



Newcastle Higher Community Council ANNUAL REPORT 2022-23

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Foreword: Chair's Report

Welcome to the first Annual Report of the 2022-2027 administration, elected to serve Pen-y-Fai and Aberkenfig wards in May 2022. It has been my privilege to serve as Chair of NHCC this year, and I hope residents will agree there have been some improvements made on previous years.

2022 proved to be an unexpected, challenging year for everyone. Entering a period of Covid recovery, communities also entered into a period of further uncertainty with the unrest and subsequent attack of Ukraine, which resulted in a series of events that continue to impact on a global level and on an individual level.

Energy prices rose sharply along with inflation which also triggered the cost-of-living crisis and people are experiencing greater financial pressures. Council delivery is also impacted with prices escalating to deliver projects and services. 2022 sadly saw working families struggling with affordability of food and housing costs, whether increasing rental or mortgage interest costs. More people were accessing food pantries, food banks and warm banks.

Residents wanted to be assured that its Council is operating properly and professionally and that it is open, transparent and robust in managing its affairs and that it is accountable to them.

With a lot of new Councillors joining NHCC, we took this year as an opportunity to take stock of governance. New councillors went through induction and training and the Council also invested in Clerk training. Individual Councillors have used their professional backgrounds to practically support these improvements through writing the relevant policies, procedures and risk assessments that are required legally to run a good practice and accountable Council.

Pipeline projects were also re-assessed having been halted during Covid, they needed to be re-costed and re-tendered in light of the delays and the rising costs of inflation.

Community Safety is another key area of interest. The local Neighbourhood Policing Team has started to attend NHCC meetings periodically and we receive crime figures for both areas on a monthly basis. We are able to interrogate the data and assess the need for additional PCSO presence in the villages at times. We have been able to raise the issues of speeding vehicles through both villages and seek to work with PCSO's, BCBC and Go Safe Wales to gather and analyse speed data and consider the best mechanism/s to tackle and deter this. We are also liaising with BCBC through the Town and Community Council forum on issues such as the 20mph zones coming into force in the coming year.

Businesses: NHCC recognises that some shops in Aberkenfig have struggled to survive and have sadly closed their doors. However, Aberkenfig still has a unique mix of independent shops and long-established reputable businesses that recognise peoples' different shopping patterns and needs and wants from the village centre. We hope to see the vacancy levels drop with the support of landlords and BCBC's regeneration strategy which incorporates the Valleys Gateway, which Aberkenfig falls within. NHCC will develop closer links with local business throughout the coming year to seek further opportunities to connect together on making our Aberkenfig a better place to live, work and visit.

Events We were delighted to be able to host Remembrance Service again at Aberkenfig Square, and to attend the church service in Pen-y-fai. We were also delighted to partner Penyfai Village Community Association (PVCA) in hosting the 'Jubitea' event open to residents across both wards and to support the distribution of commemorative Jubilee coins to primary school children.

Floral displays: We continued with floral displays across both areas and commissioned B-Leaf at Bryngarw, a local social enterprise employing disabled people to grow and plant up the hanging baskets across the area. It was our first year working with B-leaf and we received lots of resident feedback on the baskets which have been taken on board. This year we remain with the existing basket format, but by May 2024 we will have renewed all the brackets and purchased bigger and better displays!

Christmas lights: We also acted on residents requests to increase and improve the Christmas lighting displays in the area which brought some much needed 'festive cheer' to the area and drew many positive comments throughout the season. We were grateful to a local tradesperson who supported some of the lighting repairs free of charge.

More public consultation will be announced to engage with our community and ensure that residents are fully informed of our work and able to engage in it. We are also about to launch a new accessible and bilingual website www.newcastlehighercc.gov.wales



We look forward to 2023 with positivity but with recognition of the reality our electors face in what will be challenging months to come.

**Cllr. Heidi Bennett, Chair of NHCC
(Welsh labour and Co-operative)**

About Newcastle Higher Community Council

We operate in the Town & Community Council sector, the grass roots of local government. We are one of 735 town and community councils in Wales. We have 12 sitting Councillors. The Council works proactively with the communities of Pen-y-fai (incorporating Court Colman) and Aberkenfig (incorporating Pentrefelin).

FAQ: How We Operate

Meetings

The Council meets on the 2nd Tuesday of each month, except for August, Council meetings are open to the public. Any changes to this (for example due to public holidays), will be notified on the website in advance. Agendas and minutes of all the Council's meetings can be found on our website.

A Guide to Council Meetings and public representation

The Council hopes that this short guide will encourage members of the public to attend its meetings and will be particularly helpful for those unfamiliar with meetings procedure.

Why are meetings held?

Aside from the fact that there is a statutory obligation for the Council to meet, meetings are the Council's principal means by which to discuss issues, formulate policies and make decisions on matters affecting Aberkenfig and Pen-y-Fai

Who can attend?

Anyone. However, if the Council needs to consider certain matters in confidence – such as employee issues, negotiating contracts or pursuing/defending a legal action – Councillors may vote to exclude the public and press under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960.

When are meetings held?

Meetings of the Community Council and its committees are held at different venues across Aberkenfig and Pen-y-fai so as to be accessible as possible. They are normally on the second Tuesday of the month, with the meeting commencing at 6.30pm. The agendas for meetings (usually published 3 working days earlier) appear on the Council's web sited public noticeboards .

Why should I attend?

- To raise an issue or concern
- To become better informed about topical issues and matters impacting on the wellbeing of the wards and their inhabitants
- To observe Councillors' participation in decision-making

What happens at meetings?

There are spaces placed for members of the public and press (the 'Public Gallery') . They lie slightly away from the meeting. If you have a hearing or visual impairment, arrangements will be made for you to sit closer to the Councillors.

The order of business at every meeting will be as set out on that meeting's agenda and we ask that everyone attending respects the office of the Chair who is responsible for the conduct of the meeting and for ensuring that the business specified on the agenda is carried out.

The Clerk will normally be present and is responsible for preparing agendas, taking Minutes and helping Councillors make decisions that are informed, procedurally correct and lawful.

The meeting will normally follow this order

- Apologies
- Declaration of interests
- Confirmation of minutes of prior meeting
- Specific agenda items including (e.g.)
 - Clerks report
 - Committee reports and ratification of decisions
 - Confirmation of Council payments /finance update
 - Requests from residents
- Member updates

When can I speak?

In each meeting there will either be a specific session set aside for the public to speak/ask questions or the public may be able to contribute at the relevant time in the meeting. The total time allowed for public to speak is up to 10 minutes long. Details are outlined in our standing orders/procedures published online.

If you wish to speak please contact the Clerk ahead of the meeting so that special arrangements can be made if appropriate.

The Councillors present will endeavour to hear and/or address the issue you have raised but please be aware that the Council may make decisions only if the matter has been included on the advance agenda. You may be advised that the Council may reply to you in writing.

It is the Chair who determines who shall speak, in which order and for how long. If the Chair of a meeting considers that a member of the public present may have information which would help Councillors or committee members make an informed decision, they may – with the permission of the meeting – invite that member of the public to speak during the actual meeting.

Note: Other opportunities exist to raise concerns with the Council – including: contacting Councillors directly or contacting the Clerk.

Still unsure about attending?

The Council appreciates that some people may find the prospect of attending a meeting for the first time a little intimidating. If you have any concerns at all about attending a meeting please do contact the Clerk or a Councillors for help and guidance. If we know you are coming to a meeting we can make sure there is someone there to greet and advise you.

About our duties, powers and functions:

The Community Council is a statutory body at the forefront of community governance. They have the powers to precept - collect a payment made to the Community Council through the Council Tax system - to deliver activities, opportunities and services. Residents will see the precept charge detailed on their bill sent out by Bridgend County Borough Council in March. In recent years, NHCC has strived to keep the precept low and more recently has tried influence other organisations and the principal authority in terms of increasing their investment into our communities.

NHCC's remit in the community is:

- To provide for and respond to local needs
- To advocate for community interests
- To organise and promote community events

In May, every year, the Annual General Meeting of the Council takes place where a new Chair and Deputy Chair are elected. Members of the Council are nominated by their fellow Councillors to fulfil these roles over a 12-month period.

NHCC is a member of One Voice Wales (OVW) the umbrella body of Town and community Councils across Wales. OVW provides advice, guidance, training and consultancy and provides model documents which are periodically updated when there are changes in the law or other issues impacting on it. NHCC is due to review its Standing Orders and Financial regulations in the coming months as and when OVW publish the updated model documents.

There are many legal powers the Community Council can operate within, and over the coming months and years, through its projects, there will be an emphasis upon the following powers in particular:

Function	Power of Well-being: Wales
Powers & Duties	Power to do anything to promote the economic, social and environmental well-being of the council's area or anyone in the area, subject to any statutory prohibitions, restrictions and limitations on council powers.
Legislation	Local Government Act 2000 ss. 1-5

Function	Recreation
Powers & Duties	Power to provide and contribute to a wide range of recreational facilities in or outside the council's area.
Legislation	Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, s.19

Function	Tourism
Powers & Duties	Power to encourage tourism to the council's area or contribute to organisations encouraging tourism.
Legislation	Local Government Act 1972, s. 144

Function	General Power of Competence
Power & Duties	Power to do anything an individual can do provided it is not prohibited by other legislation
Legislation	Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021

Our Twelve Councillors

The role of a Councillor is a responsible one. Eleven Council Members within NHCC were elected in May 2022 and 1 is co-opted. Whether elected or co-opted all have the same duty and responsibility to act within the law and in the best interest the communities it serves. As part of their inauguration - just after the election, and before the Annual General Meeting - Members must agree to act within the law and follow, in particular, the Local Government Act (1972). They are governed by a Code of Conduct set out by the Public Ombudsman for Wales and must sign a declaration of acceptance of office to say they agree to work within this Code as well as producing a list of interests they hold.

Councillors represent their respective constituencies of **Pen-y-fai** (including Court Colman) and **Aberkenfig** (including Pentrefelin) before also representing the interest of the wider area as a collective group. Each and every Councillor are residents of, and has an active interest in the community they serve and they are dedicated to improving the quality of life and the local environment.

The Clerk, as part of their role, summons the Councillors to each Council and Committee meeting, which Councillors have a duty to attend.

The role of a Community Councillor is voluntary. No salary is paid and only expenses or allowances for specifically identified elements of the role are paid. Some allowances received are also taxable.

As a voice of the local community, Councillors have a great responsibility and opportunity to influence bodies such as Welsh Government and their principal/unitary Authority for the better and generate ideas and plans that formulate the overall policies of the Council.

Each Councillor, their political affiliation and the Ward that they represent is shown below:

Aberkenfig Ward	Pen-y-Fai Ward
Councillor Sarah Botterill (Independent) Bridgend Road Abercynffig Penybont-ar-Ogwr CF32 9BG Email: slbotterill@btinternet.com (Elected May 2022)	Councillor Samantha Barker (Independent) Ysbryd y coed Pen Y Fai Bridgend Email: barkersfly@hotmail.com (Elected May 2022)
Councillor Gethin Brown (Independent) Dunraven Street Aberkenfig, Bridgend CF32 9AS Email: gethinbrown69@gmail.com (Co-opted June 2022)	Councillor Heidi Bennett (Welsh Labour) Ysbryd y coed, Pen Y Fai Tel: 07405 208985 Email: cllr.heidi.bennett@bridgend.gov.uk (Elected May 2022)

Councillor Jane Gebbie (Welsh Labour)

Bridgend Road

Aberkenfig

CF32 9BG

Tel: 07508 643052

email: cllr.jane.gebbie@bridgend.gov.uk

(Elected May 2022)

Councillor Marged Griffiths

(Independent)

Penyfai Rd,

Aberkenfig

CF32 9AA

Email: m.griffiths261@btinternet.com

(Elected May 2022)

Councillor Gaynor Hewitt (Welsh Labour)

Bridgend Road

Aberkenfig, Bridgend, CF32 9BG

Email: gaynorhewitt@yahoo.co.uk

(Elected May 2022)

Councillor Elizabeth Morgan

(Independent)

East Street, Aberkenfig

Bridgend, CF32 9NH

Email: Bethmorg69@gmail.com

(Elected May 2022)

Councillor Michael Flanagan (Welsh Labour)

Angelton Green

Pen Y Fai

Bridgend, CF31 4LP

Tel: 01656 725228

Email: mflanagan999@gmail.com

(Elected May 2022)

Councillor David Hopkins (Independent)

Swn Yr Adar

Cavendish Park, Pen Y Fai

CF31 4GE

Tel: 01656 651439

Email: davehopkinswales@gmail.com

(Elected May 2022)

Councillor Richard Hughes (Welsh Conservative Party)

Email: rich.hughes2007@gmail.com

(Elected May 2022)

Councillor Julie Kemble (Independent)

Email: juliekemble2@icloud.com

(Elected May 2022)

Meeting Structure

The Umbrella to the Committee Structure is Full Council noted in the FAQ section above. In the last 12 months, the Council has held 11 Council meetings with Committee matters being addressed within it. All Members are summoned to attend unless an exception has been made.

The work covered at the Community Council are:

- Council Matters
- Strategic Development Matters
- Operational & Environmental Matters
- Planning Matters

At the start of the pandemic, the Local Authorities (Coronavirus)(Meetings)(Wales) Regulations 2020 came into effect, enabling meetings to take place on a digital platform. Public attendance was suspended at that time.

The Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021 now addresses how Community Council meetings should operate. NHCC can operate remote only meetings or hybrid meetings and we recently purchased appropriate equipment in order to make sure residents could properly access the meetings online.

We are not obliged to, nor do we live-stream or record Council meetings unless there is a reason to do so. NHCC will however continue to inform our residents of Council matters via uploaded Council Agendas, Reports and Minutes.

Newcastle Higher Community Council is also a **Statutory Consultee** for planning applications, meaning that it is consulted with regarding any application within its boundaries.

Committees

In May 2022, Council agreed to set up a formal committee structure to focus on key areas of Council work. The terms of reference for each committee are available upon request and will be published on the new website in due course. NHCC Committees and Councillor membership is as follows:

- Maintenance Committee:

Cllr G Brown, Cllr M Flanagan, Cllr M Griffiths, Cllr D Hopkins (Chair), Cllr R Hughes, Cllr B Morgan

- Wellbeing Committee:

Cllr S Botterill, Cllr G Brown, Cllr G Hewitt, Cllr J Kemble (Chair), Cllr B Morgan

- Finance and Audit Committee:

Cllr H Bennett (Chair) Cllr. S Botterill, Cllr S Barker, Cllr J Gebbie

- HR Committee

Cllr H Bennett, Cllr S Botterill, Cllr M Flanagan, Cllr M Griffiths, Cllr J Gebbie

What did we do in 2022/23?

In 2022/23, the new council spent time finding its feet. Councillors went through a level of induction, and many continue to work their way through the 'One Voice Wales' councillor training modules, of which there are 13. The status quo was maintained in terms of service delivery giving the Council was fairly new and this gave opportunity to review services and areas for improvements as well as gaps in provision. It covered:

- Oversight and management of Aberkenfig allotments
- Maintenance of Aberkenfig Woodland and tackling Japanese knotweed
- Procurement and provision of Community planting and hanging baskets
- Procurement and provision of green space maintenance (including Pheasant Field and Aberkenfig Square)
- Provision of dog bins contracts
- Installation of Defibrilators
- Responding to planning applications
- Hosting Aberkenfig Remembrance Service
- Collaborating with local partners of Jubilee festivities
- Civic duties in relation to the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II
- Support to community events such as the PVCA 'Jubitea' and commemorative coins for primary school children
- Procurement and enhancement of new and additional Christmas lights
- Collaborative working in relation to Warm hubs.
- Purchase of a new noticeboard for Pen-y-fai

The Council also focussed on improving governance and legal compliance. NHCC developed a number of committees that, going forward, will enable Council to make decisions more effectively and to act more quickly on decisions made so that tangible benefits and improvements can be seen in the communities the council serves year-on year.

The Council has also commissioned a new, accessible and bilingual website to ensure residents are better informed and connected to the work of its council.

The Finances (also known as ‘the Precept’)

Each year, NHCC undergoes a budgeting exercise to decide how much money is required to provide, manage, run and improve the services that it wants to deliver for the benefit of residents.

The amount of income that is estimated is deducted from the amount of projected expenditure. This sum is known as the precept, which is the additional amount added to residents’ Council Tax bills.

This amount is formally requested of Bridgend County Borough Council within a timeframe that allows the Authority to prepare its Council Tax bills, which includes the Community Council precept. For 2022/23, the Council precept was £53367. this equates to £.30.77 per Band D property, per year.

Town or Community Council	Bridgend CBC	Community Council	Police & Crime Commissioner for South Wales	Total
	£	£	£	£
Brackla Community Council	1,597.01	40.71	302.11	1939.83
Bridgend Town Council	1,597.01	107.49	302.11	2006.61
Cefn Cribwr Community Council	1,597.01	77.57	302.11	1976.69
Coity Higher Community Council	1,597.01	27.81	302.11	1926.93
Cornelly Community Council	1,597.01	58.26	302.11	1957.38
Coychurch Higher Community Council	1,597.01	32.04	302.11	1931.16
Coychurch Lower Community Council	1,597.01	63.36	302.11	1962.48
Garw Valley Community Council	1,597.01	52.85	302.11	1951.97
Laleston Community Council	1,597.01	43.51	302.11	1942.63
Llangynwyd Lower Community Council	1,597.01	58.97	302.11	1956.09
Llangynwyd Middle Community Council	1,597.01	69.46	302.11	1968.58
Maesteg Town Council	1,597.01	59.02	302.11	1958.14
Merthyr Mawr Community Council	1,597.01	20.19	302.11	1919.31
Newcastle Higher Community Council	1,597.01	30.77	302.11	1929.89
Ogmore Valley Community Council	1,597.01	38.01	302.11	1935.13
Pencoed Town Council	1,597.01	47.82	302.11	1946.94
Porthcawl Town Council	1,597.01	48.75	302.11	1947.87
Pyle Community Council	1,597.01	47.81	302.11	1946.93
St Brides Minor Community Council	1,597.01	25.70	302.11	1924.82
Ynysawdre Community Council	1,597.01	32.97	302.11	1932.09

source: Table 7

[https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/documents/s26605/Council Tax report to Council February 2022Final 003.pdf](https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/documents/s26605/Council%20Tax%20report%20to%20Council%20February%202022Final%20003.pdf)

Community and Town Councils in Wales Annual Return for the Year Ended 31 March 2023

Accounting statements 2022-23 for:

Name of body: Newcastle Higher Community Council

	Year ending		Notes and guidance for compliers
	31 March 2022 (£)	31 March 2023 (£)	
Statement of income and expenditure/receipts and payments			
1. Balances brought forward	16,821.46	72,676.81	Total balances and reserves at the beginning of the year as recorded in the financial records. Must agree to line 7 of the previous year.
2. (+) Income from local taxation/levy	53,837.00	53,837.00	Total amount of income received/receivable in the year from local taxation (precept) or levy/contribution from principal bodies.
3. (+) Total other receipts	1,159.89	3,275.17	Total income or receipts recorded in the cashbook minus amounts included in line 2. Includes support, discretionary and revenue grants.
4. (-) Staff costs	9,092.55	9,140.75	Total expenditure or payments made to and on behalf of all employees. Include salaries and wages, taxable allowances, PAYE and NI (employees and employers), pension contributions and termination costs. Exclude reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses.
5. (-) Loan interest/capital repayments	0	0	Total expenditure or payments of capital and interest made during the year on external borrowing (if any).
6. (-) Total other payments	33,048.99	51,857.58	Total expenditure or payments as recorded in the cashbook minus staff costs (line 4) and loan interest/capital repayments (line 5).
7. (=) Balances carried forward	72,676.81	68,584.65	Total balances and reserves at the end of the year. Must equal (1+2+3) – (4+5+6).
Statement of balances			
8. (-) Debtors	0	0	Income and expenditure accounts only: Enter the value of debts owed to the body at the year end.
9. (+) Total cash and investments	72,676.81	68,504.65	All accounts: The sum of all current and deposit bank accounts, cash holdings and investments held at 31 March. This must agree with the reconciled cashbook balance as per the bank reconciliation.
10. (-) Creditors	0	0	Income and expenditure accounts only: Enter the value of monies owed by the body (except borrowing) at the year end.
11. (-) Balances carried forward	72,676.81	68,584.65	Total balances should equal line 7 above: Enter the total of (8+9-10).
12. Total fixed assets and long-term assets	0	21,690.29	The asset and investment register value of all fixed assets and any other long-term assets held as at 31 March.
13. Total borrowing	0	0	The outstanding capital balance as at 31 March of all loans from third parties (including FWLB).

Training Plan and Review

NHCC has a refreshed training plan in line with the new term of office (From May 2022).

It is important to note that some Councillors who sat in the previous term of office (2017 - 2022) are currently refreshing their previous training. Some Councillors, who are also County Councillors can access BCBC training in line with their roles on that body and other Councillors may be able to access training within alternative workplaces all of which can add value. However, members are always encouraged to attend as many of the One Voice Wales (OVW) Training modules as possible as these are specifically aimed at Town and Community Councillors. There is an annual rolling programme provided, and members of committees are encouraged to attend the specialist OVW training in HR, Finance and Engagement and wellbeing.

Extract from plan

In terms of the council's initial plans these are set out as follows:

(i) New councillors

Induction by the Clerk, supported by the Chair, and the signing of the Acceptance of the Code of Conduct and Declaration of Interests before the first meeting.

Modules aim to complete within 18 months

- The Council (module 1)
- The Councillor (module 2)
- The Council Meeting (module 5)
- Code of Conduct (module 9)

(ii) Re-elected councillors (recommended every term of office)

- Code of Conduct
- Rolling programme of refresher training as per committee membership

(iii) Committee Members

Councillors are recommended to attend the training detailed below within 12 months of being elected on to the Committee unless members have previous qualifications in the subject.

Finance and Audit Committee

- Local Government Finance (Module 6)
- Understanding Local Government Finance – Advanced (Module 21)

Personnel/HR Committee

- The Council as an Employer (Module 3)
- Managing Your Staff (Module 18)
- Equality & Diversity (Module 14)

Maintenance Committee

- Local Government Finance (Module 6)
- Understanding Local Government Finance – Advanced (Module 21)

Wellbeing Committee

- Introduction to Community Engagement (Module 8)

(iv) Chairs/Vice-Chairs

- Charing Skills (Module 10)

(v) Optional training for all Councillors

- Understanding the Law (Module 4)
- Information Management (Module 15)
- Use of IT, Websites & Social Media (Module 16)

In 2022/23, there have been issues in relation to support to the Council, and as such this has had an impact on Councillors capacity and time, and seen many Councillors volunteering to deliver on the practical work, much more than usual or anticipated. As such Council is behind on its ambition around training.

Att / Non.Att	Date	Day	Module	Name
Attended	08/06/2022	Wednesday	Code of Conduct - Module 9	Beth Morgan
Attended	20/06/2022	Monday	Code of Conduct - Module 9	Dave Hopkins
Attended	04/08/2022	Thursday	New councillor Induction	Gaynor Hewitt
Attended	04/08/2022	Thursday	New councillor Induction	Gethin Brown
Attended	07/12/2022	Wednesday	Local Government Finance - Module 6	Gaynor Hewitt
Attended	23/01/2023	Monday	The Council as an Employer - Module 3	Heidi Bennett
Attended	23/01/2023	Monday	The Council as an Employer - Module 3	Marged Griffiths
Attended	23/01/2023	Monday	The Councillor - Module 2	Julie Kemble
Attended	31/01/2023	Tuesday	Creating a Community Plan - Module 12	Elizabeth Morgan
Attended	31/01/2023	Tuesday	Creating a Community Plan - Module 12	Gaynor Hewitt
Attended	21/02/2023	Tuesday	The Councillor - Module 2	Gaynor Hewitt
Attended	27/04/2023	Thursday	Code of Conduct - Module 9	Julie Kemble

The role of Chair

The Council Chair is appointed by the Council at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). The term of Chair is for 12 months. The Council Chair presides at each Council meeting and is supported by the Deputy Chair when unable to attend. It is the role of Chair to ensure that all meetings are conducted properly, with the aim of producing a set of clear, accurate and decisive Minutes.

The Chair, along with the Clerk is responsible for ensuring agenda items are maintained during the meeting and discussions by other Councillors reflect that. They also have a

ceremonial role to undertake in their year of office. The Chair has responsibility to attend civic and ceremonial events within the area. The holder of the role represents the Council as a whole, not their own personal opinions and they are not able to make a decision on behalf of the Council except in emergency situations.

The role of Clerk

The Council employs one part time clerk for up to 50 hours per month (approx 12 hrs per week). At the time of writing the Council is going through a recruitment process and has a locum clerk in place. The Clerk's role is to oversee the work of the Council, and serve as the 'Responsible Finance Officer'. They should ensure the correct policies and procedures are in place and that a high quality of service is delivered. The Clerk works with the Council Leadership to ensure that the Council's goals are achieved.

The Clerk works some core hours each week so that they are accessible to the public via phone and email, but then works flexibly to meet the needs of the Council the rest of the time including meeting the needs of the scheduled meetings during the month.

NHCC does not have a council office or community building from which to operate, so the Clerk is primarily home-based, but can meet with residents in the community on an appointment basis.

Supporting our Clerk in their continuing professional development has been reinforced by a suite of public/local government sector training that is built into personal development reviews. Our Clerk is required, and supported, to complete the specialist CiLCA qualification to ensure their knowledge and skills remain updated and that the Council receives the appropriate and up to date legal guidance and is compliant in all that it does.

Alongside this, since the elections in May 2022, elected members have been provided with a training programme to fulfil during their tenure as Councillors. The Council's training plan was published in March 2023, in line with the Welsh Government's legislature (Local Government & Elections Act (Wales) 2021).

The Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015

The [Wellbeing and Future Generations \(Wales\) Act 2015](#) was enacted to improve the social, economic, environmental and cultural wellbeing of Wales and to create a country that all residents want to live in, for now and in the future.

The Act has requirements of Larger Councils - those with a turnover of £200,000 pa or higher as is set out in statutory guidance. Whilst NHCC's turnover is much lower than this at circa £53k, it is not required to report in line with this duty, but we believe it is important to connect our work to the WFGA (2015).

The Act has seven wellbeing goals and 5 ways of working. These five ways of working help public bodies work in a way that is sustainable for the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. These are:

- Long Term - The importance of balancing short-term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to also meet long-term needs.
- Prevention - How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help public bodies meet their objectives.
- Integration - Considering how the public body's well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, on their other objectives, or on the objectives of other public bodies.
- Collaboration - Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) that could help the body to meet its well-being objectives.
- Involvement - The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves.

The seven well-being goals should be the kind of Wales that we want to see and provide a shared vision for public bodies to work towards. These are:



Public Services Board (PSB)

For each principal council area there is a Public Services Board (PSB). For Bridgend County, it is the Bridgend Public Service Board, but it is currently in transition and merging with Rhondda County Borough and Merthyr Tydfil County Borough to form the Cwm Taf Morgannwg (CTM) PSB. The Board consists of statutory members: CTM Health Board, Natural Resources Wales, Local Authorities and South Wales Fire and Rescue Service. . There are also some statutory invites which include for example South Wales Police and representatives from the Voluntary sector.

The PSB has published its latest Well-being Assessment for 2022 on its website at

<https://www.ourcwmtaf.wales/SharedFiles/Download.aspx?pageid=286&mid=613&fileid=1204>

and its Annual Report for 2021/22 here: <https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/media/14419/psb-bridgend-annual-report-eng-0722.pdf>

This brings together many different reports <http://www.ourcwmtaf.wales/CTMAssessment> and many different factors that impact well-being to help determine the well-being level of those residing within our County Borough.

This information will be used to help create a new Well-being Plan from the PSB for the area from April 2023. The current Well-being Plan can also be found on their website at <https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/my-council/bridgend-public-services-board/local-well-being-plan/>

NHCC Wellbeing Objectives

These help frame NHCC's ongoing work and projects.

1. To work with the people of Aberkenfig and Pen-y-fai of all generations to offer and promote services and events that people need and want to improve their wellbeing
2. Work with and support organisations to tackle social isolation and loneliness within our communities
3. Support the local economy and independent businesses through our 'purchase power' wherever possible.
4. Build stronger relationships with local stakeholders including businesses and community groups to enhance our local environment.
5. Hold regular consultation and listening exercises to hear the views and remain up to date on community needs and aspirations to inform our work and decision-making.

Our Council's Priorities 2023/24

Our priorities and key actions for the coming year connect to the seven well-being goals as outlined by the 2015 Act.

- Support the BCBC with the roll out of 20mph zones roll out and gateway signage
- Consider the asset transfer of Cavendish park (further to maintenance being brought up to date)
- Noticeboards
- Adding a Flagpole to the Aberkenfig Square
- Woodland and Aberkenfig square maintenance and planting programmes
- Floral displays
- Enhances Christmas lighting
- Support of community activity and fetes
- Connecting to local primary schools
- Promote projects that will support Climate change and biodiversity
- Deliver/support local events that encourage community cohesion and tackle isolation
- Work with PCSOs to ensure safer communities
- Promote long and healthy lives for residents
- Support the development of Aberkenfig Village centre and improve connectivity with businesses.
- Enhance the Pheasant Field through the provision of lighting and benches.
- Working with ramblers and riders to ensure public footpaths and bridleways remain maintained for public use
- Working with Keep Wales Tidy and BCBC to tackling flytipping issues

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