TREDEGAR TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Civic Committee of Council held at Tredegar Library on Wednesday 3rd February 2010 at 6.00 p.m.

Present: Councillor A. Williams
H. Trollope
A. Tippings
D. Howells
B. Willis
G. Woolf
S. Trollope
P. Prosser

In attendance: Ms. C.M. Keane – Acting Town Clerk
Mrs A. Jones – Acting RFO

355) Apologies: Cllrs. R. Thomas; T. Gregory; M. Cross; A. Cotton; H. Woolf; G. Bowen-Knight and D. Rowberry

356) TO WELCOME MR. ALWYN HOLLAND, BLAENAU GWENT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL WHO WILL OUTLINE THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION ACT AND THE NEW DRAFT CODE OF CONDUCT AND ANY IMPLICATIONS BOTH MAY HAVE TO ALL MEMBERS AND STAFF.

The Mayor Welcomed Mr. Holland who then spoke with clarity about the Freedom of Information Act, responding to Members questions. He pointed out that the response time of 20 working days was fixed and part-time agencies had no leeway and that correspondence via e-mail was acceptable.

Cllrs. Cross and O'Sullivan joined the Meeting at 6.35 pm.

He moved on to the New Draft Code of Conduct, again clarifying points from Members and outlining areas that may cause concern, cautioning Members to always be aware of public perception of them as either an individual or as a Councillor and to distinguish between the roles.

The Mayor thanked Mr. Holland for an interesting and informative presentation and he withdrew.

357) GRANTS

TO RECEIVE APPLICATIONS FOR CULTURAL/SPORTING GRANTS

Tredegar & Rhymney Golf Club Senior Section – a grant for £150 was recommended

TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER APPLICATIONS FOR GRANTS TO CHURCHES & CHAPELS (S.137)
Reconciliation Ministries, Calvary Pentecostal Church – a grant for £200 was recommended.

358) CORRESPONDENCE

1) BGCBC

(a) £1500.00 Christmas Lights grant from Tredegar Members. - Acknowledgement letter sent 3.2.10.

RECEIVED.

(b) Mr Rogers - Reply to letter re: Parked vehicles at Avalon Terrace.
Whilst shares the concerns he is aware of limited parking & possible restrictions may have an effect of displaced vehicles on adjoining street, therefore possible waiting restriction should be kept to a minimum, unable to commit to what future traffic schemes will be implemented due to funding in the next financial year.

Members were dismayed at the possibility that financial constrictions could impact on safety. Ward Members pointed out that cars coming from the Armoury Stores side towards the 24hr garage were generally over the white line because of the parking along Avalon Terrace. Members requested a breakdown of costs from the Borough for the work previously requested and a site meeting at a time when the road is busiest – during school pick up and drop off times.

(c) Ashley Owen – response to letter regarding hire charges for Tredegar Sports Centre. Unable to offer a reduction in the costs that had been agreed by the organiser during the pre-concert meetings. They regularly receive requests to waiver fees however in line with Local Authority policy they adopt a consistent approach and offer no reduction.

Again Members were dismayed at the negative response and it was pointed out that there was no chance to sell refreshments at the concert, also it was highlighted that the opportunity was taken by the Leisure Centre staff to distribute leaflets to the audience. It was agreed that other venues be investigated.

(d) Mark McIntyre – Breakdown of C2BG's performance. Opening hours were extended to 8pm on 4th & 5th January 2010 & subsequently went 24 hours for 2 weeks to respond issues arising due to severe weather.

Many Members queried the performance of C2BG over the Christmas period, with the ansaphone message still not being updated as of 19th January giving details of opening hours and collections dates that had passed. Also it was pointed out that at one stage the Emergency out of hours number was not working. The length of the ansaphone message meant that people on Pay As You Go Phones, often those on low incomes, having to hold for long periods of time, meaning that calls cost in excess of £1.50. Many Members commented on what they felt was the poor service being offered by the out of hours service. Many operators were unable to pronounce or follow the spellings of local names and were completely unaware of the geography of the area and offered advice such as in response to horses on the Deighton Field – "shoo them out" – potentially hazardous. It was agreed to write to Mr. McIntyre detailing these concerns.

(e) Mr D Waggett – Re: letter dated 27.1.10, letter has now been copied to Mr A Reed for him to respond to.

To be put forward to the Ordinary Meeting.

(f.) Alyson Tippings

(i) Heads of the Valleys Public Art Strategy. This strategy will form the basis for future funding bids such as the gates & screens in Bedwellty Park.

RECEIVED AND NOTED

(ii) Amended VRP grant funding for Nye Bevan Festival.

RECEIVED AND NOTED.

(g) Regeneration Partnership Board meeting 26.2.10 at 11am – items for the agenda to be submitted by Wednesday 10.2.10.

Copy to Cllr. J. Morgan. A Member made mention of the Town Landscape Initiative and suggested that it should be further investigated.

(h) Licensing

(i) W/Ending 24.1.10 Licensing List.

(ii) W/ending 31.1.10 Licensing List.

Both Received and Noted.

2) One Voice Wales

(a) Cymru Yfory Local Groups – dates of meeting being organised to raise the awareness of the need for the Assembly to have more powers.

RECEIVED AND NOTED

(b) Local Environmental Quality Improvement Projects 2010-11 Grant application form and details of possible available funding.

RECEIVED AND NOTED

(c) Countryside Council for Wales Funding Newsletter January 2010.

RECEIVED AND NOTED

(d) Advert for Independent Chair of the Regulatory Board for Wales, closing date 11.2.10.

RECEIVED AND NOTED

3) W.A.G. (a) Consultation on Accounts & Audit (Wales) amendment Regulations – details of proposed amendment, any comments are to returned by 19.2.10.

RECEIVED AND NOTED

(b) Borrowing by Community/Town Councils in 2010/11 – formal consent needs to be applied for by 12.3.10 for all borrowing which cannot be repaid within the financial year it has been borrowed.

RECEIVED AND NOTED

4) Ombudsman

Booklet on how to make a complaint about a public body – 25 copies.

Copy available for all Members.

5) SLCC Details and cost for SLCC membership which is due for renewal.

This was agreed.

6) Keith Hayden

Copy of letter sent by Cllr Hayden to BGCBC Planning Dept. raising concerns/objections against Planning Application C2010/0001 Domestic Abuse Centre.

Received.

7) Haydn Trollope

Email from Andy Taurins (Latvian Honorary Consul to Wales). Request to consider Twinning with Latvia, major events coming up in early July 2010 which Council can participate in.

It was agreed to schedule this item for consideration at a Meeting of the Community, Youth and International Sub Committee to be held before the Ordinary Meeting of Council on the 17th February 2010.

8) Andrea Williams

Forwarded email received from Ashley Meredith enquiring about upgrading the Council website.

It was noted that this matter was in hand.

9) Peter Johns Welsh Assembly email and broadband survey – completed survey to be sent to Brian Moon.

It was agreed to complete.

10) Nantyglo & Blaina Town Council

Copies of Draft Charter drawn up using the Torfaen Charter as a guide & a copy of the Caerphilly Charter. Opinions requested to enable a report to be drawn up.

Received.

11) Brecon Beacons National Park

Local Development Plan Update, rescheduled program for working group but Deposit Plan will still be produced by May 2010. Also planning a new training programme with Planning Aid Wales and will publicise dates soon.

Received. Copied to Cllr H Woolf 3.2.10.

12) Merthyr County Borough Council

Consultation on proposals to reorganise post-16 education and training in Merthyr Tydfil – observations to be submitted no later than 1.4.10.

Received – it was agreed to forward to Cllr. Williams and O'Sullivan.

13) Kidney Wales Foundation

Walk for Life 2010 newsletter – 20 copies.

Received – it was noted that the details of the Walk in Tredegar were to be published in a Feeling Good Project newsletter being distributed to every house in Tredegar. It was agreed to send a letter of thanks.

14) Shelter Cymru

Changes to Housing advice surgeries in Blaenau Gwent.

Received.

15) Llangollen International Eisteddfod. Two complimentary tickets for July.

Given to Cllr. H. Trollope to advise an available date.

16) Peter Watkins-Hughes

Dates of cinema release for his film "A Bit of Tom Jones" following the London Premier.

Noted. It was agreed to contact Mr. Watkins-Hughes to start the walk for Life in March 2010. It was agreed to send a letter of congratulation and thanks to him on the success of the film and the excellent image that he portrays of Tredegar, throughout the world.

17) Blaenau Gwent Public Health Team

New address from 27.1.10 is Aneurin Bevan Health Board, Blaenau Gwent Locality Office, Anvil Court, Church Street, Abertillery.

Noted

18) Bobath Wales

Details of Lord Mayor's Gala Concert in aid of Bobath, Friday 12.2.10 at 7.30pm, City Hall, Cardiff.

Open to any Member to attend.

19) NSPCC Request for Council to become a campaign partner by including their literature on our websites, internal communications and newsletters. To show support simply email NSPCC.

Received.

20) Community Health Council

Public Notice for next meeting Wednesday 10th February 2010 at 5.30pm Llanhilleth Miners Institute.

Received.

359) PUBLICATIONS

BGCBC Road works report w/commencing 22.1.10; BGCBC amended Road works report week commencing 22.1.10; BGCBC Road works report week commencing 29.1.10; Living Church Yards Winter 2009/10 Newsletter Issue 4; Wyevale Nurseries Hedging and Living Boundaries brochure

AVAILABLE FOR ALL MEMBERS

a) **A Member noted that the Wyevale Nurseries catalogue contained box hedging and requested a quote for the Clock perimeter.**

360) AGENDA

Executive Committee on Wednesday 27th January 2010 at 2pm Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Ebbw Vale; Consultation with Town/Community Councils Tuesday 26th January 2010 at 2pm Council Chamber, Civic Centre (3 Copies – posted to M. Cross & M. O'Sullivan); Consultation Town/Community Councils Thursday 28th January 2010 at 2.30pm Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Ebbw Vale – Minutes of the previous meeting – 2 copies (2 copies given to M.Cross); Consultation Town/Community Councils Thursday 28th January 2010 at 2.30pm Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Ebbw Vale – Reminder of pre-meeting in Committee room 3 at 2pm; Special Executive Wednesday 10th February 2010 at 2pm Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Ebbw Vale; Special Housing & Regeneration Scrutiny Committee Wednesday 24th February 2010 at 2pm Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Ebbw Vale.

AVAILABLE FOR ALL MEMBERS

361) MATTERS CONCERNING BEDWELLTY HOUSE AND PARK

1) Members requested a Meeting with Mr. David Watkins as a matter of urgency to discuss various issues including access to Bedwellty House, Borough Notice Boards and the Museum.

2) It was noted that Mr. Ron Jenkins had recently won a Gwent History Society Award. It was agreed to send congratulations. It was also noted that Mr. Ieuan Sheen had been made Chairman of Tredegar Historical Society.

362) PLANNING

a) to consider an Officer's Report – **None Received**

b) to consider Planning Applications submitted for Council's observations

App No	Applicant	Proposal
2010/0030	Mr W Steed Alta Vista Alexandra Place, Tredegar	Convert garden area into building plot for a private residence

NO OBJECTIONS

c) to consider other planning matters

2009/0148 & 2009/0149 Construction of poultry unit & retention of building for egg packing/storage/poultry rearing, Isaf Carreg Bica Farm - Appeal being held Wednesday 27.1.10 at 10am, The Seabourne Gallery, Metropole Cultural & Conference Centre, Abertillery **– overtaken by time**

It was agreed to nominate one Member from each Ward to represent Tredegar Town Council at Planning meetings in the Borough under the new guidelines, and it was agreed that Cllr. P. Prosser represent Sirhowy, Cllr. J. Morgan represent Georgetown and Cllr. B. Willis, Central & West.

363) MATTERS OF LOCAL INTEREST AND CONCERN

1) Members noted that Rebecca O'Connor from Cwm Seren was 100 on Monday 15th February and it was agreed that the Mayor visit with a bouquet.
2) Governors of St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary School announced that Miss Helen Fitzgerald was retiring at the end of term.
3) Members expressed concern at the number of horses in the Deighton fields over the Christmas holidays and at the response of the out of hours staff at Blaenau Gwent. It was agreed to write strong letter of complaint to Mr. Alan Reed at Blaenau Gwent CBC.
4) A Member requested a visit to the CCTV suite at Blaenau Gwent and it was agreed to write to Mr. Curtain and then to inform all Members.

364) TO CONSIDER THE EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC BY VIRTUE OF THE MATTERS TO BE DISCUSSED UNDER THE PROVISIONS OF THE LGA 1972 SCHEDULE 12A.

This was agreed unanimously.

365) TO RECEIVE THE VERBAL REPORT OF THE STAFFING AND FINANCE COMMITTEE AND THE RECOMMENDATIONS THEREIN.

The recommendations of the Staffing Committee were agreed until the question of working hours was raised by a Member. After considerable discussion and debate no agreement could be reached and it was agreed that this matter had to go back to the Staffing Committee for further discussion.

THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING CLOSED AT 8.55 PM

_____ Town Mayor