

**MINUTES OF THE BLACKWOOD TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD
ON 8TH APRIL 2013**

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

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors S Lewis, D Ellis, P Cook, M Jackson & A Parsons

2. Mayoral Announcements

The Mayor announced she had attended the opening of a Youth Club at Markham Congregational Chapel on 29th. March

3. Correspondence

The Clerk presented his report on correspondence received, and all were noted.

In respect of the request from C.C.B.C. Parks Service for sponsorship of the Bands in the Park programmed for the Showfield, it was agreed further detail be sought before any decision is taken.

The Clerk also reported verbally on correspondence received since preparation of his report -

C.C.B.C. - A letter from Planning outlining the position of Plasmawr and Blackwood Boys & Girls Football Club – any planning application for change of use would have to be consulted on with all properties surrounding the fields - Noted

GAVO - Letter & Application Forms relating to Gwent Best Kept Village & Junior & Primary Schools Competition – It was agreed to forward information to local schools.

One Voice Wales - Notification of RCT/Merthyr/Caerphilly Area Committee Meeting being held on 18th. April at Abertysswg Community Centre - Noted

4. *To Confirm the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 4th. March 2013*

It was *resolved* the minutes be confirmed as a true record.

5. *Matters Arising*

The Clerk informed members that a representative of the Fire Service would be in attendance at the A.G.M. to answer members concerns regarding response times, when new Station is operational.

6. *To Receive the Minutes of the Community Council Liaison Sub- Committee Meeting held on 21st. November 2012*

It was *resolved* the minutes be received

7. *To Receive the Minutes of the One Voice Wales RCT/Merthyr/Caerphilly Area Committee Meeting held on 17th. January 2013*

It was *resolved* the minutes be received

8. *To Receive a Verbal Report on the Heritage Group Meeting held on 18th. March 2013*

Councillor Hale updated members and informed them that the Group would now be known as The Blackwood & District Heritage Association.

It was planning to adopt the constitution of the Chartist Group, which would now subsume that organisation.

Contact was to be made with the Comprehensives covering the area and their feeder Schools (including Welsh Schools) to encourage their involvement, especially with the Essay Competition sponsored by the Freedom of London Association.

The long term aim of the Heritage Association will be a small museum. Details have been sought on the rental/lease arrangements offered on the old Post Office building.

The Association plan to hold meetings at the Moose Hall on the 3rd. Thursday of each month.

Minutes of the meeting are available, and the Clerk was asked to forward copies for members attention.

9. Consultation - Review of Subsidised Local Bus Services

The Clerk presented his report on the proposed cuts to the subsidised local bus services affecting Blackwood.

After much discussion where members voiced their concern to any cuts in services and how it would affect the local community, it was **resolved** the following response be forwarded to C.C.B.C. –

Blackwood Town Council strongly object to the withdrawal of security cover at the Bus Station, and given the history of the site consider this a very short sighted step. Officers themselves acknowledge this might result in an increase in anti social behaviour, and given the effective partnership work between Gwent Police and C.C.B.C. itself over recent months to improve the situation, we would hate to see things deteriorate again, at eventual costs in excess of the proposed savings.

They also object strongly to any cut in service to the Blackwood to Ystrad Mynach (Rail Linc) that would impact on those who regularly use the bus/train service to access their employment in Cardiff. This service is much more efficient than the direct bus service, and as stated is not a viable alternative for regular commuters – Blackwood after all is not connected directly to the rail network.

Furthermore, the Council have concerns on the other proposed cuts in services, and how they might affect our community, namely Blackwood to Pontypridd (evenings), Penyfan Diversions (early mornings), Blackwood to Bargoed via Markham (early evenings) and the Services to the Brecon Beacons.

Our major concerns are the possible knock on effect on employment, as in the case of Rail Linc & Penyfan Diversions, possible curtailment of social visits, while the Brecon Beacons Service helps provide access to the countryside in line with the Well Being Strategy.

10. Consultation - Community Infrastructure Levy – Draft Charging Schedule

The Clerk presented his report on the proposed Charging Schedule affecting the Community Infrastructure Levy.

After some discussion it was **resolved** no response be forwarded, but that the information be noted.

11. Planning Applications

The Clerk presented his report on planning applications received since the last meeting and it was ***agreed*** that concerns be expressed in respect of application 13/0211 to erect a two storey extension to the rear of the dwelling to provide a breakfast room at ground floor and bedroom at first floor (23 Chepstow Close, Grove Park) and that careful regard is given to the adequacy of car parking at the property.

12. Reports

The Mayor reported that attendance at the Retail Partnership meetings was in decline, due to many of the nationals not allowing staff time to attend.

P.C. Adam Laing is looking at providing an on line link, to ensure the partnership work continues.

The Mayor also highlighted the fact that a public meeting had recently been held complaining of the lack of services at Ystrad Fawr Hospital, but had been poorly attended, presumably due to lack of proper notice.

It was ***agreed*** that in future any Agenda for such meetings could be posted on the Town Council noticeboard.

Councillor Hale updated members on Plasmawr Community Centre. Usage is on the increase, and refurbishment works are well under way.

The A.G.M. takes place on Thursday 11th. April.

Councillor G Erasmus queried the progress on furniture for our meeting room. The Clerk explained that plans presented to date did not satisfy our requirements in terms of numbers, and different suppliers were being sought, with the view to smaller tables being used.

The Clerk ***agreed*** to contact Ian Mitchell (Blackwood Institute) with a view to progressing the matter.