

TREDEGAR TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Civic Meeting of Council held via Microsoft Teams / hybrid on Wednesday, 7th January, 2025 at 6.00 p.m.

Present: Councillors A.E. Tippings (Chair)
A. Jones
M. Turner
G. Badham
A.E. Evans
L. Thomas Evans
G. Jones-Griffiths
D. Rowberry
J. Thomas
P. Tolley
G. Walters

In attendance: Clerk – Ms. C. Aherne

By invitation: Aneurin Leisure Trust representatives:
Activate Blaenau Gwent Project Officer,
Janet Oxenham; with
Emma Moseley and Marcia Bailey

250) Apologies. Councillors K. Phillips, E. Jones, S. Mavar, H. Trollope, S. Trollope and K. Waldron; RFO – Ms. A. Edwards

251) Declarations of Interest

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

252) Presentation - Trailblazer Programme: to engage with families to support health and well-being

The Chair extended a welcome to the Aneurin Leisure Trust representatives, who had been invited to attend this meeting of Council to provide an update on the work being undertaken through the Trailblazer Programme and to respond to issues raised accordingly.

▪ Trailblazer Programme

The representatives worked to deliver the new Trailblazer Programme under the Aneurin Leisure Trust.

There were eleven programmes throughout Blaenau Gwent. Asking families what they need to build the Programme. Only in place past three months, engaged with 134 individuals, 200 / 250 with all family members having membership.

Current information: engage not only with individuals also family, e.g. instead of just mother / father, work with cohort of family.

The aim of the project, work with economic indicators, build up confidence, give opportunity in volunteering, hopefully opportunity in employment. Engage with people giving many opportunities volunteering, employment, with Aneurin Leisure across the whole Trust, e.g. libraries, parks, sports centres [family swimming lessons, build confidence around swimming, valuable life skills], and working with other key stakeholders.

Able to offer family membership to all Sports Centres, well-being coaching, well-being action plans. Plan fitness packages and other sessions - mental health, skills, nutrition, movement.

Working with Tredegar Football Club, one Saturday morning per month, nutrition, movement, confidence building, support in the gym.

Engage with DWP, going out and actually sitting in job centres, twice a week, getting to know Trailblazer representatives explaining the Programme, face-to-face meetings, pathway project.

Funded until end of March 2027, individuals not have to be referred by job centres, but by self-referral, which had proven helpful.

A Member commended the Programme, which appeared to have made excellent progress during the first three months since introduction and hopefully Council would continue to note the success of the scheme.

- **Engagement:** representatives were going out into the community, not only in respect of the membership offered at Sports Centres, but community centres and libraries, and looking for appropriate avenues in order to engage. Work was also ongoing in respect of the possibility of transport for individuals to access these services, which may have been inaccessible for many years.
- **Statistics:** figures produced related across Blaenau Gwent, but the data for the Tredegar area could be provided.
- **Outdoor Working Groups:** activities were linked in with Bedwellty House and Parc Bryn Bach to accommodate groups to ensure an overarching approach. The Programme had secured equipment that representatives were able to take into the community and the representatives were qualified in certain fields to ensure all areas were covered and that the activities were not working in isolation.

Council thereupon thanked the Officers of the Trailblazer Programme for attending to explain the work being carried out and responding to questions raised, which had been most informative.

253) To receive Mayor's report, as appropriate

The Mayor provided the following update on events:

- Christmas Window Dressing: presented certificates to 1st, 2nd and 3rd place winners; also presented certificates to Commended and Highly Commended winners.
- Presented cheque to Sirhowy Angling Club.
- Did Hamper pack for everyone deserves a Christmas.
- Christmas eve visits – Wonderful welcome at Maes-y-Dderwen – all residents and staff ready and waiting – even offered us breakfast. Wonderful welcome at Central Surgery – all residents and staff ready and waiting. Staff joined in with singing and even brought instruments for the resident to play. Activities co-ordinator thanked us and said it was the highlight of their Christmas. Woffington – All resident were waiting for us. Some staff stayed for the duration. Warm reception. Ty Parc – Warm welcome, long wait and after 20-30 mins 2 cleaners and the staff turned up. I think we should reconsider visiting. Bedwellty – Short wait for residents to join. Lovely welcome from staff and families visiting.
- Thank you should be sent to Community band and Karen who joined us for the visits.

254) To receive the 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.

- The Draft Estimates report, as circulated to all Members, was accepted:
Projects for completion in the Financial Year 2025 / 2026 [otherwise to be rolled over to the Financial Year 2026 / 2027 if outstanding]
 - T2520 Bomber Memorial (to be completed 2025 / 2026)
 - Siting of a promotional television within the Town [removed]
 - Review Grants
 - Sirhowy Community Garden fence
 - Allotment tree-cutting
 - Tredegar Recreation Ground
 - Additional member of staff
- Budget 2026 / 2027***
 - Review Grants
 - Sirhowy Community Garden fence
 - Allotment tree-cutting
 - Additional member of staff
 - Tredegar Recreation Ground
 - Handy person
 - Refurbishment of public conveniences
 - Refurbishment of Burma Shrine alcove.
- Proposed budget 2026 / 2027: Agreed, with the only amendment being that International Partnerships remain as a Standstill of £250.00.
- A breakdown of the Earmarked Reserves be sent to all Members with the Precept-setting report to enable further discussions on appropriate amounts.

255) Grants:

a) To receive and consider grants to Sporting and Cultural organisations (under the provision of the Local Govt. Miscellaneous Provision Act 1976 s.19 and Local Government Act 1972 s.137

Councillor L. Thomas Evans declared an interest in the following application and took no part in discussion or voting thereon.

Georgetown District Community Centre – Any financial assistance received would be used towards the costs of running the Centre

2020/21 Nov'20 CQ No. 078 £250.00 - *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.

256) Correspondence

- 1) BGCBC
 - a) i) R. Daly Re: Precept 2026 / 2027. Request for information by 31.01.2026.
 - Noted.

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

- b) 1) List of applications received, week ending 12th December, 2025
TEN 31.12.2025 to 01.01.2026 – Tredegar Orpheus Music Centre
2) List of applications received, week ending 19th December, 2025.

- Noted.

- 2) One Voice Wales a) Joint event: One Voice Wales and Planning Aid Wales 19th March, 2026 by Teams at £53.00 per person.

- Noted.

- 3) Welsh Government M. Bull Re: Section 137 Letter to Community & Town Councils 2026 - 2027. £11.60 per elector.

- Noted.

- 4) Audit Wales 2024 - 2025 Completion of Audit. Unqualified Audit opinion and no further matters.

- Noted; thanks were extended by Council to the RFO for her diligence.

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Councillor A.E. Evans joined the meeting at this juncture (6.30 p.m.)

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

- 5) Members' Correspondence: a) Cllr Turner Re: Economic Development and Environmental Management Scrutiny Committee. Asking for this to be sent to all Members and added to AOB – **forwarded to Members**

- Noted. The Leader said this had been discussed at a public meeting of the Scrutiny Committee, whereby consideration had been given to three options that the Local Authority had been asked to rank in preference with feedback to Central Government.

Option 1 –

Option 2 –

Option 3 –

Upon due consideration Option 2 had been agreed as the preferred choice, followed by Option 3 and then Option 1.

- b) Cllr Turner: Reporting a fault with the Clock Lights.

- Noted; agreed to seek advice in respect of whether lights were in need of replacing, or otherwise, and expenditure approved accordingly.

c) Cllr Tolley Re: Aberfan Concert. Further information on the proposed event and seeking funding.

- Noted.

6) Blachere

Reporting that our own motifs may need refurbishment or replacing next year.

- Noted; agreed, investigate replacing in line with new contract and any new signage to state "Merry Christmas from Tredegar Town Council".

7) Torfaen County Borough Council

C. Ashman Re: Town Council comments on shared blueprint for growth. Would like to attend a meeting to gain input from members.

- Noted; extend an invitation to full Council in February.

8) GAVO

Invitation to GAVO Virtual Annual General Meeting 22.01.2026 at 11.00 a.m.

- Noted; forward to Councillor M. Turner.

9) **PUBLICATIONS**

None received.

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

257) Planning:

- a) i) List of planning applications received in week 47
- ii) List of planning applications received in week 48

b) To consider Planning Applications submitted for Council's observations – None received

c) To consider other planning matters –

- Corporate Joint Committee for South West Wales, Informal Specific Consultee Consultation: Timetable for Draft Delivery Agreement for South West Wales CJC.
- TEPL Planning: Publicity and Consultation before applying for Planning Permission – Pulse Plastics Ltd., Unit 20 Rassau Industrial Estate, Ebbw Vale.

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

- A Member reported a tear in the painting of Lord Tredegar, which had occurred due to items being rested against it; it was important that artwork was covered up during any moving of items to avoid damage. Also photographs being removed, and inaccessible as not reinstated, with wedding pictures taking priority.

There appeared to be a lack of care and understanding when dealing with artefacts and if Members were concerned with items stored / displayed in Bedwellty House, there may be a need to considering storage of heritage items elsewhere.

259) 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** – Meeting held the previous evening; the Chief Executive of the Health Board had made a very good presentation. The next meeting could be held in the Council Chamber, with an invite to Stephen Vickers invited to attend. OVW was looking at the reason for testing of motifs on lamp-posts.
- c) One Voice Wales Larger Councils and AGM** – No meeting.
- d) Tredegar Twinning** – No meeting in December, Twinning had a charity event in support of the British Heart Foundation; lovely pictures of Orvault in the snow published; Secretary had an operation carried out; France president, help French to complete an application form for submission to French government in respect of funding that UK give to France to encourage twinning.
- e) Pen Bryn Oer Community Fund** – Next meeting April, closing deadline for applications was 11th March.
- f) School Governing Bodies** – no meetings; Members attended carol concerts; noted excellence of Tredegar Comprehensive School.
- g) Blaenau Gwent Heritage Forum** – No meeting, Christmas dinner had taken place.
- h) Tredegar Business Forum** – No meeting – cancelled.
- i) Placemaking** – Clerk to seek update.

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

- Congratulate M. Morgan and S. Arnold send letter.
- Litterpick, Bedwellty Pits – participants to register attendance.
- Policing – concerns were expressed in respect of apparent lack of action, Members recognised the Police did not have infinite resources available, and it was highlighted that Council may not be aware of what action was being undertaken elsewhere. It was agreed that an invitation be extended to the Police and Crime Commissioner and the Chief Constable.
It was suggested that the Police needed to be more proactive on minor breaches of law, for example cars parked on pavements, who should be prosecuted, as a wheelchair / pushchair would not be able to pass.
- Pharmacy – a Member expressed concern that multi-visits were needed to collect pharmacy items due to availability issues; also, a resident had complained items requested by Boots that the surgery had not sent. Another Member supported these concerns, being aware of similar complaints currently going through the Health Board with the Putting Things Right team. It was noted that the Local Authority Tredegar Members had regular meetings with the Aneurin Bevan UHB and suggested these issues needed to be raised for consideration.

- At a OVW meeting the previous evening, Nantyglo and Blaina Town Council had raised an issue with their Christmas lights, which had been stolen. MLD Services had stepped in and erected new lights and Council wished to extend thanks on behalf of Nantyglo and Blaina and bring this company to the attention of Council.

There being no other business, the Chair thanked Members for attending and wished everyone a Happy New Year; the meeting closed at 7.38 p.m.

_____ Chair