

MINUTES OF THE BLACKWOOD TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 3RD. JULY 2017

Present : Councillor J Weeks (Mayor)
Councillor J Edwards (Deputy Mayor)
Councillors W Baber, D Davies, N Turner, J Griffiths, P Cook, R Weeks, Z Hammond, A Short
& C Erasmus

P.C. Adam Lang

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors A Farina-Childs, J Criddle & D Jones

2. Declarations of Interest

Councillor D Davies Declared an Interest in respect of Item 11 Consider Minor Authority Representation – Blackwood Junior School & Cwm Derwen as Chair of Governors at Blackwood Junior School

3. Police Report

The Mayor welcomed PC Adam Lang to the meeting, who in turn apologised that due to staffing changes, no more Senior Officer was available to attend.

He explained that Inspector Jason White had left to take up a post in Torfaen, and will be replaced by Steve Drayton, however, there will be some delay in him taking up the post, and as an interim measure James Neesam will head up the Caerphilly central policing team.

The officer circulated a Statistics Report which is included as part of these minutes.

He pointed out that current problems included shoplifting, with Boots being a target, and not assisting themselves by placing high end goods close to the door. Meetings had been arranged with retailers, and increased patrols were planned. Criminal damage and arson is prevalent in the Blackwood Bus Station and Cliff Road areas of town, with refuse bins becoming a target for theft and then being burnt out.

The Clerk highlighted correspondence he had received from Mr. Alan Hudspeth regarding parking in and around town, and feels much more could be done by the police to stop the parking of cars and vans on kerbs and double yellow lines, seemingly to visit cash points and fast food outlets. The Officer was aware of the issues, and indicated tickets were regularly issued, but cited lack of resources to properly tackle the problem.

Members raised various issues relating to the Bus station and toilets. The officer asked members to report any issues to himself as soon as they occur, and to contact him with any problems/issues they encounter. (The Clerk agreed to forward Adam's e mail address to members)

The Mayor thanked Adam for his attendance, and the officer left the meeting.

4. *Mayoral Announcements*

The Mayor, Councillor Jan Weeks reported she had attended the following –

Poppy Appeal Concert

Photo shoot with Carnival Court

Laid a wreath on behalf of Town Council at the Armed Forces Day Celebration at the Dragon Circle

Met with Andrew Downes, Welsh FA Coach

Town Carnival, and wished to place on record her thanks to all who worked tirelessly to ensure another successful event.

5. *Correspondence*

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

An additional item of correspondence had been received from Blackwood Comprehensive School thanking Town Council for their generosity in sponsoring the school's commitment to the development of grassroots rugby, and identifying the fact that through community support and in partnership with Welsh Rugby Union the school has secured the services of a Rugby Development Officer, Jacob Allen. His appointment has already had an impact on pupil participation in the primary schools, and of both boys and girls throughout the secondary school as well.

One Voice Wales Notification that 13th. Conference & Annual General Meeting will be held on Saturday 30th. September 2017 at Royal Welsh Showground, Llanelwedd, Builth Wells with Mark Drakeford as key note speaker with update on developments relating to Local Government Reform

Welsh Hearts Request for date/venue for handover of Defibrillator and CPR training

Caerphilly C.B.C. Code of Conduct Training – 5pm. on Thursday 27th July 2017 – Names required

Notification that an update report will be presented to the Regeneration & Environment Scrutiny Committee on 4th. July, and that report will include the evidence submitted by external witnesses.

We will be advised of the outcome of the committees decision.

Armed Forces Day Celebrations – 10.30am Monday 19th. June – request for contribution towards cost of refreshments.

Notification of Confirmation of Diversion of Footpath – public right of way over land situated a rear of Rhos y Dderwen, Blackwood

Libanus School	Note that school are always keen to be involved in any events, but require notice in plenty of time. Also an offer to use school buildings for meetings/events.
Tenovus	Invitation for members to attend Cancer Awareness Community Day at Blackwood Gate Retail Park on Friday 7 th . July 11.00am- 4.00pm
Allan Hudspeth	Complaint regarding parking in and around Blackwood – the number of cars/vans parking on kerbs and double yellow lines, resulting in total chaos at times. Complained to police, but had no response
Mark Gwynne	Thanking Town Council for the opportunity of being part and wishing everyone every success in future projects
Gwent Police	Notification of yet further staff changes
Blackwood & Bedwas Methodist Circuit	Invitation to Mayor & Consort to attend Rev Les Jones’s farewell service on Wednesday 19 th . July & Rev Andrea Sims’s welcome service on Wednesday 13 th . September in Blackwood Methodist Church
Seafarers U.K.	Request for Town Council to fly the Red Ensign to commemorate Merchant Navy Day on 3 rd . September recognising our ongoing reliance on seafarers and shipping

In respect of Code of Conduct Training, names were requested.

In respect of the Seafarers U.K. request to fly the Red Ensign, this prompted debate as regards whether Town Council should look to provide a flag pole somewhere in town, and whilst not being in a position to assist on this occasion, it was *agreed* to agenda this for discussion t a future meeting of Town Council.

6. *Schedule of Payments*

The Clerk presented his report on payments made/ to be made and the following were agreed for payment -

	£. p
Katherine Watkins - Adjusted May Tax/N.I.	61.31
John Hold - Adjusted May Salary (Including Reimbursements)	1,330.99
K & R Print - Printing for Carnival	58.00
Caerphilly C.B.C. - Annual Licence Fee/ Room Hire/ Printing	111.50
Katherine Watkins - June Tax/N.I.	278.31
John Hold - June Salary (Including Reimbursements)	1,109.34
Coun. Jan Weeks - Mayor’s Allowance	400.00

The Clerk also informed members he would present payments made in respect of the Carnival to the next meeting.

7. *To Confirm the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting of Town Council held on 15th. May 2017*

It was *agreed* the minutes be confirmed as a true record

8. Matters Arising

Item 10 Bank Signatories

One Voice Wales view is that a dual hatted councillor can be a signatory, but he/she should remember the Code of Conduct applies, and they should declare an interest in any payment made to the County Borough, unless a special dispensation is granted.

The Clerk having explained all payments to the County Borough are made via Bank Transfer, and such payments are reported via the Schedule of Payments at each meeting, their view was that if the interest is declared, and all members are notified of such payment without a signatory, things should be fine.

After some discussion, however, it was ***agreed*** that Councillor Pat Cook be added as an additional signatory on the bank account.

Item 12 Correspondence – Battle’s Over – a Nation’s Tribute & WW1 Beacons of Light 11/11/2018

The Clerk reported that he had contacted CCBC as requested, and had been informed that the Corporate Communications Manager intended seeking the views of the Leader & Chief Executive, but as the event is some time off, it had not yet been progressed.

Item 12 Correspondence - One Voice Wales New Councillor Induction Training

The Clerk informed members that One Vice Wales would provide bespoke training for Town Council (up to 20 in number) at a cost o £375 plus travel costs. Town Council would also be responsible for provision of venue and refreshments.(Normal training costs £40 per head, so training to whole Council would cost £640)

After some discussion, where Councillor J Griffiths raised potential concerns regarding travel costs, it was agreed this training option be pursued.

9. To Receive the Minutes of the Town & Community Council’s Liaison Meeting held on 8th.Feb. 2017

It was ***agreed*** the minutes be received

10. To Receive a verbal Report on the Carnival

Councillor Bill Baber, Chair of Events, reported the Carnival had been a great success, with no mishaps to report. He thanked members who attended and helped out on the day, especially Zoe, Carol, Darren & Andrew S for all their hard work. He also placed on record his thanks to the British Legion Ladies who helped in the Hospitality tent throughout he day.

He reported it as his intention to call a De-Brief meeting where positives and negatives could be discussd more fully.

11. To Consider Minor Authority representation - Blackwood Junior School & Cwm Derwen

Councillor D Davies had already declared an interest, and took no part in discussion or decision making relating to Blackwood Junior School.

Councillor Pat Cook declared an interest at this point as Governor at Blackwood Primary School, and she similarly took no part in the discussion or decision making regarding that school.

The Clerk reported that he had made contact with Governor Support Unit, and the up to date position is as follows -

Blackwood Primary - Vacancy Exists

Ysgol Cwm Derwen - Vacancy Exists

Cefn Fforest - Councillor Jim Criddle term ends 26/10/2018

Libanus - Councillor Carol Erasmus term ends 04/04/2020

Ysgol Bro Sannan - Councillor Jim Criddle term ends 21/10/2017

It would, therefore, be appropriate to consider Town Council representation for Blackwood Primary, Ysgol Cwm Derwen and possibly Ysgol Bro Sannan, given the upcoming vacancy. Furthermore, Councillor Jim Criddle had indicated a preference to step down from Cefn Fforest, and take on the vacancy at Cwm Derwen.

It was proposed and seconded Councillor Jim Criddle be the new representative at Ysgol Cwm Derwen.

Councillors J Weeks and W Baber were both proposed and seconded to fill the vacancy at Blackwood Primary, and after a show of hands it was agreed Councillor J Weeks be the new representative at Blackwood Primary.

It was then agreed that Councillor W Baber be the new representative at Cefn Fforest School.

12. To Consider the Co-option of a member to fill the Cefn Fforest East vacancy

The Clerk reported that following the posting of the Vacancy on the Notice Board, two expressions of interest have been received by the closing date of 14th June, namely

Gerwyn James 16 Hillcrest Close, Cefn Fforest, Blackwood NP12 3AE

Janet Lancaster 36 Beaumaris Way, Grove Park, Blackwood NP12 1DE

It was agreed that both individuals be invited along to the next meeting for interview. The Clerk agreed to forward a copy of the proposed questions to the individuals and to members for their information.

13. Planning Applications

The Clerk presented his report on Planning Applications received since the last meeting -

17/0365/FULL	Mr W Turner	Erect detached dwelling Land within Curtilage of Homes of Excellence Victoria House Residential Home, Gordon Road, Blackwood
17/0381/FULL	ASDA	Install new and replacement roof plant, new access platforms & steps ASDA, Cliff Road, Blackwood
17/0403/CLPU	Mr S Bolitho	Obtain a Lawful Devel.Cert. for proposed single storey rear extension 25 Lilian Road, Blackwood
17/0405/FULL	Miss L J Mills	Convert garage into living accommodation 24 Clos Coed Duon, Blackwood
17/0412/FULL	Mrs T Etheridge	Construct a rear dormer loft conversion 13 Raglan Close, Cefn Fforest, Blackwood
17/0436/ADV	Principality B.S.	Erect 1 no. internally illuminated fascia sign 129 High Street, Blackwood
17/0454/FULL	Mr P Mackenzie	Erect first floor side/rear extension 163 Beaumaris Way, Cefn Fforest, Blackwood
17/0403/FULL	Mr S Bolitho	Erect single storey rear extension 25 Lilian Road, Blackwood
17/0431/OUT	Halo Devel.	Erect residential development of 3 no. units Land adjacent to Woodview, Cwmgelli, Blackwood

After some discussion it was agreed the Clerk contact Caerphilly C.B.C. with the following queries/comments/observations -

In respect of 17/0365/FULL query whether the planned detached dwelling was in anyway linked to the current residential home on the site, not physically, but either accommodation for staff or maybe planned for further service users. Furthermore, query if any concerns had been raised by neighbouring properties

In respect of 17/0431/OUT members have concerns regarding the plans to erect 3 residential units on the land adjacent to Woodview, Cwmgelli, especially given the past history of the area. Whilst not making an objection at this point, members retain their right to consider further, when the detailed planning application is made.

14. Reports

The Clerk reported that he had received via e-mail a copy of the Velvet Coalmine Festival Programme, and hoped members would be pleased with the finished product which dedicated 3 pages to Town Council as mentioned at the last meeting, including contact details of all current town councillors.

The 5 Year Title Sponsorship from Town Council is highlighted as being invaluable in growing the festival and that Council deserve immense credit for their belief and conviction in backing this event and its benefit to Blackwood.

This years festival welcomes a host of stars to Blackwood.

Wales Sports Personality of the Year and double Olympic Taekwon-do Champion Jade Jones MBE heads a bill that also includes Africa Writes, who bring their writers to Wales for the very first time – in fact, this year Africa Writes are on tour visiting Edinburgh, Bristol, Birmingham & BLACKWOOD.

A host of top comedians, Science Presenter from BBC1's The One Show Marty Jopson returns again, a one act Theatre competition and Blackwood's own singing sensations Into The Ark.

All this together with the numerous Creative Writing Workshops taking place in our local schools will surely enable our local children to benefit directly from what the festival sets out to do. Which is to inspire.