

TREDEGAR TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held via Microsoft Teams / hybrid on Wednesday, 21st July, 2021 at 6.30 p.m.

Present: Councillors G. James (Chair)
S. Rees
T. Smith
A.E. Tippings
M. Cross
D.W.A. Howells
D. Jones
E. Jones
K. Phillips
P. Prosser
D. Rowberry
H. Trollope
S. Trollope
G. Walters

In attendance: Clerk – Ms. C. Price
RFO – Ms. A. Edwards

078) Apologies. Councillors A. Jones, J. Thomas, M. Turner and B. Willis

079) Declarations of Interest

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

080) To receive any verbal recommendations of all Sub-Committees / Working Party held prior to this meeting of Council

It was agreed that the following recommendations of the Sub-Committee meetings held prior to Council be approved:

Tredegar Public Facilities Sub-Committee – 13th July, 2021

- It was unanimously agreed that the Knightsbridge lighting option be approved for immediate progress; Clerk to contact G. Adams Construction to confirm for implementation.

The Member, who had presided over the meeting in the absence of the Chair, briefly provided clarification in respect of the decision, i.e. that Options GL06, GL08 and GL09 would have incurred a cost over and above electrical works allowed for in the initial quotation – ranging from £350.00 to £850.00. The 'Knightsbridge' option was allowed for within the initial quotation and therefore no additional cost would be incurred; the lighting also included the colour change function requested by Council.

A Member said the reason the initial meeting of the Public Facilities Sub-Committee had

been reconvened was that the G. Adams representative had been unable to provide some information requested and was to come back with data in relation to the span of the lighting along the Clock column to the clockface, and enquired if this information had been supplied.

The Member said that the Sub-Committee had been mindful of previous requirements of Members and therefore the reasons expressed in the subsequent discussion were:

- no additional cost would be incurred for the 'Knightsbridge' option; as expenditure for the works had been allowed for within the initial contract quote;
- the 'Knightsbridge' was the only option that provided the colour change function that Council wanted;
- Council wanted the Project completed without further delay.

He added that, on seeking a quotation for the colour changing function to the Town Clock from a lighting specialist, Council had been advised this could be provided at a cost of over £10,000.00 and that amount was not available within the Council's budget. The Member responded that she was concerned that this lighting provision would be futile if not meeting the requirements of Council.

Another Member said he understood the comments raised by the Member; however, in the original meeting the representative had clarified there was no guarantee that the more expensive option would travel any higher and he therefore thought it prudent to respect the recommendation of the representative. It had therefore been unanimously agreed.

Performance Review Sub-Committee – 21st July, 2021

- To approve the report in respect of the Budget against Actual to 30th June, 2021.

Councillor D. Rowberry joined the meeting at this juncture (6.45 p.m.)

081) To consider a Schedule of Accounts for payment in July 2021

The RFO spoke to the report and explained that the bank reconciliations were available for Members to view. The Officer said the Schedule of Accounts related to items for payment in July, and potential scheduled payments during August recess, and sought approval of Members, subject to any queries relating to these payments, whereupon:

- Town Clock surround – a Member commended the gardener for the tremendous work being carried out, particularly during such hot weather; the RFO confirmed that the gardener had been advised not to work on the Clock during periods of 'Amber' warning unless doing so in the evening.
- Review of utilities – the RFO confirmed that a review of suppliers would be undertaken September / October time, as agreed previously and in accordance with the Auditor's report.
- Local Places for Nature – the RFO sought approval for an additional payment to source items omitted from the pack received, i.e. two tanalised posts; which was agreed accordingly.

There being no further queries regarding the Schedule of Accounts, presented items were approved for payment. The RFO asked that the four signatories liaise in respect of signing of the cheques for payment and the transfer of funds, as approved by Council, to be

undertaken in the presence of the appropriate Member (remotely) and Town Clerk, which was noted accordingly.

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

- a) Civic Meeting of Council - 2nd June, 2021**
- b) Ordinary Meeting of Council - 16th June, 2021**

It was agreed that, for points of accuracy only, all Minutes presented be moved en bloc as a true record.

In response to a question raised, the Clerk confirmed that no information had been received from Tredegar Fabrications as yet; also, a Member said that a meeting of the Finance and Staffing Sub-Committee would be held to discuss the Kickstart Scheme.

083) Chair to sign Minutes - at earliest opportunity in accordance with WG Legislation and Guidance

To be duly signed by the Chair, adhering to safety regulations and relevant restrictions, at the earliest opportunity – Chair to liaise accordingly.

084) Correspondence

- 1) BGCBC
 - a) M. Hopkins Re: Traffic signals Town Centre. Confirming works completing today and will enable Council to monitor traffic flows.
 - Members considered the new traffic lights were going well and traffic appearing to be flowing quicker - and were pleased.
 - b) M. Stent Re: Ongoing concerns, Car wash at Nantybwich. Pass to Highways Inspector to check if there is any impact on the public highways / footpath and to NRW in relation to the alleged run off into storm drains
 - c) M. Stent Re: Astral Garage. Environmental Health Section have referred the chemical waste element to NRW.
 - Noted; following discussion, Council agreed to review the issue again on receipt of responses from all parties contacted, i.e. BGCBC Highways, Education and Environmental Health Departments, and Health and Safety Executive.

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

- d) 1) List of applications received, week ending 09.07.2021.
- 2) List of applications received, week ending 16.07.2021.
- (i) Temporary Event Notice – Bedwellty House & Park.

- Noted.

2) One Voice Wales

- a) One Voice Wales' Innovative Practice Conference 22.09.2021: Zoom conference, £40.00 for Members - forwarded to reps

- Agreed, expenditure approved: Clerk to book two places.

3) PS N. Pigeon

Re: ASB Youth Diversion. Wishing to discuss with Council running a similar project to that funded by Abertillery Community Council which has been an effective tool to deal with ASB issues in that area.

- Noted; invite representatives to attend meeting of Council in September.

4) N. Jones

Asking if she can have a memorial bench put in Sirhowy Garden: Will seek advice on fixing before purchase, will purchase herself if cannot be provided and in memory of her young sister.

- Council said further consideration was needed as such action could set a precedent, it was noted that legislation placed specific procedures in respect of the placing of public benches. There was a need for in-depth consideration in respect of the request, for example the cost of placing a composite framework ranged between £800.00 to £1,000.00 for the bench itself.

Any details provided for consideration at the meeting would be most helpful in Members reaching a decision - for example, proposed wording on the plaque, sister's name, circumstances of passing and appropriate dates, etc.

A Member also expressed concern in respect of anti-social behaviour in this area, as stock received via Local Places for Nature had been stolen and supplies needing to be replenished, as she would not wish a memorial to be treated in such a manner.

5) Integrated Wellbeing Network

Community Voice Community Choice: Application process now open for bids up to £10,000. If you have a project that benefits the Blaenau Gwent area and supports wellbeing and recovering from COVID complete online application form <https://www.mutualgain.org/community-voice-community-choice/>

- Noted.

6) Open Doors

Registration for annual Open Doors extended to 31.07.2021.

- Noted; Council said that, due to the Town Clock base being an enclosed space, social distancing would not be possible and, unfortunately, felt it would not be appropriate to undertake an 'Open Doors' event this year.

7) PUBLICATIONS

Aneurin Bevan University Health Board Vaccination Update, issue 25, 26 and 27 – added to website & Twitter; Communicorp Clerks & Councils Direct July 2021 Issue 136 - **distributed to Members**: Received.

8) AGENDA

None received.

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

085) Planning:

a) i) To consider an Officer's Report (if received)

- ii) a) List of planning applications received in week 27
- b) List of planning applications received in week 28

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/2021/0205	Mr. & Mrs. C. & J. Keeble 2 Penuel Villas Harcourt Terrace	Construction of a first-floor extension over an existing ground floor extension, 2 Penuel Villas.
No objections	Tredegar	

C/2021/0209 Mr. L. Jenkins Proposed two storey rear extension, 53 Larch Lane
No objections Tredegar

Councillor A.E. Tippings declared an interest in the following item and took no part in discussion or voting thereon.

C/2021/0211 A. Tippings Openable noticeboard, supported on metal legs, Sirhowy Ironworks, Graham's Yard, Tredegar.
No objections Ebbw Vale

C/2021/0212 Mrs. B. Walters Proposed shed, 154 Gainsborough Road.
No objections Tredegar

d) To consider other planning matters

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

- Town Centre Manager, BGCBC:
The town centre Wi-Fi was operational in Tredegar but had not yet been officially launched. It was currently branded as 'EU Wi-Fi', as per funding requirements, posters had been distributed throughout shops in the town centre. The official launch was to be undertaken when Wi-Fi in all four towns was operational.
Lidl noticeboard - to be looked at as an urgent matter, by the Technical Services Division, hopefully this week. The three remaining noticeboards would be scheduled for upgrade / removal as appropriate.
- Storage container, The Recreation Ground – the Ironsides had been using the storage facility at the Recreation Ground but had been informed the equipment now had to be removed, and the Club would need to transport the equipment. It had therefore been suggested that Council may agree to the Club using half the storage container owned by TTC; the Club had offered to clean out the container, replace the lock and monitor the container during their training sessions throughout the week.
Council was happy to agree to this action and to assist the Club, particularly as this evidenced Town Council proactively supported sporting clubs throughout Tredegar.
- Housing incident, Waundeg – while away from home, a gentleman had his home flooded and had difficulty finding a contact number on his return to report the incident. Members of TTC had been approached and attempted to ring Tai Calon Housing Association but had been unable to get a response. Following investigation and checking the website, an alternative contact number was found. The Member said this had serious implications from a health and safety position – the ceilings had fallen and exposed the electrical lighting and the Fire Service had needed to attend. Tai Calon had a duty of care to their tenants and the response to the situation of this elderly gentleman was not considered very professional.

It was therefore suggested that a letter be sent, outlining concerns that the system in place had failed for the resident. Another Member supported this course of action, as

the gentleman had been extremely distressed – she confirmed that photos had been taken of the incident, which she would arrange to be forwarded to Town Council. The Member also confirmed that Tenant representatives were present on the Tai Calon Board of Directors, but were not in a position to raise concerns of individual tenants, but to consider agendaed items only in respect of rental and finance.

- David Wolfson, Baron Wolfson of Tredegar QC – a Member deemed the use of the title offensive, as the individual had no connection to the town of Tredegar, and considered such use a slur on the town and indicated anti-Semitism. It was suggested that a letter be forwarded to the Prime Minister outlining this concern.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 7.55 p.m.

_____ Chair