

## **Rhigos report- November**

Facebook- Hirwaun and Penderyn and Rhigos Matters

### **Police**

A PACT meeting took place on October 16<sup>th</sup> at the Hirwaun YMCA. Thank you to those who attended. These meetings are useful in allowing residents to speak directly to those who will be taking action in the village. There were good discussions around rogue traders, off road bikes and car crimes. We encourage residents to report any issues they see by calling 101. We have asked that the next meeting is in Rhigos.

### **Streetcare**

Black bin collection date- Friday 14th November, Friday 5<sup>th</sup> December

Reported overgrowth along The Bryn.

### **Highways**

Resurfacing works have begun on Heol-y-Graig. Two-way traffic lights are to remain through the week.

Reported potholes- *Heol Esgyn/Heol y De*

### **Flytipping**

Reported flytipping- *Near Parish Road, Rhigos*      *Just off A4061, on the way to Rhigos Mountain*

### **Flooding**

Reported blocked drains- *Along Mount Road*      *From Walters on Rhigos Road to the entrance of the Industrial Estate*

Reported flooding- *Old Glynneath Bank*

*Highway outside Penywaun Farm*      *Highway outside Cwm Hwnt Farm*

Officer inspected and cleared. Jettors were also sent out.

### **Parish Road**

We are working with Rhigos Community Councillors and RCT officers to reduce the flytipping along Parish Road. The flytipping is increasing, despite RCT Council inspecting the road weekly.

We joined Community Councillors in meeting with a representative of Walters to discuss the possibility of placing a gate on Parish Road, near the top, to prevent vehicular access.

### **Rhigos Primary School site**

We contacted RCT again following the sounding of the school's alarm system. An officer responded that the alarm is being triggered because of the cold temperatures and the school not being in use.

## **Planning**

Installation and operation of battery energy storage system (BESS)- Land to the West of Mount Road

Natural Resources Wales have responded to the application, with a 16 page document:

“We have concerns with the application submitted because inadequate information has been provided in support of the proposal. To overcome these concerns, you should seek further information from the applicant regarding designated landscape, protected sites, land contamination, controlled waters, pollution prevention and protected species. If this information is not provided, we would object to this planning application... We also advise that based on the information submitted to date, that conditions regarding land contamination, controlled waters and pollution prevention should be attached to any planning permission.”

## **Questions submitted to Council’s Cabinet**

Councillor Adam Owain Rogers- “In Hirwaun, the police and traffic wardens are ignored and receive abuse when trying to do their jobs responding to drivers dangerously parking on our busy streets. What other options do we have to reduce the cases of dangerous parking on double yellow lines and zig zags in my ward?”

Councillor Karen Morgan- “How many properties in RCT do not pay council tax premiums despite having been empty for more than 5 years?”

## **In the Council Chamber**

- 1- Plaid Cymru councillors proposed a notice of motion focused on responding to the cuts to home to school transport. An amended version of the NoM was supported with our key requests remaining:
  - a) The production and publication of an updated Equality and Children’s Rights Impact Assessment to include analysis of the impact on attendance and household costs across a range of scenarios (single vs. multiple children, ages 11–15 and 16–18, income levels, and access to Welsh-medium education).
  - b) That the relevant Cabinet Member writes to the Welsh Government seeking:
    - i. Fair funding for learner travel, including a dedicated grant to protect discretionary provision;
    - ii. Integration of school transport into forthcoming bus reforms, ensuring sufficient timetabled capacity, peak-time availability, and fair concessions for under-16s;
    - iii. Reform of national learner travel guidance to strengthen duties on promoting access to Welsh-medium education and to clarify the definition of “nearest suitable school” to reflect linguistic choice
  - c) That Cabinet engage formally, as a matter of urgency, with the “Save the School Transport – RCT/Wales” campaign, school leaders and governing bodies, to co-design mitigations and route-specific solutions, and to publish a public tracker of actions and walking-route reassessments. To furthermore, engage with the Children’s Commissioner for Wales and Welsh Language Commissioner.

Evidence from Estyn shows that rising transport costs and reduced provision act as barriers to school attendance, with knock-on impacts on attainment and progression. Access to Welsh-medium education is particularly sensitive to transport policy and that both the Welsh Language Commissioner and the Senedd have identified transport as a recurring barrier to linguistic choice.

- 2- Councillors discussed a second Notice of Motion on “self-propelled” or “twist-and-go” electric bicycles and scooters.

Plaid Cymru councillors supported the request that an Officer report be presented to Cabinet, which includes the potential to follow the examples set by other local authorities across the regions and nations and considers the potential for the Council to:

1. Recognise the distinction between pedal-assist EAPCs (permitted) and self-propelled / throttle-controlled e-bikes and e-scooters (prohibited unless registered as mopeds).
2. Consider the merits introducing appropriate signage for use in parks, cycleways, and pedestrian areas, making clear that only EAPC-compliant pedal-assist bicycles are permitted, could achieve.
3. Present options in respect of the use of appropriate legal powers — including byelaws, Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPOs), or other enforcement mechanisms — to restrict the use of self-propelled electric bicycles and scooters in designated public spaces. In doing so consider that any measures adopted should include appropriate exemptions for mobility scooters, disability-adapted cycles, and other mobility aids, in line with the Equality Act 2010.