TREDEGAR TOWN COUNCIL

An Extraordinary Meeting of Council held in the Council Chamber at Bedwellty House On Wednesday 8th January 2014 at 6.30pm.

Present:	**Councillor**	**T. Smith**
		R. Watkins
		A. Tippings
		R. Thomas
		M. Cross
		P. Prosser
		G. Meredith
		H. Trollope
		D. Howells
		B. Willis
		S. Trollope
		G. Bowen-Knight
In attendance:		**Ms. C.M. Keane – Town Clerk**
Also Present:		**Mr. Mike Stephens of Centre Great.**

239) Apologies: Cllrs. A. Cotton; T. Gregory, J Morgan and O. Price.

240) To receive a report from the Mayor regarding the Christmas Lighting and any reports, as requested from Gala Lights and Centre Great, received by the Clerk.

It was noted that both Gala Lights and Centre Great had been invited to attend.

The Mayor began by introducing Mr Stephens of Cente Great.
Both he and the Mayor were thanked by all Members for the work carried out over the Christmas period and he was asked to convey the thanks of Council to all his staff.

He was asked, firstly, if there were any faults that could have been avoided.
He replied by stating that he was of the opinion that whoever did the installation should do the repairs. However he did report that he had spoken at length to those who had accessed the lighting, and whilst there had been some difficulty with information they had received regarding lamp-post numbers – mainly because they were unused to the lighting in Tredegar.
He stated that there were a number of issues with the infrastructure that could have been highlighted before the Switch-On. As for the installation of the strings from the Clock his opinion was that they had not been properly installed, and that he had not received any good reports about the way in which the curtains around the Clock were hung.
He did state that the weather conditions played a part in some of the faults since most of the motifs etc had a device that would shut them down if they were affected by wind and rain.
It was noted that Council had previously paid for refurbishment to some columns.
Members noted that a number of areas had not worked at all.
Queries with the timings of the lights were outside the control of everyone except the Borough Council. This was because the lighting was controlled by a central computer by the Borough and the

employee responsible was not available over the holidays. The people who attended all the emergency call outs over the holidays were unable to make any changes to the lighting controls for this reason.
Members noted with dismay that there was not a single day of the whole festive period when the whole lighting system was on.
Once again the lack of the qualification required by Gala's contractors to work on the lamp-posts was highlighted. This was despite reassurances that they would be given the necessary training and the fact that details of the training course had been passed through to Gala two years ago by Town Council.
Mr. Stephens was asked whether the current scheme was suitable for the location. He responded by saying that the Clock decoration seemed a little flimsy but wouldn't comment further without inspection. He did comment that their company had made more trips to Tredegar to rectify faults than they had to Swansea.
Mr Stephens was thanked again for the work carried out over the holiday period and it was agreed to express our thanks to him and his team in writing. He then withdrew.

A great deal of discussion took place regarding the various elements of the lighting programme which had failed. Members expressed their disappointment at the failures throughout the scheme and also the lack of response by Gala Lights. Members agreed that, as last year, the full cost of the lighting should not be paid, since the full scheme was not delivered.
It was recommended that an independent survey of all infrastructure take place – this was agreed.
It was further agreed that the contract with Gala Light be reviewed and the option of the three year opt out, previously offered, be investigated.
It was agreed that a single company be responsible for a survey of all infrastructure, the erection, supply and repair of the lights in future years.

There being no other business the Meeting Closed – and the Mayor thanked Members for attending at such short notice.

_____ Chair