

TREDEGAR TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Civic Meeting of Council held via Microsoft Teams / hybrid on
Wednesday, 7th December, 2022 at 6.00 p.m.**

Present: Councillors G. Evans (Chair)
K. Phillips
M. Turner
G. Badham
J. Thomas
C. Walters
G. Walters

In attendance: Clerk – Ms. C. Aherne

206) Apologies. Councillors A.E. Tippings, P. Cornlouer, A. Jones, E. Jones, B. Rees, D. Rowberry, H. Trollope, S. Trollope and K. Waldron

207) Declarations of Interest

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

208) Gwent Police - Tredegar Branch: representatives in attendance to introduce the new Ward Manager

Item to be rescheduled for future meeting: apologies received, representatives were unable to attend due to operational reasons.

209) To receive Mayor's report, as appropriate

The Mayor had made various visits with grants, providing people with his expertise to their problems!, and attending events at the Spiritualist Church, Tredegar Orpheus MV Choir and OVW, with more coming in as well; he was very busy.

210) To receive any verbal recommendations of all Sub-Committees / Working Party prior to this meeting:

No recommendations of the Events Sub-Committee were reported, with ongoing actions noted accordingly.

211) Grants:

a) To receive and consider grants to Sporting and Cultural organisations (under the provision of the Local Govt. Miscellaneous Provision Act 1976 s.19 and Local Government Act 1972 s.137)

Tredegar Moose International Ladies Circle - Any financial assistance received would be used towards replacing kitchen items / utensils.

2021/22 Feb'22 CQ No. 270 £200.00 - Approved accordingly

In August 2020, it was agreed that no Special Grants were to be awarded for the foreseeable future; Council meetings had ceased due to Covid and, since then, Council had not reviewed reinstating Special Grants. Special Grants had ceased as part of savings identified by the Budget Working Party.

Southend Allotment Association - Any financial assistance received would be used towards cladding the new shed. They have secured £2,000.00 from Pen Bryn Oer, will fundraise £100.00 themselves and are **requesting Council to consider giving a Special Grant of £500.00** to enable them to meet the full quote of £2,600.00.

2021/22 Nov'21 CQ No. 223 £200.00 - Approved: a grant of £100.00 to match the fundraising of the Association. This was due to the following reasons: Members considered the costing expensive for such a project; due to limited resources available to support all organisations, there could be more worthy causes; and a decision had yet to be made in reinstating Special Grants.

b) To receive and consider grants to Churches & Chapels (s.137) - Grants as of 01.04.2017 now max £300.00 (before awarding a grant Council must be satisfied the grant is being given for non-religious purposes with the building being for community use): None received.

212) Correspondence

- 1) BGCBC
- a) A. Parker Re: Holocaust Remembrance. Asking if the Clock can be lit again in January 2023 for Holocaust Remembrance.
 - Agreed; Clerk to ascertain date.
 - b) K. Williams Re: Christmas event 17.12.2022. Asking if Council would like to make a donation towards the purchase of selection boxes.
 - Noted; a donation of £100.00 was unanimously approved.
 - c) D. Wheelock Re: Armed Forces Covenant Duty go live 22.11.2022.
 - Noted; forward to Councillor K. Phillips.

Councillor K. Phillips declared an interest in respect of the Licensing item 'Little Theatre', taking no part in discussion or voting thereon

d) i) List of applications received, week ending 04.11.2022.

1. Temporary Event Notice 19-24.12.2022 – Lidl
2. Temporary Event Notice 20-23.12.2022 & 28-30.12.2022 – The Olympia
3. Variation of designated supervisor – Little Theatre

ii) List of applications received, week ending 11.11.2022.

1. Temporary Event Notice 10.12.2022 – Dukestown Workingmen's Club

iii) List of applications received, week ending 18.11.2022.

1. Vary Designated premises supervisor - Lidl
2. Temporary Event Notice 19-24.12.2022 – Lidl

iv) List of applications received, week ending 25.11.2022.

v) List of applications received, week ending 02.12.2022.

- Noted.

2) One Voice Wales

a) Re: Council Tax, consultation on draft Regulations to extend exceptions to second home premiums and on Guidance. Comments to be submitted by 22.12.2022.

- Noted.

b) The future of Welsh Communities: Call for evidence. <https://gov.wales/future-welshspeaking-communities-call-evidence.html>
Asking for Council's responses to be emailed to OVW by Friday, 16th December, 2022.

- Noted.

c) Cost of living crisis, how to protect people's health and save lives. Free webinar on 16.12.2022 at 1.30 p.m.

- Noted.

3) Welsh Government

Appropriate Sum under Section 137(4)(a) of the Local Government Act 1972: Section 137 Expenditure Limit for 2023-2024. Appropriate sum is £9.93 per elector.

- Noted; in response to a question raised, the Clerk clarified expenditure remained far below the threshold permitted.

- 4) SLCC
- a) Membership renewal notice, annual subscription £222.00.
- Noted; unanimously approved.
- b) Members are urged to contact their local M.P.s and encourage them to sign the new Early Day Motion for Civility and Respect; requesting councils to pass a resolution to write to the local M.P.
- Noted; agreed that a letter be sent on behalf of Council.
- 5) War Memorial Conservation
- Revised costings for only two visits per year, one year and three-year contract.
- Noted; unanimously approved, retain service of current provider for a period of one year for two visits per year.
- 6) Integrated Wellbeing Network
- Re: Gwent Public Services Board Well-being Plan. Consultation ends 31.12.2022, <https://getinvolved.torfaen.gov.uk/wellbeing-plan>
- Noted.
- 7) Wales Air Ambulance
- Community Council Appeal 2022: Donation request. In 2021 they attended 3,544 missions, with 94 in Blaenau Gwent - ***last donation of £200.00 was in January 2022, financial year 2021 / 2022***
- Noted; a donation of £200.00 was unanimously approved.
- 8) Hounds for Heroes
- Thank you letter for the donation / funds raised at our Armed Forces Day.
- Noted.
- 9) R. Taylor-Davies
- The Valleys That Changed The World invitation Friday 13.01.2023 at 9.30 a.m., The Cwtch, Blaina Community Centre.
- Noted.
- 10) UK4UA
- Outlining details of support / fundraising they have done for the Ukraine.
- Council noted the information, particularly that the group had not been approved as a Registered Charity.

7) PUBLICATIONS

BGCBC Roadworks report, week ending 25.11.2022 & 02.12.2022; Blaenau Gwent Heritage Forum Agenda for meeting 21.11.2022 at 10.00 a.m. Tredegar Library; OVW Courier Fraud awareness: ABCHC UK Covid-19 Inquiry survey – **added to Twitter/website**: OVW Seaweed Farming Wales press release; OVW Welsh Air Ambulance Welshpool; Communicorp Local Councils Update Issue 268: December 2022 – **distributed to Members**: Received.

8) AGENDA

None received.

Councillor J. Thomas declared an interest in the following item and took no part in discussion or voting thereon

213) Planning:

a) i) **To consider an Officer's Report (if received)** None received.

- ii) a) List of planning applications received in week 46
- b) List of planning applications received in week 47
- c) List of planning applications received in week 48

b) **Verbal report of the Planning Committee if any** None received.

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

| App. No. | Applicant | Proposal |
|----------------------|--|---|
| C/2022/0326 | Mr. H. Evans Tai Calon Community Housing Ltd. Solis One, Griffin Lane Rising Sun Ind. Estate Blaina | Demolition of the existing walkway and associated structure, new car parking and new footpath, St. George's Court. |
| No objections | | |

Councillor G. Evans declared an interest in the following item and took no part in any decision or voting thereon

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|-------------|--|--|
| C/2022/0327 | Dr. Syad Glan-yr-afon Surgery Park Row, Tredegar | Change of use of doctors surgery to 5 flats, Glan-yr-afon Surgery, Shop Row. |
|-------------|--|--|

Observations: Members expressed disappointment of the closure of the doctors' surgery; however, more information was required as to whether the permission would relate to a private rental or if the building was intended for use as a HMO. The Chair briefly provided some background information for Council, whereupon Members agreed that, whilst Council would not wish to block any development to the doctors' surgery and recognised that the applicant would wish to ensure the best return on the property, problems were experienced in the Tredegar area with existing HMOs in the town and there was already one in close proximity.

It was agreed that the concerns of Council be referred to the County Borough Members also, in addition to submitting observations to Planning.

d) To consider other planning matters – Mynydd Carn-y-Cefn: Pennant Walters has submitted its proposals for Mynydd Carn-y-Cefn wind farm, located to the west of Abertillery. Amendments to proposals now made and application can be viewed by searching reference number ‘3270299’ at <https://planningcasework.service.gov.wales/>: Noted.

214) Updates regarding Bedwellty House and Park / Parc Bryn Bach - any issues to have been previously reported direct to the House Management / Aneurin Leisure personally

- None received.

215) 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** – No meeting
- c) One Voice Wales Larger Councils and AGM** – National Executive Committee to meet on Friday, 10th December, 2022
- d) Tredegar Twinning** – No meeting
- e) Pen Bryn Oer Community Fund** – No meeting
- f) School Governing Bodies** – No meeting
- g) Blaenau Gwent Heritage Forum** – No meeting
- h) Blaenau Gwent CAB** – No meeting
- i) Tredegar Business Forum** – The Forum had met the week before and had also received a request in respect of the donation of selection boxes
- k) VVP / Tredegar Heritage Initiative** – Meeting held the previous Friday; this had been the first meeting of the new VVP: discussion had mainly been in respect of the Queen’s Ballroom, also the Town Hall – the contract had gone back out to tender and Abletouch had been successful

216) Matters of Local Interest or Concern (by prior notice)

- The Chair had been advised by the Roman Catholic Church that Father Edmund Nazir, representing the pastoral area of Tredegar, Ebbw Vale and Rhymney, would be leaving the Immaculate Conception RC Church, and returning to Ghana. A presentation evening would be held 20th December, 2022, whereby parishioners had been invited to attend. The Chair said it would be nice if Tredegar Town Council presented a gift to the Father in remembrance of the community. This was agreed accordingly: Mayor to present.

A Member said, for information, she had presented an Aneurin Bevan plate to Father Edmund, who would be sorely missed, during her Mayoral year in office; Clerk to review memorabilia and compile a ‘bundle’.

- Town Clock – status: at the last meeting of Council, it had been decided that Council would not be putting anything up around the Clock in respect of Wales for the World

Cup. There were now three flags attached by bungees – this was not acceptable that any one Member undertook actions against a decision reached in this Council Chamber. It was disheartening when a person felt they were bigger than Council – once a decision was made, this must be adhered to.

A Member considered this had been disrespectful to Council as a whole, as their decision had been over-ruled. Another Member agreed with the sentiments made; when a democratic decision was made, Members were dutybound to adhere as Town Council reflected ‘one voice’.

It was therefore agreed that the matter be deferred for future consideration in order for the Member to be present in order for Council to agree an appropriate course of action.

- Toilets: there was an ongoing issue in respect of the opening of the toilets. The Deputy Leader explained that the toilets had opened late Saturday, as he had been working, and unfortunately Jacquee had fallen ill. He had met the cleaning operative in town - on explaining what had happened that day, the operative said that he could split his hours and was happy to work 8.00 a.m. until 12.00 noon and come back 4.00 til 5.00 p.m. (as he has access to his own transport later in the day). The operative currently worked 12.00 noon til 5.00 p.m. Therefore, this would resolve any problems with opening / closing of the toilets and town centre walkway.

The Clerk read a response from the Leader, who unfortunately was unable to attend: “Tim contacted me and I contacted Mark and he updated me re. Jacquee. I am happy for Tim to work a split shift. The main thing is for there to be enough time to clean at the end of the day so the floors are dry in the morning. Another issue is ASB of school children. Moving the hours would keep them out of Tim’s way but it leaves the toilets unstaffed at a time when we need to keep an eye on them.

Happy to put in temp arrangements until we have a Staffing Sub. Also we have talked about the use of agency staff and would be happy to add this to the agenda. Tim is in touch with me regularly and he is always helpful.”

Upon due consideration, it was unanimously agreed that the following change of hours be agreed, on a permanent basis, i.e.

Monday – Saturday 8.00 a.m. – 12.00 noon and 4.00 – 5.00 p.m.

- Blaenau Gwent ‘street cleaning’ – during Covid restrictions, all cleaners had been asked to change their hours of work to minimise risk; all other areas had now resumed normal working hours apart from Tredegar. A Member had spoken with the BG employee in passing and had been told he had not been told to return to his normal hours, i.e. 7.30 a.m. to 3.30 p.m., as yet. It was therefore agreed that a Member undertaking a dual role between the Local Authority and Town Council, report the matter accordingly.
- CCTV, War Memorial: the Clerk had spoken with a member of the military when attending the Cenotaph on Armistice Day, who informed the Officer he had witnessed the graffiti to the War Memorial. The gentleman had informed the Clerk of surveillance equipment that may resolve such problems at a very reasonable cost. He had advised of a trail camera that was activated by motion and only needed to be maintained by a six-monthly check – he said this was available at approximately £45.00 (being a one-off cost).

Following a brief discussion, it was agreed that the Clerk liaise with the Deputy Mayor with a view to progressing the matter.

- Memorabilia: Senior Members to meet to discuss replenishing of stock.
- Mayor's Christmas visits: the Clerk said that a provisional date of Thursday 22nd or Friday 23rd had been set within the calendar of events, whereupon it was agreed that the visits to the Residential / Care Homes be held on Thursday, 22nd December 2022. Clerk to make necessary preparations: approved accordingly.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 7.17 p.m.

_____ Chair