

**MINUTES OF THE BLACKWOOD TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON
3RD. JUNE 2013**

Present: Councillor G Hale (Mayor)
Councillor G Erasmus (Deputy Mayor)
Councillors A Farina-Childs, D Davies, C Erasmus, J Criddle, L Thomas, M Veater
& Z Hammond

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors A Parsons & R Dimmond

2. Mayoral Announcements

The Mayor reported that he had attended a function at Oakdale Primary School commemorating the 2nd. World War and thoroughly enjoyed the time with the children.

He then reported on invitations he had received –

7th. June @ 11.00am. Official opening of an Art Exhibition by T8, including Craft & Ceramics at Emily's Market. The exhibition runs from 4th. to 29th. June.

The Clerk reminded members of an e mail he had forwarded inviting them to this opening, but ideally required an indication of numbers asap.

26th. June @ 6.30pm. Caerphilly C.B.C. Mayor's Charity Launch at Ty Penallta

28th. June @ Armed Forces Day at Ty Penallta

3. Correspondence

The Clerk presented his report on correspondence received since the last meeting and all were noted.

4. To Confirm the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of the Town Council held on 3rd. June 2013

It was resolved the minutes be confirmed as a true record

5. Matters Arising

Review of Subsidised Local Bus Services

The Clerk informed members that he had received a copy of the report to be discussed by Cabinet on 4th. June, which was to consider the recommendations made by the Regeneration & Environment Scrutiny Committee, that the Town Council had responded to.

The report states that a petition containing approximately 250 signatures had been received from Blackwood Town Council objecting to the proposed withdrawal of security cover at Blackwood Interchange, and that correspondence had also been received from local ward members in this respect.

Following detailed consideration, the Regeneration & Environment Scrutiny Committee whilst endorsing the recommendations proposed that officers explore the feasibility of the cost of the contract for security cover at Blackwood Interchange being renegotiated with the company concerned.

Councillor A Farina-Childs informed the meeting that he and Councillor D Davies had organised the petition, but that it had not been forwarded under the guise of the Town Council.

The Clerk reported the officer's responses to the Town Council objections –

Bus Station - The bus station has high quality CCTV that is monitored from the Control Room at Tir-y-berth, along with help points for passengers that allow anyone with concerns in the Bus Station to connect directly with an operator in the CCTV Control Room. The Council will continue to meet regularly with the Police to address any public order concerns at the facility.

The petition has, however, prompted the proposal outlined earlier.

Ystrad Rail Linc - The Council will work with the current passenger provider to minimise the impact on regular passengers, in particular the core of regular commuters who use the service.

Other proposed cuts - The nearest bus stops are situated in Croespenmaen, so workers in Penyfan would have to walk up to a mile to their places of work. However, there are no return journeys in the afternoon/evening which implies passengers find alternative arrangements when leaving work.

Whilst the Blackwood to Bargoed via Markham may inconvenience some passengers, they identify several alternatives – namely Routes 56, 12 and 14.

Brecon Beacons Service - The Beacons Bus network is controlled by the Brecon Beacons National Park Authority with funding from other local authorities and agencies all with their own budget pressures. The council has negotiated with the co-ordinators and the Beacons Bus network will continue for 2013.

Honours Boards

The Clerk reported on the response received from Ian Mitchell regarding placement of Honours Boards in the Institute. Unfortunately other than placing them in our meeting room, the only alternative offered was on the landing area outside that room.

Members were disappointed that no other more prominent position could be identified, especially in respect of the Civic Awards Board which recognises the contribution /achievement made by local people to the well being of the town and community.

After some discussion, it was agreed the Clerk contact the Institute to try to arrange a meeting with the Mayor and Deputy Mayor to discuss this issue further.

6. Annual Return for the Year Ended 31st. March 2013

The Clerk presented his report, and it was resolved that the Statement of Accounts and the Annual Governance Statement be approved.

Furthermore, it was agreed that the Annual Internal Audit Report be approved and accepted.

The Clerk informed members that the necessary Notice of appointment of date for the exercise of elector's rights would be placed on the notice board in the Market Place on 10th. June 2013.

7. Planning Applications

The Clerk presented his report on planning applications received since the last meeting. Councillor J Criddle, Chair of Planning Committee, informed members that he visited C.C.B.C. as usual to find further information on the applications received, but that on this occasion both officers dealing with same were unavailable.

He outlined some minor concerns he had in respect of some of the applications, and it was agreed that he follow these up with the officers, and if thought necessary inform the Clerk to make written observations on behalf of Town Council.

8. Reports

The Mayor informed members that all interested parties – schools, groups and associations were to be invited to the next meeting of the Blackwood & District Heritage Group being held at 7.00pm. 14th. June at the Moose Hall.

It was anticipated the Group will have a web site up and running in the near future.

In remembrance of the forthcoming centenary of the outbreak of 1st. World War, details of all who lost their lives in the conflict identified on the local war memorials are to be recorded in Special Books of Remembrance, and placed in a prominent position in the town for visitors to inspect.

Councillor L Thomas reminded the meeting that the 2015 Urdd Eisteddfod was to be held between 25th. & 30th. May in Caerphilly. He proposed the Town Council participate in this prestigious youth festival, one of the largest in Europe, which is likely to attract approximately 100,000 people to the area.

It was agreed this be deferred to the Events Committee for consideration, and some ideas mentioned were to ensure the town is decorated in bunting over the period of the eisteddfod, and some presence on the eisteddfod field, whether on our own, or part of a wider town and community council presence.