

MINUTES OF THE BLACKWOOD TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 7TH. AUGUST 2017.

Present : Councillor J Weeks (Mayor)

Councillor J Edwards (Deputy Mayor)

Councillors A Farina-Childs, D Davies, Z Hammond, P Cook, W Baber, R Weeks, A Short & J Griffiths

G James & M Gwynne

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence were received from Councillors J Criddle , C Erasmus & D Jones.

The Clerk reported that he had received a request from Councillor Jim Criddle for special leave of absence for up to six months – he is awaiting an operation for a fractured pelvis.

Members were unanimous in ***agreeing*** to this request and sent best wishes for an early recovery.

As a result of Councillor Criddle's absence, members were concerned regarding the fact his expertise on planning issues would no longer be directly available.

Given the current situation, and the membership of the Planning Committee, members ***agreed*** to appoint the Chair and Vice Chair of that Committee, and after some deliberation it was unanimously agreed Councillor Z Hammond be appointed Chair and Councillor J Criddle appointed Vice Chair, in the hope that if he felt well enough he could advise and assist.

2. Declarations of Interest

Councillor A Farina-Childs, on advice received from One Voice Wales & Wales Audit Office declared his interest in Item 6 Schedule of Payments as a member on Caerphilly C.B.C.

3. Co-option to Town Council

The Clerk advised that immediately following the last meeting, he had received an e-mail from Paula Dauncey tendering the resignation of her Blackwood Central Ward seat due to a change in her personal circumstances, and a likely move to Cardiff.

Following advice from Electoral Services at Caerphilly C.B.C., the necessary Notice of Vacancy was posted on the Council Notice Board inviting a call for election by Friday 4th. August, but also requesting any person interested in Co-option to notify the Clerk by that date.

No call for election was made, and 3 individuals had expressed an interest in Co-option – Mr Gerwyn James & Ms Jane Lancaster, who we were interviewing in respect of the vacant Cefn Fforest East Ward, an former Town Councillor Mark Gwynne.

All three had been invited to attend, and notified of the questions to be asked.

The Mayor welcomed each in turn, thanked them for their interest in being co-opted, and asked the following questions –

What experiences, qualities and strengths do you believe you have that will benefit the work of the Town Council ?

What time commitment can you give to the Town Council in terms of its meetings, its community events and representing the interests of its residents ?

Following the interviews, where it was generally agreed these were three worthy candidates who would bring much to Town Council, and after much deliberation it was *agreed* –

Mr Gerwyn James be co-opted as the member for Cefn Fforest East ward and Mr Mark Gwynne be co-opted as the member for Blackwood Central ward

Both new members were congratulated by the Mayor, and signed the necessary Declaration of Acceptance of Office, witnessed by the Clerk, and took their place on Town Council

4. *Mayoral Announcements*

The Mayor reported on the following –

She had collected £260.08 in respect of her Charity at the Carnival.

She had attended the Tenovus Cancer Awareness Event at Blackwood Gate Retail Park, and found it most interesting and informative, learning that Therapy sessions were available.

Members queried whether these sessions were publicised, and the Mayor intimated that Tenovus were desperate for venues where they might attend and offer their services.

It was *agreed* the Clerk make contact with Tenovus to assess their local needs/requirements and see if Town Council might be able to assist in any way.

She had also attended Blackwood Little Theatre Young Generation rehearsals for Velvet Coalmine Blackwood Primary School and the leaving event for Rev. Les Jones at Blackwood Methodist Church and also intended to attend the welcoming event for his replacement Rev. Andrea Sims.

5. *Correspondence*

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

Caerphilly C.B.C . Bus Station toilets update –difficulty in maintaining regular toilet cleaner, actively seeking to fill post, interim measures in place to maintain service of thorough clean/ mopping first thing each morning plus lunch time visit to replenish and remove litter, which considering usage is largely effective.

Notification of Community Infrastructure Levy due to Council £4,872.78 also details of types of infrastructure works the monies can be used for. Town Council has 5 years to spend same or will have to be returned to CCBC.

Car Parks Task & Finish Group – Regeneration & Environment Scrutiny Committee have decided to re-convene the group later in the year, when there could be more information on civil enforcement. Some new members on the Group will review evidence to date and seek further if considered necessary.

Promote your local community (initiative for August) - Requests for nominations of someone in the community doing an outstanding job – paid or unpaid

Request for Contribution towards Armed Forces Day

Notification of Consultation on White Paper – Services Fit for the Future – Health & Care Services ends 29th. September 2017

Notification of Review focussing on what the future role of Community and Town Councils might look like.

The review will:

- explore the potential role of local government below principal councils, drawing on examples of effective arrangements
- define the most appropriate model(s)/structure(s) to effectively deliver this role
- consider how these models and structures should be applied across Wales. This will include consideration of any situations in which they would not be necessary or appropriate.

Timescales

The review will take around a year. It will be evidence based and inclusive. All relevant stakeholders will be invited to contribute including, but not limited to, community and town councils, principal councils and community and third sector groups.

Background

In the [Reforming Local Government: Resilient and Renewed White Paper](#) the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government confirmed his intention to commission a comprehensive review of the Community and Town Council sector.

Community and Town councils are an integral part of local government. They are often closest to people and local communities, and therefore uniquely placed to see, and provide, those services which can have a significant impact on an individual's well-being.

However the size, responsibilities and community involvement across the Community and Town council sector is varied.

We need to have an honest debate about what the future role of Community and Town Councils might look like, and consider what the right organisational format is to support local communities.

One Voice Wales

Notification of Consultation on Electoral Reform

Notification & Booking Form for Conference & AGM on 30th. September 2017

Chris Ferris

Letter from Watch Manager Cefn Fforest thanking Cllr. W Baber for visit and confirming Station Commander wishes to engage with local community groups at every opportunity.

Right from the Start Caerphilly

Request for funding to assist upgrade of computer systems

Dept. Works & Pensions (via A.F-Childs) Confirmation that offices are to move from High Street to former Aldi Site, adjacent to St. Margaret's Church

County Cllrs. Farina-Childs/ Etheridge Early notification that Blackwood Town Centre Management Group Meeting will be held on Tuesday 19th. September

Wish to work in partnership with all members of Town Council for the benefit of residents of the town. Notification that he has been lobbying in regard to Chartist Bridge and shares copy of C.C.B.C. Highways Engineer Report and various e-mails requesting various information . Offer to attend Town Council meeting September/October

The Clerk reported that he had also received a Thank you card from Sophie Bennett, thanking all involved in organising the Carnival and for choosing her as Carnival Queen and saying she was looking forward to representing the town at every opportunity.

Furthermore, a letter from Mr Ewart Smith complaining of the new parking arrangements on Pentwyn Road and those proposed for Pentwyn Avenue and says it's an accident waiting to happen. Councillor A Farina-Childs reported that he and colleagues had already raised these issues with Borough officers.

In respect of the Bus Station Toilet update, members were increasingly frustrated at the responses from C.C.B.C., and after further discussion it was ***agreed*** that a Task & Finish Group consisting of Councillors A Short, W Baber & P Cook consider the numerous issues/evidence and draft a comprehensive report that can be used when a meeting with Borough Officers is sought .

Members ***agreed*** with the Clerk's recommendation that discussion on potential schemes under the Community Infrastructure Levy take place initially at Policy & Finance Committee level.

With regard the request for nominations to promote the local community, it was ***agreed*** to support the nomination of the street cleaner in town (Christine) for her unstinting dedication to her work in all winds and weathers.

It was ***agreed*** to discuss further the Contribution towards Armed Forces Day at the next meeting.

With regard the Consultation papers referred to, the Clerk ***agreed*** to forward copies via e-mail

It was also ***agreed*** that County Councillor Kevin Etheridge be invited along to the September meeting to update Town Council on various ongoing issues including the Chartist Bridge.

6. *Schedule of Payments*

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

	£. p
Side By Side	100.00
Clio Davies (DYT Dance Group)	150.00
Caitlin Mae Nedahl	75.00
Blackwood Little Theatre	100.00
KLA Dance	150.00
Owl Sanctuary	240.00
Blackwood Musical Theatre Society	100.00
Listen to This	200.00
Tropical Inc (Dinosaur Show)	609.60 (Inc VAT)
Caerphilly Samba Band	200.00
Marcus Jones/ Classic Catering	1,300.00 Staging/ Marquees/ Sound Systems/ Seating
Blackwood Fire	18.00 (Inc VAT)
Pride of Place	33.75 (Inc VAT)
Party Supplies	250.00
Newport Pipe & Drums	200.00
John Hold	1,509.81 July Sal (reimbursement £590.12 re. carnival)
Playworks	278.51 July Tax/N.I.
Caerphilly C.B.C.	750.00 Contribution towards Beach Party Weekend
Wales Audit Office	101.70 Audit fee

7. *To Confirm the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 3rd. July 2017*

It was pointed out that Declarations of Interest should have referred to Blackwood Primary School and not Blackwood Junior School as stated.

Furthermore, it was commented that under Agenda Item 14 Reports - it might benefit by including It was reported that - before This years festival etc

With these amendments it was *agreed* the minutes be confirmed as a true record

8. *Matters Arising*

There were no matters arising

9. *To Receive the Minutes of the Events Committee (Carnival De-Brief) Meeting held on 24th July 2017*

The Chair (Councillor W Baber) presented the minutes and it was *agreed* they be received. Members present fully supported that meetings be arranged with Caerphilly C.B.C. Events Team & the Velvet Coalmine Festival Team to further explore options for the future.

10. To Receive the Minutes of the Town & Community Councils' Liaison Committee Meeting held on 14th June 2017

It was **agreed** the minutes be received

11. Blackwood in Bloom Competition

The Clerk reported he had received results from Blackwood South, Blackwood North & Cefn Fforest East, but was still awaiting same from Blackwood Central.

12. Audit of Accounts for Year Ended 31st. March 2017

The Clerk presented his report which confirmed that - Notification has been received from BDO (On behalf of the Auditor General for Wales) that the audit has now been completed.

There were no matters which came to their attention which required the issuing of a separate additional issues arising report.

The Annual Return must now be presented to the Council, and a minute made to show that the Annual Report has been approved and accepted by the Council.

The Annual Return and Notice of Conclusion of Audit has been displayed on the Notice Board and will remain there for 14 days as specified by law.

After some discussion, it was **agreed** the Annual report as presented be approved and accepted

13. Motions for One Voice Wales Conference

The following Motions are to be discussed at One Voice Wales Conference, and members considered their views on same, so that our representative Councillor Janet Griffiths might vote accordingly.

One Voice Wales AGM Motions 2017

1. Monmouth/Newport Area Committee Motion

"The Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government be asked to consider Following on from any major reviews of our sector lifting the cap imposed on the power of Well being by the restrictions of Section 137 of the LG Act 1972" - **Agreed to Support**

2. Barry Town Council Motion

"One Voice Wales calls upon the Welsh Government to support and resource the development of a community and town council community planning model for Wales; the benefits will be twofold - it will support the role of community and town councils contributing to the Local Development Plan system as well as enabling a consistent community planning methodology across Wales that will enable local councils to better support the Local Wellbeing Assessment requirements of the Well being Act" – **Agreed to Support**

3. Talgarth Town Council / Caldicot Town Council

"We call upon One Voice Wales to: a) work with relevant bodies including Welsh Government, WLGA and Keep Wales Tidy to ensure a consistency of approach to controlling dog fouling across Wales; b) and to work with these bodies to develop a campaign to raise awareness of how to report offenders, assistance with ensuring convictions and appropriate penalties to eradicate this severe nuisance." – **Agreed to Support**

4. Kidwelly Town Council Motion

"One Voice Wales calls upon Welsh Government to re-designate all current request stops as mandatory stops in the new franchise where either; i) The ORR figures show a total passenger entries and exits for that station in excess of 20,000 in the year 2015-16; or ii) The 2015 ONS mid year population estimates show a population in excess of 3,000 people for that town or village." – **Agreed to leave to Cllr. Griffiths having heard debate**

5. Penarth Town Council Motion

"One Voice Wales recommends that the Welsh Government actively considers an increase in the resource base urgently required by Town and Community Councils across Wales for the programme of enhanced service delivery outlined in the White Paper, Reforming Local Government: Resilient and Renewed, published in January 2017, in order to respond to the ambitious agenda for the sector that is outlined in this document." - **Agreed to Support**

6. One Voice Wales Motion

"That membership fees are uplifted by up to 3% for the financial year 2018-2019 – **Agreed to leave to Cllr. Griffiths having heard debate**

14. Verbal update on Provision of Defibrillator in Town

The Clerk reported that he had met with Roger Reynolds of Caerphilly C.B.C. regarding the possible placement of the Defibrillator at the Bus Station. It was suggested, due to ongoing issues that the machine might be more safely positioned in the waiting area, but this would mean it no longer being available 24/7.

The Clerk has asked he discuss same with senior officers with a view to placement on the external wall, but within coverage of CCTV, and he has agreed to take this request forward.

He further reported on a meeting held at Rhianon Passmore's Office (at her request), with Julia David (Rhianon's Assistant), June Thomas, Phil Hill (Aneurin Bevan UHB) and Cllr. W Baber. It was reported that June has with the assistance of Phil, been able to acquire a defibrillator that she wishes to position in the High Street and wondered what Town Council's views would be regarding positioning of same. She had suggested somewhere near the Maxime Cinema would be an ideal site, especially having acknowledged Town Council's plans to position one near the Bus Station. The Clerk had offered to make contact with the owner of the cinema regarding this request. It was also suggested that once things have progressed, we might look to arrange an event/events in town to advertise the provision of these defibrillators and ask the police, fire and ambulance services to assist.

The Clerk stated that whilst the defibrillator was available, it still needed an external cabinet to ensure it was available 24/7, at an approximate cost of £300/£400.

It was **unanimously agreed** that Town Council purchase the Cabinet to ensure 2 defibrillators being available 24/7 in town. It was further agreed that Town Council fully support the proposed planned events .

15. Nominations for Civic Awards (Awards Evening Wednesday 22nd.November @ Institute)

The Clerk reported that he had received a nomination from Keith Edwards in respect of Nat Thomas recognising the work he does in the community for ex miners and their families.

Councillor A Farina-Childs nominated Margaret Veater MBE recognising all she work she has undertaken over many many years for various disadvantaged groups and others and her dedicated service on Town Council.

It was **agreed** to agenda for the next meeting, and to await any other nominations that might present themselves.

16. Planning Applications

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

17/0523/CLPU Mr A Thomas, 15 Tree Tops Avenue, Blackwood
Obtain a Lawful Development Certificate or the proposed temporary siting of a static caravan in the rear garden for residential use

17/0550/FULL Mr & Mrs Burns, 30 Cefn Road, Blackwood
Erect single storey extension to rear elevation, garage to side elevation & raised decking & steps to rear

17/0599/ FULL Wetherspoons , The Sirhowy, 59 & 61-63 High Street, Blackwood
Erect a first floor extension over the existing bin store at the rear of the premises to house a walk in fridge freezer and re-siting of existing plant, form a new glazed weather lobby at the entrance to 61-63, replace an existing window on the rear elevation with a wider opening with glazed folding sliding doors, develop the first floor of No 59 as staff facilities, additional steps from the garden to rear pavement level, extend the rear timber fenced empties enclosure and re-develop and increase the number of the customer toilets to allow for the increase in occupancy

Also received notification of

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 Obtain a Lawful Development Certificate for an existing use for A3 takeaway Peking City, 2 Pentwyn Road, Blackwood, NP12 1HN. GRID REFERENCE - 317379(E) 197350(N)

The application for a Certificate of Lawful Existing Use has been received under the provisions of the above Act and I shall be glad to know whether you wish to make any observations, in writing, on this proposal. It can be viewed online at <http://publicaccess.caerphilly.gov.uk/PublicAccess/>
It is not an application for planning permission, but an application to establish whether the existing use of the site is lawful in accordance with planning legislation. Therefore, your comments should be restricted to your knowledge of the existing use of the site. In accordance with statutory requirements, it is necessary to determine the application within a specific period and it is essential therefore that any observations should be received by me within 21 days from the date of this communication. In the event of no reply being received from you, it may be assumed that you have no observations to offer and the determination of the application will be proceeded with.

The Clerk also reported on an application received earlier that day, namely

17/0601/ADV ASDA, Cliff Road, Blackwood
To replace various signage

After some discussion, it was *agreed* that whilst no objections be raised to any of the above Councillor Z Hammond seek further clarification on the proposed temporary siting of a static caravan at 15 Tree Tops.

17. Reports

The Clerk reported that all members had been invited to the Opening Night Reception of the Velvet Coalmine Festival to be held at 6.00pm. on Thursday 7th. September at the Woodbine Club , followed by the opening event Tongue Fu for Adults in the Little Theatre starting 7.30pm.