

Llanrug Youth Membership Scheme

Llanrug and Cwm y Glo Community Council has adopted a scheme to appoint two youth members to sit on the Community Council. The two members adopted are both students at Brynrefail Secondary School in Llanrug.

Over a number of years the Council has enjoyed a close relationship with the secondary school, contributing to the Welsh Baccalaureate work. The Council wished to build on this relationship and give the youth members the opportunity to voice their opinions on decisions that affect them, together with the opportunity of taking part in the process of local democracy.

The Local Government (Wales) measure 2011 gave Community councils the power to appoint up to two youth members, between 16 and 25 years of age, living or receiving their education, in the area.

The Council, which has 14 members, is very fortunate to have members with a vision for the future, and the make-up of the Council with 5 members in retirement and 9 in work ensures a wide experience. The Council acknowledges its responsibility to represent everyone in the community and feels that it is important that members hear the views and aspirations of the young people before making decisions. Because this opportunity presented itself through the above legislation, it was decided that the young people should be considered in any decision that could impact on them. The Council also hopes that attracting youth members will create an interest in young people to sit as Councillors in the future and to take an interest in politics.

As the secondary school is located within the Community Council catchment area, the Council wrote to the school to inform them of the scheme and their support was readily given. A number of enquiries were received but the Council agreed to appoint two youth members, one in the school's year 11 and the other in the sixth form.

It is hoped that the youth pupils will convey the Council's decisions and any issues for discussion to their friends through social media or on the school's communication system. Being a youth member of the council will surely be a great help for the pupils' future work prospects and will impress on their CV. In addition, we hope that the relationship between the Community Council, the school and the pupils in general will be further enhanced in future.

In a statement, Miriam and Beca, the youth members said, "We took the opportunity of being on the Community Council in order to expand our social skills, to ensure a voice for the youth of the community and to contribute to decisions for the good of the residents. We really enjoy having a voice on the council, and we hope that this opportunity will pass on to many more young people in future."

Below are the Chair of the Community Council, Councillor Goronwy Hughes with Miriam and Beca after the Council formally adopted their appointment.

