

TREDEGAR TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held in the Council Chamber,
Bedwellty House on Wednesday, 16th January, 2019 at 6.30 p.m.**

Present: Councillors H. Trollope (Chair)
E. Jones
T. Smith
A.E. Tippings
M. Cross
D.W.A. Howells
G. James
A. Jones
D. Jones
S. Rees
J. Thomas
S. Trollope
B. Willis

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

303) Apologies: Councillors P. Prosser, D. Rowberry, M. Turner

304) Declarations of Interest

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

305) To receive any verbal recommendations of the Finance and Staffing Sub-Committee held immediately prior to this meeting

The following recommendation arising from the Finance and Staffing Sub-Committee was presented for consideration and approved accordingly for the Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer.

- It was therefore agreed that the Sub-Committee support the agreed National Association of Local Councils new pay scales 2019-2020, to be implemented from 1st April, 2019 accordingly.

306) To consider and finalise the Budget for the financial year 2019/2020, setting the Precept to be collected by Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council

The notes for a Draft Budget had previously been reported to a meeting of the Performance Review Sub-Committee for consideration, in order to make appropriate recommendations

to Council to ensure sufficient resources were allocated, and meet the deadline enforced by the Local Authority, prior to undertaking their budget-setting process.

A Draft Budget and revised Reserves List, taking into account potential new risks identified, were presented for discussion.

The Deputy Leader briefly outlined some minor amendments requested by Members to the proposed draft budget:

- Senior Allowances (Mayor / Leader) and Inauguration now two separate budget headings
- Town Clock – seek sponsorship for planting of flowerbeds
- Public Conveniences / Operative – to address paintwork of toilets in the near future; regular updates required of issues in need of addressing, e.g. vandalism, repairs, etc.
- Town Clock – Tredegar Public Facilities Sub-Committee to move progress in respect of redecoration of Town Clock
- Christmas Lights – due for tender, review of infrastructure required (report of current suppliers could prove helpful); RFO to include specification in respect of quality, service and call-out provision

The RFO highlighted that these amendments had no impact on the overall 'Total' figure outlined in the proposed draft budget.

In respect of the options presented by the RFO in respect of a negative / positive effect on expenditure requirements, i.e.

Precept A (-2%) Precept B (**Standstill**) Precept C (+2%) Precept D (+5%)

Upon a vote being undertaken, it was unanimously approved that Council agree Precept B, a standstill budget for 2019/2020 and the revised Reserves.

In response to a question raised, the RFO confirmed that the last increase in budget was in 2009, with no increase in setting the budget for 2010/2011. A Member said it was commendable how Council had conducted itself over the last decade, and which the RFO had played an integral role; this was a commendable effort on behalf of the community. It was noted that services had not only been maintained but advanced, with the Town Council taking on additional responsibilities; and also remained proactive in undertaking a comprehensive programme of events throughout the year.

The Chair endorsed the comments raised in respect of maintaining a standstill precept as a lot of good work was undertaken in Tredegar and he said Members and Officers carried out a tremendous job.

307) Accounts: to consider a Schedule of Accounts for payment in January 2019

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

- Website design – a Member highlighted there were a number of issues on the Town Council website; she asked that Members note any issues identified to be reported

and considered at a future meeting of the Publicity Sub-Committee.

There being no queries regarding the Schedule of Accounts, all 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.

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

- a) Civic Sub-Committee - 5th December, 2018**
- b) Civic Meeting of Council - 5th December, 2018**
- c) Events Sub-Committee - 19th December, 2018**
- d) Ordinary Meeting of Council – 19th December, 2018**

It was agreed that all Minutes presented be moved en bloc as a true record, with any matters arising to follow.

309) Matters arising from the Minutes

Civic Sub-Committee- 5th December, 2018

- Thanks extended to Tredegar Community Band for their support for the Mayor's Christmas Eve visits to the Care and Residential Homes.
- Sirhowy Angling Club: at a meeting of the Cefn Golau TRA, it was announced that funding would be allocated to enhance St. James' Pond as a picnic area, as funds were available in the area of Cefn Golau for inward investment.

Civic Meeting of Council - 5th December, 2018

- Clerk to check whether the renewable energy was wind and solar only.
- Restoration of the War Memorial: Members requested an update on the current position.

Ordinary Meeting of Council - 19th December, 2018

- Transport: Met Travel could be considered to submit a tender quote
- CAT 'Deighton playing field': Clerk to pursue ongoing issue in respect of long-term lease with BG Officer, M. Howland.
- Nye Bevan Destination: drop-in session to be held Bedwellty House from 3.00 until 6.00 p.m. on 31st January, 2019.

310) Chair to sign Minutes

Minutes approved by Council to be duly signed by the Mayor.

311) Correspondence

- 1) BGCBC
 - a) D. Watkins Re: Consultation Public Conveniences. Hope to be completed over next few weeks and will share results then.
 - Members said the reply had not actually addressed why the Local Authority had

undertaken consultation into a service not under their remit. If the results were not forthcoming following a two-week period, Clerk to write once again.

b) Michelle Morris Re: Loss of Council Services. Street Lighting provision and removal of some school crossing patrol sites are currently included as potential savings projects. Feedback from public engagement sessions held in December is being collated and will be used to help inform Member decisions on Council savings proposals and the setting of a budget in February.

- Council considered this was a poor response in respect of loss of services. A Member referred to the Town and Community Council Charter which placed a legal obligation on local authorities not to reach decisions without proper consultation with the Town Council. He suggested that OVW should be made aware, as the champions for the Charter, particularly with Blaenau Gwent now cancelling scheduled meetings.

c) B. Elias Re: Postponement of the Liaison Meeting between BGCBC and Town/Community Councils 24.01.2019. Andrew Parker new liaison contact and as no items have been received for January meeting the most sensible approach was to move the meeting to February.

- There was provision for all local authorities to inform town and community councils throughout Wales on any issues. T&C councils had the facility to request Officers to attend meetings, as required. A Member suggested that a liaison meeting could be held to raise issues that effect both T&C councils and agenda the Charter for issues to be addressed and ensure LA Officers were aware of the Charter and its content. For instance, there had been confusion over refuse collection, whereby the information had been posted to Facebook; unfortunately, various individuals had no contact with internet services to access such information. Therefore, the Local Authority needed to consider how best to engage with the community.

Another Member pointed out that the budget meetings of the Local Authority were not being called in a timely manner; the liaison meeting, as part of the budget-setting process, had yet to be convened but all Town and Community Councils had to submit their precepts by the end of January, thereby enforcing Town and Community Councils to commit to a precept before this budget-setting process.

A Member thereupon highlighted the professionalism of Members of Town Council, and its' Officers, in managing resources.

In respect of a question raised regarding any proposed changes to the Town and Council Charter, Council were informed this could not be undertaken without appropriate consultation between Blaenau Gwent and Town and Community Councils. Members emphasised that a consistent process was needed in respect of these meetings, which should be open and transparent.

It was agreed, therefore, that the Clerk liaise with the Officer for a copy of The Charter to be circulated to all Members, for information.

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

- d) List of Licensing Applications week ending 11.01.2019
 - 1) S.L. Jones – Personal Licence
 - 2) D.L. MacQuade – Personal Licence
 - 3) S.R. Davies – Personal Licence
 - Noted.
- 2) One Voice Wales
 - a) SUDS Implementation 7th January, 2019.
 - Noted; Councillor D. Jones requested a copy.
 - b) National Library of Wales: Living Memory Workshops – online reminiscence therapy images. Workshop open to anyone working with older people and/or people living with dementia in Wales, booking required by 25.01.2019.
 - Noted.
 - c) Western Power Distribution Annual Stakeholder workshops: February 2019. Seeking feedback from stakeholders on the company's future plans

and hoping for a good representation from town/parish councils at these events as many of the topics are of real relevance. Celtic Manor 05.02.2019 from 9.15 a.m., workshop is free, booking required.

- Noted.

3) ABF The Soldiers' Charity

Thanks for Beacons of Light donation £25.00 – **added to website**

- A Member commended this event and very much hoped a similar opportunity would arise in the future, possibly a D Day themed event for Armed Forces or, as it was the 40th Anniversary, relating to the Twinning Association.

4) C. Hares

Will investigate the possibility of a timer for the War Memorial lighting.

- Members noted the response of the House Manager, but highlighted inconsistencies when the lights were on within the Park, e.g. on at 1.00 p.m. in the day but not at 5.00 p.m. when paths were in darkness and Bedwellty House was open.

Discussion ensued as to how to resolve the situation as quickly as possible, whereupon it was agreed that a Working Party meet with Roman Builders to discuss possible options – to consist of Councillors M. Cross, A. Jones, T. Smith and B. Willis.

5) R. Johnson

Asking whether Council can offer any help/advice to the manager of New Look Tredegar which may assist them with staying open.

- Noted: Councillors T. Smith and H. Trollope to meet with correspondent to discuss. It was noted that the store was due to close on 19th January, 2019 – it was agreed, therefore, that a letter be sent outlining the disappointment of Council on the loss of this store to the community of Tredegar.

6) Powys County Council

Powys LDP 2011-2026: Draft Supplementary Planning Guidance Public Consultation period 14.01.2019 to 24.02.2019 on landscape and renewable energy, responses to LDP@powys.gov.uk

- Noted.

- 7) Scope House to house collection dates: 01.04.2019 to 21.04.2019 & 06.04.2020 to 26.04.2020 – **added to website**
- Noted.
- 8) Welsh Government Town & Country Planning Act 1990 Section 247: The stopping up of highways (land at Tafarnaubach Industrial Estate, Tredegar) Order 201- (Copy of Draft Order).
- Noted: the Town Council were pleased to support such a hard-working business within the community.
- 9) Cllr Smith Letter from Mr. G. Meredith thanking Council: ‘... would like to thank Members for the wonderful opportunity to be a Councillor with TTC, memories that I will cherish for the rest of my life and a great honour to be the Mayor of our town.’
- Members wanted to wish Geraint well; he had been an excellent Mayor and, if not for ill-health, would most certainly still be representing the community on Town Council.

10) PUBLICATIONS

Communicorp Clerks & Councils Direct January 2019 Issue 19; Ville D’Orvault Orvault & Co. Jan/Feb 2019 Issue 21; BGCBC roadworks report week ending 11.01.2019 & 18.01.2019; J. Parkers Wholesale Catalogue Spring 2019.
– **distributed to Members**: Received.

11) AGENDA

Blaenau Gwent Heritage Forum Friday, 18th January, 2019 at 10.00 a.m. Tredegar Library – **available for Members**: received.

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

312) Planning:

- a) **i) To consider an Officer’s Report** - None received.
- ii) a) List of planning applications received in week 52.
- b) List of planning applications received in week 01.
- b) Verbal report of the Planning Committee if any**
- c) To consider Planning Applications submitted for Council’s observations** - None received; **and**
- d) To consider other planning matters** - None received.

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

- Aneurin Bevan Society 'Welsh Committee' – invite to reading of “Stories of Solidarity” by Dr. Hywel Francis (historian, political activist and former M.P.), with Nick Smith, M.P., on Thursday, 31st January, 2019 in the Assembly Room, Bedwellty House at 6.00 p.m. Mayor to undertake 'welcome' and an open invitation for all to attend.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 7.24 p.m.

_____ Chair