

TREDEGAR TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held in the Council Chamber on Wednesday 20th January 2016 at 6.30pm

Present: **Councillor** **T. Smith**
 A. Tippings
 M. Cross
 B. Willis
 D. Howells
 H. Trollope
 D. Rowberry
 O. Price
 S. Trollope
 R. Watkins
 S. Baker

In Attendance: **Ms A Jones – RFO**

Following the recent passing of Mrs Kay Prosser, wife of Cllr P. Prosser, a minute's silence was held.

Members spoke of their fond memories of Kay and that their thoughts and prayers were with Phillip and his family at this very sad time. It was agreed to send a letter of condolence to Cllr Prosser and that details of the funeral are to be circulated to all Members.

284) Apologies. **Cllrs G. Meredith, J. Thomas, J. Morgan, P. Prosser and R. W. Thomas.**

In the absence of the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor, Cllr Smith took the Chair for the meeting.

285) Declarations of Interest.

The Chair reminded Members to make their declarations as and when necessary.

286) To receive a brief presentation from John Smale, Community Connectors BGCBC.

Cllr H. Trollope informed the meeting there was no requirement for him to make a Declaration of Interest as this was purely a presentation and no decisions were being made.

Mr Smale introduced himself and confirmed he was now covering the Tredegar area. The aim of Community Connectors is to help lonely, isolated people in their own homes to integrate back into the community supporting them and giving them access to groups to build their confidence. The groups are varied, eg wood carving, luncheon clubs, coffee groups, befriending services or becoming volunteers such as driving for Hospice of the Valleys.

The work is short-term and once that person as settled Community Connectors take a step back and let the person access the groups alone. A list of groups for the Tredegar/Ebbw Vale area was made available at the meeting and it was noted that a men's group starts next week in Wetherspoons, Tredegar who will be giving attendees free tea/coffee and 20% off food. The men's group will be run as a dropin session, they can come and go as they wish during the time of the group session.

Mr Smale explained that this service is stopping someone from needing Social Services for another 3-5 years and that its success as resulted in an increase from three to four Community Connectors. Over the last 17-18 months there have been 311 referrals and all have had positive outcomes for the individuals.

Questions:-

- **Who refers people to Community Connectors?**

Referral can be done by anyone – mental health, dementia, drug/alcohol abuse groups or social workers – including self-referral although this is generally low. Over the last 18 months there has been a decline in social worker caseloads and an increase in Community Connectors work. They are currently looking to develop the website and the Blaenau Gwent App as a way to make referrals.

A Member suggested the use of the Connect Magazine to advertise their services as this is theoretically delivered to every household in Blaenau Gwent so should reach those that currently do not leave their home or do not have access to social media.

- **Have you tried to access local cafes for group use instead of Wetherspoons?**

Wetherspoons have a community budget which is available to offer teas/coffees. It would be necessary to identify a demand for it too as there are already lots of coffee groups being held in local churches/chapels who are very welcoming to new people. There is a need to be mindful of having an impact on those already established groups.

Members commended the Community Connectors service and relayed back at this meeting the positive feedback they had received from people that had now accessed the service. It was noted that there are many good stories to tell and suggested that Mr Smale tries to get these out publicly to show how well the service is working.

Mr Smale thanked Council for their time and reminded them that they could make referrals to him. He left the meeting at 7pm.

287) To discuss and collect a response for the Consultation “Draft Local Government (Wales) Bill” (circulated to Members December 2015).

It was noted that no response was available at this meeting and that following the attendance of Cllr Smith and Ms Jones at the Local Engagement event 2nd February 2016 their feedback at the next meeting of Council would be used to collate a response.

288) To Co-opt a Member to serve on the Sirhowy Ward until the next elections due in May 2017.

It was reported that there had been no response to the public notice regarding the co-option.

Following on from the advice received from BGCBC via One Voice Wales, Members approved the transfer of Cllr T. Smith's co-option status from the Central and West Ward to the Sirhowy Ward.

A vacancy was duly declared in the Central and West Ward with the RFO instructed to carry out the necessary actions to advertise this vacancy.

289) To receive the verbal recommendations of the Performance Review meeting held immediately prior to this meeting.

A verbal report was given with the recommendations being as follows:

- **Budget against Actual figures to the 31st December 2015** – The proposed virements are to be approved.
- The RFO is to seek advice from One Voice Wales/SLCC regarding the use of Smart Money Cymru as a banking facility and potential use of online banking services.
- **Budget for the Financial Year 2016/17** – Approved the proposed budget.
- Approve the proposed 2016/17 precept standstill with the RFO instructed to notify BGCBC. It was noted this was a standstill precept for a sixth year in a row (2010/11) and this point was to be added to the website.

The above recommendations were moved and approved by Council.

290) Grants:

Completed end of grant form from the Church of Immaculate Conception – Received.

a) To consider and approve grants to Sporting and Cultural organisations.

Blaenau Gwent Otters Disabled Swimming Club – A grant of £200.00 was approved.

b) Churches & Chapels (s.137) to consider and approve grants to Churches and Chapels

Trinity Spiritualist Church – A grant of £225.00 was approved.

291) Accounts: To Consider a Schedule of Accounts for payment in January 2016.

The RFO informed Council there were no bank reconciliations available at this meeting due to time/staffing constraints.

It was noted that the Christmas Window winner's names were not correct for 2nd and 3rd place on the Schedule of Payments. The RFO agreed to correct and the names were announced. It was agreed in future that photographs of the Christmas Window winners' windows should be taken and issued with a press release.

There being no queries regarding the Schedule of Accounts, all presented items were approved for payment.

It was agreed that Members should consider other possible competitions such as school art competition or Easter related and feedback their thoughts for discussion at a future Events Committee meeting.

292) To receive and adopt the following Minutes of Council:

a) Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting 16th December 2015.

b) Minutes of the Events Sub-Committee 6th January 2016.

c) Minutes of the Civic Meeting 6th January 2016.

d) Minutes of the Staffing and Finance Meeting 18th January 2016 (available at meeting).

Agreed to Move en bloc as a true record with any matters arising to follow below.

293) Matters arising from the Minutes.

• Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting 16th December 2015.

1. It was agreed that progress should be made on the installation of blinds in the Mayor's Parlour to prevent further fading to the furniture.
2. Members were informed that the queries raised regarding the public conveniences in Blaenau Gwent have been forwarded to BGCBC to be added to the agenda for the Consultation meeting 21st January 2016.
3. It was confirmed that flowers had been taken to Mrs S. O'Sullivan by Cllr Smith on behalf of Town Council.
4. Christmas Lights – Members raised concerns that motifs were still installed and that string lights around the Clock had been detached from the Clock itself but had been wrapped around lamp posts, not securely attached. It was noted that on the day the contractor attended to remove the festive lighting display they did not bring along a ladder and in fact asked whether Council had one they could borrow! It was agreed that an inspection should take place of the Roundels as the cherry-picker vehicle was sited at the base of the Clock not on the road and that in future all contractors are to be informed that they are not to take any vehicles on to that area.

• Minutes of the Events Sub-Committee 6th January 2016.

1. Agreed for the next meeting to be held Wednesday 10th February 2016 at 5pm.

• Minutes of the Civic Meeting 6th January 2016.

1. Agreed to include the Queen's 90th Birthday celebrations on the agenda for the next Events Committee.
2. Cllr Tippings informed Council that she has passed on the information relating to potential street parties as part of the Queen's celebrations to BGCBC and they will be issuing appropriate guidance.
3. Reminder of the invitation to all Councillors to the meeting with Inspector Morris on Wednesday 27th January 2016 at 6pm Council Chamber, Bedwellty House, Tredegar.

• Minutes of the Staffing and Finance Meeting 18th January 2016

1. The job pack for the Town Clerk role, completed as a result of the 18.1.16 meeting, was made available for viewing at the meeting and thanks expressed to those at that meeting for their diligent work.
2. It was confirmed that the reserves for the interview panel are the Deputies and they would be called on to replace their respective counterpart.

294) Chair to sign Minutes.

It was approved for the Chair to sign the Minutes.

295) Correspondence.

- 1) BGCBC a) Cllr Trollope: Information regarding Deighton Fields and the issues/costs relating to it becoming a Community Asset Transfer.

Members received the information and was of the view that these should remain as playing fields. It was agreed to submit an Expression of Interest to BGCBC for a possible asset transfer and noted this was not a firm commitment. It was agreed to move this item for discussion at a Finance Committee meeting to be held in February 2016.

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

- b) R. Prince – advice on action to take regarding Commercial Christmas.

Cllr Smith confirmed there was a detailed record of outage and poor response which he had maintained over the festive period. Members commended Cllr Smith for the way he had dealt with the issues over that period and it was agreed to let the take down of the festive decorations proceed but withhold the final payment, which is due on removal of display, until contact has been made by the contractor to discuss.

2) One Voice Wales

- a) Diary Markers: Larger Local Councils Committee meeting dates are Wednesdays 17.2.16, 13.4.16, 6.7.16 (Conference) and 19.10.16.

Received.

- b) Guide to taking part – The Queen's 90th Birthday Beacons 21.4.16.

Received and agreed to forward to Cllr Tippings.

- c) First World War Partnership Day 2016 event on 28th January 2016 at Aberystwyth University

Received.

- d) Manifesto: Climate Change Commission for Wales – weblinks for the promotion of the Manifesto covering 7 key priority area (forwarded to Members of the Climate Change Adaptation Committee (CCAC))

Received and noted already forward to relevant Committee Members. Cllr Price agreed to view and the CCAC will report back.

- e) Copy of the presentation made by Aneurin Bevan Health Trust at the Area Committee 12.1.16 regarding the new hospital development at Cwmbran and the impact on hospitals in Blaenau Gwent/Torfaen.

It was agreed to invite Aneurin Bevan Health Trust to attend the first Council meeting in March to give a presentation on the impact of this new hospital in Cwmbran and to discuss whether a community engagement event will be possible, organised by Council.

A letter is to be sent to One Voice Wales asking that they review where the area committee meetings are held with a view to selecting a location in Blaenau Gwent as the Pontypool site is difficult to access by public transport.

- 3) Cllr Price Tredegar Live: Climate Change Adaptation Committee – Tredegar Cynefin Officer Jayne Hunt as offered to organise a cross partnership workshop to give an update and make final revisions to take Tredegar Live forward. Asking for potential dates from Committee Members for the workshop to take place?

It was agreed that Committee Members are to submit available February dates to the office for a convenient meetings date to be set.

- 4) J. Hayman NHS engagement with local communities – Aneurin Bevan University Health Board Engagement Team. Will be producing a monthly briefing to share with local communities with issue 1 & 2 attached. Request for these briefings to be

shared with councillors and the local communities too if possible.
Received and agreed to add to website.

5) Brecon Beacons National Park Authority

Agenda for Audit & Scrutiny Committee Friday 22.1.16 at 10am Plas Y Ffynnon
– forwarded to Cllr Price

Received.

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

6) R. Taylor-Davies The Valleys That Changed The World – update following on from the launch event.

Received.

7) Gavo a) Restorative Approaches Family Engagement Project (RAFEP).

Available for all Members.

b) Weekly Burst: Welsh Ambulance Services NHS Trust Consultation Document, closing date for responses 26.1.16.

Available for all Members.

8) Publications

Natural Resources Bulletin Issue 3 January 2016; BGCBC Roadworks report week ending 15.1.16 and 22.1.16; J Parkers Wholesale Spring 2016; Communicorp Clerks & Councils Direct January 2016 Issue 103.
Available for all Members.

9) Agenda

Joint Scrutiny Committee Monday 18th January 2016 at 10am Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Ebbw Vale; Executive Wednesday 20th January 2016 at 11am Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Ebbw Vale; Executive Wednesday 20th January 2016 – additional agenda item no. 59(a); Audit Committee Tuesday 26th January 2016 at 9.30am Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Ebbw Vale; Environment, Economy & Infrastructure Scrutiny Committee Wednesday 20th January 2016 at 2pm Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Ebbw Vale; Special Meeting of the Council Thursday 21st January 2016 at 9am Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Ebbw Vale; Advance notice of Special Environment, Economy & Infrastructure Scrutiny Committee Thursday 10th March 2016 at 2pm Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Ebbw Vale; Education, Active Living & Learning Scrutiny Committee 12th January 2016 at 2pm – withdrawn items 4 & 5; Social Services Scrutiny Committee Thursday 28th January 2016 at 10.30am – CANCELLED; Ordinary Meeting of the Council postponement from Thursday 11th February 2016 to Thursday 25th February 2016 at 9am Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Ebbw Vale; Blaenau Gwent Heritage Forum meeting Thursday 21st January 2016 at 9.30am Tredegar Library.

Available for all Members.

Cllrs Rowberry and Willis declared an interest in the following and took no part in the discussions or voting thereon.

296) Planning:

a) To consider an Officer's Report (if received).

None received – Noted.

b) Verbal report of the Planning Committee if any.

Two Members of the Committee confirmed they had viewed the application and there were no issues identified.

c) To consider Planning Applications submitted for Council's observations.

App No	Applicant	Proposal
2016/0001	Mr A Herbert 2 Punch House Flats, Morgan Street, Tredegar.	Two storey detached house & detached garage, Plot 3 Mount Pleasant View, Tredegar.
No Objections.		

d) To consider other planning matters.

None received – Noted.

Cllr Rowberry left the meeting.

297) Matters of Local Interest or Concern (by prior notice).

- Public Conveniences – The following points were approved by Council as the agreed course of action for any emergency repair works:
Maximum spend per repair capped at £500.00p; Plumbing contractor is Robin Jones; Electrical contractor is Arlac Electrical; RFO/Town Clerk/Cllrs Smith and Willis have authorisation to contact contractors for emergency callouts and have been given devolved powers to seek alternative contractors if either of the named contractors are not available for the emergency work; and for any refurbishment or updating of facilities Council is to revert back to Financial Regulations following necessary quotation requirements.
It was agreed to instruct the caretaker to leave the heating on a low setting overnight in extreme weather conditions to prevent burst pipes and Cllr Watkins is to attend site to check that all the CCTV cameras are working.
- Letter of congratulations is to be sent to Mr Terry Hopkins now the Secretary of the Welsh Bowling Association.
- Cllr Tippings has agreed to source the name of the lady who used the defibrillator at Tredegar Leisure Centre on Mr A. Reeves.
- Letter to be sent, via Cllr S. Trollope, to Dylan Morris for winning the National Short Story Award.
- Cllr Willis agreed to bring details to the office of a Tredegar resident represent Wales in the snooker for a letter of congratulations to be sent.
- Members were informed of the BBC documentary “Fair Tax Town” being broadcast that evening. The documentary is about how Crickhowell’s town businesses were investigating the use of tax avoidance schemes.

There being no other business the Meeting closed at 8.20pm.

_____ Chair