

TREDEGAR TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held in the Council Chamber on Wednesday 18th November 2015 at 6.30pm

Present: **Councillor** **G. Meredith**
 T. Smith
 A. Tippings
 M. Cross
 J. Morgan
 S. Trollope
 H. Trollope
 D. Rowberry
 R. Watkins
 R. W. Thomas
 S. Baker

In Attendance: **Ms A Jones – RFO**

217) Apologies. **Cllrs J. Thomas, G. Bowen-Knight, B. Willis, D. Howells, P. Prosser and O. Price**

218) Declarations of Interest.

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

219) To recommend questions for PC Jamie Witcombe's attendance at the next meeting of Council on Wednesday 2nd December 2015.

As the attendance has now been delayed by PC Witcombe to January 2016 it was agreed to defer this item to the meeting prior to the January date but to include a request for an update on off road biking to be brought to the January meeting too.

220) 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.

221) To further discuss the correspondence from Mr D. Watkins regarding public conveniences in Blaenau Gwent.

The RFO supplied costs to date for the public conveniences in the Gwent Shopping Centre, Tredegar and offered an approximate cost by the end of the financial year.

Following on from the discussions it was agreed to send another letter to Mr Watkins requesting the following:-

- Clarification on what the utility charges are.
- Information on any "benefits in kind" such as free opening/closing of facilities, supplying of consumables, cleaning etc that is being offered to any of the other facilities with the Borough.
- Clarification on any commercial lettings in the towns such as promotional stands and how/where monies raised from these are distributed within that town.
- Request that the information used for the utility charges is amended to more current information as it is too far out of date to be used as a basis for debate.

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

Moved.

223) Grants:

a) To receive a verbal report and recommendations of the Civic Sub-Committee Meeting held 18th November 2015.

The RFO gave a brief summary of FC Tredegar Club and the three projects they are looking to undertake – 1) Utilise the pitch at Ashvale Social Club as their home ground; 2) Training sessions in primary schools to encourage and develop skills with the children, with a Year 6 School Cup tournament; 3) Festival of football tournament – A six-a-side tournament possibly end of May/early June for local teams.

The following recommendations were made:-

- Cllr Watkins would review the criteria for the Environmental Award scheme (successfully accessed by Cefn Golau TARA) to see whether it was suitable for this Club and if yes forward the information on to them.
- A grant of £200.00 recommended, only to be issued on receipt of the Constitution and recent bank statement.
- Details of Tredegar Half Penny Rate and General Fund to be given to the Club.

All were agreed.

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

2167 (Tredegar) Sqdn Air Cadets – A grant £200.00 was approved.

Peacehaven Tenants & Residents Association – A grant of £200.00 was approved.

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

Noted no recommendations.

224) Accounts: To Consider a Schedule of Accounts for payment in October 2015.

Bank reconciliations were made available for Members to view.

Christmas Lights payment - A Member gave a verbal report and confirmed that following a second site visit with the contractor all present at that site meeting were happy with the status of the installation, all bar a few points which were highlighted to the contractor; therefore the second payment was agreed. Council agreed to ratify this payment.

Members were sympathetic to the difficulties the Mayor is experiencing with his work and Mayoral commitments and accepted his provisional apologies for the Christmas Lights Switch On event.

The following was agreed from the discussions on the Christmas Lights:-

- To continue to monitor their work even though they appear to be more diligent this year.
- To contact Townscape Heritage Group to discuss funding towards infrastructure works for the walkway area of Commercial Street identified as a dark spot in this year's festive lighting.
- In Summer 2016 to address gaps, issue letters to shops asking whether they would like a Christmas tree bracket fitted on their property.

Town Clock repairs – The order for the works had been issued as a matter of urgency on receipt of the costings and following approval of the Leader to ensure the Clock would be working for the Switch On event. Cllr Trollope confirmed he had given a statement on Friday 13th November 2015 to South Wales Argus regarding the difficulties being experienced in repairing the Clock and its complex mechanics. Cllr Smith confirmed both Facebook and the Council website were being regularly updated about the status of the repairs. The following was agreed:-

- Ratify the approval for the replacements part/necessary works.
- Approve payment which is to be released on presentation of the invoice.
- Add image of the replacement unit to the Council website.
- Investigate whether a claim can be made from the insurance.

Following on from the points above, the accounts having already been inspected by Members with cheques and invoices reconciled, were approved for payment.

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

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

b) Minutes of the Performance Review Meeting 21st October 2015.

- c) Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting 21st October 2015.
 - d) Minutes of the Staffing and Finance Committee 28th October 2015.(available from office prior to meeting or at meeting)
 - e) Minutes of the Staffing and Finance Committee 4th November 2015.(available from office prior to meeting or at meeting)
 - f) Minutes of the Events Sub-Committee 4th November 2015.
 - g) Minutes of the Civic Meeting 4th November 2015.
- Agreed to Move en bloc as a true record with any matters arising to follow below.

226) Matters arising from the Minutes.

- **Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting 21st October 2015.**

It was noted that they Recycling vehicles will be collecting from the rear street in Georgetown shortly.

- **Minutes of the Events Sub-Committee 4th November 2015.**

1. Christmas Eve visits – RFO confirmed no contact made with residential homes yet.
2. Christmas Lights Switch On event – Same lorry firm and driver have been confirmed; Events Committee meeting arranged for Monday 23.11.15.
3. Cairn visit – Well done to all who participated in the walk in such terrible weather. Concerns raised about the barrier being locked again stopping access for people into Trefil mountains. It was agreed to challenge the legality of this barrier and query whether it is a bridleway rather than a private road.
4. Princetown Memorial – Commended how lovely the Service was and how proud the village are of the Memorial which will be maintained by Caerphilly County Borough Council. Disappointed was expressed regarding some negativity shown by a few regarding the attendance of Councillors over general public.
5. Remembrance Sunday – It was agreed this was the best turnout to date and how humbling it was to see the increased attendance of schools and younger associations.

- **Minutes of the Civic Meeting 4th November 2015.**

1. Cllr Rowberry queried why the letter regarding the derogatory comments made, on Facebook about Borough Councillors, by a fellow Town Councillor had not been included as a correspondence item for this meeting as she had requested. Whilst it was accepted that the matter had been dealt with at a separate meeting due to the receipt of a second letter it was agreed for the letter to be read to all Members at this meeting which was done so. It was noted that at the previous meeting a full and frank apology had been given by the Member which was again extended at this meeting along with apologies for the letter not being presented at the 4th November 2015.
2. Aneurin Bevan House – It is hoped that this will be open for use by the Credit Union and C.A.B. by the end of this year.

227) Chair to sign Minutes.

All Minutes approved from the Ordinary Meeting in October were presented, as agreed at that Meeting, with the Minutes approved at this Meeting and the Mayor duly signed in the presence of Council.

228) Correspondence.

- 1) BGCBC a) S. Northall Re: Additional Learning Needs Formal Consultation Document 2015 – Confirming receipt of comments.

Received.

- b) M. Perry Re: Trollibocs – response to request to clarify who requested/implemented the change to the new system – copied for all Members

Received.

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

- c) S. Jago Re: Financial Support request for a Flying Start Christmas Programme – wish to put on free Christmas family time activities which will also give information to support the families.

It was agreed as lantern making sessions, sponsored by Council, have already been offered a £500.00 grant/sponsorship is to be given. Also details of Tredegar Members Half Penny Rate fund it to be supplied to them.

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

- d) List of licencing applications week ending 6.11.15.

Received.

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

- e) J Smale Community Connector (East) – request to attend a Meeting to introduce himself and give update on the project.

Agreed to invite to January meeting not attended by Gwent Police.

2) One Voice Wales

- a) Gwent Police and Crime Commissioner
 - i) Consultation event 11.1.16 (venue to be confirmed depending on numbers attending) giving an opportunity for the public understand matters such as budgets etc. RSVP to Commissioner@gwent.pnn.police.uk
 - ii) Consultation...Are we Fair? – short survey on equality and diversity, closes 16.12.15.

Both received.

- b) Draft Guidance for Allotments and Community led gardening projects – consultation questionnaire for completion.

Agreed for Cllr Tippings to complete. Congratulations were extended to Cllr Watkins for his successful £10,000 community grant bid for Cefn Golau.

- c) Response to the Statutory Guidance for the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 consultation.

Received.

- d) Public Appointments:-
 - i) Arts Council of Wales – Appointment of Chair, closing date 3.12.15.
 - ii) Wales Commissioner to the Equality & Human Rights Commission, closing date 14.12.15.

Received and available for interested parties.

3) Remembrance Day:-

- a) Fr Davis - Thanks for Service books and request for extra next year. Also request for PA system used in previous year as this year's was not adequate.
- b) Cllr A Tippings - Response to Fr. John Davies email.

Cllr Tippings has since clarified with Fr Davis that there had been confusion over the PA requirements for this Service. Information was given by Fr Davis regarding the possibility of accessing the Armed Forces Covenant grant to purchase a suitable PA for military related events. It was agreed Mr J Cotton is to be approached to provide specifications for a suitable outside PA system and Cllr Tippings is to complete the grant application on receipt of the specifications.

It was agreed that a test run of Council's PA system is done prior to the Switch On event on 27th November 2015.

4) Sergeant M Briggs Community issues/Tensions – letter copied for all Members.

Noted and agreed to add to Council website. Also agreed for Mayor to write a letter of condolence to Orvault on behalf of Council and it was noted that Cllr Smith has already sent a personal message to the Deputy Mayor of Orvault.

5) Town Clock:-

- a) Smith of Derby - Costing for replacement unit for the clock and confirmation engineer in Wales Thursday 19.11.15, order number needed to process.

b) Cllr T Smith – Need to approve so work completed asap – RFO raised order.
Moved as item previously discussed earlier.

6) Mr A Skeates Thank you for the nomination of the BEM award and the organisation presentation made.

Received. Agreed to ask Mr Skeates for permission to add to Council website.

7) Blaenau Gwent Heritage Forum

a) WW1 Centenary Commemoration August 2015 publication.

Received.

b) No large Commemoration Day planned for next year therefore asking whether it could form part of the Armed Forces Day Event and they work in co-operation with Council.

Agreed to ask them to participate in the AFD 2016 event. Also agreed that Cllr Meredith is to inform BSM Abertillery of the 2016 date requesting they contact the Council office to discuss would other equipment they can bring, with the possibility of firing a gun following the final band performance.

8) Jayne Hunt

a) Friends of Sirhowy Woodlands group minutes and next litter pick event is taking place on Saturday 21st November 2015 from 10am to 12noon.

Received. It was noted how well this enthusiastic group is doing and the success of the last litter picking session. It was agreed to send a letter Ms Hunt commending her work.

b) Tredegar Town Partnership Forum meeting 3rd December 2015 at the Moose Hall 12noon – 2pm, list of deals going down included with email.

Received.

9) L. Price Copy of email sent to Orvault on behalf of all members of Tredegar Twinning Association and the corresponding reply.

Received.

10) Publications

Ville D'Orvault, Orvault & Co magazine Nov/Dec 2015 02; BGCBC road works report week ending 13.11.15 and 20.11.15; War Memorial Trust Bulletin November 2015 No. 67; Ville D'Orvault Press cuttings 18.11.15.

Available for all Members.

11) Agenda

Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee Monday 23rd November 2015 at 2pm Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Ebbw Vale; Ordinary Meeting of Council Wednesday 16th December 2015 – CANCELLED; Democratic Services Committee Wednesday 16th December 2015 at 10am Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Ebbw Vale; Ordinary Meeting of Council Thursday 19th November 2015 at 2pm Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Ebbw Vale; Advance notice of Special Meeting of Council Wednesday 2nd December 2015 at 9am Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Ebbw Vale; Blaenau Gwent Heritage Forum meeting Thursday 19th November 2015 at 9.30am Tredegar Library, includes Christmas menu.

Available for all Members.

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

229) Planning:

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

Noted as none received.

b) Verbal report of the Planning Committee if any.

There were no issues identified with the application below.

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

App No**Applicant****Proposal**

2015/0404

Mr & Mrs Lacey
102 Beaufort Road
Tredegar.

Front extension to provide porch –
102 Beaufort Road.

No Objections.

d) To consider other planning matters.

Noted as none received.

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

A Member commended fellow Members and staff for the continued proper running of Council and its matters whilst at its current staffing levels.

231) 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.

232) To receive a verbal report from the Staffing and Finance Committee.

The Chair of the Staffing Committee summarised the meeting held on 16th November 2015.

All Members agreed to accept the settlement agreement terminating Ms Keane's employment and that a suitable job description/advert is drawn up.

Members commended Ms Keane for her diligent work during her time with Council.

Thanks were extended to the Chair of Staffing for dealing with the necessary meetings.

There being no other business the Meeting closed at 8.15pm.

_____ Town Mayor