

TREDEGAR TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of Council held via Microsoft Teams / hybrid
on Wednesday, 16th July, 2025 at 6.00 p.m.**

Present: Councillors A.E. Tippings (Chair)

A. Jones

M. Turner

L. Thomas Evans

E. Jones

G. Jones-Griffiths

J. Thomas

P. Tolley

G. Walters

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

**By invitation: Blaenau Gwent CBC representative
Service Manager: Policy & Partnerships**

**102) Apologies: Councillors K. Phillips, G. Badham, A.E. Evans, S. Mavar,
D. Rowberry, H. Trollope, S. Trollope and K. Waldron**

103) Declarations of Interest

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

104) Town / Community Councils Charter of Common Agreement - Service Manager: Policy & Partnerships, BGCBC, in attendance to respond to questions raised

The Chair extended a welcome to the Local Authority representative, Service Manager: Policy & Partnerships, who had been invited to attend this meeting of Council to respond to questions raised and provide any points of clarity in respect of the Charter of Common Agreement between the four Town / Community Councils and Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council.

The Service Manager: Policy & Partnerships thereupon provided some background information in relation to the Charter.

- Liaison with town / community councils had been suggested as part of Recommendations for Good Practice for principal authorities within a Welsh Government document some years ago.
- The latest administration of the Local Authority had agreed an update was needed to this historical document in equal collaboration with partners.
- The document had been developed in 2018 / 2019, being presented to partners in 2019 / 2020 for consideration, commencing an engagement process. Unfortunately,

the Covid 19 pandemic had impacted on progress.

- The current administration had indicated a wish for improved relations with the Town / Community Councils to work collaboratively. The Policy Team had therefore been tasked with re-establishing the Charter, recognising however that professional links with the Clerks remained open and in place.
- Each of the four Town / Community Councils had representation at the Joint Meetings; Nantyglo & Blaina and Tredegar had raised concerns in respect of the implementation of the Charter, rather than the content therein and were reluctant to sign, e.g. consultation in respect of proposed Planning developments. Abertillery & Llanhilleth Community Council and Brynmawr Town Council had signed the Charter.
- To ensure all parties were working towards the same objectives, actions were being undertaken to address such issues, e.g. to facilitate engagement, the intention was to invite Planning representatives to a meeting to interact with the Joint Committee.

The Leader thanked the Officer for attending; in his role as TTC representative, he said the main issue was how Blaenau Gwent would demonstrate to the Town and Community Councils that what was laid down in the Charter would be adhered to. At the moment, the Local Authority had not demonstrated this and he was not confident they were capable of doing this in an appropriate, meaningful manner. For example, issues had been experienced in liaising with the Highways and Planning Departments, notifying Town / Community Councils of planned events and in relation to the budget-setting process, and closer ties were needed with the Local Authority, not just for Tredegar but across the County Borough. The Town / Community Councils were not involved in discussions and the Charter needed to be fully integrated in order to embed partnership-working and ensure communication.

The Service Manager: Policy & Partnerships acknowledged the points raised and confirmed the current administration had listened to concerns and was undertaking actions to address, e.g. appropriate Officers had been invited to attend the latest meeting of the Liaison Committee. The new Strategic Director, Adults and Communities, Mr. David Leech, would be meeting with all Town / Community Councils in August to discuss how to improve collaboration in going forward. The Officer said that hopefully this would identify the right pathway to challenge the Local Authority, Members supported the concerns raised in respect of lack of consultation, e.g. a review of parking provision in the town centre. A Member referred to the previous THI forum meetings whereby, on Council requesting representation, Members had been informed that Town Council already had representation with Members on the Board under the remit of other roles, i.e. the Museum, Cymru Creations, etc. However, on occasions, the update from those representatives was that information not in the public domain could not be shared with Town Council.

Council therefore supported the Leader's recommendation that the Charter should not be signed at this time and consider how Council could effect change within the Charter and ensure Blaenau Gwent adhere to the document.

A Member proposed therefore that Council allow a six-month period and then reconsider the signing of the Charter with a view to Blaenau Gwent CBC evidencing that the Local Authority could work with the Town and Community Councils in the manner suggested.

The Service Manager: Policy & Partnerships acknowledged the comments raised and thereupon provided a brief overview of a recent meeting to update Members.

Council thereupon thanked the Service Manager: Policy & Partnerships for attending and responding to questions raised, which had been most informative.

It was unanimously agreed that the Charter of Common Agreement be agendaed for review following a period of six months to evidence the capability of the Local Authority to comply with the principles contained therein.

105) To receive any verbal recommendations of all Sub-Committee / Working Party meetings 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.

- **Performance Review Sub-Committee – 16th July, 2025**

To approve the report in respect of the Budget against Actual to 30th June, 2025 and accept the Recommendation that:

- No virements were recommended but this would be assessed as part of the next quarterly report.

106) Accounts: to consider a Schedule of Accounts for payment in July 2025, with approval for urgent payments to be made during August recess

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.

- The Schedule of Accounts related to items for payment in July and potential scheduled [estimated] payments during August recess;
- August payments, other than direct payments, would not be paid until formal documentation was received;
- Revised August payments would be submitted at the next Ordinary meeting in September for ratification.

There being no further queries regarding the Schedule of Accounts, presented items were approved for payment, with approval for urgent payments to be made during the August recess. The Officer 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.

107) To seek approval for Senior Members to be delegated powers to address urgent matters during the August recess

The Clerk sought approval for Senior Members (Top 4) to be granted delegated powers for urgent payments during the August recess, with subsequent ratification by Council on receipt of the next Schedule of Accounts, which was agreed accordingly.

108) RFO Update

The RFO spoke to the report, outlining salient points for Members' attention in respect of the following.

- Asset Register – Insurance stated any revalue they undertook would be a rebuild valuation and could not value the War Memorial. Ongoing: views to be fed back to the RFO by the end of August.
- Smart Money Cymru (SMC) - Petty Cash account – the Barclays debit card had arrived

and this would be incorporated into an appropriate Policy as to how manage use.

- Online Payments – both Policies would be presented in September. Once approved, Council would start to use this process in moving forward with online payments.
- Sirhowy Community Garden - fencing – further quotes to be sought with the replacement and securing of five posts included in the specification.
- Cleaning Contract – renewed until 26th June, 2025, by which time Council was to review the operative role.
- Publicity Screen – screen to be ordered once SLA agreed.
- Members' Allowances – respond to RFO by 28th July, 2025.

Thanks were extended to the RFO in compiling the report, which was very thorough and easy to digest. The report of the RFO was thereupon noted and accepted accordingly.

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

- a) Events Sub-Committee - 4th June, 2025**
- b) Civic Meeting of Council - 4th June, 2025**
- c) Finance and Staffing Sub-Committee - 18th June, 2025**
- d) Ordinary Meeting of Council - 18th June, 2025**

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

110) 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.

111) Correspondence

- 1) BGCBC
 - a) L. Horner Re: Tredegar Recreation Ground. Condition survey, ignore information relating to the tenanted bungalow which is not being proposed as included within the transfer.
 - Designate as Agenda Item for September meeting of Council for discussion.
 - b) J. Harris Re: Christmas Lighting 2025. Chasing up completed applications.
 - No Christmas motifs were to be hired for 2025 and therefore the need to complete the application for structural testing was not applicable.
 - c) List of applications received, week ending 27.06.2025.
 - 1. Temporary Event 26.07.25 – Tredegar Recreational Ground.List of applications received, week ending 04.07.2025.

1. Transfer of Premise Licence – Quarrymen’s Arms (Formerly The Top House)
 2. Vary designated Premises Supervisor to Andrew Davies – Quarrymen’s Arms (Formerly The Top House)
- Noted; Members welcomed the return of the Quarrymen’s Arms, the doors being open once again.

2) One Voice
Wales

Re: National Forest Landscape Scheme 2025 / 2027. Funding is available for Local Nature Partnerships (LNPs) to work with partners to invest in woodland landscapes and gain National Forest Status. Webinar information / dates.

- Noted.

3) C. Rundle

- a) Re: Remembrance Day Planning Meeting - 14th August at 7.30 p.m. Moose Lodge.

- Noted.

- b) Re: V.J. Day 80th Anniversary 15th August, 2025. Details of RBL’s planned event.

- Service at the Burma Shrine in recognition of the Battle of Tredegar Hill at 12.00 noon; Bell-ringing at St. George’s Church 6.30 p.m.; wreath-laying at the Cenotaph, 7.00 p.m. and lighting of the beacon at Aneurin Bevan Stones at 9.00 p.m.

4) Cerebral Palsy

Asking for a donation to support their services.

Previous Donation 2024 / 2025 July 2025 Cheque 706691 £100.00

- Noted: a donation of £100.00 was unanimously approved.

5) A. Latham

- a) Asking if Council would be prepared to meet the cost of refreshments for Tredegar Orpheus who are attending a 100th birthday free of charge.

- Members felt unable to support the Friendship Group with a financial contribution on this occasion, feeling this could set a precedent for the future, which would not be sustainable particularly bearing in mind increasing burden impacting upon Town Council resources.

However, the Mayor would be presenting a birthday card and flowers to the lady on the day in recognition of this special day.

6) PUBLICATIONS

BGCBC Roadworks report week ending 11.07.2025 and 18.07.2025; OVW Re: Book Now! Workshop on Decarbonising the Built Estate. Ystadau Cymru offering three online workshops starting 23.07.2025 – ***distributed to Members***: Received.

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

112) Planning:

- a) i) List of planning applications received in week 27
ii) List of planning applications received in week 28
- b) To consider Planning Applications submitted for Council's observations – None received.

App. No.	Applicant	Proposal
C/2025/0196 No objections	Simon Farr Associates 35 Ael y Bryn Street Fochriw	Proposed driveway to front of existing property for two vehicles, 16 Rhoslan.
C/2025/0210 No objections	C/o Boyer Planning Third Floor Park House Greyfriars Road Cardiff	Application for Discharge of conditions: 14 & 15 (Dust Mitigation Scheme), 21 (Blast Monitoring Scheme), 28 (Water Management & Poll Prevent Plan) and 49 (Communication & Engagement Scheme) of planning permission P/2022/0171 (extension to Trefil Quarry for mineral working comprising limestone extraction & future restoration), Gryphon Quarry Products, Trefil Quarry.
C/2025/0214 No objections	Mr. N. Rimes 3 Meadow Crescent Tredegar	Detached garage, 3 Meadow Crescent.

- c) To consider other planning matters – BGCBC Re: Gryphonn Quarries Ltd., Trefil Quarry. Decision notice for C/2022/0171, not sure whether C/2022/0280 has been decided yet. Query has been passed to Senior Officers.

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

- Ysgol Gymraeg Tredegar – the Leader said that, unfortunately, the School would not be ready for September and would have to find accommodation for another classroom in Bedwellty House. A suggestion had therefore been made to allow Ysgol Gymraeg

staff to use a desk in the Council office next term. The Member said this request had been relayed to the Clerk for a desk to be used in the Town Council office and he had only been made aware by a BG Councillor, who stated it was a “done deal”.

The Leader believed this was a matter that should have been presented to Council formally for consideration. Personally, in his opinion, this should not be allowed, as sensitive information was stored in the Cwtch and taking into account GDPR, also staff working certain hours.

The Clerk explained both the RFO and herself had been approached on the proposal to gain their thoughts and confirmed that Council staff had no problem with the School staff sharing the office in the short-term. Both members of staff had apologised if the Leader felt ‘out of the loop’, but this had not been the intention.

Therefore, unless a formal written request was received from Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council, this matter remained unsettled.

It was therefore agreed that the concerns of Council be relayed to the Education Directorate of Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council.

- Storage ‘The Cwtch’ – a Member expressed concern in respect of the condition of the Council Chamber and Mayor's Parlour, with the storage of items in these areas. It was considered such use was disrespectful and Members felt that items - such as the BBQ, chairs, paintings, etc. - should not be stored in the Council Chamber or Mayor's Parlour, even for interim storage arrangements. Therefore, Council would ask that this practice cease - particularly as the Mayor's Parlour was likely to be used on a more regular basis with the placement of Ysgol Gymraeg staff in the Town Council office.
- Public Toilets – the use of the Disabled Toilets for ‘Ladies’ for repairs had now been resolved and the Member had put a new lock on the Disabled Toilet; unfortunately, the chain had been cut, and the chain and radar key stolen. The Member had again placed a new chain and padlock, and a new radar key to use the Disabled Toilet.

He proposed that another camera be placed at the entrance to monitor and survey the Disabled Toilet, because this area not visible; this would link up to the other two cameras, as wiring was available on the existing system for another camera, to monitor congregation in that area.

It was therefore agreed that a quote for third camera be sought.

- Bandstand, Bedwellty Park – the tree had been set on fire during a performance in the Bandstand and the Chair emphasised how important stewarding was throughout the duration of the Concerts. Only two Members had remained, and said that anyone looking to volunteer should contact the Clerk.

The Chair added it had some twenty-five years since the Bandstand had been painted and suggested it was time to review; a lots of issues had been drawn to the attention of Aneurin Leisure, e.g. football, clothes, etc. in the rafters and two panels replaced with zinc metal, which were not matching the remainder. This could be considered under forward planning for next year or the year after.

This being the last Council meeting prior to the August recess, the Mayor wished Members a happy, healthy, peaceful break.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 7.39 p.m.

_____ Chair