

TREDEGAR TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Civic Meeting held in the Council Chamber on Wednesday 6th January 2016 at 6.30pm

Present: **Councillor** **J. Thomas**
 A. Tippings
 M. Cross
 B. Willis
 D. Howells
 J. Morgan
 H. Trollope
 D. Rowberry
 R. W. Thomas
 S. Baker

In Attendance: **Ms A Jones – RFO**

260) Apologies. **Cllrs G. Meredith, T. Smith, G. Bowen-Knight, P. Prosser, O. Price, S. Trollope, R. Watkins and PC J. Witcombe.**

In the absence of the Mayor the Deputy Mayor Cllr J. Thomas took the Chair for the meeting.

261) Declarations of Interest.

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

262) To receive PC Jamie Witcombe who will answer questions and provide an update on recent operations.

PC Witcombe's apologies was received and Members were given the written response, as follows, received regarding the questions posed to him in readiness for this meeting.

1. Update on off road biking.

Off road biking has been raised as a "your voice" priority for the Sirhowy ward. We are planning off road bike operations over the coming weeks/months involving neighbourhood teams, traffic officers and the Brecon National park wardens as we are looking to target the mountain behind Trefil. Although we will look at other area in Tredegar on these days also.

2. Illegal parking outside all schools in Tredegar.

We are currently patrolling when able schools in Tredegar as John Morgan will know. Georgetown, Deighton have been patrolled on several occasions just before Christmas. Tredegar comprehensive is also a school that we are looking to target. I am looking to hold a site meeting with the school, traffic management and a local councillor. We have given the school letters to distribute to all parents educating them on the parking issues. We will also then issue traffic offence reports for any offending vehicles. Although from experience this will not solve the problem. A long term solution needs to be found at this school working with Highways and the school itself.

3. What are the Police not giving summons to illegal parking in general?

In relation to the query, I have just returned to the station having given a traffic offence report to a vehicle in town. Although it is an area I will be raising with other officers that more could be issued.

4. Members are keen to have your vision for the future of Policing in Tredegar and would like an update on the current policing structure.

At present working out of Tredegar we have 5 response shifts of around 5 to 6 officers who cover Tredegar and Ebbw Vale dealing with 999 and priority calls 24/7. Also the neighbourhood team which includes one police officer (myself) and at present 6 community officers.

As of next week 16 CID officers are moving into the station from Ebbw vale and Bargoed . They will be dealing with investigations covering the whole of Blaenau Gwent and the Rhymney Valley. At this time I do not see this structure changing and although you can never predict in this current financial climate what will happen in the future I am confident that Tredegar station is safe and will continue to protect and serve the community with the resources available.

5. Speeding with particular concerns raised about the Tredegar to Blackwood road.

Speeding traffic on the A4048 is not an issue that has been raised by residents of Tredegar as far as I am aware. I travel this road every day back and for work and although I am aware of the speed camera van being situated in the villages of Hollybush and Argoed on a regular basis. They would be located there as they are residential and high footfall areas.

6. Litter and fly-tipping: related antisocial behaviour of this activity.

The local council environmental officers would be the lead agency as regards fly tipping and litter. Although obviously if officers on patrol came across persons in the act of fly tipping they would deal and contact the relevant agency.

7. Parking of trailers and commercial vehicles in residential areas.

Parking of trailers and commercial vehicles in residential areas . I presume this means vehicles parked on housing association car parks which are meant for residents only. This is not an offence as such that the police could deal with. Although we would pass the details onto the relevant housing association.

Members accepted the responses to the questions raised and the following was noted:-

Question 1. – It was agreed to ask for the officers to liaise with local councillors who could suggest possible positioning of the vehicles to assist with catching the offenders as it has been observed previously that off road vehicles on the mountain have passed above police vehicles undetected because the police vehicles are sited on lower level roads.

Question 2. – It was noted that Bryn Bach primary was not mentioned. Members still concerned about the increased use of this road by larger vehicles. The school has tried to address the issue of parent parking by speaking and sending letters to parents but they need support from the Police to enforce action to deter to help reduce potential risks to children's safety.

Question 3. – A Member's response regarding the effectiveness of the reporting of illegal parking was noted; if the public report the matter to the police then it has been followed up with the vehicle owners being summoned.

Question 5. – It was noted this is a dangerous road mainly due to the way some people drive along it and concealed/difficult junctions such as Bedwellty Pits.

Question 7. – It was noted that the response was aimed at vehicles parked in car parks whereas Members concerns also included those vehicles parked on the highway and this concern has not been addressed in the response.

It was agreed to send a letter to the Police Commissioner Ian Johnston inviting him to attend a Council Meeting to discuss how issues raised locally do not appear to be adequately responded to.

Sympathy was expressed for the level of cuts and lack of manpower the Police are experiencing which in time will have a detrimental effect resulting in them not giving the community an adequate service.

Members agreed is attendance at the meeting on Wednesday 17th February 2016.

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

As Council is awaiting further information from BGCBC regarding this vacancy Members agreed to defer this item to the next meeting.

264) 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.

Moved and meeting closed to the Public.

265) To discuss the initial 2016/17 budget proposals and make any necessary recommendations for the final budget.

All Members had received a copy of the budget proposals prior to the meeting and proceeded to moving through the budget heading by heading.

Budget Heading 4 – A further possible £500 reduction was identified but it was agreed to accept the already proposed reduced figure set in the budget.

Budget Heading 6 – RFO confirmed that a tender process for insurances will be actioned seeking value for money at the appropriate level of cover for 2016/17.

Budget Heading 8 – Agreed to amend name to include “Inauguration” to clarify what this heading covers.

Budget Heading 13 repairs/Painting. – Discussions on whether to decline the reduced proposed amount took place but in light of the fact that the wall renovation is scheduled to be completed before the end of the current financial year with no major project planned for 2016/17 it was agreed the budget proposal was acceptable.

Budget Heading 14 Special Projects. – It was noted that the 75th Anniversary of the bomber crash was not fully commemorated in 2015. It was agreed to leave the proposed budget unchanged with a view to erecting a permanent reminder at the crash site, and possibly a commemorative item for siting at Bedwellty House, from these funds if an application to the Armed Forces Covenant was unsuccessful. It was also agreed to contact the RAF representatives that attended the 70th Anniversary to enquire whether they could lend assistance with the transportation of an agreed memorial to the crash site.

Budget Heading 14 Picture Gallery – The rehang of pictures needs to take place in 2016/17 and monitoring of this budget will be necessary as extent of repairs required are unknown until work commences.

Budget Heading 16 – It was agreed a standstill figure and that Members would assist with the cleaning of the Memorial chippings prior to Armistice Day 2016.

Budget Heading 18 – A Member took this opportunity to inform those present of a site meeting being held on Friday 8th January 2016 at 10am in the Commercial Street walkway to discuss potential planting and all Members were welcome to attend.

Budget Heading 19 – The overspend in the current year was explained to Members and it was accepted that this community project not foreseeable at the time the current year budget was set. There being plans to undertake such a project this year it was agreed there was no requirement to increase the budget heading and the proposed amount was accepted. Cllrs J. Thomas and Meredith are to be asked to review any civic gifts currently held with a view to replenishing for the forthcoming year.

Budget Heading 22 – In light of the intake of new Councillors and maintaining the opportunity for training the standstill budget was agreed.

Budget Heading 23 – The proposed standstill was accepted and reminder to take action on the newsletter/town guide production in 2016/17.

Budget Heading 25 – The RFO outlined how this budget was usually utilized and agreed to see what other potential uses it had. Standstill proposal agreed.

Budget Heading 26 – After serious debate over the use and requirement for this budget, Members put forward two proposals: 1) reduction by half or 2) Standstill. Both proposals were seconded and following on from vote proposal two was agreed. It was agreed to revisit the Tredegar Live Project to gain a full understanding of how this budget could be fully utilized and the need to start to reconvene these meetings to move forward with potential projects.

Following on from the points noted above, there were no agreed amendments to the budget proposal presented to Council and the RFO was requested to collate the data into a full budget which is to be presented at the next meeting of Council to assist with the decision on the level of precept to be levied.

Cllr Willis left the meeting at 7.48pm.

It was agreed that the RFO presents a list of the precepts for the other town council in Blaenau Gwent at the next meeting of Council.

266) To re-open the Meeting to the Public.

Moved and the meeting was re-opened to the public.

267) To discuss and collect a response for the Consultation “Green Growth Wales: Investment Support” (circulated to Members December 2015).

It was agreed for Cllr Tippings to fully review the document and draft a response for Council to approve.

268) Grants:

Completed End of Grant form received from 2167 (Tredegar) Air Cadets, Re-Liance Bus Preservation Group and Bedwellty Park Bowls Club.

Received

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

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

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

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

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

269) Planning:

a) To consider an Officer’s Report.

List of Delegated Items determined between 16th November 2015 and 11th December 2015

2015/0365 retention of change of use to tanning shop, hairdressers and beauty salon at 30a & 31 Church Street and self-contained flat at 30b Church Street, Tredegar – Approved.

2015/0367 Construction of raised platform/patio and glass balustrade to front and side of platform, Dros-y-bryn Whitworth Fields, Tredegar – Approved.

2015/0351 One 3 bed and one 4 bed detached dwellings with elevated patio areas over garaging (resubmission) Lakelands, Merthyr Road, Tredegar – Approved.

2015/0228 Discharge of condition: 8 – traffic calming/speed reduction measures of planning permission C/2014/0193 – Condition discharged.

2015/0393 Discharge of conditions: 18 –Highway Condition Survey, 20 – Abnormal Indivisible Load Permit, 21 – Temporary Traffic Regulation Order of planning permission C/2012/0327 – Condition Discharged.

Planning Applications Report

C/2015/0237 Removal of conditions 34, 35 & 36 and variation of condition 1 & 2 of planning permission C/2009/0329 land adjacent to Park Hill, Tredegar - Recommendation is planning permission be GRANTED.

C/2015/0236 Removal of conditions 34, 35 & 36 and variation of condition 38 of planning permission C/2009/0328 land adjacent to Park Hill, Tredegar - Recommendation is planning permission be GRANTED.

Officer’s Report noted as received.

b) Verbal report of the Planning Committee if any.

Noted that no report was required.

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

None received – Noted.

d) To consider other planning matters.

None received - Noted

270) Correspondence.

1) BGCBC

THI project – no funding available to contribute to infrastructure works however funding could potentially become available under a Vibrant & Viable Places training initiative. A “Pipeline Project” application has been submitted and it should be determined mid-January whether that application has been successful.

Received and wants the walkway electrical infrastructure included in the forthcoming project funding if possible.

2) One Voice Wales Email

- a) Supporting Joint Commissioning for Public Services Integrated Health & Social Care Conference 26.11.15 Cardiff City Stadium – Deputy Minister’s speech and delegate pack including the day’s presentations are now available online.

Received.

- b) “More than just words....follow-on Strategic Framework for Welsh Language Services in Health, Social Services & Social Care” Public Consultation Event City Hall, Cardiff 2nd February 2015 9.30am-12.30pm – booking form included or responses to consultation can be submitted online by 28.2.16.

Received and available for interested Members.

- c) Appointment of a Vice-Chair and Independent Members to NHS Wales, closing date for application 15.1.16.

Received and available for interested Members.

- 3) Welsh Government Consultation Events on the draft Local Government (Wales) Bill & Explanatory Memorandum – Invitation for Clerks to attend event Tuesday 2nd February 2016 at Liberty Stadium, Swansea (10.30am-1.30pm) – Have booked place for RFO to attend and awaiting confirmation that a second place is available for Leader to attend too.

Members agreed the attendance of the RFO and Leader.

4) Sir S. Boyle KCVO, Lord-Lieutenant for Gwent

- i) Patrons’ Lunch, The Mall London, 12th June 2016 – As part of the Queen’s 90th birthday celebration: this street party style event will be held for attendees from the charities and organisations to which the Queen acts as patron to commemorate the longevity and breadth of Her Majesty’s patronage of over 600 organisations since 1952. Wants Councils to encourage local charities to hold their own street party event to celebrate too whilst using this platform to raise funds.

Agreed to add to website and for Cllr Tippings to draft a press release

- ii) Clean for the Queen – Request to register online at cleanforthequeen.co.uk to take part in this litter picking campaign which will be running through January/February/March with the “most monumental of all litter clear-ups from Friday 4th to Sunday 6th March 2016.

Agreed to forward to J. Hunt.

5) J. Hunt

Litter pick arranged for Saturday 23rd January 2016 at main entrance of Sirhowy Woodlands(Thomas Ellis Way) 10am-12noon, if you are able to attend please her know, JayneH@severnwyne.org.uk .

Received. Any Members can attend to contact J. Hunt.

- 6) Orvault a) Best wishes for 2016 from Yvon Patte, New President of Orvault Twinning Committee.

Agreed to send a letter of congratulations to Yvon Patte.

- b) Happy New Year from the Mayor.

Received.

- 7) Gavo a) Recruiting Directors for new social enterprise 3 Valleys Manufacturing Ltd. Available for any interested Members and add to website.

- b) Employment opportunities – 2 x Coordinators covering Powys/Ceredigion areas.

Available for any interested Members and add to website.

Cllr R. Thomas requested information from the previous Council meeting relating to the vacancies on the Community Council Health Board to be made available to him.

8) Brecon Beacons National Park Authority

i) Agenda National Park Authority meeting 12.1.16 at 1pm at Plas Y Ffynnon, Brecon – forwarded to Cllr Price.

ii) Agenda Planning, Access & Rights of Way 12.1.16 at 1.30pm at Plas Y Ffynnon, Brecon – forwarded to Cllr Price.

Both items received.

9) Robin Hill

Tredegar Project – Request for copies of the Oliver Jones's photographs he saw during his visit in August 2013; Second request is for someone to read his enclosed draft on The Tredegar Company which he intends to include in his forthcoming book – would like comments on it from a Tredegar viewpoint.

Agreed that Mr Hill can copy if he is able to attend. Agreed to send the second request to Cllrs Tippings, Prosser, Morgan and Mr E Morgan asking for their views.

10) Cllr K Hayden

Re: Joint Councillors meeting with Gwent Police – Meeting has been arranged with Inspector of Blaenau Gwent Phillip Morris to discuss the "Future of Policing in Tredegar" with all Tredegar Town Councillors invited. Could Council host this meeting in the Council Chamber at 6pm Wednesday 27th January 2016? Also can Councillors email their concerns regarding Policing in Tredegar direct to Cllr Hayden, keithhayden@fsmail.net so he can collate and forward them to Insp Morris prior to the meeting.

Agreed to hold the meeting in the Council Chamber and for the questions previously sent to PC J. Witcombe to be forwarded on to Cllr Hayden to have Insp. Morris's response. It was also agreed to request an update on how the Police collate problems within different Wards since the change from PACT.

11) PUBLICATIONS

BGCBC road works report week ending 25.12.15 & 4.1.06; Orvault & Co Jan/Feb 2016 Issue 03.

Available for All Members.

12) AGENDA

Executive Monday 21st December 2015 9am Civic Centre, Ebbw Vale – additional agenda item, 7(b); Democratic Service Committee advance notice of meeting Thursday 7th April 2015 at 10am Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Ebbw Vale; General Licensing Committee Tuesday 5th January 2016 at 10am Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Ebbw Vale; Education, Active Living & Learning Scrutiny Committee Tuesday 12th January 2016 at 2pm Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Ebbw Vale.

Available for All Members.

271) Updates regarding Bedwellty House and Park—any issues to have been previously reported direct to the House Management personally.

Agreed to send a letter to the House management and staff, copied to Mr A. Hughes, congratulating them for their excellent work over the Christmas period with activities/entertainment that appealed to all ages and background. Wishes to be extended for this continued success throughout 2016.

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

a) **Joint Committee of Local Councils** – No meeting.

b) **Gwent Valleys One Voice Wales** – Meeting is next week.

c) **One Voice Wales Larger Councils and AGM** – No meeting.

d) **Tredegar Twinning** – Holding a Burns Night at Georgetown Community Centre, open to all Councillors to attend. Tickets are £6 each with a two course meal and entertainment but take own refreshments.

Orvault visit to Tredegar is between 8th-12th April 2016. Council agreed to host the Inter-committee Meeting on Saturday 9th April 2016 at 10am Council Chamber, Bedwellty House followed by the Mayor's Reception at the Moose Hall. £350.00 was agreed for catering purposes with Mrs L. Price organising this on Council's behalf.

e) School Governing Bodies – Members commended the primary schools for the excellent Christmas shows by the children. It was agreed to send a letter to all primary schools congratulating;

- St Joesph's Primary - It was confirmed to Cllr Baker that he is now the Council representative and relevant departments are to be notified.
- Bryn Bach Primary – Cllr H. Trollope attended the Dementia Christmas Dinner held in the Orchid House Tearoom before Christmas at which Bryn Bach choir sang. He commented that they were tremendous and warmly received by the dinner guests.

f) Blaenau Gwent CAB – no report available.

g) Blaenau Gwent Heritage Forum – No meeting.

h) Tredegar Crime Prevention Panel – no report available.

i) Tredegar Business Forum – meeting due this month.

j) VVP/ Tredegar Heritage Initiative – Planting as commenced in the walkway between Commercial Street and the main car park which is already making a difference. It was confirmed that two planning applications have already been submitted with another three in the pipeline waiting for further information to enable submission.

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

- Staffing Meeting – The RFO was instructed to arrange a meeting of the Staffing and Finance Committee to agree a Town Clerk job description and the relevant criteria for the role. Members agreed Wednesday 20th January 2016 at 2pm.
- Friends of Bedwellty Park – Members wishes thanks to be extended to the Friends for the offer of financial sponsorship of an extra Park Concert date. The offer is declined but a request is to be made asking whether any of their members would be available to volunteer as stewards during the Park Concert season.
- Trefil village – In December it was declared the highest village in Wales. It was agreed to write to Brymbo Community Council, North Wales - as Bwlchgwyn previously held the title of highest village – to ask if they are interested in linking up as the councils with the highest villages in North & South Wales. Cllr Tippings is seeking information regarding costs of a suitable sign for Tredegar which Council may consider sponsoring.

There being no other business the Meeting closed at 8.25pm

_____ Town Mayor