

TREDEGAR TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held via Microsoft Teams / hybrid on Wednesday, 21st February, 2024 at 6.30 p.m.

Present: **Councillors K. Phillips (Chair)**
 E. Griffin
 M. Turner
 A.E. Tippings
 G. Badham
 E. Jones
 B. Rees
 D. Rowberry
 H. Trollope
 S. Trollope
 A. Moore
 S. Mavar

In attendance: **RFO – Ms. A. Edwards**

**323) Apologies. Councillors A. Jones, K. Waldron, C. Walters and G. Walters
Town Clerk – Ms. C. Aherne**

Council was sadly informed of the passing of the mother-in-law of Councillor Katie Waldron: Council observed a Minute silence as a mark of respect. Sincere condolences were extended to the family.

324) Declarations of Interest

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

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

None held prior to the meeting.

326) To consider a Schedule of Accounts for payment in February 2024

The RFO confirmed that the report had been sent to all Members prior to the meeting and was also available in the Chamber to those in attendance. The RFO explained that bank reconciliations, valid to date, were available for Members to view in the Chamber at this meeting, and upon request, which was noted accordingly.

There being no queries regarding the Schedule of Accounts, presented items were approved for payment. The RFO confirmed there was no requirement this month to approve a transfer of funds, which was noted accordingly.

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

- a) Performance Review Sub-Committee – 10th January, 2024
- b) Civic Meeting of Council – 10th January, 2024
- c) Performance Review Sub-Committee – 24th January, 2024
- d) Ordinary Meeting of Council – 24th January, 2024

It was agreed that all Minutes presented be moved en bloc as a true record.

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

Minutes approved were duly signed by the Chair in the presence of Council.

329) Correspondence

- 1) BGCBC
 - a) Re: Traffic Order Consultation, Off Street Parking Places. Consultation closes 29.02.2024.
 - Agreed to forward to all Members.
 - b) D. Griffiths Re: Martyn's Law webinar dates, voluntary and community Organisations.
 - Agreed to forward to all Members. Recommended that the Clerk and a Member of the Events Committee attend one of the sessions. Councillors Turner and Phillips agreed to check their availability on the dates offered.
 - c) Cllr S. Thomas Re: Consultation with Town / Community Councils, Revenue Budget 2024/25 16th February, 2024. Response to concerns raised by Cllr Turner regarding the short notice to review document prior to the meeting.
 - Cllr Turner outlined the concerns raised: receipt of the meeting documents only two days prior to the meeting, one document alone was 350 pages, too much to digest and scrutinise properly. Whilst he acknowledged Councillor Thomas' response, there was a need to improve the collaboration and community between the Welsh Government, local authorities and town councils.

Noted.

Councillor D. Rowberry declared an interest in the following item and took no part in discussion.

d) **i) List of applications received, week ending 02.02.2024.**

1.Vary premise licence to allow sale of alcohol in beer garden – Railway Tavern.

ii) List of applications received, week ending 09.02.2024.

1.Temporary Event Notice 23.02.2024 – Dukestown Workingmen’s Club.

2. Vary designated premise supervisor – Railway Tavern.

- Noted.

2) One Voice Wales

a) Event Invitation: Community Assets, Police & Practice in Wales. What’s next? Monday 26.02.2024 at 10.00 a.m.

- Agreed to forward to Councillor Turner.

b) Re: Pethau Bychain meetings on 27.02.2024 at 11.00 a.m. and 6.30 p.m.

- Agreed to forward to Councillor Tippings.

c) Free portrait of His Majesty The King for Town, Parish and Community Councils. Deadline for application for a free portrait is 28.03.2024.

- Received and RFO instructed to apply.

d) Re: Buckingham Palace Garden Party Wednesday, 8th May, 2024. Confirming Council’s nomination has been selected.

- Noted and congratulations expressed to Councillor E. Jones.

3) Torfaen County Borough Council

Consultation of the Greater Gwent Pension Fund: Investment Strategy Statement 2024/25. This document sets out the key changes to the ISS proposed at this time. Any comments arising from this consultation should be submitted to Alex Bull by 5.00 p.m. on Friday 01.03.2024 to enable these to be considered in the report to the meeting of the Pension Committee on Monday 18.03.2024.

- Agreed to forward to Councillor Turner

4) Aneurin Leisure

R. Priddy Re: 2-bay noticeboard installation. Quote for siting in the flowerbed by The Lodge, £575.00 plus VAT - **RFO requesting approval.**

- Approved unanimously.

- 5) French Visit:
- a) Tredegar Twinning Association. Asking for either a host for a man and his two sons or a contribution towards the cost of them staying at a B&B.
 - b) Councillor Tippings update: Has agreed to host the family of three and the couple that were originally staying with her are now being hosted by someone else. Councillor E. Jones also hosting a couple so only need a space for the bus driver. Asking for this to be forwarded to all Members.

- Councillor Tippings confirmed they were still seeking a place for the bus driver. During the long weekend stay, Saturday and Sunday would be free but on the other days it would be necessary for the bus driver to be transported back and fore to where the bus is to be sited.

It was agreed for any Member, able to accommodate the bus driver, to contact the town office.

- 6) Noah's Ark
- Thanks for £50.00 donation.
- Noted.

7) PUBLICATIONS

BGCBC Roadworks report, week ending 16.02.2024 & 23.02.2024; OVW Re: The National Forest for Wales. New round of funding, closing 08.05.2024; Blaenau Gwent Heritage Forum Agenda for meeting 20.02.2020 at 10.00 a.m. Tredegar Library; ABUHB Neighbourhood Care Network News Issue 3: November 2023 – January 2024; Llias Public engagement briefing, Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent community visits December 2023 - Received.

Councillors E. Jones and D. Rowberry and declared an interest in the following item and took no part in discussion or voting thereon.

330) Planning:

- a) i) List of planning applications received in week 06
- ii) List of planning applications received in week 07
- Received.

- b) To consider Planning Applications submitted for Council's observations**
- None received.

c) To consider other planning matters – PEDW Re: DNS 3239121 Manmoel Wind. Confirmation of Hearing Sessions arrangements, virtual sessions taking place on 19th, 20th and 27th March – Received and Noted.

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

- **Keep Wales Tidy, Local Places for Nature top up packs** – Councillor Tippings confirmed that packs, up to the value of £600.00, were being offered for use at the Deighton Playing Field and Sirhowy Community Garden and that there would be a meeting with the Representative on site next week. An invitation was extended to all Members to join that meeting and interested parties were to contact Councillor Tippings direct for further details. The RFO confirmed the town centre operative has been informed to weed both gardens and it was then duly requested that he is informed of the offer from Councillor Tippings to meet him on site to assist.
- **Clock Lights** - The RFO confirmed the electricians visited the Clock last week. The update received is that they intend to remove the lights and send them back to the suppliers for testing. There is also a suggestion of fitting the lights in a vertical position which would hopefully avoid the condensation problem. There was no update on why the Clock face lights keep tripping out. A Members raised concerns about the floodlights being fitted in a vertical position as this would not fully light the Clock tower. It was agreed to raise this point with them once the floodlight testing results have been received.

A Member requested that a response is sent, by the end of Thursday, 22nd February, 2024, to BGCBC as to whether Council will be able to participate in their Easter Event on 30th March, 2024. BGCBC are waiting to print posters for the event and wish to know whether the Clock opening can be included. Members were reminded to contact the office by tomorrow to confirm their availability as stewards for the event.

- **Antisocial behaviour in vicinity of Red Lion Square / Commercial Street** – A Member has been approached twice regarding antisocial behaviour, including visual drug dealing and trouble, in the vicinity of the Red Lion Public House. In light of this behaviour, a local business person had stated they were considering changing their opening hours as they were deeply concerned for the safety of their staff. Another Member raised how on several occasions, at 5.40 a.m. on a Sunday, patrons – around 20 to 30 in number - were seen leaving the Red Lion and on one instance, over the Christmas period, they were forced to drive on the wrong side of the road to avoid people. They continued by stating that they found the experience scary and have even changed their driving route to work to avoid this type of confrontation.

It was agreed to write to BGCBC Licensing and Gwent Police raising these concerns.

Members also noted the lack of Police attending meetings, both at Town Council and local authority level; a recent meeting with Town Council was cancelled by the police at 8.45 a.m. on the morning due to a stabbing incident and, to date, there has been no response to that meeting's discussion points, which were emailed through to them after the notice of cancellation was received. Council appreciate the Police are busy but it was felt that Council must endeavour to restart these meetings, the need to address concerns of antisocial behaviour and lack of visual Police presence at night.

The operation of CCTV in the town centre was raised with the BGCBC Councillors in attendance. It was stated that they had been informed it was fully operational now however it was on automatic rotation – unmanned –

and now sited in Caerphilly. A Member highlighted a recent successful prosecution of assault using CCTV footage but they were also aware of two other assaults for which there was no CCTV footage available in the town. It was suggested Town Council request a visit to the Caerphilly facility to assess how it works.

- **Buckingham Palace Garden Party invite to Tredegar Task Force** – It was noted that Tredegar Task Force were officially invited to attend a Garden Party on 8th May, 2024 to receive certificates for the Queen’s Award for Voluntary Service. The award is an MBE for volunteer groups and it was awarded to them for the work undertaken through the COVID pandemic. Council agreed to note a request from a Member to recognise the Task Force volunteers for their commendable work during the pandemic and this is to be discussed during organising of future presentation evenings.

A Member suggested two Tredegar Comprehensive pupils for a future presentation evening and it was agreed for the RFO to email the Member the appropriate form to complete.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 7.08 p.m.

_____ Chair