

## ONE VOICE WALES

**RCT, Merthyr & Caerphilly Area Committee meeting held at Blackwood Town Council Building at 7pm on Wednesday 30 July 2025.**

### Minutes

#### **Present: Members**

Councillor Edward Dawson	Bedlinog & Trelewis Community Council
Councillor Cathrine Clark	Blackwood Town Council
Councillor K Etheridge	Blackwood Town Council
Councillor G Etheridge	Blackwood Town Council
Councillor Catrin Moss	Gelligaer Community Council
Councillor M Courtney-Solbach	Hirwaun Community Council
Councillor Adrian Harford	Hirwaun Community Council
Councillor Rob Smith	Llanharan Community Council
Councillor Mal Davies	Llantrisant Community Council
Councillor Jo Rao (Chair)	Maesycwmmer Community Council
Councillor Lynda Davies	Pontypridd Town Council
Councillor Michael Wedderien	Risca Town Council
Councillor A Broughton-Pettit	Van Community Council
Councillor Elliot Wigfall	Ynysybwll & Coed y Cwm CC

#### **Present: Clerks**

Bob Campbell, Clerk	Risca Town Council
Michelle Morris, Clerk	Van Community Council

#### **Apologies for Absence: Members**

Councillor Sally Davies	Risca Town Council
Councillor Colin Mann	Llanbradach & Pwllypant CC
Councillor Glen Evans	Tonyrefail & District CC

#### **Apologies for Absence: Clerks**

Ceri Mortimer, Clerk	Gelligaer CC
Tony Graham, Clerk	Pontypridd Town Council
Annemarie Bevan-Edwards, Clerk	Ynysybwll & Coed y Cwm CC

#### **One Voice Wales: Officers in attendance**

Maria Mulcahy: South Wales Development Officer

#### **RMCAC 2025/48 Welcome by Chair**

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting and gave everyone the opportunity to introduce themselves.

#### **RMCAC 2025/49 Apologies for Absence**



Apologies for absence as set out above.

**RMCAC 2025/50 Declarations of Personal Interest**

There were none declared.

**RMCAC 2025/51 Presentation from Alison Woodyatt, WAST Service Manager**

Key points from the Welsh Ambulance Service update:

- Alison gave an overview of the historic and current service delivery challenges and the benefits of having a positive working environment.
- Her presentation is about yellow emergency ambulances and leans towards RCT area as Wales is split into Health Board areas
- There are approximately 2000 front line staff. This includes paramedics, emergency technicians as well as specialist technicians.
- The way the Welsh Ambulance Service deals with the most serious 999 calls changed on 1 July 2025. A new purple category was introduced for people suffering from an out of hospital cardiac arrest and the red category was retained for life threatening emergencies those at high risk of cardiac or respiratory arrest including illnesses and trauma. The expectation is that ambulances will respond to these calls in an average of six to eight minutes.
- Does the person need an ambulance? The new approach places a greater focus on outcomes than response times. More is done over the phone to reduce the number of people that need to be conveyed to hospital. Their aim is a 20-30% reduction in hospital admissions and to increase support in the community.
- They are waiting to hear who is going to be the new Welsh Ambulance Service Chief Executive. Jason Killens the previous CEO is still the Chair of the UK Association of Ambulance Chief Executive (AACE).
- If fuel prices reduce it helps WAST to underspend as they are trying to save 2.7 million.
- Action is also being taken to improve ambulance handover at hospitals to support ambulance capacity to respond to 999 calls in the community.
- Nearest available resource is sent so sometimes ambulances from another area will respond to an emergency outside their area.



The Chair thanked Alison for giving up her time and providing an update on the Welsh Ambulance Service. A copy of the presentation would be provided to MM for circulation to members of the committee.

### **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

#### **RMCAC 2025/52 To elect a Chair for the year 2025/26**

No nominations had been received.

It was **Resolved** that Cllr Rao be re-elected as Chair and there were no objections.

#### **RMCAC 2025/53 To elect a Vice-Chair for the year 2025/26**

No nominations had been received.

It was **Resolved** that Cllr Moss be re-elected as Vice-Chair and there were no objections.

#### **RMCAC 2025/54 To elect two representatives to serve on the National Executive Committee (Currently Cllr Jo Rao and Cllr Mal Davies).**

It was **Resolved** that Cllr Rao and Cllr Davies remain as the area committee representatives on the National Executive Committee.

#### **RMCAC 2025/55 Arrangements for meetings in 2025/26 –**

15 October 2025 (Remote)

28 January 2026 (Remote)

8 April 2026

29 July 2026

It was **Resolved** that the dates are agreed and there were no objections.

### **ORDINARY MEETING**

#### **RMCAC 2025/56 To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 16 April 2025**

It was **Resolved** that the minutes are approved as a correct record.



**RMCAC 2025/57 Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on 16 April 2025.**

The two matters raised under RMCAC 2025/44 had been referred to One Voice Wales.

1. Area Committee regions – A motion has already been sent by Risca TC about being included in the Gwent Valleys area. Please refer to the original email request for motions sent on 7.4.25 which outlines the motion procedure. The final list of agreed motions will be issued to councils in time for their September meeting.
2. Qualified external audit opinion.

One Voice Wales were concerned with the dissatisfaction that some councils in Caerphilly had experienced in relation to the external audit process. Lyn Cadwallader and Paul Egan had an online meeting with Deryck Evans to share the concerns and seek a response

Audit Wales have confirmed that there is no appeals process in operation, but Audit Wales would be prepared to consider any concerns that Clerks/RFOs had subject to them providing evidence to suggest that the reasons for any qualifications were based on an incorrect assertion.

Concerns were also conveyed relating to information that had been provided about missing information and additional costs incurred when Audit Wales followed up on missing information.

It was **Resolved** that the information be noted.

**RMCAC 2025/58 Developments in Relation to Charters/Devolution of Services/Asset Transfers**

Caerphilly – Charter is still being discussed.

RCT – Draft charter has gone out to public consultation which will close on 25<sup>th</sup> August 2025. Councillors are concerned especially about lack of councillor liaison meetings.

Merthyr Tydfil CBC – Representative from Bedlinog & Trelewis CC will keep us updated on their queries relating to a charter.

Councils were invited to give a brief description of developments that were being planned or had been implemented.

No examples were provided.

It was **Resolved** that the information is noted



**RMCAC 2025/59 Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board  
Stakeholders Group – Report from Cllr Deenik**

Cllr Deenik has provided two detailed written reports which will be sent to members with the minutes

It was **Resolved** that this information be noted

**RMCAC 2025/60 Councillor Training programme and Consultancy Services**

Details of the training programme are circulated to all councils. One Voice Wales continues to deliver a broad range of training opportunities with bursaries available to eligible councils.

Consultancy Service is also available to members.

It was **Resolved** that the information be noted.

**RMCAC 2025/61 Development of Good Practice Guidance**

Since the last meeting, One Voice Wales had produced Practice Development notes on:-

- (15) Co-option 2025
- Who does what acronyms?
- Annual financial actions
- (13) Writing Reports

The following Practice Development Notes have been reviewed and updated:-

- (3) Pre-election period timetable review
- (4) Annual Report
- (5) Multi-Location meeting

It was **Resolved** that the information is noted

**RMCAC 2025/62 To receive the draft minutes of the National Executive  
Committee held on 20 June 2025**

The meeting was cancelled due to low number of confirmed attendees

It was **Resolved** that the information is noted.



**RMCAC 2025/63 To receive the draft minutes of the Larger Councils Committee held on 16 April 2025**

It was **Resolved** that the information is noted.

**RMCAC 2025/64 Guest speakers for Future Meetings.**

Members considered proposals for guest speakers at future meetings.

- Deryck Evans – Audit Wales
- South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner
- Warm Wales
- Rachel Carter – Local Places for Nature

It was **Resolved** the information be noted

**RMCAC 2025/65 One Voice Wales – New website**

Website has been live for member councils since 19 March.

It was **Resolved** that the information is noted

**RMCAC 2025/66 One Voice Wales Cost of Living Crisis Project**

An update about the work that the team are doing had been circulated with papers for this meeting

It was **Resolved** that the information is noted.

**RMCAC 2025/67 One Voice Wales Local Places for Nature**

Rachel Carter the One Voice Wales Local Places for Nature Officer has provided the following update:

- 2025 is a Section 6 Biodiversity reporting year and all councils should be preparing for this. All the information that councils need was sent out on 9 May as a follow up to the webinar series in April. There are details on the One Voice Website but if you require any other information contact Rachel.
- Several large projects are being undertaken such as events to promote dark skies.
- A new grant scheme is going to be launched subject to the availability of funds
- A new staff member has been appointed to the team to cover Local Places for Nature in the North Wales area.

It was **Resolved** that the information is noted.



**RMCAC 2025/68 Correspondence and Consultations**

MM gave a summary of the information that had been circulated by One Voice Wales since April

MM also pointed out the importance of reading the e-bulletins which are circulated to all councils in Wales. To reduce the number of emails being sent to councils the ebulletins are sent out twice a month and contain information that used to be sent out in individual emails. Going forward a newsletter which is exclusive to member councils will be also circulated each month which will highlight information only available to members.

It was **Resolved** that the information is noted.

**RMCAC 2025/69 Review of community arrangements for RCT**

The commission has received the decision from Welsh Government on its community review final recommendations which is to change the boundaries of 33 communities.

Due to the number of boundary reviews in Wales which will have an impact from 2027, One Voice Wales will be developing a plan to engage with member councils on the impact of community boundary reviews.

It was **Resolved** that the information is noted.

**RMCAC 2025/70 Upcoming Conferences and Events:**

- a) **One Voice Wales AGM – 1st October 2025.**
- b) **One Voice Wales Extraordinary AGM (Remote) – 3 September 2025.**

Members were reminded of the importance of their councils being represented at the remote EGM on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> September at 4 pm. The CEO sent a letter via email on 25.6.25 stating that each council must nominate one councillor to attend the online meeting and the importance of each council determining their position on the revised One Voice Wales Constitution and Governance Framework.

- c) **Joint OVW and SLCC Event on 12 November 2025.**

It was **Resolved** that the information is noted, and members will remind their councils.

**RMCAC 2025/71 Matters for Referral to the NEC**



- Members are concerned about the communication and relationship with Local authorities.

It was **Resolved** that the matters be referred to the NEC

### **RMCAC 2025/72 News and Reports from Councils**

Councils were invited to give a brief description of initiatives that were being planned or had been implemented: Examples reported are set out below

#### **Pontypridd Town Council**

After last years Vintage fun day in the park the council have decided to spread the summer season over a few weeks rather than spending a lot of money on one day. During August there will be :

- Brass band festival – this will include films and events in the park
- Road show – this is going out to all the wards rather than in the Town and is aimed at 5yrs old and upward
- Craft event
- Talks in museum
- Final event will be a ticketed music event in the museum.

#### **Bedlinog and Trelewis Community Council**

- 6<sup>th</sup> August – Children's event – They will be inviting a lot of local groups, and it will include crafts in climbing centre

#### **Van Community Council**

- Recently held their VE Day celebration
- During the summer holidays there will be-
- Tennis sessions – free for every child and guardian
  - Skateboard academy, forces for fitness & outdoor tug of war
  - Salvage creation – crafts for children

### **RMCAC 2025/73 Any Other Business at the discretion of the Chair**

It was **Resolved** that there was no other business

### **RMCAC 2025/74 Date of Next Meeting**

The Chair and members wished to thank Blackwood Council for allowing them to hold their meeting in their Council building.



It was **Resolved** that the next meeting will be held online at 7pm on Wednesday 15 October 2025

DRAFT