

DRAFT

MINUTES OF THE BLACKWOOD TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 6TH. OCTOBER 2025

Present : Cllr. G Etheridge (Mayor)
Cllr. J Griffiths (Deputy Mayor)
Cllrs. D Davies, A Farina-Childs, K Etheridge, C Clark, K Jones, C Erasmus, M Gwynne,
N Dix & P Cook

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence were received from Cllrs. D Box, R Mills, K Williams & A Short

The Clerk reported that he had received a letter from Cllr. L Phillips tendering her resignation as a member for Blackwood North Ward, and this was duly accepted.
He informed members he had contacted Dave Beecham, Electoral Services at Caerphilly C.B.C. informing him of same, and the necessary Notice of Election would be posted on the Notice board & web page tomorrow with a closing date for Call of Election being Monday 27th. October

2. Declarations of Interest

There were No Declarations of Interest made at this time

3. Police Report

There were no Police present to Report

4. County Borough Report

The following Report had been received (and forwarded to members) from the Blackwood County Borough Members

1. On-going issues with the Pobl housing Development at the rear of Coronation Rd. This time in relation to the one-way system.
2. On-going issues with the TW site at Cwmgelli. Water still leaving the Site.
3. Attempted Call-in on Car Park charges.
4. On-going issues with Fly Tipping.
5. Nigel attended a meeting in relation to the HMO on Albany Rd on 1st October.
6. On-going issues with the Bin Storage Facility at the New Red Lion Flats. A meeting has been arranged for 15th October to discuss these issues
7. A point to note that following an issue that I reported in relation to Japanese Knotweed CCBC no longer have an Invasive Species Officer!!
8. Additionally, Kevin has asked several questions in relation to the New Flats being built by Snap Fitness.
9. Addressing traffic issues/problems due to resurfacing works on Montclair Avenue/ Libanus

The Report was received and accepted

5. *Mayoral Announcements/ Report*

The following Report had been received (and forwarded to members) from the Mayor -

- 1, Attended as Mayor to the new Black RAT Productions show of Dai Cula, of the Valleys
- 2, Attended a site meeting at Chepstow Close regarding parking issues.
- 3, Attended an event as Mayor for the TOMVC annual concert.
- 4, Meeting with police over HMO and ASB in Blackwood
- 5, Meeting with RBL Regional poppy appeal Manager regarding the Launch in Blackwood this year.
- 6, Meeting with BMI regarding details of the Mayor's Concert and the Civic Awards Evening
- 7, Written to CCBC for an update regarding the site visit at the BMX track.
- 8, Meeting with Darren Charles's at CCBC regarding potential funding for BMX track.
- 9, Poppy garden opposite library, JS Lee's have been instructed to carry out the works, and another site meeting has been held to discuss last minute and final points on flagpole.
- 10, Arrangements with Libanus Primary have been made to visit the school as Mayor and to take along Council colleagues to a Careers open day later this year.
- 11, Poster has been made in advance for the Carol concert and lantern parade for approval by council.
- 12, Ongoing issues with the festoon lighting saga still continues and we are doing all we can to carry out our side of the issue.
- 13, Site meeting with Jo Hillier rakes regarding more seating in Blackwood town.
- 14, Site meeting with Town Centre team to discuss more flower beds outside the cinema instead of bollards, this has been agreed and we are awaiting the planters.

The Report was received and accepted

6. Correspondence

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

Caerphilly C.B.C. Notification of Blackwood Town Centre Shareholders Meeting 6.00pm Thursday 23rd. October @ ASDA Community Champion Room (via High Street opposite B.M.I.

Footfall Figures

Various correspondence re. Christmas Lighting & Car Park Charges

One Voice Wales Notification of cancellation of AGM & Conference 1st. October

Notification of RCT/ Merthyr/ Caerphilly Area Committee meeting to be held via Teams on October 15th.

Notification of Model Complaints Procedure plus Attendance 6 Month Ruling

Democracy & Boundary Commission for Wales Copy of Draft Annual Remuneration Report for 2026/27
Other than the optional Financial Loss Compensation being increased
* Up to £67.45 for periods not exceeding 4 hrs
* Up to £134.90 for periods exceeding 4 hours but not exceeding 24 hrs
All other payments are unchanged from previous years

Various Nominations for Civic Awards

7. Schedule of Payments

The Clerk presented his Report on payments made/ due for payment, and all were ***unanimously agreed*** -

		£. p
Caerphilly C.B.C.	NNDR	625.00
Welsh Water	Water Rates	77.73
Petty Cash	Petty Cash	47.60
Imagine Pro.	I. D. Cards	154.54
K. Watkins	September Fee	30.00
Mrs R. E Davies	September Salary	897.44
John Hold	September Salary	977.98
HMRC Paye	September Tax/ Er's N.I.	1,173.00
Amazon	Ethernet Splitters	32.97
Amazon	Ethernet cables	20.99
Bebb Tasker & Sucksmith	October Lease Payment	960.00
British Gas	Electricity Charges	67.09
K & R Print	Remembrance Posters	40.00
J.S. Lee	Hanging Baskets – Filling & watering	6,600.00
Caerphilly C.B.C.	Beach Party Recharge	15,330.63
GAVO	Sponsorship Awards Evening	250.00

8. To Confirm the Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 15th.September 2025

It was **resolved** the Minutes be approved as a true record

9. Matters Arising

There were no Matters Arising

10. To Receive the Minutes of the Policy & Finance Committee Meeting held on 22nd.September 2025

The Clerk presented the Minutes, and it was **resolved** they be received

The Clerk highlighted that it had been **unanimously agreed to recommend the following grants to Town Council**, namely –

£250 be awarded to Blackwood Town Cricket Club in respect of the Youth Section
£171.55 be awarded to Blackwood Community History Group to assist purchase of equipment
£250 be awarded to Blackwood RFC Juniors (Under 7's) to assist in purchase of kit

Furthermore, it had been **agreed to recommend** to Town Council that £500 be awarded to Blackwood Town Cricket Club to assist in the purchase of a new wicket cutter .

In respect of an application from Pontllanfraith Inner Wheel, the Clerk reminded members that Town Council for several years had supported the Turn the Town Pink Event when funds were being raised for the new Breast Cancer Unit at YYF Hospital, and as such had identified an amount of £250 within its budget each year (separately from the £4,000 Grants budget) . In effect members are being asked to release that budget.

After a very short discussion it had been **agreed to recommend** to Town Council the release of £250 to Pontllanfraith Inner Wheel in support of their fund raising Event.

The recommendations were **unanimously agreed** and grants to be made as highlighted

The Clerk also reported that having had discussions on potential use of CIL monies, the following schemes /projects had been recommended to Town Council for consideration and ranked in priority once costs are known and that any unfunded schemes/projects should then be earmarked against any future CIL receipts –

Blackwood RFC Flood Defence works

Play Area at Plasmawr Park, together with 5 a side goal posts – ongoing maintenance responsibilities/costs would also need to be a key consideration in respect of this potential scheme

Provision of additional defibrillators to provide 24/7 coverage in town at Blackwood Miners Institute & Blackwood Methodist Church

Provision of Security Shutters at Bus Station to aid the fight against ASB in the area

Members **unanimously agreed** with the above recommendations for potential use of CIL monies

11. Change of Signatories – Currently Clerk plus 2 of 3 from Cllrs. G Etheridge, R Mills & A Short

After some discussion it was ***agreed*** that Mandy Betts replaces John Hold, and that the Town Council member signatories stay as they are. It was agreed the necessary Bank mandate forms be completed and sent to Cooperative Bank

12. Purchase of Desk Top Computers for Clerk & Deputy Clerk

The Mayor reported it was necessary to purchase 2 desk top computers/screens etc. for the Clerk & Deputy Clerk.

He had sought quotations and the cheapest which he recommended to Council was from Curry's (as with the tablets/ lap tops purchased last year) in the sum of £2,394 inclusive of VAT.

The Clerk reported savings were now anticipated on the Beach Party costs and could be vired for this purchase.

Members ***unanimously agreed*** to the purchase of computers/ screens as a matter of some urgency

13. Planning Applications

There were no Planning Applications received in respect of our area

14. Reports

The Clerk gave a brief update of his meeting with the Chief Exec. and was hopeful common sense might prevail in the Festive Lighting saga and that we might be able to utilise festoon lighting as last year, with the proviso we will look to work with the Borough & our contractors Elsbury's to attach same in future years to attachments on buildings in the High Street, some currently used for hanging of bunting.

He also briefly informed members of answers to questions raised regarding the Car Parking charges increases and the numbers of paid parking spaces and the number of on street limited waiting bays and areas of unregulated parking spaces in each town which would as they stated in the report help mitigate these car parking increases.

Not being particularly happy with the response he intended replying saying that once again from the figures supplied Blackwood residents and visitors bear the brunt of the decisions taken. Members supported the Clerks views and ***agreed*** to a response as outlined

15. Events Committee -

(a) Remembrance Services Arrangements

The Mayor reported all is in hand, with Service booklet pretty much complete and due to go to printers, and buffet arrangements organised as last year.

He also informed members of the Gwent County British Legion Poppy Appeal Launch, being hosted again by the Blackwood & District Branch on Thursday 23rd. October , 10.00am. at St. Margaret's Church, then to the Dragon Circle followed by refreshments at the BMI

(b) Civic Awards Evening - Nominations to be scrutinised by Policy & Finance Committee or Full Council ?

The Mayor informed members in excess of 20 nominations had been received for Civic Awards, and we now needed to decide who should decide on Awards to be made.

After some discussion it was agreed Policy & Finance Committee be tasked with the role and then recommend to Town Council. The Mayor did point any member was welcome to attend the meeting as an observer to ensure fairness & transparency.

It was agreed as the closing date was Monday 13th. October the meeting be held at 6.30pm that same evening.

(c) Planned Christmas Events

The Clerk reported he had received a request from Caerphilly CBC Events team to organise the Stage Entertainment at the Christmas Market/ Fair on Saturday 24th November, with a budget of £1,500 as in previous years and to arrange the Pontllanfraith Rotary Sleigh to be in attendance all day with a budget of £600.

He reported he had made contact with the usual contributors regarding their potential attendance.

Similarly he had confirmed attendance of the Oakdale Silver Band at the Carol Concert on Thursday 4th. December, and had made contact with the Schools requesting their attendance on the evening. The Mayor confirmed Mynyddislwyn Male Choir would also be in attendance.

Cllr J Griffiths queried that with the Clerk having been greatly involved with these events over the years, would there be a proper briefing of what is expected. He confirmed he had a session arranged with Mandy & Rhian over the next week or so discuss this and other issues, but might well be available if required.