

# TREDEGAR TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held via Microsoft Teams / hybrid on Wednesday, 15<sup>th</sup> April, 2026 at 6.00 p.m.**

**Present: Councillors A.E. Tippings. (Chair)**

**A. Jones  
M. Turner  
G. Badham  
A.E. Evans  
L. Thomas Evans  
D. Rowberry  
J. Thomas  
P. Tolley  
H. Trollope**

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

**By invitation: Member of Parliament, N. Smith**

**368) Apologies. Councillors K. Phillips, E. Jones, G. Jones-Griffiths, S. Trollope, K. Waldron and G. Walters**

## **369) Declarations of Interest**

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

## **370) Nick Smith, M.P. - to provide an update on the work he is undertaking and inviting any questions of Members**

The Chair extended a welcome to Nick Smith, M.P., who had been invited to attend this meeting of Council to provide an update on the work being undertaken and to respond to issues raised accordingly.

- National / International context – referred to uncertainty in the UK due to issues, such as the war in the Ukraine, and associated pressures with our country's allies, rising fuel costs, etc.
- April was the start of a new financial year - some people would see significant improvements, e.g. family finances, pensioners' allowances, and also major improvements to workers' rights, e.g. statutory sick pay, etc.
- Local updates – Tredegar had strong connections with Rhymney and he was sorry to see Dawn Bowden stepping down and the M.P. wished her well in her new life.
- Funding put in place for the Sirhowy Valley, Bargoed and New Tredegar of £20m over the next ten years and provided opportunities for Tredegar within this new initiative.
- Significant issues arising in respect of the Royal Mail, with focus particularly in

respect of Ebbw Vale.

- Labour representatives had recently met with the DWP and Welsh Career Services in respect of supporting young people into work – this was a good initiative across the UK, which was proving very successful.

A Member referred to concerns raised from residents in respect of the repayment of the £200.00 Cold Weather allowance; the concern being that many recipients had to pay back this money and this had not been promoted by the DWP. Therefore, many of the public thought any communications were fake / fraudulent. The M.P. had not been approached in any individuals but was happy to seek further detail and report back to the Member / Council accordingly.

Another Member referred to the banking hub in Abertillery and the hub to be introduced in Ebbw Vale, and enquired if any lobbying was being undertaken in respect of provision of a hub in Tredegar, as all the high street banks had closed. The M.P. said that this was a global problem, however private / commercial organisations would be influenced by local need in respect of considering staff, number of hours / days per week, participation, in considering if such provision was worthwhile.

The Chair thanked the M.P. for his time and enquired what progress was being made in respect of off-road biking; the Member wrote, on average, three times per week to report this issue. Vehicles were arriving at Trefil and off-loading large amounts of vehicles, travelling from areas such as The Midlands. The M.P. recognised that numbers kept rising in respect of this issue and said Trefil was the 'tip of a spear' and provided a launch pad for collaboration, such as increase in electric bikes, which were proving dangerous, particularly in town centres. The M.P. confirmed that a 'catch-up' meeting was convened every six months with Senior Police Officers to monitor issues, such as illegal bikers, and undertake a concerted campaign across interested parties.

Council thereupon thanked the Member of Parliament for attending and responding to questions raised, which had been most informative.

### **371) 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 immediately prior to Council, be approved accordingly.

- **Budget Against Actual to 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2026** - the report was unanimously recommended for approval.
- **Revised Reserves as at 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2026** - the information was accepted and the Reserves unanimously recommended for approval.
- **Asset Register as at 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2026** - the Asset Register was unanimously recommended for approval.
- **Update : Interim Internal Auditor Report** - accepted accordingly.

Update provided, following an informal meeting in relation to The Recreation Ground, Tredegar, with the Leader, staff and interested parties (recorded under agenda item, Matters of Local Interest or Concern).

### **372) To consider a Schedule of Accounts for payment in April, 2026**

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

- Tredegar Business Forum and Castle Street Congregational Church: February / March – due to the end of the financial year of 31<sup>st</sup> March, 2026, Council had agreed to consider two grant application requests at the Ordinary Meeting of Council, which had been approved accordingly.
- St. David's Day Fund: Additional payment, March – this related to expenditure to purchase books for Schools in the Tredegar area, which would be offset by funding received by Council.
- Quadient Finance UK Ltd.: April – this amount was shown in 'red', as this amount was estimated due to the figure not being released until the 18<sup>th</sup> of every month. In response to a question raised, the RFO said that Council could consider paying for postage on an individual basis, rather than renewing the annual contract for the franking machine, as this could prove more cost-effective, due to a significant reduction in items sent via post.
- Section 137 payments in Schedule of Payments – Resolution of Council: In pursuance of the power conferred by Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) and being of the opinion that the expenditure satisfies the requirements of that section, expenditure up to £121,212.40 was approved in relation to the above £0.00.

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

### **373) To receive and adopt the following Minutes of Council:**

- a) **Events Sub-Committee - 4<sup>th</sup> March, 2026**
- b) **Civic Meeting of Council - 4<sup>th</sup> March, 2026:** typo to be amended accordingly in Minute 'heading' from 2025 to 2026 [page 212]
- c) **Finance and Staffing Sub-Committee - 11<sup>th</sup> March, 2026**
- d) **Policy Sub-Committee - 18<sup>th</sup> March, 2026**
- e) **Ordinary Meeting of Council - 18<sup>th</sup> March, 2026**

It was agreed that all Minutes presented be moved en bloc, subject to the foregoing amendment, as a true record.

### **374) 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.

### **375) Correspondence**

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

*part in discussion.*

1) BGCBC

- i) List of applications received, week ending 3<sup>rd</sup> April 2026
- ii) List of applications received, week ending 10<sup>th</sup> April 2026

- Noted.

2) One Voice Wales

BGCBC Re: Withdrawal of the emerging Blaenau Gwent Replacement Local Development Plan (2018-2033). The Council resolved to withdraw the emerging Blaenau Gwent RLDP at its meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2026. The Welsh Minister subsequently agreed to the withdrawal of the RLDP in a letter dated 17<sup>th</sup> March 2026. At the Council meeting of 5<sup>th</sup> March 2026, it was also agreed to proceed with preparing a Joint Local

- a) Development Plan (JLDP) with Torfaen who also withdrew their RLDP at their Council meeting of 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2026.

- Noted.

- b) Re: National Conference & Awards Ceremony 2026, 1<sup>st</sup> July. £99.00 per delegate.

- Noted; re-agenda.

- c) New NRAP and Section 7 list.

- Outlined the introduction of six aims designed to guide co-ordinated action. Noted.

- d) Re: Launch of the One Voice Wales Civility and Respect Pledge. Civility means politeness and courtesy in behaviour, speech and in the written word and these are fundamental to the success of councils in Wales. It is acknowledged that a culture built around these essential values is a feature of how many councils operate but it is well known that for some councils this is not the case which is exemplified through high numbers of complaints being submitted to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales, grievances submitted to councils by employees and lost work time caused by workplace stress illnesses. The civility and respect pledge sets out a number of important commitments designed to create an environment conducive to effective working avoiding many of the issues that can adversely impact on the general performance of councils. It is vital that committing the council to high standards of behaviour by completing and

signing the pledge has a lasting impact and it is strongly recommended that the process is given a prominent place on council agendas possibly followed up with media coverage. It is suggested that the pledge could also be framed and displayed in meeting rooms to remind everyone of what they have committed themselves to for the current and long-term future. One Voice Wales would strongly encourage you to complete and sign the pledge and to let us have a copy of the signed version so that we can retain a central register of those councils who have made this important commitment.

- Noted: forward to all Members.

3) Cllr K. Waldron

Update on health.

- The Clerk outlined the content for Members' information and subsequent consideration of Council.

It was therefore agreed to allow a 'dispensation for absence' for a further six months; the Member would be welcome to return when in a position to do so in the future.

4) H Woolf

Civic nomination form.

- Following due consideration, it was agreed that the nomination be approved accordingly.

## 5) PUBLICATIONS

BGCBC Roadworks report week ending 10.04.2026 and 17.04.2026; One Voice Wales Funding Newsletter April 2026; OVW Placement Opportunities Rural Wales Advisory Board and Placements Call, deadline for applications 17.04.26 – ***distributed to Members***: Received.

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

### 376) Planning:

- i) List of planning applications received in week 12
- ii) List of planning applications received in week 13

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

<b>App. No.</b>	<b>Applicant</b>	<b>Proposal</b>
P/2026/0010	Mr. S. Griffiths Duffryn House Duffryn Road Cwmbach	Side extension to create to additional bedrooms with ensuite, 38 Stockton Way.
<b><i>No objections</i></b>		

P/2026/0060	Mr. C. Ciftci 2 The Circle Tredegar	Install a window plus surround to the side elevation facing Market Street, 2 The Circle.
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***Observations: No objections, subject to the proposed development retaining the character of the building and was fitting with the heritage, bearing in mind The Circle was a conservation area***

**c) To consider other planning matters –**

Weekly List: Registered Applications. Query - would Planning Application P/2026/0066 be presented to Town Council in the future: Clerk to enquire.

**377) Matters of Local Interest or Concern (by prior notice)**

- Public Conveniences: the Leader referred to an issue on Thursday evening, the Deputy Mayor had contacted him as the cleaning contractor had been unable to gain access to the storage area at the rear of the toilets. This had been a result of the Local Authority changing all padlocks upon Blaenau Gwent CBC taking over responsibility of the Shopping Centre. TTC Members were unable to achieve contact with anyone at the Council to address this issue and had therefore needed to break the padlocks and buy new replacement locks to secure the area. The next day, these had been broken again after the Leader informing Councillors / Officers.

Blaenau Gwent was technically correct in assuming responsibility for all areas within the Shopping Centre and would require access, e.g. in the case of fire, as would any leaseholder be allowed to hold a key for emergency purposes. However, the Town Council had taken on the responsibility for maintenance and operation of the toilets for many years and no-one had been in touch with regard to changing the locks, not once but on two separate occasions.

Again, it was suggested this evidenced a lack of communication and supported the reasons for Council not signing the Town and Community Councils Charter. Council said that there was a need, therefore, to seek clarification on the status of the Lease with the Authority.

- The Recreation Ground: following the meeting with the Leader, staff and Blaenau Gwent Officers, both parties agreed Council were basically ready to move to the next stage, i.e. seeking the service of a Solicitor to advise on the proposed Tenancy at Will. As previously reported, the Leader referred to Mr. T. Watkins, who was currently undertaking the role of bookings and liaising with other parties / Local Authority. It had been recognised this individual had the appropriate knowledge and experience in respect of The Recreation Ground and could prove ideal for consideration. It had been agreed, therefore, that the Leader liaise with the Clerk and RFO in respect of initial considerations, such as hourly rate, number of hours and specification of the role.

The Leader therefore proposed the following for approval of Council, which was unanimously agreed:

- 24 hours per week – flexible basis, dependent on responsibilities relating to The Rec., including Saturday and Sunday
- National Living Wage
- Three / six month probation
- Duties : Opening of public conveniences on a Saturday, litter-picking of Deighton and Sirhowy, basic painting, planting of Town Clock surround

- Time Sheets – duties would be seasonal
- Members raised concern in respect of the increasing practice of illegal parking on pavements. Vehicles were parking fully mounted on pavements and this was causing a safety hazard for pedestrians, forcing individuals on to the highway and resulting in prams / wheelchairs being prevented access to pass [e.g. Morgan Street]. This had also been witnessed on pavements at Market Street, Bank Lane and Stable Lane, also in the town centre outside Family Vision.

On Sirhowy hill / Beaufort Road, Members reported that cars mounted on the pavement were parked so close to the wall of the properties, residents would be unable to open their front doors if opening outwards, and again, parked vehicles forcing prams / wheelchairs into the road.

Agreed: Clerk to write expressing the concern of Council in respect of the apparent lack of enforcement in relation to illegal parking throughout Tredegar and kindly asking that this matter be addressed accordingly.

- Town Clock garden surround: the summer planting was approved and associated expenditure agreed accordingly. Chair to liaise with Clerk in respect of bedding plants / quantity.
- The Clerk brought the attendance of a Member to the attention of Council; as the only meeting to be held in May would be on Wednesday, 20<sup>th</sup> May, 2026, with the cancellation of the Civic meeting, the Member would be absent for longer than the six-month period allowed. It was therefore unanimously agreed that, should the Member attend the Annual Meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> May, this would meet criteria.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 7.19 p.m.

\_\_\_\_\_ Chair