

MINUTES OF THE BLACKWOOD TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 6TH. MARCH 2017

Present: Councillor W Baber (Mayor)
Councillor J Weeks (Deputy Mayor)
Councillors J Criddle, Z Hammond, D Davies, C Erasmus, J Edwards, N Turner, M Gwynne,
M Veater MBE, G Hale
Sgt. Tony Watkins

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from Councillors A Farina-Childs, P Cook, R Moore & M Harris
Inspector Jason White

2. Declarations of Interest

There were no Declarations made at this point

3. Policing Matters

The Mayor welcomed Sgt. Tony Watkins to the meeting, ho apologised for the Inspectors absence. The Sergeant reported that there continued to be problems with anti social behaviour in and around the bus station area, albeit less than previously, but that some of the problems were now being experienced on the High Street, Cliff Road, ASDA, McDonalds and KFC.

He informed members that problems were now being routinely reported by ASDA, McDonalds & KFC and this had accounted for a quite significant increase in ASB.

Police had been encouraged by the publics response to their on line appeal regarding an incident at McDonalds which had eventually led to an arrest and the officer stated that the increase in problems could result in McDonalds staff wearing cameras to help identify troublemakers.

The theft of wheelie bins in the Cliff Road area had increased over recent weeks, with many apparently burnt out and the perpetrators sniffing the resultant fumes.

Parking continued to be a problem in town, and 78 tickets had recently been issued.

The Mayor questioned the officer regarding the ongoing problems in the Market Place, with the market manager being recently threatened with a knife and the free runners continuing to cause havoc. The Sergeant was not aware of the knife incident, and said he would check this out, but did ask members to tell anyone who sees problems in town to report same immediately. Whilst it was not always possible to respond quickly, often due to having to prioritise calls, he did state if he or his team received the calls he would respond asap.

Members were understanding of the staffing problems, and Councillor D Davies wished to place on record his thanks for a speedy response to Blackwood Junior School and also the dedication of PC Richard Gibbs who assisted at an incident at the Moose Hall, whilst being off duty.

Sgt. Watkins was thanked for is attendance and he left the meeting.

4. *Mayoral Announcements*

The Mayor reported on his attendance at the following –

Guiding Concert at Blackwood Methodist Church on Sunday 12th. February
Velvet Coalmine Sponsors Evening at Maes Manor on Thursday 16th. February
Presentation of cheque to Moose International, Blackwood
Mayor of Caerphilly C.B.C. Charity Concert at Methodist Church on Friday 24th. February
Judged a Picture competition at Sainsbury's
Blackwood Crime Prevention Panel performance of Wings to Fly at Blackwood Miners' Institute
Queens Visit to Tidworth Barracks, Wiltshire and delivered Greetings from Town Council
Funeral of Mavis Organ earlier in the day

Councillor Jan Weeks, Deputy Mayor reported she had attended a function and presented a cheque to Mia Rose Lewis in support of her Charity fund raising efforts.

5. *Correspondence*

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

Caerphilly C.B.C.	Copy of Blackwood & Cefn Fforest Prohibition of Waiting Order 2017 Online Copy of Annual Report of Caerphilly Theatre & Arts Service Notification that Cllr. Keith Reynolds Leader of the Council will be standing down at the forthcoming election Copy of information on Business Rates forwarded to local businesses
Cllr. Andrew Farina-Childs	Notification he is no longer a Plaid member, and will serve as an Independent until the forthcoming election
Cllr. Delwyn Davies	Notification he is no longer a Plaid member, and will serve as an Independent until the forthcoming election
Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales	Copy of Annual Report
One Voice Wales	Copy of presentation made to Larger Councils meeting by Claire Germain (Welsh Government) on Implementation of the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act and its implications for Community & Town Councils. Blackwood Town Council are exempted from the duties outlined, as we do not meet the criteria of the Act – namely Gross Income in excess of £200,000 for each of the 3 years prior to the local well-being plan or the area being published.
Aon Insurance	Notification of settlement of Claim made by Mr Charles Roe in the sum of £7,187

Boundary Commission for Wales	Notification that the Commission has published all responses received during its initial consultation. The start of the statutory four week period runs from 28 February to 27 March 2017. All responses written and oral are on the Commission website at www.bcw2018.org.uk
Blackwood Neighbourhood Policing Team	Request for funding – Annual football tournament Friday 12 th . May
Bobath Children’s Therapy Centre Wales	Request for funding
Teenage Cancer Trust Unit at U.H.W., Cardiff	Request for funding

In respect of the Prohibition of Waiting Order and Boundary Commission, it was **agreed** the Clerk forward copy of the Notice and a copy of M.P. Chris Evans letter proposing an alternative that would not result in such an upheaval of neighbouring communities in the area.

In respect of the Remuneration Panel Annual Report, the Clerk reported that he intended placing same on the Agenda for the next meeting

With the current years budget committed, it was **agreed** the applications for financial assistance be considered by Policy & Finance Committee for decision and allocated against the new year budget.

It was also agreed letter be forwarded to Councillor Keith Reynolds wishing him well for the future, following his decision to stand down at the elections.

Councillor Jan Weeks informed members it was also her intention to resign from Plaid and continue to serve as an Independent until the forthcoming elections.

Councillor D Davies stated a letter of thanks should have been forwarded from the Moose, thanking Town Council for their generosity and also informing members security improvements at the building had now been undertaken.

6. *Schedule of Payments*

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

		£. p
DYT Dance	Grant	250.00
Blackwood & District Crime Prevention Panel	Grant	250.00
Mia Rose Lewis	Grant	100.00
Blackwood Comprehensive School	Grant	200.00
Blackwood Comprehensive School	Grant	350.00
Moose Int. Blackwood	Grant	250.00
Caerphilly C.B.C.	Floral Display + Room Hire	3,246.25
John Hold	Feb. Salary + reimburse.	712.88
Playworks (Katherine Watkins)	Feb. Tax/N.I.	490.58

7. To Confirm the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 6th. February 2017

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

8. Matters Arising

Councillor Zoe Hammond reported that the Police were hoping to launch the RU2DRUNK initiative Borough wide, and were currently working to engage with other major towns in the Borough quoting Blackwood's support as the catalyst.

9. To Receive the Minutes of the Town & Community Council Liaison Committee Meeting held on 2nd. November 2016

It was *agreed* the minutes be received.

10. To Receive the Minutes of the Blackwood Town Centre Management Group Meeting held on 9th. September 2016

It was *agreed* the minutes be received

11. Purchase of Defibrillator

The Clerk reported that it was now in excess of a year since Town Council made the decision to provide a Defibrillator for the town, and felt it was now becoming an embarrassment and a firm order should now be placed.

Several members shared the Clerk's concerns and after some discussion it was agreed the Clerk contact Welsh Hearts, quoting our support of June & Grant Thomas's Jacks Appeal and order a Defibrillator with necessary casing etc.

It was also agreed the Clerk contact Caerphilly C.B.C. to establish where the ideal siting of same would be in/ near the Bus Station, which had been previously identified as the preferred location to benefit the town.

12. Planning Applications

The Clerk presented his report on planning applications received since the last meeting –

17/0042/FULL	Santander	Install new shop front incl. replacement glazed sliding door & A.T.M. 148 High Street, Blackwood
17/0043/ADV	Santander	Installation of 46"TV with metal shroud 148 High Street, Blackwood
17/0079/ADV	HSBC	Installation of internally illuminated fascia sign to rear elevation 91-93 High Street, Blackwood
17/0084/FULL	Mr M Lawford	Construction of two storey dwelling including two habitable rooms in roof space and attached garage 3 The Meadows, Blackwood
17/0085/RET	Mrs H Carroll	Retain conservatory to rear of dwelling and bike store/shed to side of dwelling 61 Montclair Avenue, Blackwood

He also reported on the additional notices received since the report had been prepared, namely

17/0077/FULL	J D Wetherspoons	Provide link from existing Public House to the adjacent property to extend customer area and develop and extend pub garden The Sirhowy, 61-63 High Street, Blackwood
17/0081/COU	Mr R Duggan	Change of use to provide a coffee shop/bistro over three floors, basement, ground and first floor levels Tilley Beddoe, 185 High Street, Blackwood
17/0125/FULL	Home Bargains	Retain ATM Units 6-7 Blackwood Gate Retail Park, Blackwood
17/0126/ADV	Home Bargains	Install integral illumination and screen to the ATM fascia, internally illuminated sign and LED halo illumination to the ATM surround Units 6-7 Blackwood Gate Retail Park, Blackwood
17/0135/FULL	Mr A Smith	Erect two storey side extension providing lounge, toilet, utility room and bedroom with en suite and new timber fence 1 Cardigan Way, Grove Park, Blackwood

After some discussion, it was *agreed* that Councillor J Criddle, Chair of Planning, make contact with the Planning Section regarding 17/0084 (3 The Meadows), 17/0081 (185 High Street) & 17/0135 (1 Cardigan Way) before deciding whether or not to make any representations on same.

13. Reports

The Clerk and Councillor Z Hammond reported on the Town Centre Management Group Meeting held on 28th. February.

It was reported that the Cobbled Lane on the High Street, between the Flour Mill and Bosco Nero was being resurfaced, using materials consistent to its original.

The Summer Fair/Beach Party was scheduled for weekend 1st./2nd. July, and Paul Hudson had thanked Town Council for helping to make last years summer and Christmas Events so successful and hoped we could continue to work closely together in the future for the benefit of all parties. The Clerk had informed the Group that this years Velvet Coalmine Festival, with the news of £9,000 funding from Community Regeneration ensures the event becomes a 10 day event starting on Thursday 7th. September, and that with the additional funding Africa Writes (African Literature Festival) will be involved, giving the local children a rare opportunity to learn about African Culture.

Whilst a planning application had been received in respect of the former Aldi Site, unfortunately it didn't seem likely any progress would be made in the near future.

An update was given to the Group on the proposed Red Lion development, but Councillor Hammond got the impression that Town Council knew more about the proposals than members/ officers present at the meeting.

It was also reported that the owners of the Toilet Block site had been asked to tidy up the site, and that if no response was forthcoming in the next couple of weeks it was highly likely works would be undertaken to remedy the situation and the owners charged accordingly.

The Clerk reported he had raised the issue of the Task & Finish Group on Car Parking, and the possible representation from this Group, as intimated in correspondence received. This had caused disagreement between the Cabinet Members present and Councillor Dix (Chair of the Task & Finish Group). Cabinet members apparently unaware of the invitation and the Chair of the Group defending his decision by stating it was supposedly all about consultation.

Councillor M Gwynne asked if there had been any progress with the plaque being re-sited at the former Coach & Horses Public House on the High Street.

The Clerk responded that he hadn't been in touch with the new owners lately, but would try to make contact over the next week or so.

Councillor D Davies informed members he had arranged a visit to the CCTV Control Room later in the week if any members were interested. Members, whilst interested felt it was too short notice. The Clerk suggested he contact Carl Nestling and arrange another visit, possibly after the elections and Annual General Meeting.

Councillor M Veater MBE asked whether it might be possible for the Clerk to identify any outstanding issues from this Council's tenure at the next meeting, so that all parties are aware of same prior to the Annual General Meeting.