

## ***MINUTES OF THE BLACKWOOD TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 13<sup>TH</sup>. APRIL 2015***

***Present :*** Councillor G Erasmus ( Mayor )

Councillors A Farina-Childs, D Davies, C Erasmus, Z Hammond, M Harris, J Criddle,  
& B Baber

Also present County Councillor Alan Rees

### ***1. Apologies for Absence***

Apologies were received from Councillors P.Cook, A Parsons, G Hale & M Veater MBE

### ***2. Policing Matters***

Sgt. Mark Thomas offered the apologies of the new Inspector, Carl Williams who was currently on leave.

Mark apologised that he did not have the crime statistics to hand due to computer problems.

He then reported that on Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup>. April ( 12.00 noon ) at the Maxime Cinema a Counter Terrorist briefing was being held with retailers in the town, and councillors were welcome to attend. Furthermore, later in the afternoon ( 2.00pm ) at the Police Station there was a meeting planned to discuss the proposed trial re-opening of the High Street to traffic on Thursday evenings, and again councillors were welcome to attend.

On Thursday 16<sup>th</sup>. April the inter school football competition takes place at Pontllanfraith Leisure Centre, and the sergeant thanked Town Council for their generous support.

The Chair asked members if they had any issues they wished to raise, and Councillor A Farina-Childs mentioned that groups of youths had started congregating at the Showfield. The sergeant agreed to monitor the situation.

The Chair thanked Mark for his attendance, and also took the opportunity to thank him for all his support and assistance during his time as Inspector.

### ***3. Mayoral Announcements***

The Mayor reported that he had attended the World War 1 Commemoration at Blackwood Library on Friday 13<sup>th</sup>. March, followed by refreshments at the Ambulance Hall.

His Coffee Morning / Chinese Auction in aid of his Charity held at Woodfieldside Pensioner's Hall on 11<sup>th</sup>. March had raised in excess of £100.

He had also received an invitation to attend Blackwood Musical Theatre Society's latest production Me & My Girl on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup>. April at the Blackwood Miners' Institute

#### **4. Correspondence**

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

In respect of the One Voice Wales Response to the White Paper ( Reforming Local Government Power to Local People ), it was **agreed** the Clerk forward a copy of same to members for their information .

It was **agreed** to renew membership of One Voice Wales in the sum of £988 for 2015/16

In respect of the Consultations on Leisure Facilities & Recycling it was **agreed** these be discussed by the Policy & Finance Committee.

Members were concerned that the proposed closure of Cefn Fforest Leisure Centre would have a negative effect on the Community, given its current usage.

With regard the use of additional plastic sacks under the recycling proposals, members were concerned about the possibility of dogs ripping open same and the potential of significant litter. County Councillor Alan Rees reported that he opposed the closure and had raised the possibility of Cefn Fforest Leisure Centre being run by another organisation – maybe a community group. He also informed members he had asked for the Closure/ revised opening times at the Recycling Centres to be monitored and reviewed.

In respect of the Temporary Road Closure to allow Velathon Wales to pass through the borough on Sunday 14<sup>th</sup>. June, members did have concerns that this will cause significant disruption and inconvenience, but felt that since the event was sponsored by the Welsh Government it was a fait accompli.

It was **agreed** the invoices from C.C.B.C. in respect of road closures ( £739.25 ) and room hire ( £17.32 ) be paid.

In respect of Playworks it was **agreed** the invoice in respect of Tax/NI for £696.76 be paid and it was also **agreed** to accept the increased charge of £5 per payslip produced.

Members **agreed** that the Clerk arrange for a representative of PS Partnership to attend a future meeting to talk about the Circuit of Wales development planned for north of Ebbw Vale.

It was **agreed** the applications for financial assistance received from Blackwood Musical Theatre Society & Mynyddislwyn Male Choir being passed to Policy & Finance Committee or their consideration.

The Clerk also reported that he had received thank you letters from the Stroke Association, Relate Cymru & the Moose in respect of recent donations. These were also noted.

#### **5. To Confirm the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 2nd. March 2015**

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

## **6. Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising.

## **7. To Receive the Minutes of the Community Council Liaison Sub-Committee Meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup>. July 2014**

It was *resolved* the minutes be received.

## **8. To Receive the Minutes of the One Voice Wales Larger Council's Committee Meeting held on 15<sup>th</sup>. October 2014**

It was *resolved* the minutes be received.

## **9. To Receive the Minutes of the One Voice Wales Larger Council's Committee Meeting held on 25<sup>th</sup>. February 2015**

It was *resolved* the minute be received.

## **10. To Receive the Minutes of the Blackwood Town Centre Management Group Meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup>. October 2014**

It was *resolved* the minutes be received.

## **11. Council Insurance 2015/2016**

The Clerk reported that an insurance quote had been received from Aon in the sum of £1,327.48 ( compared with £1,316.73 last year ).

He informed members that Mandatory Cover in respect of Public Liability & Employer's Liability were now £10 million each, whilst Fidelity Guarantee, Official's Indemnity, Crossed Cheques ( and other non-negotiable money ) & Libel & Slander were £250,000 each.

Christmas Lighting, Chains of office and computer are also insured at reported cost.

Specific cover for hired equipment for the Carnival is arranged separately.

The current policy is part of a 3 Year Long Agreement effective from April 2014.

The Clerk recommended renewal, and after some discussion this was *unanimously agreed*.

## **12. Consider request from Caerphilly C.B.C. for funding towards Bands in the Park**

The Clerk presented his report, and after some discussion it was *agreed* that we support the request to hold a concert at the Showfield at a date to be agreed with Caerphilly C.B.C. in the sum of £346.

## **13. Planning Applications**

The Clerk presented his report on planning applications received since the last meeting. Councillor J Criddle proposed there were no issues in respect of the majority of applications, but that he did have reservations regarding the following –

15/0134/FULL 8 Denbigh Close, Grove Park - with the proposed conversion of garage to office/gym, that there was sufficient car parking within the curtilage of the property

15/0256/FULL 8 Clos Coed Bach – with the proposed construction of sun lounge to rear of property, that it did not overlook neighbouring properties.

## **14. Reports**

The Clerk together with Councillors C Erasmus & Z Hammond reported on the Blackwood Town Centre Management Group meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup>. March.

The Group were delighted to hear that Town Council had unanimously agreed to continue with the floral decorations/displays in the High Street from 2016/17.

The Police had reported that 60+ parking tickets had been issued by C.S.O.'s over the past few months on High Street, Woodbine Road & David Street, and continued action would be taken against parking on pavements and zig zag lines near crossings.

The proposal to trial the re-opening of the High Street on Thursday evenings met with less positive response, albeit it was accepted that if the road were re-opened and any problems arose the enforcement order could be re-introduced without any delay. The meeting referred to earlier by Sgt. Thomas will discuss the response from all stakeholders and a decision arrive at.

A new initiative Choose the High Street – Past & Present will aim to reconnect people with their local town centres. The past element will use old photographs to evoke memories and re-establish people's connection to a particular place. During the summer, road shows will be held in each town centre library, these consisting of archive photos, schools' artwork and retailer stories and pictures of their business history.

The Clerk notified members that he had given Caerphilly C.B.C. officers several names that they might contact for assistance, namely Ewart Smith & Councillors Veater, Criddle & Hale.

Councillor Z Hammond asked the Clerk to call an Events Committee meeting for April 29<sup>th</sup>., a date agreed with Mrs Ann Evans of Twinkle Twinkle Boutique who will attend and outline her ideas for this years Carnival Parade.

Councillor A Farina-Childs proposed that with the probability of male youths taking part in the event this year Town Council seriously consider members undergoing DBS ( formerly CRB ) checks. It was *agreed* the Clerk make enquiries as to what is required to make the necessary applications.