

## Ordinary Meeting Minutes

### Attendees:

Cllr. R Hunt, Cllr. I Forcada, Cllr. M Farkasovska, Cllr. H Child, Cllr. C Volrath  
Cllr. K Reid, Cllr. I Perry (joined the meeting in person around 7:10pm ), Clerk J Chen  
& 2 members of public in person & 4 members of public online.

### Absent:

Cllr. J Griffiths, Cllr. G Ward, Cllr. M Hinton

**Quorum: YES (7/10)**

**Meeting Started on:** December 9<sup>th</sup> 2025 07:00PM

**Meeting Ended on:** December 9<sup>th</sup> ,2025 08:56PM

**Held on/at:** Field Study Centre of Amelia Trust Farm

Zoom Link <https://zoom.us/j/92541418992>

**Meeting Chaired by:** Chair R Hunt

### 1. **Chair's welcome and introduction**

Welcomed all members attended the meeting and congratulated new councillor- Cllr. Hugh Child on his election victory

### 2. **To receive apologies for absence**

Received Cllr. Hinton's apologies for absence.

### 3. **To receive Declarations of Interest under the Council's Code of Conduct**

(please clarify the nature of interest as per Standard Committee's request)

No declarations made.

### 4. **To approve Minutes of:**

#### **a. Meeting of 11<sup>th</sup> Nov 2025**

Proposed by: Cllr. Reid

Seconded by: Cllr. Forcada

Voted for: Chair Hunt, Cllr. Farkasovska

Voted against: none

Abstained: Cllr. Volrath due to partial attendance at previous meeting,

Cllr. Child (who didn't attend the previous meeting)

**This minutes was approved with 4 votes in favour, 0 against, 2 abstentions.**

## b. Meeting of 3<sup>rd</sup> Apr 2025

**Due to lack of information, minutes will be amended after gaining access to recordings of meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> Apr 2025.**

Chair Hunt stated that we have not amended the minutes of 3<sup>rd</sup> Apr 2025 as the recordings of meeting on 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2025 have not been provided after we requested. The council wasn't happy to approve this minute in current form. This minute will have to stay as draft minutes until we have the recording of the meeting, so that we can make accurate reflection of what happened in the meeting.

Cllr. Child questioned why this minutes hasn't been amended and approved after nine months.

Chair Hunt responded that amendments were requested, they haven't been done. The recording of the meeting was held by the former chair.

## 5. Public participation

- One of the residents emailed the clerk for his concern on Light on footpath which he discussed with Cllr. Perry in 2022-2023. (please see attached email) refer to Agenda 9a
- One of the residents emailed to ask the update on progress of Land at Campbell Court and Adoption of Roads at Campbell Court by VoG Agenda refer to 9b-c
- One of the residents emailed about the litter bin in Bonvilston.(please see the attached email) ~~refer to Agenda 9d~~

Chair Hunt read the email from the resident about the litter bin **after item 9g section 6 report**

Cllr. Perry updated that it was reported that 192 litter bins across the Vale had been removed due to inappropriate use, including one in Bonvilston.

All eight bins in St Nicholas, together with the dog waste bin, have been retained. Exceptionally, one bin has also been reinstated in Bonvilston.

Members were reminded that misuse of litter bins may result in their removal.

It was noted that one to two additional bins are scheduled to be installed in March 2025.

***Cllr. Perry joined the meeting in person at 7:10pm and no declarations of interest made.***

- One of the residents emailed to advertise on the Council Newsletter. Email forwarded to Chair. Refer to Agenda 9e3

## 6. Police Matters

No update from PCSO

## 7. Planning applications

**Update of planning applications for October 2025 (please see the attached list)**

**New Planning applications (OBJECT or NO OBJECTION)**

a. 21 November 2025

Planning Application No.: 2025/00090/FUL(ANH)

Location: Land adjacent to Hellas, Twyn Bach, St Nicholas

Proposal: Construction of a single residential dwelling on land adjacent to Hellas, including access, gate, fencing and associated development. Proposed alteration to the front boundary treatment of Twyn Bach.

**NO COMMENT**

b. 1<sup>st</sup> December 2025

Planning Application No.: 2025/01200/CAC (WG)

Location: Pwll Sarn Farm, A48 St Nicholas

Proposal: Demolition of the existing substandard ancillary structures attached to the stone barn. The conversion of the existing barn to a residential dwelling forms part of a separate planning application (Ref.2024/00252/FUL)

**NO OBJECTION**

c. 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2025

Planning Application No.: 2024/00252/FUL (WG)

Location: Pwll Sarn Farm, A48 St Nicholas

Proposal: The proposed change of use of an existing redundant stone barn with an additional extension for the creation of a new 4 bedroom detached dwelling.

**NO OBJECTION**

d. 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2025

Planning Application No.: 2025/01214/FUL (SA)

Location: Sheepcourt Farm, A48 Bonvilston

Proposal: Single storey rear extension and installation of PV panels to front roof.

**NO OBJECTION**

## 8. The Clerk/RFO update

a. **The agenda item 5 of meeting on 11<sup>th</sup> Nov 2025 for consideration relating to the allocation of funding for Christmas events**

- i. OVW confirmed that the resolution made is lawful and binding, ***‘The summons must include the agenda for the business to be transacted at the meeting. The agenda should set out the order in which the items will be transacted. A council cannot lawfully transact any business which is not included on the agenda.’*** In the case in point, it was clear that this matter was included in the business to be transacted.
- ii. OVW also notified the Clerk that expenditure on Christmas events would normally be covered by S137 of the Local Government Act 1972, a grant to an individual is not permissible under Section 137
- iii. Clerk emailed the form and related council policy to the resident who requested the funds, haven’t heard from her yet.  
  
Chair Hunt believed the event did take place on Sunday and the resident didn’t apply for the grants as per request.

## 9. Other projects and responsibilities

### a. Lights on the footpath – email from the resident

Chair Hunt read an email from the resident about safety concerns on a footpath in St Nicholas due to inadequate lighting.

Cllr. Child volunteered to meet with the resident to inspect the path, and another resident offered to meet with Cllr. Child to show the path’s condition too.

It was resolved to agree that Cllr. Child will meet the residents to inspect the path and lighting condition and see what the council can help with.

Cllr. Perry updated that

- The footpath in question is not part of the adopted highway.
- The Highway Authority only provides street lighting on adopted highways and permitted paths.
- The lawful pedestrian route is along the lane at the bottom of the wall, not at the top.

Due to the steepness of the path and the absence of railings, it is unlikely ever to be adopted by the Highway Authority. Consequently, the Highway Authority will not install street lighting at this location.

- If another organization wished to install lighting at this location, multiple stakeholders would need to be involved, including the Conservation Area Officer, Biodiversity Officer, Tree Officer, and Highways. Installation would require trenching from the A48 and the placement of bollards. Trenching costs are extremely high.
- The uncertainty regarding whether the land belongs to the Vale Council, as maps did not clearly identify ownership.
- The matter was previously considered by the council in February 2023. The council acknowledged that installation of lighting on this land would involve significant costs, potentially ranging from £10,000 to tens of thousands of pounds, far exceeding the value of lighting.

**b. Update on the progress of Land at Campbell Court -email from resident**

Chair Hunt proposed that this item be considered in Section Two due to its sensitive nature involving a community member.

It was noted that members of the public and any individuals with an interest in the matter could not be involved in the Section Two discussion.

Cllr. Perry declared an interest in this matter in the past

The proposal was seconded by Cllr. Reid.

The motion was carried, with Cllrs. Forcada, Farkasovska, Child, and Volrath voting in favour.

All members of the public attending online were moved to the waiting room, members of the public present in person left the meeting room, and Cllr. Perry also withdrew.

**The council entered Section Two for confidential business.**

**Discussion commenced at 7:20pm**

**The council concluded the confidential business under Section Two.**

**The Section Two discussion ended at 7:35pm**

**Members of the public and Cllr.Perry were invited back into the meeting room.**

**c. Update on the progress of Road Adoption of Campbell Court -email from resident**

**Update from Cllr. Perry:** No date has yet been set for Campbell Court adoption, though it is not expected until the end of next year. Welsh Water must first adopt the underground infrastructure before the council can adopt above-ground assets. Easements exist for wastewater storage tanks beneath Nos. 1 and 2 Campbell Court, which are on private land, and full-time authorities must retain access to maintain these. It was noted that the administrator/liquidator should be responsible for electricity bills until adoption.

**Resident's Statement:** The resident moved into the development in March 2023, with solicitor searches at the time suggesting adoption would occur "in the near future." However, the developer had already entered administration, which may have affected decisions had this been known. At that point, four years had already elapsed without adoption, which was considered unusual compared to typical developments. The situation has now extended to seven years, with three years since administration. A bondsman has agreed a sum of £100,000 to cover outstanding works, but progress remains delayed. Multiple parties are involved, including Welsh Water, the administrators, and the National Grid, which has contacted residents regarding lighting costs. The resident expressed concern that liability for incidents rests with residents until adoption.

**Response from Cllr. Perry:** Any bills received should be forwarded to the landowner/liquidating company (the administrator). The resident queried the purpose of having a bondsman in place. Cllr. Perry stated this road wasn't originally intended to be adopted.

**d. Elect a representative of Council for OVW meetings**

It was resolved to appoint Chair Rebecca as the main representative of Council for OVW meeting, Cllr. Perry as the second representative of Council for OVW meeting. Cllr. Reid abstained from the vote.

**e. Update from the interim Chair of the School, Church and community committee**

1. Christmas Tree

Chair Hunt updated that two Christmas trees in St Nicholas, two Christmas trees in Bonvilston, one donated to the School with total £320, Battery powered LED lights and Baubles and batteries were purchased and installed under budget £3000.

Cllr. Child queried that with respect to what the transformation from last year to this year is immense regarding the trees, the scope of work had been too restricted from the budgetary point of view.

Chair Hunt stated that the council wished to reduce the budget allocated to the Christmas trees, noting that the expenditure had exceeded £5000 in the previous year.

2. Elect new chair of SCCC

- It was resolved unanimously to elect Councillor Child as member of SCCC. Chair Hunt proposed, Cllr. Reid seconded.
- It was resolved to elect Chair Hunt as the chair of SCCC, Cllr. Volrath seconded, with Cllr. Perry recording objection.

3. Council Newsletter advertisement – email from resident. To elect Newsletter leader to communicate with residents who has needs.

The council discussed the possibility of advertising local businesses in the community newsletter and considered to appoint a member to take charge of the newsletter and collect information for future editions.

Cllr. Volrath queried the limitations of the advertisement scope

Cllr. Perry raised concerns about the legal implications and potential competition with local businesses, profit margin for this advertisement.

Cllr. Volrath noted advertisements on the noticeboards; it was confirmed by Cllr. Perry that any commercial advertisements have been removed from the noticeboards six months ago as notice boards are public property.

**Cllr. Volrath proposed to investigate the legal implications further and discuss this matter in next meeting, seconded by Cllr. Farkasovska. This motion was resolved with Cllr. Perry recording objection.**

**Winter Edition of Newsletter can be collected from shops, pubs and church in the community.**

**f. Update from the chair of the finance committee**

**i. To approve December payments awaiting authorisation list**

**Cllr. Volrath declared interest on item 9fi2-councillor remuneration claim, and left the meeting room.**

1. By Election on 16th Oct 2025 invoice from the Vale Council £3383.95

**It was resolved unanimously to approve the payment. Chair Hunt proposed, Cllr. Perry seconded.**

2. Received Councillor remuneration claim form from Cllr. Volrath for 2025/2026, total allowance due £156+£52+£500=£708

**It was resolved to approve this payment with Cllr. Perry recording objection.**

**Cllr Volrath was invited to return to the meeting room following the resolution.**

3. Clerk/RFO Salary- Contracted hours 45hours, extra hours 55.35hours to approve. Total hours 100.35hours Total amount after NI deduction £1677.23 hours breakdown: ILCA Training 11.35hours, Clerk meetings:4.54hours, Clerk work 53.67hours, Clerk/RFO work:19.08hours, RFO work: 11.71hours.

**It was resolved to approve this payment with Cllr. Perry objecting due to high cost. Chair Hunt proposed, Cllr. Volrath seconded.**

The Chair clarified that she had reviewed the timesheet of working hours provided by the Clerk/RFO, which included tasks such as internal and external audit and budgeting etc. She noted that the current arrangement was more cost-effective than the previous locum clerk, despite having received no handover when she took over, which resulted in a period of catch-up. Cllr. Child expressed concern that overwork should not become a regular occurrence. The Chair confirmed that the workload is expected to reduce following the current transition period.

**ii. November 2025 Payments list & Limited Bank Reconciliation (no income)**

**iii. Internal Audit**

The Internal Audit for 2023–2024 has been completed and cannot be revisited for this period.

With regard to the Internal Audit for 2024–2025, the Finance Committee requested that the internal auditor place this on hold, as the accounts are currently subject to review by Audit Wales. It was noted that there is no requirement to undertake an internal audit while the external auditor is conducting a full audit. The council will revisit this period once we receive the result of external audit.

**iv. External Audit**

It was noted that Audit Wales is responsible for conducting the external audit for the period April 2023 to March 2025.

**v. Strategic Plan & Precept 2026/2027 update**

Chair Hunt presented the strategic plan, and the accompanying slides were circulated to members.

Cllr. Perry read his proposal regarding the strategic plan which were not circulated to members or Clerk and stated that he will share this document following this meeting.

Member of the public raised her concerns on reduction of precept in the strategic plan, and another member of the public raised concerns on the significant precept increase from £25 five years ago to £125 now.

Chair Hunt proposed that council adopt this strategic plan, no seconder.

Cllr. Perry proposed that a corporate strategic plan is put out to the public for consultation prior to adoption, no seconder.

Cllr. Reid proposed to defer this topic to next council meeting for further discussion, the proposal was seconded by Chair Hunt and resolved unanimously.

**g. Section 6 report due to file in December 2025**

Cllr. Volrath noted that the Section 6 Report is required to be completed and submitted by the end of December. Owing to a particularly busy period, the report has not yet been completed. She confirmed that she had spoken with the relevant authority, who agreed that the report may be submitted in January. She will bring the report to council for review and approval in January meeting

**h. Bus Stop update**

Cllr. Volrath updated that a representative from the Vale Council told her that the design of the eastbound bus stop had been accepted and approved by the Vale. Concerns were raised regarding a planter.

Cllr. Perry stated that the Community Council had previously resolved to undertake the project but subsequently resolved not to proceed. The only change during that period was that the landowner indicated an intention to sell the land rather than lease it, with associated leasing costs.

Cllr. Volrath was told that, following recent discussions with the Vale, the project is progressing in the format suggested by the Vale. She was aware that

Cllr. Perry had proposed alternative ideas, which the Vale had not supported. Cllr. Perry stated that his proposals had not been objected to and expressed that he should have been consulted prior to the meeting.

Alternative proposals for a bus shelter in stone or wood were discussed. The Vale expressed concern about the impact of placing a planter on the opposite side of the pavement near the bus stop. The Community Council noted that it was not minded purchasing the land due to liability issues etc.

Cllr. Perry stated the update Cllr. Volrath provided is factually incorrect and he expressed his surprise at this matter.

Chair Hunt stated that Cllr. Volrath can only update what she was told.

**10. To receive reports from Chairman, Clerk and Members, and anything urgent.**

none

**11. Correspondence from organisations including One Voice Wales**

none

**12. Correspondence from the members of the public**

none

**13. Next meeting**

Tuesday, 13<sup>th</sup> January 2025 at 7pm Ordinary Meeting (monthly)

Minutes taken by

Joan Chen – Clerk to the Council