**Cyngor Cymuned Onllwyn Community Council**

**Environment Committee**

Minutes of Monthly Meeting held on 7th July 2025 held at Dove Workshop, Banwen.

**Present:**

Cllr Ruth Stone (Chair), Lydia Price, Cllr Gareth Llewellyn, Cllr Dave Wise, Alun Keenan, David Pugh.

Clerk Mr Simon Chaplin.

**Apologies:**

Cllr Lee Reynolds, Cllr Dean Cawsey, Cllr Ian O’Kane.

Meeting commenced at 1830 hours.

1. **Apologies.**

Apologies received from above persons.

1. **Declarations of interest.**

Declaration of interest form explained and would be dealt with as matters were discussed

1. **Matters raised by members of the public.**

Member of the Angling Club reported that an Otter was within the pond area. Clerk conducted research into this and reported back to the environment committee that under Schedule 5 Wildlife and Countryside Act nothing could be done. Clerk also mentioned that advice from Amphibian and Reptile conservation that the Otter would eventually move as they are transient animals.

1. **Update on work so far.**
2. Butterfly Garden, Clerk reported that an application had been made to secure packages to enhance the area for wild flowers and such however on this occasion the community council had been unsuccessful. Discussion surrounded utilising a working party to assist in maintaining the area which would go towards the Schedule 6 biodiversity report. This was agreed upon that members of the committee would commence work on the area in the Autumn time. It was also stated by members that the grass along the footpath would be cut and some strimming completed to tidy the edges. Also it was discussed whether the ground was suitable for flowers and trees due to poor soil levels, this is to be examined closer when the area is cleared to look at what can be done for next year. It was also mentioned that raised beds could be created utilising the tree length that had been felled from within the woodland walk thereby repurposing these.
3. The clerk gave a resume of the meeting recently held with One Voice Wales biodiversity officer, ARC, NRW and Neath Port Talbot places for nature representative. The area is rich with diverse wild flowers which have appeared since the last visit, there was also evidence of toad breeding and grass snakes. Advise that was given was to apply for funding from Neath Port Talbot for a land management survey and plan to be created to see exactly what we have and need to do and then to further apply for any funding to purchase tools etc that are required to meet the plan. This funding would not cover the cost of training with these items.
4. The clerk passed around the expression of interest form for all to see and to add any comments they felt necessary, this will be send to the council for action.
5. Lydia explained what her and Ian had completed in relation to the local planters in the village and thanked for her work. She also expressed an interest in developing the ‘dram’ planter and one near the St Patricks stone. The clerk advised her that there were funds available for this and to arrange prices/estimates so that this could be agreed and actioned.
6. **Biodiversity plan report.**

The clerk showed the committee the start of the report that needs to be submitted at the end of the year, they explained that if any members know of any biodiversity work that had been carried out in the last three years to inform him for adding and any work that may be carried out until December is to be recorded to add to the report.

A number of different land areas were mentioned where work could be carried out to enhance biodiversity with management and siting of new trees.

1. **Grass cutting.**

Neath Port Talbot are currently cutting the grassed areas in line with the community council wishes. It was mentioned that in future if the community council own a grass cutting machine in line with any plan that is agreed upon then this may reduce the amount on the current contract.

The clerk reminded the committee that any mechanical devices that are purchased would also require any users to be trained in their use.

The clerk informed the committee that he had posted pictures on the community council website showing how the wild flowers were developing in the area.

1. **Matters raised by committee members.**

David brought up the need to deal with the Knotweed adjacent to the path/stream. The clerk informed him that Our Tree Company had been in attendance and looked at the area and that they would put together a plan covering 3 – 5 years to deal with it and that the company own the credentials for this work which will be shown to the community council.

He also mentioned knotweed adjacent to the land in School Road which had been cut when grass cutting, he was informed unfortunately that this was not owned by the community council. The clerk will bring this to the attention of the local authority.

Next meeting 1st September 2025 at 1830 hours.

Signed:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Dated:\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_