

**MINUTES OF A SPECIAL MEETING OF TOWN COUNCIL HELD ON 6<sup>TH</sup>.JUNE 2022**

Present : Cllr. G Edwards ( Mayor )

Cllr. L Phillips ( Deputy Mayor )

Cllrs. D Davies, G James, A Short, C Erasmus, P Cook, D Box, S Brookman & K Jones

**1. Apologies For Absence**

Apologies for Absence had been received from Cllr. A Bradfield

The Clerk informed the meeting that Dorothy Simmonds had withdrawn from the process

**2 Declarations of Interest**

The Clerk explained that unless they were related to any of the Candidates there was no need to Declare an Interest.

There were no Declarations of Interest made

**3. Interviews for Co-option to Town Council**

**4 Vacancies - Blackwood North/ Cefn Fforest/ Blackwood South (2)**

The Clerk recommended that the following questions be asked by the Mayor to all candidates in turn, and to ensure fairness to all candidates there would be no supplementary questions allowed from the floor.

***A brief introduction – tell us a little about yourself***

***Why do you wish to become a Town Councillor and what experiences, qualities and strengths do you have that will benefit the work of Town Council ?***

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

***How do you feel about Blackwood Town right now, and if you were given a budget to make changes what would be the first things you would look to do ?***

Furthermore that the decision be taken by secret ballot after the interview process was completed, and that the candidates be informed that they would be contacted later that evening by the Clerk as to their success.

This was ***unanimously agreed***

The following candidates were then interviewed -

**CATHRINE CLARK**  
**KEVIN ETHERIDGE**  
**JANET GRIFFITHS**  
**MARK GWYNNE**  
**GRANVILLE HALE**  
**RHYS MILLS**  
**JACOB PEARCE**  
**KIRSTY WILLIAMS**  
**SARAH WAREHAM**

After all interviews had taken place, members were unanimous in stating what a high calibre of candidates we had attracted and admitted it was going to be a difficult decision.

The Clerk handed out the ballot papers to members and asked them to vote for the 4 people they would like to see Co-opted onto Town Council.

Having then collected same and totalling the votes cast he announced that the 4 successful candidates were Sarah Wareham, Rhys Mills, Kirsty Williams & Kevin Etheridge

Since all Candidates had indicated their General Interest in Co-option, members after some deliberation **agreed** the following representation –

Blackwood South - Cllrs. S Wareham & R Mills  
Blackwood North - Cllr. K Williams  
Cefn Fforest East - Cllr. K Etheridge

#### **4. Briefing on alternatives for the planned Summer Event – Saturday September 17<sup>th</sup>. 2022**

The Clerk reported that he was eager to get a steer from members regarding the planned Summer Event provisionally earmarked for Saturday September 17<sup>th</sup>.

The realistic options would appear to be the Beach Party Theme Event or a Food/ Craft Themed Event.

The Clerk reported that having had some dialogue with the Borough Events team, who would be organising the Event he had learnt that there was a planned food Festival in Caerphilly on 3<sup>rd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup> September whilst the Abergavenny Food Festival was earmarked for our provisional date of 17<sup>th</sup>/18<sup>th</sup>. September.

After some discussion and given the number of Food Festivals planned it was **agreed** that we go down the Beach Party themed Event route.

The Mayor queried whether we might bring forward the date of our event given the likely competition and suggested Summer Bank Holiday- Saturday 28<sup>th</sup>. August as an alternative.

After some discussion it was **agreed** the Clerk contact the Events Team to see if this was possible with possibly Saturday 10<sup>th</sup>. September as another viable alternative

The Clerk explained to newer members that in the past we had always tried to involve local groups and organisations to take part in the event, by giving them free pitches so that they might try and make some money for their funds, and would be trying to ensure the Borough could provide approx 8 tents/ marquees free of charge.

He also explained that Town Council, as at the Winter Event, had previously organised an Entertainment Stage, where again we encouraged local dance groups, choirs, theatre groups and individuals to perform throughout the day.

Cllr. A Short commented that at previous events the community groups had been right at the top end of town, and had not felt properly included, and felt that they should be interspersed with all the other stalls throughout the High Street. Cllr. L Phillips suggested that perhaps the Beach area should be nearer the top of town meaning visitors would have to pass all stalls to get there. The Clerk said he would pass these suggestions onto the Events team and would over coming weeks ask them to attend an Events Committee to share their proposals.

The Clerk reminded members that additional budgetary provision was needed given an initial cost estimate of £14k + ( excluding stage entertainment ) compared with a budget of £10k. Members were mindful that we had not, due to Covid restrictions, been able to provide any community events for the past 2 years, and felt it was important to provide something special for the town this year. After some discussion, it was *agreed* that an additional £10k be earmarked from our reserves for this event, with the additional funds being used to provide some exciting entertainment opportunities