

TREDEGAR TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held via Microsoft Teams / hybrid on Wednesday, 22nd January, 2025 at 6.30 p.m.

Present: Councillors K. Phillips (Chair)
M. Turner
A.E. Tippings
G. Badham
A.E. Evans
A. Jones
E. Jones
G. Jones-Griffiths
D. Rowberry
H. Trollope
S. Trollope
K. Waldron
G. Walters

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

272) Apologies. Councillors E. Griffin, S. Mavar, G. Meredith and J. Thomas

273) Declarations of Interest

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

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

It was agreed the recommendations of the Performance Review Sub-Committee held prior to Council be approved accordingly:

- To approve the report in respect of the 2025 / 2026 budget proposals; and To agree that an agenda item would be brought forward for consideration at the Civic Meeting of Council on 5th February, 2025, in order for the precept to be agreed for the 2025 / 2026 financial year.
- To accept the amended Budget Preparation Timeline.
- Addition of agenda item relating to projects update.
- To approve the report in respect of the Budget against Actual to 31st December, 2024, and Recommendations contained therein, i.e:
 - Audit Fee – virement of £1,189.00: £795.00 ‘Insurance’ and £394.00 ‘Stationary & Equipment’.

- Town Clock: Energy – virement of £1,000.00 from ‘Comm. Provisions Public Conveniences / Operative’.
- Town Clock: Maintenance Fee / Repairs – virement of £200.00 from ‘Celebrations’.
- Comm. Provisions: Christmas Lights – virement of £1,200.00 from ‘Special Projects / Events’.
- War Memorial – virement of £4,200.00 from ‘General Reserves’.
- Allotments – virement of £800.00 from ‘Comm. Provision Green Spaces’.

275) To consider a Schedule of Accounts for payment in January, 2025

The RFO spoke to the report and explained that the bank reconciliations, valid to date, were available for Members to view upon request, which was noted accordingly.

There being no further queries regarding the Schedule of Accounts, presented items were approved for payment. The RFO asked that the designated signatories liaise in respect of the transfer of funds, as approved by Council, to be undertaken in the presence of the appropriate Member and Town Clerk, which was noted accordingly.

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

- a) Events Sub-Committee - 4th December, 2024
- b) Civic Meeting of Council - 4th December, 2024
- c) Events Sub-Committee - 18th December, 2024
- d) Finance and Staffing Sub-Committee - 18th December, 2024
- e) Ordinary Meeting of Council - 18th December, 2024

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

277) 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.

278) Correspondence

- 1) BGCBC
 - a) R. Daly Re: Precept 2025 / 2026. Giving an extension of the date to 06.02.2025.
 - Noted.
 - b) K. Williams Re: Promotional TV. Estimated cost of the external installation of a TV at the library. Can rent advertising space on the screen, which will help offset the running costs.
 - Noted. The RFO had liaised with the Town Centre Manager, as instructed by Council, in respect of the promotional TV situated at the library to enquire of costs. The Leader said

there were cheaper options available than the costings supplied.

The Chair said that a similar item had been donated to this organisation in December and, if not needed, Council could possibly have this equipment. It was valued at approximately £6/7,000.00 but upgrades were needed, which would cost in the region of £800.00.

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

- c) List of applications received, week ending 10.01.2025.
 - Noted.
- 2) Re: Forgotten 53
 - a) K. Sullivan: Invitation to two Councillors to attend 07.02.2025 at 7.00 p.m.
 - Noted.
 - b) J. Dann. Another invitation to attend 07.02.2025 at 7.00 p.m. Invite for Mayor and Consort and any other Councillors who wish to attend.
 - Noted: Councillor G. Jones-Griffiths wished to accept; Clerk to liaise to allocate a seat. Councillors G. Badham and A. Tippings confirmed they had already accepted in the remit of a different role. Really powerful production one of the best the Member had seen.

Councillor G. Badham declared an interest in the following item and took no part in discussion.

- 3) M O'Connell
 - B & T would like to integrate the Town Clock into their logo.
 - Noted. Town Council was unaware of any copyright relating to the use of the Town Clock image and commended the business on wishing to promote Tredegar. Members also expressed appreciation for the courtesy in informing Council of intentions prior to taking any action.
- 4) T W Medics
 - Re: Providing Medical Cover. Offering to quote for Armed Forces Day.
 - Noted.

5) PUBLICATIONS

Blaenau Gwent Heritage Forum meeting 20.01.2025 at 10.00 a.m. Tredegar Library; BGCBC Roadworks report, week ending 24.01.2025; Communicorp Clerks & Councils Direct January 2025 Issue 157; OVW Re: Llais Y Goedwig, Networking Days local to you – ***distributed to Members***: Received.

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

279) Planning:

- a) i) List of planning applications received in week 01 and 02
- ii) List of planning applications received in week 03

b) To consider Planning Applications submitted for Council's observations

App. No.	Applicant	Proposal
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Councillor H. Trollope declared an interest in the following application and took no part in discussion or voting thereon

C/2024/0303	Mr. J. Strand Tredegar Comprehensive School No objections Stable Lane	External classroom (8x4m) constructed of timber frame with green roof, Tredegar Comprehensive School.
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C/2024/0321	Mr. J. Leddington 3 Rhoslan No objections Tredegar	Construction of new detached garage in grounds of Plot 4 of Willows residential development, including access and parking as well as alterations to the rear boundary of Plot 3 to accommodate new vehicular access to rear of Plot 4, Willows Social Club, Church Street.
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Councillor H. Trollope declared an interest in the following application and took no part in discussion or voting thereon

C/2025/0015	BGCBC Community Services No objections The Energy Centre Lime Avenue Ebbw Vale	Single storey extension, Tredegar Comprehensive School, Stable Lane.
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Councillor K. Phillips declared an interest in the following application and took no part in discussion or voting thereon

C/2025/0019	Mr. K. Phillips Made in Tredegar No objections Brompton Place Tredegar	Installation of roof mounted solar panels, The Little Theatre, Upper Coronation Street.
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A brief discussion ensued regarding the loss of the outdoor exercise areas, as there was no external area for children on the School site, as these were now occupied by buildings. A Member said it was recognised there was a premium for certain areas but there were outside areas to the rear, with seating and tables for use during the summer.

c) To consider other planning matters – Caerphilly County Borough Council

Re: 2nd Replacement Caerphilly County Borough Local Development Plan 2020-2035.
Pre-deposit public consultation ending 26.02.2025

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

- Apprenticeship – Members discussed the possibility of establishing an apprenticeship at Tredegar Town Council: the Clerk was passed a name of an Officer (T. Robinson) of the Local Authority, as a possible contact. A Member suggested this also could be within the remit of BG Officer, Mr. M. Forouzan, who had proven very helpful previously in providing advice to the Councillor within the area.

The Chair said there were various options available, referring to ‘Kickstart’, which was a six-month placement, or an apprenticeship for a one-year period where the employer would look to pay the national minimum wage or role-related. However; this could include fifteen / twenty-five hours per week for classroom studies and this option could prove costly, especially in respect of the employer’s time. There was also the Shared Apprenticeship option, which was new and only introduced in December, whereby the college met the cost of the wages but the apprentice’s time was spread between two / three organisations.

Another Member suggested Council could consider an internship, rather than an apprenticeship; however, Members suggested with people struggling financially in Blaenau Gwent, this may not be an appropriate option.

Clerk to contact the afore-mentioned Officers to seek advice as to any apprenticeship opportunities that were open to Town Council - individual to be trained in administrative duties, covering both the role of Clerk and the Responsible Finance Officer.

- Christmas Lights – discussion was needed, as a Council, in respect of Christmas lighting, as associated costs would only increase; Council could ask local businesses to help, every year Council placed a motif on the Shopping Centre without any contribution from this private enterprise, etc.
- Recreation Ground – responsibility of this asset had been transferred under a Tenancy Agreement, rather than a Lease, to look after the Recreation Ground; however, unfortunately there was now only one Director remaining on the Board established. The Local Authority had indicated there was no financial capacity to operate the asset and, if no interested party was found to manage the Ground, it was their intention to unlock the gates and allow the public access for any use, including dog walking. Members had undertaken initial discussions and an amount of £10,000 had been set aside within Earmarked Reserves as part of the budget-setting process; this was a nominal figure and would be dependent on the level of involvement by the Town Council. A brief discussion thereupon ensued regarding management and possible use of the Ground:
 - Grounds maintenance, e.g. mowing and line markings.
 - Utilities, including floodlights.
 - Condition of asset; Members understood that the Stand was condemned, ascertain what was included, e.g. Stand, changing rooms, bungalow, car park and Club House were located on the site.

- Involvement of sporting groups, such as football, rugby and cricket.
- Setting up a Board / Consortium to be in charge of running the Ground. A named company would have to be recorded on the Lease in order to access any grant funding. Town Council to fulfil role as mediator only.
- Events, e.g. horse show, carnival / fete, firework display – options to generate funding to reinvest with a view to the asset being self-financing.

A lengthy discussion thereupon ensued regarding such a financial commitment and in-depth consideration was required, as Council needed to bear in mind the current financial climate. Members indicated apprehension in accepting financial responsibility and suggested that Council consult with the public to seek their views on services provided. However, it was emphasised that this update had been brought forward to Council to gauge the appetite of Members; it was therefore agreed that the Leader continue to attend the meetings held with all interested parties and report back to Council accordingly.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 7.40 p.m.

_____ Chair