

TREDEGAR TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held in the Council Chamber,
Bedwellty House on Wednesday, 20th June, 2018 at 6.00 p.m.**

Present: Councillors H. Trollope (Chair)

**E. Jones
T. Smith
A.E. Tippings
D.W.A. Howells
G. James
A. Jones
P. Prosser
D. Rowberry
S. Trollope
M. Turner
P. Waldron
B.G. Willis**

**In Attendance: Town Clerk – Ms. C. Price
RFO – Ms. A. Jones**

By invitation: Internal Auditor, Mr. S. Bees

087) Apologies: Councillors M. Cross, D. Jones and J. Thomas

088) Declarations of Interest

The Chair reminded Members to make their declarations as and when necessary.

089) To consider the exclusion of the Press and public by virtue of the matters to be discussed under the provisions of the LGA 1972 Schedule 12A

Moved, the meeting was closed to the public.

090) To receive:

Council agreed to a change of order in respect of points a) to d).

The Chair extended a welcome to the Internal Auditor, who was in attendance to present his report for the Internal Audit for the year 2017 / 2018.

- **report of the Internal Auditor**

The Internal Auditor thanked Council for the opportunity to present his findings again this

year and provided a brief introduction to the report, which was presented to advise Members of the conclusion of the Internal Audit for the year ended 31st March, 2018.

He said that the purpose of the audit was to demonstrate that the Town Council had fulfilled the statutory requirement to maintain an adequate and effective system of internal audit of their accounting records and system of internal control; and the report provided the assurance for the Town Council to complete maintenance in accordance with its Annual Governance Statement. The audit had included checks and balances, as listed in the audit programme, and supporting documentation had been examined. The Internal Auditor outlined changes to the audit for 2017/2018.

Regulation 15 of the 'Accounts and Audit (Wales)' Regulations 2014 had last been updated in 2015 and required Council to submit an Annual Return. Within the Annual Return the three new thematic assurances for 2017 / 2018 were:

- Use of Reserves
- Use of s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972
- Gratuity Payments (*not applicable to Tredegar Town Council*)

It was important that the thematic assurances were announced as early as possible to provide councils every opportunity to comply; currently for 2018 / 2019, it was proposed these be: 'compliance with Standing Orders' and 'delegation to committees'. The Internal Auditor said this needed to be demonstrated and recorded within the minutes at every opportunity.

The statement within the report certified that the Internal Auditor:

- had acted independently, and on the basis of, an assessment of risk;
- had carried out a selective assessment of compliance with relevant procedures and controls;
- had undertaken the audit in accordance with the Council's needs and planned coverage;
- had reported on their conclusions as to whether specific control objectives had been achieved throughout the year to a standard to meet the Council's needs.

The Internal Auditor outlined eleven specific control objectives, each of which required the Internal Auditor's certification and reflected the findings of the audit.

The Internal Auditor thereupon referred to the control objectives and issues arising, and invited Members to respond on these matters, and also the content of the report:

- Grounds maintenance – Sirhowy Community Garden / Deighton playing field: suggested that a more formalised agreement would be in the best interest of Council. Members said that Council were pursuing the possibility of acquiring the playing field with the appropriate Officer under a Community Asset Transfer but was awaiting the decision regarding a proposed change in policy by the Local Authority.
- Elite Cleaning: as this was the fourth year of the contract, Council should continue to review the arrangement to ensure the best market price was received in respect of this service. To ensure the good service was taken into account as well as costs incurred; the Internal Auditor suggested compiling a template, featuring various elements within the matrix, which could take into consideration both price and quality factors.

- VAT had been properly accounted for and claimed well before the official submission date; for which he commended the Finance Officer.
- The current strategy implemented in respect of the level of Balances and Reserves were effectively managed, however Council could review the precept in the future, if required.
- Salaries and Payroll: the Internal Auditor had undertaken a comprehensive audit of payroll, confirming he had no concerns that the appropriate national frameworks were in place. He was aware that OVW had been commissioned to undertake a review of duties and capacity. The Chair confirmed this was being pursued following comments of staff in respect of workload and was ongoing at present.

A Member highlighted that there had been a need to review the Mayor's Allowance following revised arrangements as outlined in the report of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales, to ensure a measured approach by Council. The Internal Auditor noted the change, which remained within the maximum specified guidance for a Civic responsibility. He said that a prudent reason for Council to pay the allowance in two instalments throughout the financial year could be to avoid any issues arising should there be a change in responsibility for an individual. Also, in addition to the Civic allowance, a Mayor could be allocated the £500.00 allocated for a Senior Allowance and the £150.00 to cover Members' expenses.

The Internal Auditor thereupon outlined his conclusions in respect of the statutory Internal Audit Report and the requirements thereof. He expressed his gratitude to the RFO and Clerk for their full co-operation throughout the audit, and the assistance provided in respect of supplying any documents and / or information required.

A Member extended thanks to the Internal Auditor for the work undertaken and the manner in which he undertook his duties; she thereupon enquired of best practices undertaken elsewhere that Tredegar Town Council could adopt and suggested these could be fed back to the staff. The Internal Auditor said that, in his experience, best practice was more often than not relayed to other town councils based on the work undertaken by the staff of Tredegar Town Council.

- **verbal recommendations of Performance Review Sub-Committee**

The following recommendations, arising from the Performance Review Sub-Committee, were reported for consideration and approved accordingly.

- Year End Accounts to 31st March, 2018; and
- Reserves

- **confirm the Annual Accounts and Return for 2017/2018, prior to External Audit**

The RFO read parts 1 – 9 of the Annual Governance Statement; Parts 1 – 8 were agreed as 'Yes' and No. 9 (Trust Funds) as 'not applicable'. The Officer thereupon read statements 1 – 3 on Annual Governance Part 2 and these also were agreed as 'Yes'.

Members of the Council agreed, to approve by resolution, to submit the Annual Return to the External Auditor.

The Chair extended thanks to the Internal Auditor for the excellent work undertaken in his appraisal, and for attending to present a most comprehensive report; he looked forward to

continuing working together in the future. Mr. Stuart Bees thereupon left the meeting.

- **Internal Audit 2017/2018: to undertake a review of the Internal Audit Process for the year ended 2017/2018;**

The RFO presented her report of the Internal Audit Service 2015/2016, which was a thematic approach to be reviewed every year. The Internal Auditor, Mr. S. Bees, would undertake his assessment on being appointed; the Officer confirmed he had been very thorough in this process.

In respect of the performance of the Internal Auditor, Members said there were no queries or comments; therefore, the statements outlined within the report were formally accepted and approved accordingly.

Members thereupon expressed their thanks to the RFO for her work, and also expressed appreciation to the Internal Auditor, Mr. S. Bees. The RFO confirmed that the appropriate letter would be sent to Mr. Bees, on approval, confirming his re-appointment at the AGM as Internal Auditor.

091) To re-open the Meeting to the Public

Moved, the meeting was re-opened to the public.

092) Accounts: to consider a Schedule of Accounts for payment in June 2018

The RFO spoke to the report and explained that the bank reconciliations were available for Members to view.

- Poppy Wreaths – additional payment approved for the three wreaths
- Town Clock – RFO to request report on call-out, as timing still incorrect; agreed to hold payment until response received.

There being no further queries regarding the Schedule of Accounts, with the aforementioned payment to be held in abeyance, all other presented items were approved for payment. Transfer of funds would be undertaken in the presence of the appropriate Member and Town Clerk, which was noted accordingly.

The RFO left the meeting at this juncture.

093) To receive and adopt the following Minutes of Council:

- a) Annual General Meeting of Council - 2nd May, 2018;**
- b) Finance and Staffing Sub-Committee - 14th May, 2018;**
- c) Civic Sub-Committee - 16th May, 2018;**
- d) Ordinary Meeting of Council - 16th May, 2018;**
- e) Events Sub-Committee - 21st May, 2018 ** *Chair of Events to present***

It was agreed that all Minutes presented be moved en bloc as a true record – with the exception of e) which were not made available, with any matters arising to follow.

094) Matters arising from the Minutes

Annual General Meeting of Council – 2nd May, 2018

- Amend 'Jacquee' to Jacquie (page 1)
- Mayor's Allowance – noted this could be subject to N.I. contributions in addition to tax

Finance & Staffing Sub-Committee - 14th May, 2018

- Amend 'Town Clock' to War Memorial (page 11)
- Possible sighting of hilt – the Leader confirmed this had been recovered
- Electrical provision – column ordered, to be painted

Ordinary Meeting of Council – 16th May, 2018

- Invitation to be extended to the Team Leader – Highways & Winter Maintenance, Nicola Davies, to the 'July cycle' Ordinary Meeting of Council: to discuss highways maintenance
- Civic Award presentation evening now to be held 4th July, 2018: apologies extended by Councillor S. Trollope for this date
- Armistice and Armed Forces Communities Programme – Councillor A. Tippings to liaise with office
- Fly the Flag – thanks extended to Councillor E. Jones for repairing the Armed Forces Day flag

095) Chair to sign Minutes

It was agreed that the Minutes be signed at the next Ordinary Meeting of Council, following amendments requested being undertaken.

096) Correspondence

- 1) BGCBC
 - a) K. Hale Re: Tredegar Town Centre "Deep Clean" will take place on Sunday, 24th June and Sunday, 8th July, 2018.
 - Noted.
 - b) Cllr J. Morgan: Report of overgrown allotment edges at Vale View.
 - Chair of Allotments, Councillor P. Waldron, to liaise.
 - c) Deighton Primary: Apologies and explanation for their late request to Town Council asking for permission to use the playing field for their sports days –**forwarded to senior four**.
 - Noted.
 - d) Notice of Sirhowy Ward vacancy
 - i) A. O'Leary. No request for an Election.
 - ii) Cllr K. Hayden. Suggesting a move from Georgetown Ward.

- Noted; agenda item for discussion at next meeting of Council.
- e) Consultation with Town / Community Councils: dates of forthcoming Meetings being held at 2.00 p.m. Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Ebbw Vale – ***copied to relevant Members***
- Noted.
- f) S. Cargill Re: Play sessions. Thanks for allowing them to run the play sessions over Whitsun at Sirhowy Community Garden. Keen to add Sirhowy to their Summer Play Session programme therefore asking can they use the site again on 1st, 8th, 15th and 22nd August.
- Agreed, subject to appropriate levels of Health & Safety, clean up, contingency plans regarding inclement weather, etc. A Member was delighted that the Community Garden was being used in this manner.

Councillors T. Smith and B. Willis declared an interest in the following item and took no part in discussion or voting thereon.

- g) i) List of Licensing Applications week ending 18.06.2018
1. Gaming machine permit – Red Lion.
 2. Designated Premises Supervisor – Tredegar Sports Centre.
- ii) List of Licensing Applications week ending 15.06.2018
1. Temporary Event Notice – The Cambrian.
 2. Personal Licence – Mr P Pikulski.
- Noted.

- 2) One Voice Wales
- a) Asking for nomination of Chair and Vice Chair for the Gwent Valley Area Committee being held 24.07.2018 at 7.00 p.m. Abertillery & Llanhilleth Town Council. ***Nominations to be submitted no later than 17.07.2018.***
- Noted; Councillor J. Thomas to be nominated as Chair.
- b) Remembrance Day Silhouette installation grants.
- Noted; Clerk to apply for award.

- c) New Model Standing Orders 2018 & amendment to para 21 (a).
- Noted.
- 3) Cllr Tippings
- Email: Press release from Pen Bryn Wind Farm Community Fund - **added to website**
- Council were informed that over £50,000 of applications had been received for £7,000 of grant funding; unfortunately, some of the grants refused in the Tredegar area had been really good projects.
- 4) Cllr J. Thomas
- Nomination for Civic Award.
- Approved, with a further four nominations presented and approved accordingly.
- 5) Independent Remuneration Panel
- Proforma Statement of Payments for Town and Community Councils, must be in the public domain by 30th September.
- Noted; passed to RFO.
- 6) D. Summerfield
- Dressing the windows for NHS: update on participation by shop holders.
- Council was disappointed with the lack of interest in participating; however, the Heads of the Valley Stationers was outstanding and should be recognised. Agreed that a certificate be presented in recognition.
- 7) A. Tuggey
- Commemoration of the end of World War 1: Presence of a Queen's representative. Information on how to invite a Deputy Lieutenant to lay a wreath Sunday 11.11.2018.
- Noted; Clerk to liaise.
- 8) D. Brown
- Link to Go Fund Me campaign to raise funds for Lindsay Bryan.
- Noted. Council was informed that a swimming gala was also being arranged in support – agreed that Councillor M. Turner liaise to ascertain details and proposed that participants be Councillors M. Turner, E. Jones, P. Prosser and D. Rowberry to ask Gemma, if needed.

9) GAVO Studying Outdoors Skills Project being held at Sirhowy Woodlands.

- Noted.

10) PUBLICATIONS

BGCBC Roadworks report week ending 15.06.2018 & 22.06.2018

- Noted.

11) AGENDA

Blaenau Gwent Heritage Forum Minutes and agenda for next meeting 15.06.2018 at 10.00 a.m. Tredegar Library; Audit Committee Tuesday, 12th June, 2018 at 9.30 a.m. Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Ebbw Vale; Environment, Regeneration and Economic Development Scrutiny Committee Thursday, 21st June, 2018 at 9.30 a.m. Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Ebbw Vale; Education & Learning Scrutiny Committee Monday, 18th June, 2018 at 9.30 a.m. Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Ebbw Vale; Special Social Services Scrutiny Committee Wednesday, 20th June, 2018 at 2.00 p.m. Council Chamber, Civic Centre, Ebbw Vale; Environment, Regeneration and Economic Development Scrutiny Committee Thursday, 21st June, 2018 at 9.30 a.m. – appendix and report for agenda item no. 9.

Available for Members – received.

Councillor B. Willis declared an interest in the following item and took no part in discussion or voting thereon

097) Planning:

a) To consider an Officer's Report (if received) – None received

b) Verbal report of the Planning Committee if any – None received

c) To consider Planning Applications submitted for Council's observations;

App. No.	Applicant	Proposal
C/2018/0162	Mr. A. Flaxman 11 Bush Bach Tredegar	Demolish existing detached garage and construct new detached garage and store, 11 Bush Bach.

No objections

C/2018/0172	Mr. & Mrs. Ingram Sunnyside Western Crescent Tredegar	Rear single storey extension, dormer to rear, Sunnyside Western Crescent.
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No objections

Councillor G. James declared an interest in the following application and took no part in discussion or voting thereon

C/2018/0175

Mr. S. James
Madison House
Picton Road
Tredegar

Retention of change of use from
Post Office (ground floor) to a
residential dwelling and proposed
walls and pillars, 61 Ashvale.

No objections

d) To consider other planning matters – None received

098) Matters of Local Interest or Concern (by prior notice)

- Tredegar Horse Show – Mayor had attended, which had been an excellent event. Supreme Champion of Show was nine year old Demi Appleton with her pony, Islyn Araf Don.
- Geraint Griffiths, Young Ambassador ‘Arts in Wales’ – Welsh Assembly funded for young ambassadors to get involved; inform Moe Forouzan.
- Former Councillor Roger Thomas had experienced a fall and was admitted to Prince Charles Hospital – Councillors H. Trollope and A. Tippings to visit.
- Councillor D. Rowberry thanked Council for the plants donated to the Community Centre
- Armed Forces Day – a Member said that he had been unable to hear the Vicar from the Long Shelter. The Leader was liaising with J. Cotton Audio in respect of the Aneurin Bevan Day.
- 100th Birthday – Mr. Raymond Lewis, 19th July, 2018
- Benches in precinct – to front of Fresh Active dangerous condition; Clerk to write
- Pressure Group, Bevan Day – to be located within Park, seeking signatories for petition; also, to erect banner outside The Cambrian. Stewards would be unable to enforce, considered a Police matter. Council pursuing additional security for the event.
It was agreed: Plenary powers be delegated to the four Senior Officers to approve expenditure thereof.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 8.45 p.m.

Chair