



Draft Minutes of the Blackwood Town Council Meeting held on 2nd February 2026, at Blackwood Town Council Offices

Present in person: Councillors G Etheridge - Mayor,

J Griffiths Deputy Mayor -

Councillors P Cook, C Erasmus, K Jones, C Clark, M Gwynne, A Farina Childs, G Etheridge

Attended digitally: Councillors K Etheridge, J Griffiths, K Williams, D Box, R Mills

Also in attendance: M Betts (Town Clerk/ RFO), R Davies (Deputy Town clerk/ Deputy RFO) Member of the public.

1.To receive Apologies for Absence.

Councillors D Davies. A Short, N Dix.

2.To receive Declaration of Interests or dispensations on any item(s) on this Agenda, if appropriate.

[Councillors and Officers are reminded of their personal responsibility to declare any personal and/or prejudicial interest(s) in respect of any item of business on this agenda in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000, and the Code of Conduct for both Councillors and Clerk.]

No declarations provided at this point.

3. Police Report

Crime - Data shows an overall decrease in recorded crime across the Blackwood ward during January when compared to December. There are no noticeable trends or patterns, and the reduction has been observed across several categories. Despite a positive trend police will continue to monitor patterns closely and maintain proactive patrols and engagements to ensure community safety.

Anti-social behaviour – this has seen a slight increase when compared to December. The rise has been noted and is being actively reviewed to understand contributing factors. Officers are responding through targeted patrols and working in partnership with local agencies.

There are several targeted operations taking place in the Blackwood areas. These are aimed at tackling specific areas such as anti-social behaviour, safe drinking and violence against women, tackling the use of e scooters / e bikes and illegal parking.



4. To receive, approve and sign Minutes of the last Council meeting 12th January 2026.

Approved and signed by the chair in the presence of the council.

5. Matters arising from previous minutes.

No matters arising from the minutes.

6. To receive Draft Minutes of the Policy & Finance meeting 19th January 2026

Minutes noted.

7. Reports

A. Mayor's report: no report

B. Clerk/ RFO Report

The past month has required a lot of work related to the budget and setting it for the coming year. There has been a focus on expanding the council's profile on social media, with spotlights on businesses, bios for councillors and newsletters. Councillors were reminded of the up-and-coming spring fair - Big Welsh festival. Councillors were asked if they could spend some time manning the stall which will be in the high street. The offices will be open and used as a quiet space. Promotional materials have been ordered and will be available to give out on the day.

C. County Councillors' Reports

1. We have received an avalanche of complaints in relation to the tto's in regards the Pobl Development at the rear of Coronation Rd.
2. Missed Bin Collections are occurring again.
3. Contaminated water entering the Sirhowy River.
4. Issues with the new speed ramps on Sunnybank Rd.
5. CCTV monitoring being reduced. Kevin put a motion forward at Full Council, but the Monitoring Officer and several Cllrs objected to this as the Monitoring Officer stated that the Motion was "Premature



6. Grove Park Persimmon development, supporting residents re WAG decision process/ press statement in opposition to the development.
7. Reporting fly tipping in the town centre.
8. Reporting vandalism to lighting columns
9. Movement on the Persimmon Houses on Grove Park might be worth council putting in their objections by 23/2/26 shall report at meeting
10. Number of complaints gone into council phase 1 Highways matters from residents; clearing over drains promised within 10 days over 1 month ago, FOI resident submitted on 10th October not dealt with until 27/1/26 breach of 20 working days – with information commissioner to issue a formal complaint notice
11. 2. 91 million spent on PFI Contract for schools
12. Budget cuts on Agenda for Community Council to put their views in – will report at meeting (18 minutes meeting lasted at Council offices with Town Council hardly any questions most disappointing – they really need to up their game)

D.Representative Report

Feedback from One Voice Wales AGM this is the first time the meeting was quorate and went ahead. Time was spent discussing the constitution as this needs to be tighter. OVW will be meeting with the Senedd and so it was suggested that the clerk/deputy log the councils concerns and send these to Cllr Clark who can forward them to OVW for representation.

Cllr Etheridge highlighted the closing date for representatives for the proposed 300 houses is 23rd February and since there were hundreds of objections logged by residents, he requested that the town council write an objection to planning on their behalf.

Councillors attended the Special liaison meeting with the town and community council in Ty Penallta's to discuss the proposed budget. The whole meeting lasted 18 minutes and there was little challenge to the proposed budget by other councils. OVW representative was asked if she could raise this with One Voice Wales, as it was felt if town councils want to be involved and informed by the Local authority there needs to be more engagement and challenge offered.

The local authority has sent out a survey regarding the usefulness of the meetings but there are only 2 questions and no opportunity to expand on why



they may or may not be useful. It was suggested that the Clerk contact the Borough Liaison Officer regarding the value of the survey. (The survey did in fact contain more questions).

8. Finance items

Schedule of payments.

Supplier	Description	Amount
British Gas	Gas	£227.39
British Gas	Electricity Bill	£71.68
Notetop Office Solutions	White Paper	£80.64
Big Bear Promo	Promotional Items	£1,272
Traditional Signwriting Services	New Honours Board plus addition of names	£802.00
GRC Plumbing and Heating	Investigate and resolve radiator issues	£144.00
Blackwood Town Council	Salaries Clerk and Deputy Clerk	£2845.50
Elsburys	Christmas Lights Call outs/Repairs	£618.96
CCBC	Contribution to Spring Fair	£3,000
Internal Systems Wales	New Fire Door between reception and main offices	£837.60
Plan.com	Mobile Phones	£56.00



Ty Hafan	Mayor's Charity 2024	£1,307.22
Wales Air Ambulance	Mayor's Charity 2025	£867.00
Ogi	Broadband/Phones	£204.60
J S Lee	Repair to Steps	£216.00
K and R Print	Extra Orders of Service for Remembrance	£220.00
Katherine Watkins- Playworks	Payroll	£20.00
Case Graphics	Door Nameplate	£27.29
Blackwood RFC	Flood Defences	£12,000

The CCBC events team has asked for contribution of £3000 to fund the Big Welsh Festival. This has been discussed in Policy and Finance and is now proposed to Council for consideration. Contribution, as requested, was agreed.

A request to purchase additional laptop as the others are now used by the clerk / Deputy, was agreed.

Photocopier. Costs were discussed for a 5 year term. Cllrs requested that the Clerk/deputy find out the cost of a reduced term of 2/3 years.

Budget 2026/27

Councillors were presented with a detailed budget break down and monitoring report which has been recommended by the policy and finance committee. It was unanimously agreed to accept the report and the budget proposal for 2026/27.



9. Planning Matters

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 – SECTION 78

planning@caerphilly.gov.uk 14 January 2026 LOCATION: 79 High Street, Blackwood, NP12 1BA,. PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT: Retain and complete the change of use from commercial to A1 (Shops) APPELLANT(S): FM Global PLANNING APPEAL REFERENCE: CAS-04563-T3B6Q3

10. Policies, Governance & Compliance.

None at the moment but policies will go to policy and finance and then be submitted, if approved.

11. Correspondence.

Planning Aid Wales: Upcoming events

CCBC

Agenda and papers for Special Liaison Meeting 26th January: Draft CCBC Budget proposals

Notification of installation of new noticeboards in Blackwood

Information on consultation on Air Quality Strategy

Footfall figures for January

Information on regulations from Christmas Lights installations

Notification of tables for BTC at forthcoming events

Request to include a lantern parade as part of the procession for the Christmas Lights switch on

Request for a contribution of £3,000 for the Spring Fair, with the same amount being allocated back to the Beach Party.

Information on Code of Conduct Training for newly elected members

Information on Pride in Place Funding

One Voice Wales

Reminder re Annual General Meeting on 21st January 2026

Information on Town of Culture Funding



Information re Area Committee Meeting held on 28th January 2026

Information from Biodiversity Seminar held on 15th January 2026

12. Community Issues/ Projects.

1. Christmas lights – A meeting was held with CCBC Highways Officer regarding the health and safety rules associated with festoon lights. These will be taken down in the next few months. The lights on the lamp posts will meet the agreed criteria.
2. The new electronic notice board has been installed. The Clerk/deputy have been asked to find out who is the point of contact to advertise and its cost.
3. Clerk/ deputy have been asked to approach the Town Centre Management team and ask are they planning any initiatives to assist with the falling foot fall figures. It was noted that when councillors have visited local businesses they are concerned about the increased parking charges and business rates.

It was requested that the One Voice Wales representative ask the Welsh Government on the councils behalf how they are planning to assist local businesses. It was felt that Town Council should be lobbying more and take action – representative to lobby OVW and ask them to represent to the WG.

4. Concerns were raised regarding interpretation boards outlining local history being removed. The Mayor commented that these were due to be replaced

13. Clerks Working Hours

The deputy clerk's days of work have changed and will now be Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday 10am – 3pm.

The clerk's days of work are unchanged (Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 10am-3pm).

14. Date of Next Meetings:-

Policy and Finance: Monday 16th February 6.30pm

Full Council: Monday 2nd March 6.30pm

Councillors are reminding that training has now been booked for the recommended modules. This is bespoke training and will take place in the chambers. It will take place on: - 9th February – The council as an employer

9th March – Understanding the law.

Both will be at 6.30 - 8pm



It was highlighted that there are six modules that form core training as all councillors need to appreciate, we have responsibilities and it is essential that all are trained to deal with these. This will be discussed at Annual Council.

Meeting Closed – 7.21pm.



Actions

1. Clerk/deputy find advertising costs of new electronic board.
2. Clerk/ deputy to approach the Town Centre Management team and ask are they planning any initiatives to assist with the falling foot fall figures.
3. Cllr Clark as the One Voice Wales representative ask the Welsh Government on the council's behalf how they are planning to assist local businesses.
4. Clerk/deputy find out the cost of a reduced term of 2/3 years for photocopier.
5. Clerk/deputy to write on the Council's behalf objecting to the proposed 300 houses
6. Clerk/deputy log the councils concerns regarding the Special liaison meeting and send these to Cllr Clark who can forward them to OVW for representation.
7. Clerk to contact the Borough Liaison Officer re the recent survey.
8. Clerk/Deputy to recirculate their mobile telephone numbers.