

**In line with the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 these minutes are duly published as draft and will be formally agreed at the next meeting this Committee.**

## **Laleston Community Council**

### **Minutes of the Extraordinary Finance Committee held remotely via Microsoft Teams on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2025 at 7pm**

**Present:** Cllr's V James, S Philpin, M Smith and I Spiller.

- 1. To receive apologies for absence.** Cllr's D Harrison & S Richmond.
- 2. To receive Declarations of Interest (if any) of Members in respect of the business to be transacted.** Cllr I Spiller – Personal interest as Chair of Broadlands Community Hub.
- 3. To discuss inclusion of new tarmac footpath between Heol Blandy & Clos Y Golomen in Broadlands within the 2026/27 Precept.**

Cllr I Spiller presented a quotation for installation of a 150 linear meter pathway between Heol Blandy and Clos Y Golomen in Broadlands to replace the existing path which is currently rough stone/mud and unsuitable for some users. It was noted by members of the committee that this extended from the existing tarmac pathway through the estate towards Gypsy Lane.

Cllr I Spiller suggested including it within the budget and looking to obtain grant funding to pay for it via the Town & Community Council fund.

Members agreed to recommend this be included this within the budget heading for footpath improvements for 2026/27 contingent on grant funding, with an income for the same amount for grant funding. Proposed by Cllr S Philpin, seconded by Cllr M Smith.

- 1. To discuss and agree the uplift in Bryntirion Masterplan reserve for 2026/27**

It was noted that due to the cost of the playparks extensions in Laleston & Barnes Avenue totally £47,361.89 against a £30,000 budget, as the CAT transfer had not been considered at the time of work being carried out, and was also subject to head of terms which still have not been received to date, the finance committee agreed at the time to vire the overspend from the Bryntirion Masterplan reserve. It was recommended that council increase the reserve by £30,000, replenishing the reserve back to £50,000 and increase by £15,000 during this precept setting. Proposed by Cllr S Philpin, seconded by Cllr M Smith.

- 2. To discuss request by a regular room hirer to open Bryntirion Community Centre during Christmas shutdown.**

The committee discussed the current staffing situation at Bryntirion Community Centre and felt it was unable to support this request due to the dates requested as all members of staff were off work. Proposed by Cllr V James, seconded by Cllr S Philpin.

- 3. To discuss opening and closing of carpark during Christmas shutdown.**

The committee felt that it was important that residents be able to access the carpark to utilise Bryntirion fields during the community centre Christmas shutdown. It was decided to leave the gates open during the Christmas shutdown period. Proposed by Cllr S Philpin, seconded by Cllr V James

**4. To agree quotations received for allotment roof.**

The committee reviewed the quotations received, and opted to instruct SR. Middleton & Sons to undertake the roof replacement for the allotment roof. Proposed by Cllr S Philpin, seconded by Cllr M Smith.

**5. To discuss Broadlands Wildflower meadow reports**

The committee reviewed the biodiversity reports prepared by AKES and Dot Williams on the Broadlands Wildflower Meadow.

The committee agreed that the cherry laurel hedges had been neglected for years, and would need to be removed and replaced with a more appropriate hedgerow for the wildflower meadow. It was agreed that quotations be sought for the removal and reinstatement as per the report recommendations, with a view to improving the visual splay at the junction of Greystone and Gentle Way when reinstating.

The committee noted that some of the trees were competing with each other and some needed supporting. It was agreed to instruct AKES to undertake the work as recommended.

It was noted that the Willow Dome was in need of some immediate remedial work to remove some of the overgrowth and reestablish the shape, it was agreed to obtain quotations for this work for consideration.

It was noted that some of the edging for the pathway was in need of replacing due to age, and it was agreed that quotations be sought for the replacement.

Proposed by Cllr S Philpin, seconded by Cllr M Smith.

**6. To review and agree budget headings to recommend to full council for 2026/27**

The committee thoroughly reviewed the budget headings and spend to date and made the following recommendations for consideration by full council.

General Admin budget – reduce to £2,500 – committee felt that based on current spending this could be reduced from £3,000 to £2,500.

Public Liability budget – reduce to £3000 - committee queried how this had been reduced to £2773 this year when £4000 was budgeted and will seek clarification ahead of the full council meeting from the office manager. Should this be correct committee suggested reducing this budget.

Memberships & Subscriptions – increase to £4500 from £4000 – committee noted that subscriptions for One Voice Wales and SLCC were due to rise.

Photocopier – increase to £1200 from £900 – committee noted this budget heading was reduced last year and appeared to be overspent at the 6 month point and needed realigning.

Bin Emptying – increase from £7,000 to £12,000 – committee noted that council had installed 5 additional bins during the course of this financial year due, and was

overspending on the budget allocation for 2025/26. It recommended realigning this based on investment.

Bin Repair/Replacement – £0 to £500 it was agreed to enter a nominal budget of £500 as committee agreed there were no plans to install any additional bins during the next financial year.

New Bins/Benches/Planters – Following councils extensive investment in the community over the last few years it was noted there were no plans for additional schemes, and no budget would be placed against these items.

Biodiversity/Allotment Committee – Budgets to be maintained at £5,000 for Allotment improvements programme delegated to the committee and Biodiversity improvements to cover improvements on Broadlands Wildflower meadow which council had recently obtained by Laleston Community Council from Merthyr Mawr Estates. Allotment running costs to be reduced from £3,000 to £2,000 due to running costs over the previous financial years.

Blandy Hall – Reduce £6,000 to £5,000 due to current running costs over the previous financial year. Reduce building improvements budget from £1,500 to £1,000 for new financial year. Allocate budget of £500 for maintenance of the Boules/Garden.

Broadlands Steps – Increase budget from £50 to £500. It was noted that the steps leading from the subway to shopping precinct which Laleston Community Council maintain are falling into disrepair and needed investment in the coming financial year.

Bryntirion Community Centre – Increase budget from £3,500 to £17,000 based on agreement of full council to seek quotations to replace the toilets within the centre to a new unisex facility. Increase running costs budget from £20,000 to £22,500 to allow for inflationary increase and current run rate exceeds existing budget heading. Increase cleaning costs budget from £6,000 to £7,350 to meet current demand and allow for small increase.

Bus Shelter repair/replacement – Decrease budget to £1,400 from £1,500. It was noted that the bus shelters are Laleston Community Council assets and needed to be maintained as necessary to prevent them failing into disrepair.

Noticeboards – No budget allocation for new noticeboard during the current financial year.

Community Pantry – Committee to seek clarification on this budget as it appears to be set incorrectly. Committee recommend setting at £2,500 based on current spend.

Defibrillator installation – Committee was unsure whether this could be removed as to whether the current SLA is due for renewal, this needed clarification ahead of precept setting. Committee left this budget at £1500 but this could be removed if this is not required.

Events budget to remain the same as in previous financial year. Council had already agreed a recommendation from finance at October's meeting of full council to hold the Broadlands Fun Day budget at £15,000. Committee agreed to recommend the fireworks budget remain at £6,000. Query over whether there is a duplication within the budget for Senior Citizens Lunch & Senior Citizens Bus Trips – this needs to be clarified ahead of full council. Capital Expenditure (vired from Laleston Fete for 2025/26 as it was cancelled) to be removed and put back to the Laleston Fete budget for the next financial year.

Christmas Lighting budget to remain the same. Committee recommended that council continues with its replacement light budget as it was noted that Centregreat have but a number of their own light fittings on the A473 due to some of our older features failing due

to age. It was recommended that the budget for additional Christmas tree be removed and put into the replacement feature budget for this reason in the coming financial year.

Hanging Baskets/Verges/Planters – It was noted that in budget setting last year, watering of the hanging baskets and planters had been omitted, and was not included within other budget headings. The budgets were realigned based on the quotations received for the coming financial year. The centre verges on Heol Blandy in Broadlands also needed a budget allocation for summer bedding plants and winter flower displays which needed to be budgeted for in the coming financial years.

Maintenance Budget – Committee recommended adding at £2,500 general maintenance budget, increasing the grass cutting budget by 10% from £10,000 to £11,000, and maintaining the budget of £3,500 for an additional weed spray.

Grants and Donations – reduce from £5,000 to £3,000. Council increased this last year, but only £2,430 was applied for in 2024/25 with a similar run rate so far this financial year.

Laleston Well – committee recommended whatever budget remained unspent in this financial year be allocated to next financial year, with no additional budget being introduced. Council had previously resolved that grant funding needed to pay for the next stages of developing this project.

Members Training - reduced from £500 to £200 – due to the amount of free training being offered it was felt that this would not be required during the next financial year.

Chair of Committees payments reduced from £2000 to £1500 in line with current committee allocations.

MUGA budget increased from £0 to £5000 to allow for improvements in Laleston MUGA to be considered during this financial year.

Playpark budget reduced from £40,000 to £15,000 due to lack of progress in getting BCBC to varying the s106 to allow adoption by Laleston Community Council of Persimmon Parks. It was noted that only Maes-Yr-Eirlys park was due to be upgraded in the next financial year based on information previously provided, and a budget of £15,000 be allocated to allow for additional equipment in line with our commitments at Barnes Avenue park in Cefn Glas and Laleston park.

Milestone - removed due to work carried out this financial year.

Grit Bins – budget reduced from £3,000 to £600 due to not being spent.

Traffic Calming – unspent H Bar budget of £1,000 to be reallocated in new financial year.

The Pound – budget removed for the next financial year due to no proposals being submitted ahead of budget setting.

Reserves – committee felt that it was essential that the general reserves be maintained at a higher level due to council being exposed to maintaining two buildings and the allotments. After deliberation it was agreed to recommend council increase the reserve from 2 months running costs to 4-6 months running costs.

There being no further business, the meeting ended at 8.42pm.