

TREDEGAR TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of an Ordinary Meeting of Council held at The Library, Tredegar on Wednesday 18th August 2010 at 6.00 p.m. to meet with Ms. Bobby Bolt of Aneurin Bevan Health Board.

Present:	Councillor	H. Trollope
		M. Cross
		A. Tippings
		B Willis
		P. Prosser
		G. Woolf
		K. Hayden
		D. Howells
		R. Thomas

In attendance: Ms. C.M. Keane – Town Clerk

Also present: Ms. Bobby Bolt and Ms. Joanne Absalom and several members of the public.

131) Apologies: Cllrs. Bowen-Knight, J. Morgan, S. Trollope, H. Woolf, D. Rowberry and T. Gregory.

132) To meet with Ms. Bobby Bolt, Locality Director for Blaenau Gwent – Aneurin Bevan Health Board to consider the following questions posed by Members:-

- a) Tredegar General Hospital
 - i) The future use of the hospital.
 - ii) Minor casualties – the use of the General Hospital and effect on Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan.
- b) Doctors Surgeries – rumours about the relocation of surgeries from the General Hospital site.
- c) Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan
 - i) Public transport provision from Tredegar.
 - ii) Facilities available – A & E, Dialysis etc.
 - iii) Outpatient facilities.
 - iv) Morgue facilities – are these available on site.
- d) Are there plans to introduce a needle exchange scheme (diabetics etc)
- e) Questions arising.

Cllr. Trollope began by explaining the normal operation of meetings to the members of the public present and that there would be an opportunity for them to put questions throughout.

All Members introduced themselves and Ms. Absalom began by outlining the changes which had been made to the Local Health Boards and then Ms. Bobby Bolt went on to further explain the changes and consultations that had already taken place.

Ms. Bolt outlined the facilities available at Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan in detail explaining that it was much more a “rehabilitation” hospital with therapy units both in and out door. There had been an

expansion facility built in to the present structure meaning that it had been “future-proofed” and also provision for a docking station to house a visiting mobile unit i.e. CT or MRI Scanner.

Slides of the rooms and the open areas of the hospital were shown and the “green” credentials of the building were highlighted. As were the ensuite rooms all with large windows and open views.

A number of questions were put to the representatives of the Health Board both by Members and members of the public present, including the lack of dialysis provision – the response that this was a specialist service and that they felt that a service within Blaenau Gwent was “not warranted”. However following discussion the representatives of the Health Board agreed to feedback issues regarding access to dialysis. Transport to and from the hospital was also raised as an issue and the Meeting was informed that discussions were underway with a bus company. A Member queried whether the religious requirements of the patients would be catered for and was informed that there was a hospital Chaplain and a Faith Room. She also highlighted the need for those who were unable to get to the Faith room to be catered for and that local pastors should be allowed access. They agreed to look into these issues. It was noted that there was to be no out of hours pharmacy at the hospital and concerns were noted and the Meeting was informed that this would be looked at. The Saturday clinic held by the Hospice of the Valleys at the General Hospital had recently been halted and Ms. Bolt, who knew nothing about it said that she would look into the matter.

Questions relating to infection control were answered satisfactorily and the question relating to the morgue was met with the response that either family would contact an undertaker or the deceased would be moved to Nevill Hall if a post mortem were required. The Board members were unaware of problems relating to needle exchanges (by diabetics) and promised to look into this matter.

The overwhelming concern was for the future of Tredegar General Hospital. Neither of the Aneurin Bevan Health Board members could guarantee the future of the General Hospital building. The final decision on the fate of the building itself was outside the control of the Health Board. Some artefacts were to be transferred to Ysbyty Aneurin Bevan to feature in a display. A Member queried the fate of other artefacts and was told that the Board would arrange a meeting with the local Archive Group and also were to meet the Hospital Linen Guild who had members present.

The planned changes meant that part of the General Hospital building would be closed very shortly, however this part contained the boiler room and computer equipment for the rest of the building and plans for access were still being made. Members suggested alternative uses for the part to be closed – this included use by the Hospice of the Valleys and as a Museum. Both members of the Health Board said that possibilities could be considered. A Member of Council pointed out that the General Hospital bordered Bedwellty Park which was currently the subject of major renovation and was within a Conservation area and feared that the prospect of the building being shuttered or boarded up against the backdrop of the Park would detract from the extensive renovation taking place. Again all those present stressed the importance of the General Hospital building to the people of Tredegar and highlighted its part in the social history of the town.

The Meeting concluded with the Mayor thanking the members of the public for attending and both Ms. Bolt and Ms. Absalom for their presentation and responding to questions from both Members and public who were present and they were asked to keep the Council informed of progress Ms. Bolt concluded by stating that as soon as the contractors were off site, visits would be organised, this was likely to be in October.

There being no other business the Meeting closed at 8.05 p.m.

_____ Chair