. Also displayed on website www.clyro.org



Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Cllr J Fforde, Chair)

Appendix A

CLYRO COMMUNITY COUNCIL

8/9/26

June, July & August 2026

REPORT BY COUNTY CLLR JAMES GIBSON-WATT.

This report covers the period June – August 2026. My apologies for condensing the whole summer period into one report, but, drawing on my experience as Council Leader from 2022-25 and as Cabinet Member for Learning since May 2025, I thought it would be more useful to provide a more general report covering the summer period and some of the big issues the county council is dealing with, rather than my traditional monthly one.

Education Transformation Project in Powys

In April 2020, in response to concerns about the quality and sustainability of education provision in Powys, including education for learners with Additional Learning Needs (ALN), Powys County Council launched its Strategy for Transforming Education in Powys, which was updated in summer 2022 by the new Welsh Lib Dem/Welsh Labour council administration. The full strategy can be found via this link:-

<https://en.powys.gov.uk/transformingeducation>

The need for the strategy to be implemented as quickly as possible has become more acute as pupil numbers on school rolls continue to fall as Powys's population 'ages' and the condition of many of the county's older schools continues to deteriorate.

Also, the demands of the new school curriculum in Wales means that delivery of it is increasingly difficult in very small schools. These often have to operate with three year groups in each class, placing, in my view, unreasonable demands on the teaching and learning support staff, as well as requiring headteachers to spend most of their time teaching, as well as administering the school. Larger schools are more able to deliver the curriculum and do provide better facilities and more after-school and sporting opportunities. It is also the case that for many pupils, moving from the very nurturing environment of a very small school to a secondary school one is very difficult and their learning suffers as a result. In addition to the above, the levels of per pupil extra funding that needs to be provided through the funding formula to keep the small schools viable is now proving harder to justify and is preventing the county council from providing enough funding to its secondary schools, resulting in



levels of deficits in some schools that are restricting their ability to deliver top class learning and indeed threatens their future viability.

The outcomes for too many pupils in Powys's secondary schools are simply not good enough and a key aim of the Education Transformation Strategy is to enable improvement in that sector.

So, alas, some very small primary schools have had to be closed during this Council and consultation has begun to consider the future of another one locally (Gladestry C in W School). Pupil numbers there have fallen to 30 and are predicted to drop to 19 in a few years' time. Proposals for more small school closures will surely follow in the next Council, which will be elected in May 2027.

However, I am delighted that during this Council period a new, purpose-built, school building for Ysgol Robert Owen Special School in Newtown opened (in September 2024). For decades this school for pupils with severe learning and physical difficulties operated from a sub-standard building and a number of poor, demountable classrooms. At last, we have a new building able to provide the facilities the school's pupils need to be able to thrive and learn. During this summer period I have 'cut the turf' to begin the construction of a new school campus at Powys's specialist ALN school at Brynllawarch Hall, near Kerry in north Powys; and also for the new school building and grounds at Sennybridge County Primary School, which from September 2028 will begin its transition from its current dual-stream status to becoming a Welsh-medium school, to meet the increasing demand in that area for dedicated Welsh-medium provision. Both construction projects are due to complete by September 2028.

In addition, capital funding support from Welsh Government for a long-overdue new school building complex at Ysgol Bro Hyddgen in Machynlleth has been approved and a contractor appointed to create a new secondary school campus for Ysgol Calon Cymru in Llandrindod Wells. Again, a significant proportion of the capital costs is being met by the Welsh Government. All the new school projects are part-funded funded from the Welsh Government's Sustainable Communities for Learning Programme. More new school building projects are in the pipeline in Powys and some very significant decisions, including the future of some secondary schools in the county, will confront the next Council Administration after May 2027.

Social Care in Powys

Throughout the previous Council (2017-2022), in line with national trends, the budgets for Adult and Children's Social Care (£147m budget in 2026/27) increased dramatically, to the point where social care spending significantly exceeds the Education budget (£124m in 2026/27) spending in Powys. I am pleased to say that the social care budget has been brought under much greater control since 2022, although the pressure on social care remains acute. The Council has a small risk budget to allocate to social care if unforeseen pressures arise, but this area of service remains a key risk.



Despite that, performance in both Adults and Children's Services has greatly improved in recent years. For example, Care Inspectorate Wales recently conducted an assurance check on the council's Adult services and produced a report that praised many aspects of service delivery and the leadership of the service, while identifying that consistency of delivery still needs to be improved (some inconsistency is inevitable in a vast county with a sparse population like Powys).

Health and Powys Teaching Health Board

A recent leak of Health Board internal discussions on options for the future use of Powys's community hospitals, which suggested that the options included a significant reduction of in-patient beds in most of the hospitals, has raised a lot of fears locally and across the county. Public meetings have been held. However, it is important to note that the Health Board, which is facing a significant deficit in its budget, has made no decisions and before any changes are made to hospital services there would need to be a full period of public consultation. As Council Leader from 2022 to 2025 I was successful in leading efforts to create a fully collaborative framework for the Council and Health Board to work together and jointly plan health and social care services, so I fully expect the Council to be closely involved in discussions once the Health Board has completed its internal processes. It should be possible to come out of this process with an improved model of care services across Powys, but that will require creative thinking and no doubt some compromises.

Highways issues, etc.

The exploratory work carried out on Glasbury Bridge a few months' ago shows that the costs of re-decking/restoring the bridge is going to cost much more than was originally anticipated and budgeted for in the council's forward capital programme. Alternative funding sources are being explored, but of course this will produce further delay before work starts, risking further cost escalation. I apologise for not being able to be more precise about either the costs or timescales but will keep the local councils and public informed as soon as more information is produced.

Significant resurfacing work, pothole repair and verge ditching has taken place on the area's minor roads (e.g. the resurfacing of a section of the Clyro to Painscastle road to the north of the Begwyns), following the council's £2m injection of extra funding into the Highways budget plus some welcome Welsh Government grant funding, although much still needs to be done to bring our minor roads up to an acceptable standard.

Waste & Recycling

Members will recall that to improve efficiency and save costs, and in support of the county council's budget process, a 'route optimisation' review for waste and recycling collections was conducted and introduced from February 2026. Collection problems do still occasionally occur, but are much-reduced, now that the new system has settled down and the crews have got used to the new routes through our complex network of small, rural roads. The service



has at all times been very quick to react to local councillor requests for missed collections to be collected, but sometimes not so quick to react to reports made online by residents. More positively, Powys County Council has one of the highest rates of recycling in the UK, with 70% of household waste now being recycled.

Glasybont Common (the 'Bont)

Alas, I have nothing new to report regarding watercraft launching, but will of course do so when there are further developments. This is all very frustrating.

The tragic loss of a teenage boy while swimming there this summer appears to have had an impact on the number of people visiting the 'Bont; and the frequent adverse publicity about pollution in the river no doubt is also having some impact on visitor numbers. This is a shame, in my view, as the 'Bont provides valuable recreation and swimming space for locals and visitors alike.

Planning

No local planning issues of significance to report.

However, more broadly the debate about the proposed major wind farm and associated pylon and powerline developments across Powys has become more heated. My personal position on the issue is that the proposed turbines are too big and too many, their proposed location on some of the most sensitive landscape areas in the UK (e.g. the Radnor Forest) is inappropriate and it appears will be little or no material benefits to the communities affected, other than the promised 'community funds', which themselves will be contentious and potentially divisive.

The size of the proposed turbines (240m toe to top) is extraordinary. For comparison, the height of the Radnor Forest above seal level is about 600m, so the turbines will be more than a third as high as the total height of the mountain itself, and about half as high as the mountain as observed from the A44 road at New Radnor. In addition, once the concrete plinths on which the turbines sit become too degraded to be used, many years into the future, they will be left in situ to slowly leach noxious pollutants into the ground water and wider environment over many decades. In my view this is all not justifiable.

With regard to the power lines and pylons that will be needed, they will take all the power (and money) generated away from Powys to feed into the national grid, without in any way helping to strengthen the local electricity grids in Mid Wales that are currently so weak as to limit much-needed business and housing expansion.

Reducing carbon emissions is of course essential if we are to limit the damage of climate change, but my preference would be for the expansion of solar power and indeed hydropower in places like the Elan Valley reservoir complex, to generate power for the local grid networks as much as for the national grid, although this will require the development of extra underground power line infrastructure and pylons. I accept that hydropower does affect the ecology of watercourses downstream, but there is no fully pain-free way of generating



electricity. Wind turbine developments should only be small scale and to provide power to local electricity grids for the benefit of local communities and businesses.

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