



21st January, 2026

Dear Councillor Behr,

I am writing to you in my role as Leader of Tredegar Town Council as, in a public meeting of the Economic Development & Environment Management Scrutiny Committee, you decided to reference Tredegar Town Council and in particular financial issues.

I feel it is important to challenge the way this issue is being framed, particularly where it risks setting one town against another within Blaenau Gwent, whilst also questioning if you stretched the councillors code of conduct by selectively picking one area whilst ignoring wider context and also making political attacks disguised as financial commentary.

It is essential that the wider funding context across the county borough is properly recognised. While Tredegar is referenced as having benefited from capital investment over a number of years, this does not reflect the full picture. All towns across Blaenau Gwent have received investment from different funding streams at different times, largely determined by external funding criteria rather than local discretion.

By way of example, Abertillery received the last round of SPC funding under a Conservative UK Government, amounting to £13.1 million. In addition, significant public investment has been directed along the Ebbw Valley rail corridor, estimated at between £5–7 million in Blaenau Gwent, delivering clear connectivity and economic benefits to communities along that route. Brynmawr has also benefited from substantial investment through the new shopping complex, which £700,000 of public money was used, part of which is physically located within the Nantyglo / Blaina boundary, whilst £49,700 has been given to sporting clubs and facilities within this area between 2020 and 2025. These examples illustrate why it is neither fair nor accurate to single out one town in isolation when considering historic investment.

It is also relevant to acknowledge that all Town Councils in Blaenau Gwent hold financial reserves, with those reserves varying as a percentage of each Council's precept. This is both appropriate and prudent financial management. Any discussion about relative advantage or disadvantage should therefore consider not only historic capital spend but also current financial capacity, including allocated and unallocated reserves, across all Town Councils.

I agree that there must be a genuine and meaningful conversation about how future funding is identified and used to benefit the whole county borough, particularly our most deprived communities. That conversation needs to be grounded in fairness, transparency, and an honest recognition of past funding decisions across the borough, rather than focusing narrowly on one locality or how outside bodies decide on allocation.

I hope you can continue this discussion constructively and collectively, with the shared aim of ensuring that all future investment decisions support all our communities, in line with the governance given, plus not putting any monies at risk of being withdrawn and avoid creating unnecessary division between towns that face many common challenges.

Kind regards,

Cllr Mark Turner
Leader Tredegar Town Council