

TREDEGAR TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held at the Library, Tredegar on Wednesday 16th
March 2011 at 6.30p.m**

Present:	Councillor	H. Trollope
		B. Willis
		M. Cross
		A. Tippings
		G. Bowen-Knight
		D. Howells
		J Morgan
		P Prosser
		S. Trollope
		G. Rowberry
		H. Woolf

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

349) Apologies: Cllrs D. Rowberry, A. Cotton, K. Hayden, R. Thomas, G. Woolf and T. Gregory

Also present a member of the press.

It was noted by all Members that Cllr. Gregory was about to begin his treatment and it was agreed that his apologies would be taken as read. The Leader and all Members joined in sending Cllr. Gregory best wishes.

350) Declarations of Interest

The Chair reminded Members to make declarations of interest at the appropriate point on the Agenda.

351) Grants: To consider and approve grants to sporting and cultural organisations.

Thanks were noted from Transitions Counselling & Training Services; Hospice of the Valleys and Tredegar Town Band.

Hospice of the Valleys – A grant of £250.00 was approved with a request for the event literature to advertise the sponsorship from Tredegar Town Council.

Tredegar Angling Club – A grant of £150.00 was approved.

Churches & Chapels (s.137) to approve grants to Churches and Chapels – **There were none.**

352) Accounts: To Consider a Schedule of Accounts paid in February 2011 and for payment in March 2011

The cheques and invoices had been checked and reconciled by Members prior to the Meeting. A query was raised regarding payment for work to the lights around the Town Clock and it was noted that they had failed again within a week. It was agreed to withhold payment pending a site visit and Cllrs Cross and Willis agreed to attend.

It was agreed that the Clerk and RFO attend the relevant days of the SLCC conference. It was noted by Members that the end of the financial year was approaching and that Council were on budget, indeed slightly under. Thanks were expressed to the RFO for the tight management and scrutiny of costs throughout the year.

353) To receive a report on Changes in Banking Services from the RFO. Follows:

Report to Council

Changes in Banking Services

In January 2011 a meeting was held with Huw Walters-Davies, Local Business Manager, at Barclays Bank in Tredegar to discuss how the changes in future Banking Services would affect the Council. It must be noted at this point that these changes are affecting every individual and business. However, until the Governance & Accountability in Local Councils is amended to incorporate the changes in Banking Services it will not be possible for Council to implement them.

Recently Banks began to phase out the cheque guarantee system which will completely cease in June 2011 but these plans go further and Barclays Bank believe that by 2018 cheque payments will also have been completed phased out. This then leaves the question of how, in the future, will Tredegar Town Council be able to make/receive payments? This comes in the form of 3 options:-

- 1. Debit card (payment deducted immediately from Bank Account).*
- 2. Credit card (payment placed on an account to which Council must make a payment to at a later date – usually within 30 days or interest will be charged).*
- 3. On-line Services – transfer payments between accounts.*

Debit & Credit Cards

As stated above these two cards have different functions and at present it would not be possible to determine what would be the spending limit on either or the maximum allowable expenditure in a single transaction.

Under our current Banking Mandate, which requires two signatures per cheque, it would not be possible to have a Debit card but a Credit card may be available if we wished to enquire further.

Any future Debit/Credit cards issued to the Council can only be issued to a Named Officer i.e. the Clerk or R.F.O. and not directly to Tredegar Town Council – thus removing the security of two signatures required to authorise the payment. The future requirements, with the phasing out of cheques plus more products available to purchase on-line, would be that Council may require a Debit card and Barclays would issue two cards which are to remain with the two members of staff at all times (recommendation of Barclays). To strengthen security on usage of these cards both members of staff would receive an individual Membership Number, PIN Number and a debit card machine (which can be stored in the Council safe). This machine will issue a unique code each time which is to be used for on-line services but this code is only obtainable by inputting the Membership Number and PIN Number with the correct Debit card.

The Debit card with PIN Number would give staff the facility to make on-line, in-store or over the telephone purchases. However this then leaves it possible for staff to make purchases without prior approval of Council which could result in frivolous overspending. Therefore besides amendments being made to the Governance & Accountability in Local Councils guidelines, it would be necessary for Council to also review its own Financial Regulations and set new procedures to control this form of purchasing.

On-Line Services

Currently Tredegar Town Council has three accounts – Current, Base Rate Tracker and Business. However we only actually use two of the accounts on a month to month basis and it may be prudent to review the number of accounts at the point of changing to on-line services to reflect our usage and to make transactions more manageable i.e. reduce the risk of incorrect movements between accounts. Also new types of accounts may be available to Council which will offer more on-line services than we are currently entitled to.

The aim of on-line services is to give the Bank's customers more flexibility in making/receiving payments, control of their own accounts and to reduce costs to the Bank's customers (which in turn also reduces the Bank's costs due to minimal manual work required). The reduction in costs comes in the form of paperless statements (although these will still be available but at a cost per statement) and all on-line transactions will be free.

On-line services give the facility to make payments direct into the recipient's account. However, it is vital that the bank details supplied are accurate and updated regularly to avoid payments being made to wrong accounts. In fact Mr Walters-Davies did point out that once a bank account is closed it will be re-issued to another customer after six months. This highlights the importance of accurate information particularly as the system will automatically store the details of regular recipients.

With a change over to on-line services our current Mandate of two signatures per transaction would once again not be valid. However there is currently a facility available where one person makes the transaction but a second person must "log on" to approve the transaction for it to be completed. This facility is available at a cost of approximately £50.00 per month (charges may fluctuate over the next few years) and any savings we make by changing to on-line services would be minor, in fact to incorporate the two person on-line approval facility at £50.00 per month would increase our costs.

Mr Walters-Davies did highlight that on-line services offer you a level of security in that each transaction can be traced back to the member of staff who processed it and as it is necessary for all four pieces of the on-line banking services (i.e. Debit card, Membership Number, PIN Number and debit card machine) to be used to obtain the unique on-line code plus being able to negotiate the various security screens/questions, fraudulent transactions could not be made unless by the member of staff!

Summary

Cheques will be phased out by 2018 with the move to using on-line services; payments can be made either by using the on-line services or by debit/credit cards; Named officers of the Council would be responsible for the debit/credit cards issued and required to keep them safe.

As previously stated, until changes are made to the Governance & Accountability in Local Councils guidelines this report is purely for information and no action can be taken. But it must be remembered that Council will also need to revise its own Financial Regulations to implement new security and procedures to prevent fraudulent transactions. There will also still remain the need to have a paper trail for all transactions for annual accounts and auditing purposes. Council must also be mindful of the integrity of current and future staff to limit the risk of fraud.

Annette Jones R.F.O. 22nd February 2011

The report on proposed changes to Banking Services was received. It highlighted the proposed phasing out of cheques and that the cheque guarantee card had already gone. The changes would affect Town and Community Councils across the country and present Legislation was not sufficient to cover the changes. This was one of the topics for discussion at the SLCC Conference, which the RFO would be attending. The possibility of an additional security package, costing £50 per month was highlighted. It was noted that the present arrangements in place to view constitutions and bank accounts for grant applications was sound and that it would be vital to keep these records up to date. The information that accounts were "recycled"

after 6 months surprised everyone. It was agreed that One Voice Wales would be instrumental in putting processes in to place and that the subject being raised at the SLCC Conference was timely.

The RFO was thanked for her attendance and left at 7pm.

354) To receive a report on the Heritage Summit by the Clerk. Follows:

Clerk's Report to Council

The "Heritage Summit" Tredegar Rugby Club, Wednesday 9th March 2011.

The idea of the Summit was to bring together like minded people not only from organisations that already had an interest in the history and architecture of the Town, but from right across the board. To put forward buildings that need saving, not only because of their status as Listed buildings, but because of their place in history. The advance publicity had made it very clear that this was the purpose of the evening. The guest speakers that were invited came with this one aim in mind. The publicity was a total success, with an estimated 300 people attending.

However, the message of the Summit seemed not to have reached some of them, who were intent on broadening the remit of the meeting to take in the whole economy and general appearance, mainly of the town centre and its shops. Whilst it was apparent that a number were determined to make their point about the state of the town, the Officers of the Borough who had attended were obviously not expecting this change of direction and were therefore ill-prepared to answer some of the questions that came from some members of the public.

Whilst parts of the meeting were extremely uncomfortable for our invited speakers they were all impressed by the turn out.

A number of people have asked why there was no agenda for the meeting – this was intended to be an open forum for members of the public to bring their concerns about the buildings that they cared for – not for discussion to be driven from the Council's part. A number have also said that the PA system was inadequate – however the number of people in the room and the underlying noise level would probably have rendered most ineffective. Unfortunately the roving mike that we were to use was not available, which we discovered whilst setting up.

Conclusion.

The result of the meeting was that 87 people left their contact details, with 17 people offering their services for the steering group. The proposed contact with the Architectural Heritage Fund needs to be managed carefully, with those on the steering committee having the skills to move the project forward. Everyone has something that they can contribute, the art now will be to match them with a function that helps, not hinders, the proposals.

Christine Keane Town Clerk 16th March 2011

The Clerk's report on the Heritage Summit was received and read by Members, despite some access problems to the venue, the information had been retrieved only that morning but a comprehensive list of the 87 who had attended and asked to be kept informed of progress and also the 17 who had put their names forward for the Steering Committee, had been compiled. It was agreed to write to the Architectural Heritage Fund to invite them to attend a Meeting of the Heritage Committee.

Thanks were expressed to all those who had prepared information for the Meeting and had attended. Special thanks were given to the Press who had helped to publicise the evening widely.

It was agreed to move the report to a Meeting of the Heritage Committee to further discuss the setting up of the Steering Committee.

355) To receive and adopt the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held on 16th February 2011.

The Minutes were received and approved as a true record.

356) Matters arising not on the Agenda.

- 1) Minute No. 327 (4) Mrs. Bolt had previously agreed to attend the Heritage Summit, but had to withdraw at short notice, Members raised again the artefacts taken to Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan and also amount of time the minor injuries unit was open, which meant that there was a lack of cover especially during the times relating to local/school/ club sporting fixtures. The lack of pharmacy cover was raised again.
- 2) Minute No. 327 (5). Walk for Life. It was agreed to contact those who had previously taken part. Sponsor forms available from the Office. Time and location confirmed as 2pm on Sunday 27th March 2011 at Parc Bryn Bach.
- 3) Minute No. 327 (7). YETI – it was noted that this had been a tremendous success and that the winning group had been commissioned to produce their product, a baby hamper, for local charities.
- 4) Minute No. 327 (8) Orpheus. The Mayor was thanked for attending and it was noted that the Choir would be featuring in a BBC programme filmed at Blackwood Institute with Connie Fisher in May. A new list of long serving members would be provided by the Secretary of the Choir.
- 5) Minute No. 328 (13) A report on the progress of the sculpture for Orvault was made, with news that it was almost complete. Wording for the sculpture would be in the form of a quote from Aneurin Bevan to be provided by the Deputy Leader, and would also include the fact that it was a gift from the people of Tredegar to the people of Orvault.
- 6) Minute No 332 (c) Following previous discussion of the Anniversary of the Jewish Riots in August a Member queried whether the stone Menorah (a candle bridge used during worship) was still in the synagogue. It was understood that this was now a private house and had been remodelled. It was agreed to forward this to the Heritage Committee.
- 7) Minute No 332 (d) Woodfield Rd. Clerk to contact Planning and Highways again re the unloading of materials. (to be copied to action group)

357) To receive and adopt the Minutes of the Heritage Committee Meeting of Council held on 2nd March 2011.

The Minutes were received and approved as a true record.

358) Matters arising not on the agenda

The Member of the press present expressed a wish to be kept up to date with information and stated that her paper would like to run a series of features on the buildings that had been highlighted at the Summit, with the potential for their uses highlighted. This suggestion was welcomed by all

359) To receive and adopt the Minutes of the Civic Sub-Committee Meeting of Council held on 2nd March 2011.

The Minutes were received and approved as a true record.

360) Matters arising not on the agenda.

There were none.

361) Correspondence.

- 1) BGCBC (a) N. Deufel
(i) Re: Waterford Crystal Vase – No decisions made on the which inventory items are returning but once she has the list she will arrange a consultation meeting with Town Council. Also confirming site visit date of Friday 18.3.11 at 3pm.
(ii) Proposes that Council meet with Programmes Officer Ruth Bradburn at the next Events Committee to share plans for the Welcome Back Celebration and future events.

RECEIVED.

- (b) S. Smith, Planning – They will only send hard copies of complex applications (for a short period of time) and all staff have been informed that due to reduced staffing levels & budget it is necessary for the applications to be sent electronically only. Also they are moving towards the request of Government which is to increase electronic correspondence to reduce the paper mountain.

RECEIVED. It was thought by Members that the cost of Planning Applications also included the cost of a number of copies of the plans put forward – Clerk to check.

- (c) Highways - Reply to letter dated 7.3.11 Re: Replacement of Stone Blocks with Bitmac. Due to failure of stone setts in The Circle & Commercial Street there was no option other than to replace them with bitmac patching to maintain such highways to a safe standard for users. It is assumed eventually all areas will have to be replaced with bitmac which is the only option until finance is available for a complete scheme to enhance these areas.

RECEIVED. It was suggested by a Member that the materials used would be regulated because the area was in a Conservation Area, this status having caused many problems for shopkeepers regarding the installation of shutters. Clerk to follow up.

- (d) Draft First Revision of the Blaenau Gwent Regeneration Strategy is available (link supplied in email), comments to be submitted by 21.4.11 – forwarded to Cllr Morgan 14.3.11

RECEIVED. It was agreed that Cllr. J. Morgan would draft comments and bring before Council.

Cllr. B. Willis declared an interest in the following item and took no part in the discussions or voting thereon.

- (e) (i) List of Licensing Applications week ending 25.2.11.
(ii) List of Licensing Applications week ending 4.3.11

RECEIVED.

- (f) Planning RE: Energy from Waste Generating Station, Cwmbargoed, Merthyr Tydfil – Two further drop-in sessions being held 15th & 16th March in Merthyr Tydfil & Caerphilly respectively on how people can make their case to the IPC (deadline 26.3.11). BGCBC issued the press release after Council decided at its meeting on 3.3.11 that residents of the County Borough were not well informed about the proposals.

RECEIVED. This item was taken with item 6 on Correspondence. The letter supporting objection to the proposed development sent to the meeting at Dukestown Club, had been viewed by a number of Councillors, from all parties, and the content agreed.

3) One Voice Wales

- (a) Notice of annual membership due 1.4.11 £1759.
(b) National Training programme for Community & Town Councils in Wales. Timetable, venues & costs for each module (8 modules available).
(c) Funding Newsletter March 2011.

ALL RECEIVED. It was unanimously agreed that the service from OVW had been invaluable and the annual membership costs of £1759 were agreed.

- 4) SLCC (a) Reminder for the Larger Councils' Conference "Establishing the Impact of Localism" 14th & 15th April 2011 at Hilton Hotel, Cardiff. Early bird booking extended to 31.3.11
(b) Resolving Workplace Disputes – Government Consultation period closes 20.4.11. SLCC intends to respond to the proposals and welcomes any input from members. Comments to be submitted to SLCC National Employment Advisor by Friday 1.4.11

BOTH RECEIVED. It was agreed that both the Clerk and the RFO attend the conference on the days most relevant to them

5) Civic Trust for Wales

- (a) Invitation to participate in Open Doors 2011 event. Event information to be submitted by 31.5.11 to be included in their promotion.
(b) Confirming receipt of Clock Open Doors registration and asking if there are any other sites in the surrounding area that may also be able to participate.

RECEIVED. It was agreed to open the Clock to the public on Saturday 10th September 2011 from 10 am to 1 pm.

- 6) Cllr A Tippings Request for letter of support to be sent to the protesters against the incinerator for their meeting at Dukestown Club – letter done & hand delivered 15.3.11

See Minute No 361 (1)(f)

- 7) K. Hughes Feedback regarding the Heritage Summit meeting.

RECEIVED. – Forward to the Heritage Committee.

- 8) J. Wilcox Link to Wellington Bomber film on You Tube.

RECEIVED. Members noted that this was now available to view on YouTube and also noted that a number of people did not have access to the medium and would not be able to view the film. There was some concern that the film had not been viewed by Council prior to its release. The film was highly commended by all those who had seen it and it was agreed that the Town Council should organise a public screening for the film.

- 9) Kidz R Us Invite to heritage presentation on a project based upon local parishioners who died in service during World War I, memorial plaque still on display at Park Place Chapel. Thursday 24.3.11 at 7pm Venue 1.

RECEIVED. All Members had received details of the presentation and were encouraged to attend, there was a suggestion that the T2520 film might be featured too.

- 10) Cllr Trollope Copy of reply received from Homemakers Re: Visit to Monwell Hankinson.

RECEIVED. Discussion followed the reading of the reply and it was agreed by a majority, with one abstention, that this be accepted and the grant cheque forwarded to them.

- 11) Brecon Beacons National Park

- (a) BBNP Local Access Forum meeting on Thursday 17.3.11 at 2pm BBNP Authority Headquarters – forwarded to Cllrs R.T/H.W.
- (b) Draft Community Council Charter – meetings with Town & Community Councils. If Council is unable to send a representative to one of the consultation meetings then please submit written/email comments by 25.3.11 - forwarded to Cllrs R.T/H.W.
- (c) Amended letter Re:- Draft Community Council Charter – meetings with Town & Community Councils. Deadline for feedback on the Draft Charter is extended to end of April.- forwarded to Cllrs R.T/H.W.

RECEIVED. Whilst it was agreed that there was little relevance to the town of Tredegar, it was further agreed that items from the National Park should still feature in correspondence as a matter of interest. All items to be available for Members at the Office.

- 12) RAF Benevolent Fund Thanks for the donation of £157.10 raised at the T2520 Memorial Service and it will be used to support members of the RAF family.

RECEIVED.

- 13) Lt. Col. B. Bennett Thank you for the honour of the award and for the wonderful reception both he and his wife received, it was a memorable & enjoyable evening.

RECEIVED, with pleasure.

- 14) Armed Forces Day

- (a) Friends of Deighton Primary. Wish to supply artwork again for this year's AFD
- (b) Tesco - £20 gift voucher towards AFD event.

RECEIVED.

- 15) WCVA New Convergence PQQ (Pre Qualification Questionnaire) by ILM (Intermediate Labour Market) now covers B.Gwent. Details of briefing sessions.

RECEIVED.

- 16) Olive Tree Theatre Details of "A night at the Musicals" available 11.4.11 to 3.6.11, book before 11.4.11 to receive 40% off the first booking.

RECEIVED. It was noted that there had been little contact from the Sherman Theatre and it was agreed to write ref. the Night Out scheme.

- 17) E4Events Details of services they offer in organising/staging events.

RECEIVED.

18) Kidney Wales Foundation

Details on Walk for Life 2011

RECEIVED. It was agreed that the incoming Mayor, Cllr. Bernard Willis would take charge of the registration and the event at Parc Bryn Bach on Sunday 27th March 2011 starting at 2pm. There was some discussion surrounding the attendance at the cheque presentation evening.

19) Communicorp

(a) Clerks & Councils Direct March 2011 Issue 74

(b) Local Councils Update March 2011 Issue 137

RECEIVED.

20) The Valleys posters for events in Blaenavon.

RECEIVED.

362) PUBLICATIONS

BGCBC Road works report week ending 11.3.11; Flagmakers Catalogue 2011/12; Ville D'Orvault Bordereau d'envoi February 2011 & Le Cens Pratique March 2011 No. 123; Sign Of The Times Street signs cards; BGCBC Road works report week ending 18.3.11; Nomix Enviro Leaflet on reasons why to use Nomix residual herbicide; Glasdon Direct 2011 brochure

AVAILABLE FOR ALL MEMBERS

363) AGENDA

Education & Leisure Scrutiny Committee Wednesday 9th March 2011 at 2pm Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Ebbw Vale; Environment Scrutiny Committee Thursday 10th March 2011 at 2pm Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Ebbw Vale; Executive Committee Wednesday 9th March 2011 at 11am Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Ebbw Vale; Special Finance, Improvement & Performance Scrutiny Committee Tuesday 15th March 2011 at 11am Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Ebbw Vale; Blaenau Gwent Heritage Forum Meeting on Thursday 17th March 2011 at 9.30am Tredegar Library; Special Education & Leisure Scrutiny Committee Friday 18th March 2011 at 2pm Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Ebbw Vale; Special Finance, Improvement & Performance Scrutiny Committee Tuesday 15th March 2011 at 11am Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Ebbw Vale; Special Education & Leisure Scrutiny Committee Friday 18th March 2011 at 2pm Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Ebbw Vale

AVAILABLE FOR ALL MEMBERS

364). Delegates: To receive and consider reports from Delegates to Outside Bodies and the recommendations of Sub-Committees/working Parties.

- i. Bedwellty Park Management Board – **No Report**
- ii. Joint Committee of Local Councils – **A meeting of the Joint Committee had agreed the Charter and the points of concern to be put forward to the Borough at the next Consultation Meeting. At this meeting the concerns were accepted and after many years the Charter was finally agreed. The Mayor of Tredegar minuted his thanks to the Mr. Steve Bartlett, Clerk of Nantyglo and Blaina, for the effort that and time that he had spent to finally get the Charter agreed.**
- iii. Gwent Valleys One Voice Wales – **an interesting presentation by Ms. Shelley Bosson regarding the new post of Chief Commissioner of Police. Some interesting points raised – the lack of qualification requirements or knowledge**

of policing required and the post would not be vetted. It was to be an elected post.

- iv. Tredegar Twinning – **The sculpture for the Orvault visit was nearing completion, and a representative of the Town Council was still being sought (volunteers requested) – a list of meeting dates was requested by Members.**
- v. School Governing Bodies– **No Report**
- vi. Blaenau Gwent Council for the Disabled– **No Report**
- vii. Parc Bryn Bach Management Committee – **N.B.A site meeting of the Events Committee had preceded this and it was noted that the Manager had not been available and that no other Member of staff had met us. It was a sunny afternoon and it was noted that there were over 20 cars in the playground area and that a number of people had tried to gain access to the Visitor Centre which was closed (operating Winter Hours). A number of cars were parked outside the main gates on the main road because of the notice of closing times. It was noted that the cafeteria stopped serving at 3pm promptly. The potential for profit was noted by Members and the loss currently being made was a matter of great concern to all.**
- viii. Tredegar Youth Café– **No Report**
- ix. Blaenau Gwent CAB– **No Report**
- x. Communities First Board – **upcoming social evening was reported.**
- xi. Tredegar Crime Prevention Panel– **No Report**
- xii. Tredegar Business Forum – **It was noted that 3 new members had joined and that they had requested a stall to support Armed Forces Day.**
- xiii. Blaenau Gwent Regeneration Forum– **No Report**
- xiv. Blaenau Gwent Heritage Forum– **No Report**
- xv. Blaenau Gwent HARPS Project – **an event at Bryn Bach Primary School was highlighted and it was noted that the children attending the school clean their teeth in the school every day.**

Cllr. B. Willis declared an interest in the following item and took no part in the discussion or voting thereon.

365) Planning:

- a) **To consider an Officer's Report – none received.**
- b) **To consider Planning Applications submitted for Council's observations.**

App No	Applicant	Proposal
2011/0068	Mr G Brown 24 Scwrfa Road, Tredegar	Garage.
No Objections		
2011/0062	Mr W K Wong 28 Commercial Street	New shop front and roller shutter with external repairs
No Objections		

2011/0069	Ms MacFadyen Cheque Centre Ltd, The Forum, Bankhead Crossway North Edinburgh	Change of use of retail premises from Class A1 (shops) to Class A2 (Financial & Professional Services) 22A Gwent Shopping Centre
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No Objections

2011/0070	Mr J Pendry 12 Fair View, Tredegar	Detached garage with pitch roof
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No Objections

2011/0073	Mrs S James 35 Brompton Place, Tredegar	Two storey & single storey rear extension
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No Objections

2011/0075	Mr C Morse Dorian House Tynewydd, Tredegar	Retention of fence with a gate and new bridle gate, Land, adjacent to Dorian House, Tynewydd
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Council were minded to object on the following grounds:

- 1) whether the land owner had given permission for the development**
- 2) the pedestrian access is on a difficult angle**
- 3) the bridle gate should be on the line of the bridleway and not adjacent to it**
- 4) there was also a query regarding an amount of land that had been cleared of trees but did not feature on the application.**

2011/0079	Mr S Phillips 34 Fields Road, Tredegar	Demolish existing toilet and build single storey bathroom extension to rear elevation, 56 James Street
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No Objections

c) To consider other planning matters

2009/0283 OUT Former Gas Holder Station, Vale Terrace, Planning Obligations – Reply to letter dated 22.2.11 Re: financial contributions for Education in relation to the proposed development. Encloses the report to Planning Committee which sets out the reasons why the planning obligation was not required – extreme high costs of remedial work at the heavily contaminated site and strong desire to return site to beneficial use in the public interest means that it was not considered appropriate to seek planning obligations.

Members were dismayed that this obligation had not been upheld. It was also felt that there were uses, other than housing, that may be more beneficial to the area. This application also highlighted to Members the need for full scale, printed, copies of the plans to be available for inspection.

366) Matters of Local Interest or Concern

- 1) A recent visit had been made to Bedwellty House and Park by both staff and Members. The Leader outlined the progress that had been made since the last visit and the tremendous amount of work that had taken place in the Park itself with new seating, planting overall and the relaying of the tennis courts. However he queried whether the proposed use of the Council Chamber for the handover from outgoing to incoming Mayor would be possible – even for the extended date of the 26th May 2011. Another Member noted two areas for concern 1) the housing for the Waterford Crystal that had been removed and 2) the rose garden in front of the house that had been established to commemorate the 50th Anniversary of World War II, commissioned by**

the War Graves Commission, planted with roses that had been recommended by them – and consecrated. This too been removed, it had been replanted but not with the same theme in mind.

The Boundary Wall – originally discussions surrounding the wall had led Members to believe that it would be demolished and rebuilt. However this had proved too costly and repairs were being made, with different materials being tested.

Council Office space – preliminary discussions concerning the move had involved a like for like arrangement on return. The single office that had been allocated to the Council was questioned during the visit – the Manager of the House knew nothing about the previous discussions and Mr. Watkins advised a Member that we would have to talk about it. The need to clarify the space available is becoming more pressing.

The Mayor's Parlour – it was pointed out that this area used to house much memorabilia and the drinks cabinet for the Parlour, which had traditionally been used for entertaining visiting guests in the past.

The design on the rear of the housing for the block of stone had been queried and it transpired that it was of a fern – one of the original plant derivations of coal.

It was pointed out during the visit that the original design of the Walled Garden had been altered slightly, meaning that the space originally nominated as the “Green Gym” during Cllr. Morgan's Mayoral Year as a part of his Appeal would not now be possible. He agreed to discuss the best use of the money, currently on hold, with Ms. Deufel, the House Manager and the Heart & Stroke Foundation.

It was agreed to contact Ms. Deufel to raise many of these concerns.

Cllr. G. Rowberry left the Meeting at 8.55pm

2) A photograph of the entrance to Bedwellty House dated approx. 1908 showing the Lodge being built had been handed to a Member by a member of the public who had found it in the skip outside the Crown public house. This had duly been given to the Heritage Group.

3) Staffing and the Future Jobs Fund – it was noted that the Fund was due to close on the following Friday and that application for a replacement clerical assistant would need to be in place the following day. This was agreed, Clerk to action as a matter of urgency.

THERE BEING NO OTHER BUSINESS THE MEETING CLOSED AT 9PM.

_____ Chair