

TREDEGAR TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Council held remotely via Microsoft Teams on Wednesday, 25th November, 2020 at 6.00 p.m.

Present: **Councillors E. Jones (Chair)**
 T. Smith
 A.E. Tippings
 M. Cross
 D.W.A. Howells
 G. James
 K. Phillips
 S. Rees
 J. Thomas
 H. Trollope
 S. Trollope
 G. Walters
 B. Willis

In attendance: **Clerk – Ms. C. Price**

091) Apologies. **Councillors D. Jones, A. Jones, P. Prosser, D. Rowberry and M. Turner**

092) Thanks and Appreciation by Councillor E. Jones, Mayor 2019 - 2020.

The Mayor expressed her appreciation through what had been a challenging period due to restrictions.

093) To Elect a Mayor to serve until the Annual Meeting of Council 2021 or retain status quo; *and*

094) Declaration of Acceptance of Office by the incoming Mayor, if applicable. (Chain of Office to be handed over and Consort's Chain to be exchanged.)

In light of the restrictions on activities of Council, it had been unanimously agreed that Senior Officers remain in post until the Annual General Meeting in 2021, i.e. Mayor and Deputy Mayor, Leader and Deputy Leader, with Councillor Gaynor James to deputise the Deputy Mayor for the remainder of the Civic year.

The exchange of the Chain of Office was not applicable, due to the Mayor remaining in situ; Mayor to receive the acceptance of Office, which would be duly signed in accordance with Covid restrictions, recognising social distancing and safety guidance.

095) To receive any communication the Mayor may wish to lay before Council.

None received.

096) To Elect a Deputy Mayor to serve until the Annual Meeting of Council 2021 or retain status quo. (Chain of Office will be given to the incoming Deputy.)

Deputy Mayor to remain in post until the Annual General Meeting in 2021 – therefore, an exchange of Chain of Office was not applicable.

Deputy Mayor to receive the acceptance of Office, which would be duly signed in accordance with Covid restrictions, recognising social distancing and safety guidance.

097) To Elect a Member as Leader of Council until the Annual Meeting of Council 2021.

Unanimously agreed; Councillor Tommy Smith to continue in the role as Leader until the Annual General Meeting in 2021.

Leader to receive the acceptance of Office; to be duly signed in accordance with Covid restrictions, recognising social distancing and safety guidance.

098) To Elect a Member as Deputy Leader of Council until the Annual Meeting of Council 2021.

Unanimously agreed; Councillor Alyson Tippings to continue in the role as Deputy Leader until the Annual General Meeting in 2021.

Deputy Leader to receive the acceptance of Office; to be duly signed in accordance with Covid restrictions, recognising social distancing and safety guidance.

As the Mayor had not had the opportunity to raise funds for her Mayoral Appeal for 2019/2020, it was proposed that Council donate £500.00 to the Mayoral Appeal, which was agreed unanimously.

099) To approve that the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Leader and Deputy Leader are ex-officio Members of all Council Committees and Sub-Committees with voting rights.

This was agreed unanimously.

100) To receive and confirm the Standing Orders of Tredegar Town Council.

All Members were reminded that this document formed part of the Councillor pack received at the point of signing their Declaration of Office.

This was agreed unanimously.

101) To receive and confirm the Financial Regulations of Tredegar Town Council.

All Members were reminded that this document formed part of the Councillor pack received at the point of signing their Declaration of Office.

This was agreed unanimously, as approved by the previous administration.

102) To appoint Barclays Bank plc as the Council's Bankers (existing).

This was agreed unanimously, as approved by the previous administration.

103) To Authorise the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Leader and Deputy Leader of Council, with the Clerk and RFO, to sign cheques on behalf of Tredegar Town Council.

This was agreed unanimously, as approved by the previous administration; Clerk and RFO to only sign cheques in the case of an emergency, once proper approval had been gained from the other four signatories listed.

104) To consider any Urgent correspondence.

There was no urgent correspondence for consideration; the Clerk thereupon invited Members to raise any items of urgency for consideration.

Members had queried progress in respect of the transfer of funds to a credit union, in the sum of £10,000 for Council to support the community.

The Clerk provided a response from the RFO, which briefly provided the background to discussions at meetings to consider the budget-setting process and the subsequent decision of Council. The Officer also clarified the Council's position in respect of the precept collected in order offset expenditure in respect of operational activities and providing Council services throughout the year.

Following a brief discussion, it was agreed that:

- a Budget Working Group be convened, to discuss the best way forward to transfer funds into the credit union account, with an invitation extended to the Internal Auditor to attend, together with Clerk and RFO.

105) To set the Mayor's Allowance (£1,315.00) - to authorise payment in full or pro rata.

The Mayor had expressed a wish to waive the Mayor's Allowance 2019 / 2020, due to a decrease in duties within her Civic role, as a result of restrictions imposed during the current Mayoral year.

This was agreed unanimously; and Council expressed appreciation of this generous offer. However, Members said, should the situation change, the Mayor should liaise with the office in respect of reimbursement of any expenditure incurred.

Councillor T. Smith declared an interest and therefore took no part in discussion or voting thereon.

106) To set a Leader's Allowance, not exceeding £500.00, and authorise payment.

This was agreed unanimously.

107) To appoint a Civic Committee (all Members of Council).

This was agreed unanimously.

108) To appoint ALL MEMBERS OF COUNCIL to the Performance Review Committee to meet quarterly.

This was agreed unanimously.

109) To confirm the following Sub-Committees and to appoint Members to serve on them until the Annual Meeting of Council 2021.

It was unanimously agreed that the Committee list 2019 remain status quo, with increased Membership communicated to Clerk (as follows) and the list to be circulated to all Members accordingly.

- a. Civic Sub-Committee – 9 Members
- b. Events Sub-Committee – 9 Members
- c. Heritage Sub-Committee (encompassing Bedwellty House and Park, the Assembly Room Picture Gallery, Tredegar War Memorials and Tredegar Town Clock) with plenary powers up to £500.00 – **12 Members**
Councillors G. James and G. Walters added (quorum increased to 4)
- d. Finance & Staffing Sub-Committee – **10 Members**
Councillor G. Walters added (quorum increased to 4)
- e. Appeals Committee – **7 Members**
Councillor S. Rees added
- f. Policy Sub-Committee - All Members of Council
- g. Community, Youth and International Sub-Committee – **10 Members**
Councillors K. Phillips and G. Walters added (quorum increased to 4)
- h. One Voice Wales Climate Change Adaptation Programme – 6 Members
- i. Tredegar Public Facilities Sub-Committee – **6 Members**, plus Reserve
Councillor G. Walters added
Planning Councillor G. Walters added; Councillor G. James as Reserve
- j. Publicity Sub-Committee – **7 Members**, plus Reserve
Councillor G. James added
- k. Budget Working Group
- l. Allotment Association – 6 Members, plus Reserve
Councillor G. Walters added

110) To confirm the letter of appointment has been issued to the Internal Auditor for 2020 to the Annual Meeting of Council 2021.

Confirmed; and noted accordingly.

111) To appoint Members to serve on the following outside bodies:

Unanimously agreed that the Committee list remain status quo, with one vacancy filled as communicated to the Clerk, and the list to be circulated to all Members accordingly.

- a. Joint Committee of Local Councils
 - i. Gwent Valleys One Voice Wales
 - ii. One Voice Wales Larger Councils and AGM
- b. Tredegar Twinning Association
- c. Pen Bryn Oer Community Fund
- d. School Governing Bodies
 - i) Bryn Bach Primary
 - ii) Deighton Primary
 - iii) Georgetown Primary- **vacancy to be filled by Cllr G. Walters**
 - iv) Glanhowy Primary
 - v) St. Joseph's Roman Catholic Primary
- e. Blaenau Gwent CAB

- f. Tredegar and Ebbw Vale Crime Prevention Panel
- g. Tredegar Business Forum
- h. Blaenau Gwent Heritage Forum
- i. VVP / Tredegar Heritage Initiative
- j. Pen Bryn Oer Community Fund

112) To agree the presentation of the Aneurin Bevan Prize, the Peter Morgan Jones and Michael Foot Awards, in conjunction with Tredegar Comprehensive School.

A Member had contacted Tredegar Comprehensive School and the intention was to undertake a virtual Awards ceremony; Councillor Haydn Trollope to follow up and provide the office with the names of the recipients, in order for the cheques to be drawn up and awarded accordingly.

This was agreed unanimously.

The Member expressed concern that 17 of 25 schools had been identified with evidence of Covid, and the Director of Education would be liaising with all Headteachers imminently.

113) To agree the presentation of the Tony Gregory Award.

Members to submit any nominations to the office for consideration of Council.

This was agreed unanimously.

114) To agree the Lindsay Bryan Sports Memorial Award.

As no Presentation Awards evenings of Council had been convened since the 2020 nomination, which was approved by Council previously, it was unanimously agreed that this recipient remain on record to receive the Award in 2021.

115) To confirm the pattern and timings of Meetings of Council:

Following the temporary revoking of the pattern and time of Council meetings as a result of Covid-19 restrictions, approved in March 2020 in accordance with Standing Orders, it was proposed that Council revert to the approved schedule, i.e. first and third Wednesday each month at 6.30 p.m., which was agreed unanimously.

Congratulations were extended to Members of Town Council for all their work during these difficult times, which was a credit to the community.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 6.32 p.m.

_____ Chair