

TREDEGAR TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Civic Meeting of Council held via Microsoft Teams / hybrid on
Wednesday, 3rd November, 2021 at 6.30 p.m.**

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

In attendance: Clerk – Ms. C. Aherne

**182) Apologies. Councillors S. Rees, K. Phillips, P. Prosser, S. Trollope,
and G. Walters**

183) Declarations of Interest

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

184) To receive Mayor's report, as appropriate

The Mayor had attended the presentation of the Children's International Film Festival of Wales, which had been such a wonderful event, with all different parties of the world participating, from seven years old to adult. It was tremendous what these youngsters were capable of and should be encouraged – Well done! Thanks were extended to Councillor Kevin Phillips and his team and congratulations to the children who had written the short film 'The Car Crash' (Wales) entry. The Mayor considered such participation was good for the future of these young people and schools should be doing more in the curriculum in this respect.

The Mayor had also undertaken a visit to the Gwent Shopping Centre to promote shops in Tredegar and the retailers had been really pleased. Finally, she had attended a Friends of Bedwellty Park event and presented the cheque on behalf of Town Council.

Councillor D. Rowberry joined the meeting at this juncture (6.36 p.m.)

A Member also reported that Cymru Creations had been successful in acquiring the Queen's Ballroom; it was agreed that a letter of 'Congratulations' be sent.

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

Finance and Staffing Sub-Committee - 27th October, 2021

Kickstart Scheme: it was agreed that the Chair of Finance and Staffing sign off the contract on behalf of Council; as previously delegated, to be reported to the next meeting of Council for ratification.

Events Sub-Committee - 3rd November, 2021

Cairn Memorial – 13th November, 2021

- Clerk invited four providers to tender for minibus provision

Christmas Lights switch-on

- Fee approved for all application forms, i.e. Special Event Road Closure Order, Temporary Street Trading Consent, Temporary Event Notice

- St. John Ambulance – medical cover: expenditure approved

- Hire of gazebos: expenditure approved

Mayor's Christmas visits

- Not advisable to proceed: it was therefore agreed that a gift (chocolates and biscuits) be purchased for each of the residential / care homes.

186) Grants:

a) To receive and consider grants to Sporting and Cultural organisations

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

Sirhowy Woodlands CIC - Any financial assistance received would be used towards the cost of a mobile mill (£8,000). **2019/20 Sept'19 CQ No. 903 £500.00 – Special: £200.00**
Approved accordingly.

Southend Allotments - Any financial assistance received would be used towards the cost of the ongoing path construction project. **2019/20 Sept'19 CQ No. 904 £200.00: Approved accordingly.**

b) To receive and consider grants to Churches & Chapels (s.137) - Grants as of 01.04.2017 now max £300.00 (before awarding a grant Council must be satisfied the grant is being given for non-religious purposes with the building being for community use) - None received.

187) Correspondence

1) One Voice Wales

Health Impact Assessment of Climate Change in Wales infographics: Public Health Wales has published a series of infographics highlighting the importance of climate change impacts on the health and wellbeing of the population of Wales, and to support public bodies and businesses to take action to address any impacts

- Noted; forward to Councillors A.E. Tippings, D. Jones and J. Thomas.

2) Brynmawr Rotary

Christmas 2021 food hamper for the whole of Blaenau Gwent: Requesting consideration of financial support and / or volunteers to help pack the hampers. Distributed 184 last year.

- Noted; ascertain how many had been distributed within the Tredegar area in order for a decision to be made at the next meeting.

3) Trefest

Dates for Battle of the Bands in 2022 and request for a Member to be a judge at the final event 02.04.2022

- Noted; agreed that the Mayor would attend to participate as a judge.

4) Remembrance Sunday / Parade

a) A. Tuggey Re: Update on Remembrance Deputy Lieutenant's attendance

- Noted.

b) P. Edwards Email Re: Raising disappointment over no parade.

- Noted; Council extended thanks for the email. Clerk to respond explaining the Remembrance Sunday event at the War Memorial was not TTC remit, our role being to facilitate between the Royal British Legion and the Church.

Council had agreed to the provision of the PA system and to print the Orders of Service in support of the event, and act as liaison between the RBL and the Local Authority. Council considered this as 'small steps' to a return to normality and hoped the Parade could proceed in the future; also that Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council would offer greater aid to the RBL in the arrangements going forward, particularly as this was a civic event for the Local Authority to administer.

A Member clarified that a decision had been made at a National level that the RBL was not responsible for any Remembrance events and parades due to litigation issues.

Another Member highlighted disparities between support provided by the Local Authority across the County Borough, bearing in mind that Ebbw Vale did not have a Town

Council and BGCBC should address this inconsistency.

5) Gwent Police

Re: White Ribbon Day 2021 (United Nation's International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women) on 25th November. Partner package guidance on how you can show your support.

- Noted; forward to Councillors T. Smith and J. Thomas.

6) **PUBLICATIONS**

BGCBC Roadworks report, week ending 29.10.2021 and 05.11.2021; Aneurin Bevan University Health Board Vaccination Update, issue 41 and 42 – added to website and Twitter; Communicorp Local Councils Update Issue 256 November 2021; OVW Vacancies Care Inspectorate Wales; Night Out Welsh Language Promoters Group, online coffee and chat Wednesday 10.11.2021 at 3.00 p.m.

– ***distributed to Members***: Received.

7) **AGENDA**

None received.

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

188) **Planning:**

a) i) **To consider an Officer's Report (if received)** None received.

ii) List of planning applications received in week 42.

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/2021/0312	Mr. A. Jones ADJ Architects Ltd. Hopslade, Eastham Tenbury Wells	New sterile packaging facility, PCI Pharma Services, Unit 23- 24 Tafarnaubach Ind. Estate.

No objections

C/2021/0316	Mr. S. Smith, BGCBC c/o Ms A. Longford Old Monmouthshire CBC County Hall Rhadyr, Usk	Listed Building consent for the demolition of front range of buildings at The Shop, Shop Row, Tredegar.
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No objections

d) **To consider other planning matters** – concerns were expressed regarding the former Ironmasters House, which a Member understood was to be demolished and rebuilt; he was advised this was on a flood plain and, therefore, in the event of any demolition of the building, a developer would not be allowed to rebuild on that location. It was the

understanding that works related to the 'renovate and extend of the structure', planning permission would be required accordingly.

189) Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Annual draft report - February 2022

The Clerk spoke to the document, highlighting any significant changes / salient points for consideration, and sought comments from Members in respect of the draft report.

Section 13. Payments to Members of Community and Town Councils

- Tredegar Town Council remained in Group B - Income or Expenditure in 2020 / 2021 of £30,000 - £199,999
- 13.7 Council was reminded that 'An individual may decline to receive part, or all, of the payments if they so wish'. This must be done in writing and was an individual matter: the RFO had devised a proforma, which was circulated to all elected Members, requiring a signature if anyone wished to waive the payment.
- ***Determination 44: Community and Town Councils must make available a payment to each of their Members of £150.00 per year as a contribution to costs and expenses, with the exception of those Councils in Group 5 where the payment is optional.***

Taxation Members expressed concern in respect of the issue relating to taxation of the payment of £150.00 per year as a contribution to costs and expenses. It was suggested that if this had been an issue for larger authorities, i.e. Unitary or the Senydd, resulting in greater amounts, Welsh Government would have pursued this with HMRC proactively, and resolved the situation more expediently than was now the case with town and community councils.

As this payment was made to offset costs and expenses that would generally relate to consumables to carry out the role - e.g. I.T. provision, stationary, telephone, etc. - such an allowance would be non-taxable, as considered reimbursement of expenses, and not treated as a salary.

- ***Determination 45: Community and Town Councils can make payments to each of their Members in respect of travel costs for attending approved duties. Such payments must be the actual costs of travel by public transport or the HMRC mileage allowances.***
- ***Determination 46: If a Community or Town Council resolves that a particular duty requires an overnight stay, it can authorise reimbursement of subsistence expenses to its' Members at the maximum rates set out on the basis of receipted claims.***
- ***Determination 47: Community and Town Councils can pay financial loss compensation to each of their Members, where such loss has occurred, for attending approved duties.***
- ***Determination 48: Each Council can decide to introduce an attendance allowance for Members. The amount of each payment must not exceed £30.00. A Member in receipt of financial loss compensation will not be entitled to claim attendance for the same event.***
Councils that intend to introduce an attendance allowance must set out the details of the scheme and publish them on their website.
- ***Determination 49: Community and Town Councils can provide a payment to the Mayor or Chair of the Council up to a maximum of £1,500.00. This is in addition to the £150.00 payment for costs and expenses and the £500.00 senior salary if these are claimed.***
- ***Determination 50: Community and Town Councils can provide a payment to the Deputy Mayor or Deputy Chair of the Council up to a maximum of £500.00. This is***

in addition to the £150.00 payment for costs and expenses and the £500.00 senior salary if these are claimed.

It was the individual decision of each council to agree up to five Members; Senior roles and allowances were agendaed, on an annual basis, for consideration at the Annual General Meeting of Council.

- ***Determination 52: Members in receipt of a Band 1 or Band 2 senior salary from a principal council (that is Leader, Deputy Leader or Executive Member) cannot receive any payment from any Community or Town Council, other than travel and subsistence expenses and contribution towards costs of care and personal assistance.***

The Clerk confirmed 'a principal council' related to both Local and Unitary Authorities but was not relevant for Tredegar Town Council, having no Members undertaking a dual role of Town and County Borough Councillor holding senior positions, within Band 1 or Band 2 of the Local Authority.

The report of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales and the appropriate Determinations were thereupon noted, and the feedback to the IRPW in respect of taxation of the Member's Allowance agreed accordingly.

190) Updates regarding Bedwellty House and Park / Parc Bryn Bach - any issues to have been previously reported direct to the House Management / Aneurin Leisure personally

- None received.

191) Delegates: to receive and consider reports from Delegates to Outside Bodies and the recommendations of Sub-Committees / Working Parties:

a) Joint Committee of Local Councils – No meeting

b) Gwent Valleys One Voice Wales – Members had attended the recent meeting whereby discussion had ensued regarding Public Service Boards, mainly in respect of the make-up of PSBs, e.g. the voluntary sector and NRW had representation, however there was no provision for town / community council representation (Minutes were available for Members' purview).

c) One Voice Wales Larger Councils and AGM – a Member reported back in respect of the October meeting, referring to a really good presentation by Mold Town Council "Totally Mold", who had introduced a local voucher scheme; this project aimed to increase footfall into town centres. In support of the Voucher Scheme, thirty-five businesses had signed up initially and there were now sixty-nine participants. Mold TC was developing a website, promoting that vouchers could be purchased from Mold Town Council and where redeemable; £13,000 worth of vouchers had been issued. This had resulted in an increased turnover and new customers. There was support across the UK for this Scheme, and retail vacancies had reduced to less than 7%. Carmarthen Town Council were looking at a Recovery Plan and Barry Town Council had been allocated funding to put on events, taking a lead on recovery.

d) Tredegar Twinning – the Association had printed new leaflets, encouraging people to join, and would be holding a social event in the Nag's Head on 13th November, 2021; Members to let the Twinning know if attending. The Association was looking for additional members to recruit and would be hosting a stall at the Christmas market.

e) Pen Bryn Oer Community Fund – the Member was currently unable to share which applicants had been successful; there were substantially more Tredegar applicants than for the Rhymney area, therefore sadly some excellent projects for Tredegar had been unsuccessful. In respect of the pre-election period for March next year, usually the deadline would be February / March, with the next meeting scheduled Monday 4th April, 2022 – this could be subject to change.

f) School Governing Bodies – Bryn Bach Primary: inspection visit - all based on progress-making with new curriculum, no official report had been received regarding grading of the Inspection, however it had been considered that excellent progress was being made and the children were really engaged, with learning and progression ahead of where it needed to be.

g) Blaenau Gwent Heritage Forum – Meeting held; monthly discussions going ahead at Bedwellty House, Day School throughout – based on the autumn 2020 theme ‘Arts and Heritage’ – lectures were free of charge.

h) Blaenau Gwent CAB – No meeting

i) Tredegar / Ebbw Vale Crime Prevention Panel – No meeting

j) Tredegar Business Forum – No meeting

k) VVP / Tredegar Heritage Initiative – No meeting

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

- Litter collected and stored on steps of Town Clock - follow up with Blaenau Gwent CBC; it was noted this had previously been agreed by Town Council to allow for safekeeping but should be addressed for the Remembrance Sunday service.
- Stagecoach – depots Blackwood and Cwmbran; discussions regarding disparity of wages could result in a strike from 17th November, 2021 until 10th January, 2022.
- Condition of Memorial gates to Bedwellty Park, various parties deemed it appropriate to attach notices and the cellotape removed the paint; a Member suggested Council could consider looking at this project for the next financial year, as the RFO would be preparing a forecast in November / December. Council may be able to fund such work via the Armed Forces, however there was a need to ascertain ownership of the stanchions, whether owned by Aneurin Leisure or Blaenau Gwent CBC.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 7.32 p.m.

_____ Chair