

Draft Minutes of Blackwood Town Council Meeting held on Monday 6th July 2026



Present: Cllr G Etheridge, C Clark, K Jones, L Perkins, C Erasmus, D Davies, P Cook, Councillors K Etheridge OBE & R Mills.

Chairperson: Councillor G Etheridge (Mayor)

Also in attendance: M Betts (Clerk/ RFO) & R Davies (Deputy Clerk/ Deputy RFO)

1. Apologies for Absence:

Cllr J Griffiths, A Farina Childs, D Box, A Short, N Dix, M Gwynne.

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

Cllr D Davies declared an interest in item 20 (over 50 Forum)

Cllr Davies, Cllr L Perkins and Cllr G Etheridge declared an interest in item 16 (Centenary of the Cenotaph).

3. Police Report – The police were unable to attend the meeting and will update the Mayor in due course.

4. County Borough Report-

The cracks found on Foundry Hill requires a full survey to assess the damage and its cause. Prior to work beginning on the Cwm Gelli development it was estimated that the traffic would increase and this has been true with a 92% increase in traffic using Sunny Bank Road.

Members of the council attended the One Voice Wales conference on 1st July. Blackwood Town Council won two awards for the work they did to save the Blackwood Miners' Institute when it was under threat of closure.

Members were invited to Blackwood Rugby Club Awards presentation. The Town Council has donated £12,000 for flood defence works. Councillors reported it was a lovely evening, and they were able to view the work that has been done regarding the flood defences. The club are confident that the measures taken will address the risk of flooding in the future.

Persimmon housing development – a decision is expected in next few weeks. The delay is concerning as if the development goes ahead, it will have a dramatic impact upon the area as there will be an increase in traffic serving the site.

Anti-Social Behaviour has decreased in some areas; however, residents have complained regarding boy racers in Asda.

Litter around the area is also being complained about.

5. Mayoral Announcements-None given at this point

6. To confirm minutes of the Council meeting held on 1st June 2026.

Resolved: Cllr Mills noted item numbers were the wrong way round from the agenda. An interest was declared for item 8 not 9. The amount of payment to mayor was wrong it is £1000 not £1500;

these issues were noted and will be amended. Otherwise, it was declared these are a true and accurate record.

7. To confirm minutes of the Special Council Meeting held on 29th June 2026

Resolved: that these are a true and accurate record and will be published on website.

8. To receive the minutes of the Policy and Finance Meeting of 15th June 2026

Resolved: that these are a true and accurate record.

Members asked if Wales Air Ambulance a certificate to recognise the money and effort that has been donated to the organisation as the mayor's charity. This could then be displayed at the Council offices.

9. To receive the notes of the meeting with Town Centre Management and Regeneration Officers held on 17th June 2026 – The clerk went through the notes and fed back the outcome and information following the meeting.

The mayor advised that a directory would cost over £4200 and felt that this isn't something the Town Council can help with. It was commented that the TCM team don't seem to engage with the businesses in the area.

The Mayor advised a letter had been sent to the appropriate officer regarding lack of budget for the Town Centre Management Team, as yet no response received.

The Clerk and Deputy Clerk felt it has been a helpful meeting from their perspective.

10. Audit Wales information on Variances – at the Special Council meeting held on 29th June, members had suggested a narrative to go with the variance figures. Following consultation with One Voice Wales, it was felt this was not needed for the audit submission. There is a prescribed format and it was felt that Audit Wales will request information if needed. However, a narrative will be prepared for Councillors to help explain the reasons for the variances.

11. Correspondence

CCBC Arrangements for meeting with Town Centre Management /Regeneration Officers

CCBC Footfall Figures

CCBC Road Re-surfacing Programme 2026/2027

CCBC Summer Events Leaflets

CCBC Community Council Liaison Sub Committee Meeting Date: Monday 20th July

OVW Training Dates for Councillors

OVW Biodiversity Packages

OVW Various bulletins

Elsbury ; correspondence re removal of catenary cabling/erection of bunting

Planning Aid Wales: Training Events

Inpost re installation of lockers

Scribe re various training events

Training Certificates from Members

Natural Resources Wales Community Flood Volunteer Event

Public Health Team Posters

Freedom of Information Request

Zurich Insurance: confirmation of cover for civic regalia anywhere in the UK

Alison Bebb : request to contact company for fire equipment maintenance

12. Schedule of Payments

Amount	Description	Supplier
£52.00	Annual Fee for data protection	Information Commissioner
£465.30	Training Courses/ Conferences	OVW Conference and Awards
£2,438.82	Salaries	BTC
£464.48	Christmas lights electricity	SSE
£40.28	Birthday Vouchers	BTC
£28.46	Key cabinet with key tags	Amazon
£57.82	Gas Bill	British Gas
£40.00	Birthday Flowers	BTC
£700.00	Grant for Parklet Graphics	Jacob Abraham Foundation
£731.05	New sockets	Fusion Electrics
£371.83	New Lighting	Fusion Electrics
£1,121.10	Installation of defibrillators	Fusion Electrics
£204.60	Phone / Broadband	Ogi
£64.80	Mobile Phones	Plan.com
£960.00	Office lease	Bebb, Tasker and Sucksmith
£79.43	Water charges	Welsh Water
£45.60	Accounts package	Scribe
£615.00	NNDR	CCBC
£85.55	Petty Cash	Post Office
£220.05	Photocopier/Printing	Digital Systems Wales

Payments Schedule was agreed

13. Requests for financial assistance: None received.

14. Clerks working hours, salaries, Deputy Clerk probationary review- The clerk and deputy clerk left the room at this point.

Mandy Betts is the Clerk and Rhian Davies is the Deputy Clerk. Both are employees of the Town Council. Mandy works Tuesday to Friday 23 hours per week, this has been reduced by one hour from initial employment. Rhian works Tuesday to Thursday, 18 hours per week, this has been increased by 2 hours from initial employment.

The deputy clerk has had her probationary review, the clerk's review is scheduled for August. The outcomes of the reviews and any salary implications will be reported accordingly.

15. Beach party update, including discussion of the entertainment stage at future events –

Everything in hand the turn out from stall holders is good, usual rides, busking pods, some councillors have already volunteered to help with the Town Council stall. A discussion followed regarding manning the event stage. As we are funding the event it seemed appropriate that the events team organised the acts this time. However, it was felt that in the future the Town Council would prefer the clerk and deputy clerk to take control of this and introduce the acts and act as a compere as well as seeking the entertainment acts as in previous years. Cllr Cook felt that as we are funding the event the Town Council needs more recognition which has not been evident in the publicity so far from the events team. **It was proposed and seconded that the clerk / deputy clerk take responsibility for manning the stage and organising the community stage and councillors will man the stall where possible.**

16. Centenary of the cenotaph: The current budget is £2000 for the centenary of the cenotaph. It was proposed that an additional £5000 be set aside for further costs. Councillors asked for a detailed breakdown of the additional costs. These will be presented at the September meeting, A motion was proposed for £5000 to be set aside from the project fund pending a review of the programme of events, this was seconded – unanimously carried. Members who declared an interest took no part in the debate or decision.

17. Public Toilets – this item was deferred to the September meeting.

18. Draft Letter to Health Board – Sent out to members and asked for comments to be sent, none received to date. The clerk asked those present for any comments to be received by Wednesday 8th July; request for a bus service to the Grange to be mentioned as there is no direct route.

19. Dispensation request for Cllr D Box Resolved: This was unanimously agreed.

20. Blackwood 50 plus forum: Cllr Davies declared an interest. This group was designed so that older people have a voice, it used to cover the Caerphilly borough but this group has now folded. Councillor Davies is looking to start 50+ forum for the Blackwood area. Members asked that Cllr Davies give some more information. It was suggested that the Clerk look for Terms of Reference for the previous group or similar groups and that a further discussion is put on the agenda for a future meeting to see how the Town Council can help. In the meantime, if councillors are interested, they can contact Councillor Davies.

21. Planning Applications

Case Reference 26/0387/COU

Location 1, The Old Court, William Street, Blackwood NP12 1NU
Proposal Change of use from residential to offices
Case Officer Josie Millson 01443 864708

Case Reference 26/0424/HH

Location 2 Graig View, Highland Terrace, Blackwood NP12 1QN
Proposal Erect a garden studio
Case Officer Eric Wichert 01443 864709

Case Reference 26/0391/RET

Location 27 Addison Street, CefnF forest, Blackwood, NP12 1EN
Proposal New vehicle access, garden walls with railings and associated
Landscaping works

There were no objections/concerns raised.

22. Workshop on Priorities September Meeting – The clerk mentioned that the September would include a workshop for members to prioritise themes/ideas/events that they would like to push forward.

23. Date of next meetings:

13th July Policy and Finance 6.30pm, Town Council Offices

7th September Full council 6.30