

ONE VOICE WALES

**RCT, Merthyr & Caerphilly Area Committee meeting held online at 7pm on
Wednesday 15 October 2025.**

Minutes

Present: Members

Councillor Edward Dawson	Bedlinog & Trelewis Community Council
Councillor Debbie Brown	Bedlinog & Trelewis Community Council
Councillor Catrin Moss	Gelligaer Community Council
Councillor M Courtney-Solbach	Hirwaun Community Council
Councillor Rob Smith	Llanharan Community Council
Councillor Lynda Davies	Pontypridd Town Council
Councillor A Broughton-Pettit	Van Community Council

Present: Clerks

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

Apologies for Absence: Members

	Bargoed Town Council
Councillor Megan Ingram-Jones	Bargoed Town Council
Councillor Cathrine Clark	Blackwood Town Council
Councillor Adrian Harford	Hirwaun Community Council
Councillor Colin Mann	Llanbradach & Pwllypant CC
Councillor Mal Davies	Llantrisant Community Council
Councillor Jo Rao (Chair)	Maesycwmmer Community Council
Councillor Elliot Wigfall	Ynysybwl & Coed y Cwm CC

One Voice Wales: Officers in attendance

Maria Mulcahy: South Wales Development Officer

RMCAC 2025/75 Welcome by Chair

The Chair had sent her apologies, and the Vice Chair welcomed members to the meeting.

RMCAC 2025/76 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence as set out above.

RMCAC 2025/77 Declarations of Personal Interest

There were none declared.

RMCAC 2025/78 Presentation from Rachel Carter the One Voice Wales Local Places for Nature Programme Manager and South Wales Biodiversity Officer.

Key points:

- Going forward there is going to be a Local Places for Nature Team.
Sam Langdon has been appointed as the North Wales Biodiversity Officer
- As part of the programme the team will be mapping out areas and making sure land is being managed and recorded accurately.
- Biodiversity Packages 2025 are available to all Community and Town Councils subject to the Local Places for Nature Grant criteria and acceptance of terms and conditions.

The packages are designed to provide the resources and support your council needs to deliver Biodiversity enhancements. The packages include: Planters and pollinators, wildflower areas, trees, bulbs, hedges and shrubs, habitat boxes, wildlife ponds, signage, citizen science & maintenance tools

Full details about why you should apply, what you need to apply and how to apply are set out in the biodiversity section on the One Voice Wales website. Please use the following link: [Local Places for Nature - One Voice Wales](#)

- Section 6 Reports – Once the reports are approved by council please send a copy of the report to Rachel with the link to where it can be found on your councils' website

The Vice Chair thanked Rachel for giving up her time and providing an update on the Local Places for Nature programme

RMCAC 2025/79 To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 30 July 2025

It was **Resolved** that the minutes are approved as a correct record subject to the typographical amendment to state that clerk Michelle Moore was present and not Michelle Morris.

RMCAC 2025/80 Matters arising from the minutes of the meeting held on 30 July 2025.

Matters for referral to NEC -Agenda item RMCAC 2025/71 Concern about communication and relationship with Local Authorities.

The matter was raised at the NEC meeting on 19.9.25 under item NEC 2025/18. It was resolved that the concerns are already being addressed through existing channels and in consultation with key partners such as Welsh Government and WLGA.

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

RMCAC 2025/81 Area Committee Survey Analysis

MM advised that unfortunately the survey is not representative of the whole sector as only 186 responses had been received out of 656 members.

A copy of the survey results and graphics providing a summary of the findings of the Area Committee survey was shared online during the meeting as well as a link being sent out with the agenda.

Overall, members present:

- agreed that they enjoyed having guest speakers at the meeting
- raised concern to how some member councils do not know about area meetings as information about meetings is sent to all member councils.

It was suggested in order to entice members to attend meetings that there is an award system. Information could also be sent out to council at time of renewing membership outlining the requirement to attend meetings

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

RMCAC 2025/82 Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board Stakeholders Group – Report from Cllr Deenik

No report available. Cllr Deenik will try to attend a future meeting to introduce himself to this Area committee as he is also the representative for Bridgend, Cardiff and the Vale Area committee.

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

RMCAC 2025/83 Developments in Relation to Charters/Devolution of Services/Asset Transfers

Caerphilly – Charter is still being discussed.
RCT – Draft charter is in consultation process
Merthyr Tydfil CBC – Representative from Bedlinog & Trelewis CC will keep us updated on their queries relating to charter.

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

RMCAC 2025/84 Councillor Training programme and Consultancy Services

A copy of a OVW training video had been shared with members during the meeting. Please use the following link to view - [Training Modules Overviews - One Voice Wales](#)

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 2025/85 Development of Good Practice Guidance

Since the last meet the following Practice Development notes have been reviewed:-

- Members allowances: Annual Timetable of Actions
- Practice Development Note 7 – Attendance – Six month Rule

Model Complaints Policy 2025 – Word documents have been sent out which councils can adapt.

It was **Resolved** that the information is noted but can also be found on the One Voice Wales website

RMCAC 2025/86 To receive the draft minutes of the National Executive Committee held on 19 September 2025

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

RMCAC 2025/87 Larger Councils Committee

The meeting is not scheduled to be held until 23rd October 2025.

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

RMCAC 2025/88 Guest speakers for Future Meetings.

South Wales Police and Crime Commissioner has accepted invitation to attend the January meeting.

Members considered proposals for guest speakers at future meetings.

- Deryck Evans – Audit Wales
- Warm Wales

It was **Resolved** the information be noted

RMCAC 2025/89 Upcoming Conferences and Events:

- 12 November 2025 - SLCC & One Voice Wales Joint virtual conference – Managing a Changing Environment
- Dates to be confirmed for next year's conferences

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

RMCAC 2025/90 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. Funding opportunities are showcased on the One Voice Wales website and social media.

Members were advised that a Social Impact Assessment survey will be issued shortly. The survey has been commissioned to measure the sector response to the Cost-of-Living crisis and will also evaluate the contribution that the OVW Cost of Living project team has made in that response

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

RMCAC 2025/91 One Voice Wales Local Places for Nature

- All town and community councils must submit their triennial biodiversity reports to Welsh Government by the end of this year.

Section 6 report writing workshops are taking place in October and November.

- Keep Wales tidy are running two free webinars
 - Green space and biodiversity webinar - 23.10.25
 - Local environmental quality webinar – 5.11.25

It was **Resolved** that the information is noted, and full information can be found in the Local Places for Nature section of the One Voice Wales website.

RMCAC 2025/92 Correspondence and Consultations

MM gave a summary of the information that had been circulated by One Voice Wales since July. This included the Welsh Government statement from the Cabinet Secretary for Housing and Local Government which provides an update on the actions to support the role, governance and accountability of the community and town council sector.

Members were reminded of the importance in replying to consultations. One Voice Wales Policy Officer Catrin Jones has sent details about two consultations recently. To inform the response from One Voice Wales it is important that members respond to Catrin in order that she can respond on behalf of members.

The closing date for the consultation on extending the duty on local authorities to broadcast meetings is 28 November but Catrin would need your council's response by 14 November if you wish to inform the response from One Voice Wales.

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

RMCAC 2025/93 Matters for Referral to the NEC

It was **Resolved** that there were no matters for referral to the NEC.

RMCAC 2025/94 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 Community Council

- The Council has received funding from Welsh Government to restore a 1910 pipe organ at Pontypridd Museum.

- The Morfydd Owen Festival took place over a weekend in Pontypridd. It celebrated their musical inheritance by having singers and songwriters from Pontypridd.

Risca Town Council

- The Council and the British Legion are holding a Remembrance Service and parade
- Festive season – They will be using their new lanterns
- Winter Fair – The Council will be holding their Christmas Lights switch-on event on Saturday 22nd November 2025.

Vann Community Council

- Vann Ward has been allocated participatory budget through GAVO and the NHS for 11 projects in the area. One of the projects is to grow beans in the Vann allotments
- Remembrance service to be held.
- The council will be hosting their Community Champion Awards in November.

Bedlinog & Trelewis Community Council

- A park within Bedlinog suffered a lot of storm damage. The Community council and Merthyr CBC are arranging for the footpaths to be re-laid.
- To celebrate the 200th anniversary of Cyfarthfa Castle a book launch took place to celebrate the connection between the people who lived, worked and visited the castle.

Gelligaer Community Council

- Holding a Christmas fair
- Funded a singing project for adults with additional learning needs.

RMCAC 2025/95 Any Other Business at the discretion of the Chair

MM advised members that One Voice Wales have been asked to establish whether any councils in Wales are responsible for any footpath maintenance in their area.

None of the councils represented at the meeting are responsible for footpaths in their area.

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

RMCAC 2025/96 Date of Next Meeting

It was **Resolved** that the next meeting will be held online at 7pm on Wednesday 28 January 2026

DRAFT