

TREDEGAR TOWN COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Civic Meeting of Council held via Microsoft Teams / hybrid on
Wednesday, 5th March, 2025 at 6.30 p.m.**

Present: **Councillors M. Turner (Chair)**
 E. Griffin
 A.E. Tippings
 G. Badham
 A. Jones
 E. Jones
 G. Jones-Griffiths
 G. Meredith
 D. Rowberry
 H. Trollope
 S. Trollope
 K. Waldron
 G. Walters

In attendance: **Clerk – Ms. C. Aherne**

317) Apologies. **Councillors K. Phillips, A.E. Evans, S. Mavar and J. Thomas**

318) Declarations of Interest

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

319) To receive Mayor's report, as appropriate

None received: apologies extended by the Mayor for absence.

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

It was agreed the following recommendations of the Policy Sub-Committee held prior to Council be approved accordingly.

- The review of all policies placed before the Policy Sub-Committee, as reported by Officers, be unanimously recommended for approval subject to the foregoing amendments:

Risk Management Policy

No amendments.

Standing Orders

Amendment to Page 2 – Item 1.a)

Meetings

Attention was drawn to poor attendance at the December meetings, due to Members' commitments at this extremely busy time of year. Therefore, in order to enable Members to attend, it was agreed that the cycle be amended to reflect that one meeting would be held on the second Wednesday in December, rather than the first and third Wednesday of the month, incorporating a joint agenda of items generally considered at both the Civic and Ordinary meeting of Council.

Internal Financial Controls

Amendments

Page 1 Bank Account Monitoring and Control:-

The current Bank mandate in place states that the named signatories for Council are the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Leader, Deputy Leader, Chair of Finance **and Staffing**, ...

- **Bank Mandate**

- Council approve signatories as 5 Members of Council – Leader, Deputy Leader, Mayor, Deputy Mayor & Chair of Finance **and Staffing**. (Annual rotation due to change of Mayor, Deputy Mayor & Chair of Finance **and Staffing**)

Page 3

- Online services access: Where possible only once a month to transfer funds and print statements; completed by R.F.O. in the presence of two witnesses - approved signatory Members, Chair of Finance **and Staffing** Sub-Committee, Clerk - with those present signing the dated documentation to confirm transaction.
- **Emergency Variation** – to resolve cheque related queries: completed by R.F.O. in the presence of one witness (either an approved signatory Member, Chair of Finance **and Staffing** Sub-Committee, or the Clerk
- **Timesheets**
 - ~~No monthly timesheets are completed by the Officers~~
 - Staff basic contract hours are Clerk 22 hours per week office based, 6 hours per month for meetings; R.F.O. 22 hours per week office based, 2 hours per month for meetings; **Gardener 137 hours per annum**; All wages are salaried.

Page 6 “Payment processing”:-

When/if possible, the following day the R.F.O. will post the cheques to the relevant recipients with their statements (if available) or our order/account details with the cheque.

Financial Regulations

Page 1

These Financial Regulations were adopted by the Council at its Meeting held on **20th March, 2024** and revised at the meeting held **5th March, 2025**.

Page 3

5.6 ... The transfer is to be done by the RFO, witnessed by any two of the following:-

- Leader
- Deputy Leader
- Mayor
- Deputy Mayor
- Chair of Finance **and Staffing**
- Town Clerk.

Pension Policy

No amendments.

Allotments – Management and Policy

It was agreed that the Allotment policy be updated to reflect the observations of Members and reported back to a meeting of the Policy Sub-Committee for subsequent approval.

321) 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) – None received.

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)

Councillors D. Rowberry and A.E. Tippings declared an interest in the following applications and took no part in discussion or voting thereon.

Horeb Chapel - Any financial assistance received would be used for updating the heating.
2021/22 March'2022 CQ No. 284 £300.00 - Approved accordingly.

Sardis Chapel - Any financial assistance received would be used for additional heating.
2021/22 March'2022 CQ No. 285 £300. 00 - Approved accordingly.

322) Correspondence

- 1) BGCBC
 - a) K. Williams Re: Invitation to Meeting with Iain Nicholson on Town Centre Improvements 18th March, 2025.
 - Noted; Leader and Deputy Leader to attend.
 - b) L. Sage Re: Running costs, Tredegar Recreation Ground.
 - Noted. The Leader had requested costings, which had been received, and a report was being written by the Local Authority that the Leader had asked to be sent to Town Council. There would be three options outlined that would require in-depth discussion and a meeting of Full Council would be convened for due consideration of implications thereon.
- Members supported awaiting the report; a Member said that it should be noted that the ground was not currently being used to full capacity, as ex-users wanted to return and could have associated funding – for example,

the Tredegar Horse Show, which may not be included in the estimates.

- c) A. Russell Re: Planning Decision Notice P/2024/0210 Consent to carry out tree works.
 - Noted. It was agreed that tenders be sought in respect of remedial works; a Member said that an invite could be extended to Sirhowy Woodlands, who were qualified to undertake such work.
- d) S. Cargill Re: Funding available for play opportunities. Proposals to be submitted by 03.03.2025 – now extended to 07.03.2025.
 - Noted.
- e) Re: Christmas Toy Appeal. Thank you for your support.
 - Noted.

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

- f) List of applications received, week ending 21.02.2025.
 - Noted.

- 2) One Voice Wales
 - a) Membership of One Voice Wales 2025-2026. Renewal £3,155.00.
 - Noted; the Clerk highlighted this cost was based upon per household, rather than an increase in accordance with inflation. It was unanimously agreed the expenditure be approved accordingly.
 - b) Re: Postponing the Annual General Meeting. A decision has been made that the remote AGM, which was due to be held on 11th March, 2025, will be postponed. Unfortunately, we do not have enough Councillors booked on to make the meeting quorate – at the time of writing, we have approximately a third of the Members needed. Please accept our apologies for any inconvenience this may cause.
 - Noted. It was noted that OVW may be pricing out attendees in respect of continually levying additional charges in respect of training, conferences, etc.

3) Blachere

Christmas Lights 2025 options.

Illuminations

- Costings had been received, upon request, outlining a number of options in respect of provision of the lighting display, i.e. one-year extension, / braids on Poles – no Shopping Centre / Shopping Centre only / additional 4ft flag pole tree.

It was agreed that the information be emailed to all Members for perusal in order to make a decision in going forward.

In respect of a question raised regarding confidentiality, it was recognised that the information related to quotation costs only, which should not be shared in the public domain, as this could jeopardise a fair tender process. Members felt that public consultation could be undertaken to ascertain the wishes of the public, e.g. a query placed on the Council's Facebook page: it was considered this would not prove productive resulting in a platform for negative feedback only. Council recognised however, this could be carried out in the future.

4) Teenage Cancer Trust

Re: Partner with Teenage Cancer Trust to Support Young People facing cancer in Wales. Asking Council to consider support by promoting their service, fundraising / donations or collaboration on local events and initiatives.

- Noted; a donation of £50.00 was unanimously approved.

5) SSAFA

SSAFA Wales Community Council Annual Appeal 2025. Request for a donation.

- Noted. Due to financial constraints in the current climate, it was considered the Town Council could not support the request, as monies should be utilised in the community of Tredegar.

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

6) Smart Money Cymru Community Bank

A. Taylor Re: Community Investment Bond. Sponsor deposit £85k in capital and receive a modest return.

- Noted; it had been agreed that an invitation be extended to meet.

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

7) L. Lou Complaint regarding a local business.

- Noted. It would be inappropriate for Council to consider unfounded information. It was agreed, therefore, to forward the complaint to the Police and the Education Directorate of the Local Authority.

6) PUBLICATIONS

BGCBC Roadworks report, week ending 07.03.2025; BGCBC Re: Announcing the launch of the Ministry of Defence's Families Hub – ***distributed to Members***: Received.

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

323) Planning:

- a) i) List of planning applications received in week 8
- ii) List of planning applications received in week 9

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

App. No.	Applicant	Proposal
C/2024/0316	Mr. D. Hillman Crown Auto Centre Merthyr Road	Retention of rear extension, Crown Auto Centre, Merthyr Road.
<i>No objections</i>	Tredegar	
C/2025/0057	Mr. M. Sullivan 21 Heol Waen Ebbw Vale	Construction of 2 pairs of semi-detached houses and one two storey detached house at land adjacent to Fairfield. Tredegar.
<i>No objections</i>		
C/2025/0036	Mr. G. Musgrove Ron Skinners & Sons The Car Showroom Tafarnaubach Ind.	Demolition of the existing building, importation of inert material and associated works, Unit 6 Tafarnaubach Ind. Estate, Tredegar.
<i>No objections</i>	Estate.	
C/2025/0049	Mr. G. Thayananthan 12 Nibloa Terrace Penydarren	For the partial change of use of 2 King Street to shop and single storey extension to 2 & 4 King Street.
<i>No objections</i>	Merthyr Tydfil	
C/2025/0059	Mr. J. Hunt 13 Hollycroft Beaufort Road	Construction of new detached dwelling with associated parking and garden, widening of existing lane,

No objections Tredegar 13 Hollycroft, Beaufort Road, Tredegar.

C/2024/0294 Mr. & Mrs. C. Jones
Springfield Cottage
Queen Victoria Street
Tredegar Retention existing new detached dwelling and provision new access road improvement works, including landscaping, ecological enhancement and services, Springfield Cottage, Queen Victoria Street.

No objections

c) To consider other planning matters – Tree works: Members referred to the tree works undertaken in The Circle, expressing concern that two trees had been cut back too severely. A Member complained that the trees had been mutilated and their appearance was disgraceful. Members were concerned in respect of the same fate befalling other trees that may only require a light trimming back, as there now only remained a 3m stump. Council therefore sought an explanation in respect of the action taken to the two trees located around The Circle.

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

- Council commended the lovely art exhibition displayed in celebration of St. David's Day.

325) 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 – No meeting.

c) One Voice Wales Larger Councils and AGM – Meeting postponed.

d) Tredegar Twinning – The Association had met and discussed changing the name of Tredegar Twinning to a more generic name to attract more people from outside of the town; however, in expressing the link between the two cities, the outcome was that the decision was to remain as Tredegar Twinning Association.

e) Pen Bryn Oer Community Fund – Application closure date was 11th March, 2025, with the next round in April.

f) School Governing Bodies – Tredegar Comprehensive: a matter had been brought to the attention of Governors of inappropriate use of social media by pupils outside of the school environment. The Chair of Governors had drafted a letter with appropriate wording of what the consequences would be, which had been fully supported by parents – and the Governing Body commended, e.g. one pupil had been refused permission to attend a School trip. The Member said it was good that parents were on board to address such concerns and were supportive.

g) Blaenau Gwent Heritage Forum – Items for sale featured the new logo, e.g. mugs. The Forum was growing in strength with continued interest in the talks with excess of fifty attendees: there was no update in respect of the literature regarding Churches / Chapels.

h) Tredegar Business Forum – The Town Centre Manager had spoken with the Forum in respect of returning events that September – such as Dinomania; a shop owner had been due to speak in respect of the return of the Classic Car / Motorcycle Show but had

failed to attend; two new members had expressed ideas as to how the Forum could utilise vacant shops, such as allowing for the display of items for sale; new planters had been acquired for the baskets and the heathers / daffodils were looking very nice in the barrier baskets, and was looking to buy extra baskets for the summer; the walkway had been planted and the mural fixed. It was hoped that the local Primary Schools would adopt planters in the town centre to maintain.

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

- Pride 2025 – an event would be held on Saturday, 24th May, 2025. The Working Party had managed to recruit two local celebrities – Nathan Wyburn and Stephanie Webber – to support the event in Bedwellty Park. This would feature the raising of a flag, speeches in the Bandstand and lectures, music until early evening including a Samba Band and Tredegar Orpheus Male Voice Choir.

Members were invited to participate by stewarding at the event: please email Alyson Tippings accordingly. It was agreed that Councillor Gerraint Jones-Griffiths be nominated as TTC representative on the Working Group.

- Project Update – T2520, Councillor Alyson Tippings to obtain quotes for plaque, only wording and emblem to be confirmed; Promotional TV – unfortunately, the TV offered by the Mayor had proven unsuitable.
- Public Conveniences – ceilings in both toilets in need of painting, both needing refurbishing, men's urinal – wood rotting at bottom, waterproofing could be improved.

In respect of any complaints received; specific reason was needed as to the nature of the complaint, i.e. toilets unflushed, flooding, etc., as Members vouched for the cleanliness and any concerns could be dependent on the time of visit, as this could be between the Cleaning Operative's cleaning schedule.

Issues highlighted, i.e that the metal catch in one of the Women's toilets was broken, which the Clerk would relay to the Operative accordingly, and the galvanised covers were rusting, which could be replaced with stainless steel.

- Lindsay Bryan Memorial Sports Award – two nominations were received in respect of the recipient for the Award. The Members spoke on the nominees' achievements and the reason for their nomination whereupon a vote being undertaken, it was agreed that the successful candidate be awarded the Award in 2025 and the runner up be pre-approved to receive the Award in 2026.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 7.45 p.m.

Chair