Nantyglo & Blaina Town Council

ANNUAL REPORT 2025/26



Town Council Leader: Glyn Morvan

Town Clerk: Tracy Hughes

Contents

Town Mayors Report……Page 3

About Nantyglo and Blaina Town Council……Page 4

Meetings……Page 4

Staff……Page 4

Nantyglo and Blaina Town Council Membership……Page 4

Committee Membership……Page 5

Training Plan 2025/26……Page 6

Introduction……Page 6

Training……Page 6

Training Aims……Page 6

Staff training……Page 6

Council……Page 7

Councillors Training……Page 7

Finance – Income & Expenditure for 2025/26……Page 8

Income……Page 8

Expenditure……Page 8

Financial Donations……Page 9

Assets……Page 9

Events……Page 10

Town Mayors Report

It is hard to believe that 12 months has passed since I took over as Mayor from Michael. I remember it as if it was yesterday with Michael saying to me 'I've done my bit, it's over to you now. Well shortly I'll be saying the same thing to the new Mayor.



Also just to show how quickly time does fly we are today celebrating Kevins first anniversary as a member of the Council. The annual meeting last year with the first meeting he attended. So, from us all 'Happy Anniversary Kevin' from us all.

My time as Mayor started with two big events. The first was celebrating the Armed Forces Day held in Bedwellty Park and the second was Aneurin Bevan day shortly afterwards which recognised the immense contribution he had on all our lives.

One of the most enjoyable days I had early into my term as Mayor was the visit I made to the Dementia Café which is held in the Cwtch here in Blaina. The welcome I received was fantastic and I was made to feel at home immediately. The café is open to residents of Nantyglo and Blaina as well as the surrounding area and allows for those suffering from this terrible condition and their carers to come together in a safe and carefree environment to enjoy life once more.

On the 1st of August the beach came to Blaina. The grounds of St Peters Church were transformed overnight with tons of sand and deckchairs to provide a beach day experience to both the young and not so young residents of our communities. There was music, games, ice-cream and even a bit of sun. The only thing I found strange was when the dinosaurs came out to play something I have not experienced in Barry. Needless to say, no one was eaten, and a great time was had by all.

On the 5th of August a Charity concert was held at St Peters where Abertillery Male and Female choirs performed to raise funds for my Mayoral charity, The Community Hope Project. A great evening of song was had, and the choirs enjoyed themselves as they won most of the raffle prizes.

On the 12th of September I attended the unveiling of a statue at Ebbw Vale Leisure Centre to a local athlete by the name of Steve Jones. Steve was being honoured in this way because of him holding the record for the fastest time recorded for winning the New York marathon some years ago. Steve now lives in Australia but returned home to accept this honour.

The following day was a big day for rugby in Blaina. Blaina Rugby Club was celebrating their 150th anniversary, by playing a local derby with their close rivals Nantyglo. The Central Park was packed with people as you would expect. Just before the match started a group of cyclists who had cycled from Blaina to Gloucester Rugby Club on a charity ride to raise funds for the Hospice of the Valleys arrived with the match ball donated by Gloucester. A hard-fought match ensued with Blaina finally taking the glory of winning the match.

On the 14th of September I was privileged to meet Darren Foote who was returning the Blaenau Gwent after undertaking a 400 mile walk from Memetz Woods, France to Ebbw Vale. Darren had been laying poppy wreaths at War Memorials enroute and on his return home placed a wreath at Brynmawr and then finally at

Ebbw Vale. The purpose of the walk was to raise funds for Blesma the charity for limbless ex-service personnel.

1st of October saw the Party in the Park event held at Central Park Blaina where residents were able to come together for a day of entertainment.

On the 23rd of October a local rugby hero David Watkins was honoured when a commemorative brick was unveiled at the Sports Club, Central Park, Blaina, in his name. Family and friends came to honour his memory and his outstanding contribution to rugby during a glittering career.

The 9th of November saw the annual Remembrance Parade take place. The parade started at Nantyglo with light rain but as the service progressed at the Central Park the heavens opened, and torrential rain began to fall. In true tradition organisation laid their poppy wreaths to the fallen to honour their ultimate sacrifice.

Christmas started a little early in Blaina as Santa's Grotto arrived at St Peters Church on the 29th of November. That however did not stop the enthusiasm of the local children who braved the cold weather to meet the man himself. The Christmas cheer continued with the Schools Carol Concert at Ystruth School, and the Santa's Sleigh run through Nantyglo and Blaina where again children lined the streets to once again catch sight of Santa himself.

At the start of the New Year the weather again played its part in causing disruption to events for a long period of time.

However, on the 14th of March St Peters came to the rescue again in hosting an Animal Interaction Day where the young and also the not so young had the opportunity to interact with animals both domestic and otherwise.

The animals on show at the event included a snake, spiders, lizards, meerkats, owl's as well as the good old favourites like rabbits and hamsters. Again, a good time was had by all.

On the 21st of March I was again able to take part in New Year celebrations when Raffie invited me to attend the Bahia New Year which was being held in the Cwtch in Blaina.

The room was packed with excited party goers and the afternoon was filled with singing, dancing, crafting, networking and of course a very substantial buffet. All in all, it was a very interesting experience.

Unfortunately, at the beginning of the year the sad news came that my Mayoral charity the Community Hope Project was closing as several of the trustees were unable to continue in post. The charity had been working within our communities since Covid and during this time had helped both individuals and organisations in need of help and support.



Fortunately, prior to its closure I was able to donate £1.000. from my appeal which helped them to continue their good work right to the end. As an organisation it will be solely missed in our communities.

Lastly, I would like to thank you all for allowing me to be the Mayor of Nantyglo and Blaina during the past 12 months. It has been an honour and a privilege and I would like to pass on my best wishes to our new Mayor and hope that he too enjoys his year as much as I have.

About Nantyglo and Blaina Town Council

Nestling in the upper reaches of the Ebbw Fach Valley lies the communities of Nantyglo and Blaina.

The Local Government Act 1972, brought about a nationwide reorganisation of local government. The implementation of the Act during 1974 brought the five former Urban District Councils of Abertillery, Brynmawr, Ebbw Vale, Nantyglo & Blaina and Tredegar together to create Blaenau Gwent Borough Council.

Nantyglo and Blaina Community Council was established to continue some of the functions of the previous UDC and to provide local representation on various statutory and voluntary organisations. The first meeting of the community council, which was held on the 27th of February 1974, resolved to adopt town status for Nantyglo and Blaina and thus the community became a town council.

Council membership is of 16 unpaid, elected members, 8 for Nantyglo and 8 for Blaina. The council currently has 1 vacancy in the Nantyglo Ward.

Meetings

Nantyglo And Blaina Town Council meets on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month. The Planning & Highways and Finance & General Purpose committee meeting is held on the second Tuesday, with the Full council and Events committee meeting held on the fourth Tuesday.

An Annual Meeting occurs every May.

Staff

Nantyglo and Blaina Town Council employs two staff members; Mrs Victoria Williams as Town Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) (From May 2026), and Mr Kevin Rowlands as Assistant Town Clerk. Tracy Hughes resigned from the position of Town Clerk/ RFO in May 2026.

Nantyglo and Blaina Town Council Membership

Name	Party	Ward
Cllr Ken Jones: Town Mayor, Chair of Full Council Committee	Independent: Elected	Nantyglo
Cllr Glyn Morvan: Deputy Town Mayor & Leader of Council,	Independent: Elected	Nantyglo
Cllr Michael Williams: Vice Chair of Events Committee.	Independent: Elected	Blaina
Cllr Susan Howlett	Independent: Co-opted	Nantyglo
Cllr Lillian Harris	Independent: Elected	Blaina
Cllr Des Hillman: Chair of Finance & General Purposes Committee	Independent: Elected	Nantyglo
Cllr Carole Hillman	Independent: Elected	Blaina
Cllr Andrew Fryer	Independent: Co-opted	Blaina
Cllr David John Wright (April 2025)	Plaid Cymru: Co-opted	Nantyglo
Cllr Lynn Higgins; Chair of Events Committee	Independent: Co-opted	Blaina
Cllr Lesley Emanual	Independent: Co-opted	Blaina
Cllr Elaine Singleton	Labour Party: Co-opted	Nantyglo
Cllr. David Finch	Independent: Co-opted	Nantyglo

Cllr Mark Evans	Independent: Co-opted	Blaina
Cllr Wendy Howls	Independent: Co-opted	Blaina

Committee Membership

Name	Position	Committee
Cllr Ken Jones	All Members of Council Chair	Full Council
Cllr Ken Jones Cllr Carole Hillman	All Members of Council Chair Observers	Planning & Highways Committee
Cllr Lynne Higgins Cllr Michael Williams	All Members of Council Chair Vice Chair	Events Committee
Cllr Des Hillman	All Members of Council Chair	Finance & General Purposes Committee
Cllr Ken Jones Cllr Glyn Morvan Cllr Des Hillman Cllr Michael Williams Cllr Andrew Fryer Cllr Susan Howlett	Town Mayor Leader of Council & DM Deputy Mayor Representative Representative Representative	Personnel Committee
Cllr Ken Jones Cllr Carole Hillman Cllr Des Hillman Cllr Andrew Fryer Cllr David Finch	Town Mayor Deputy Mayor Representative Representative Representative	Joint Committee of Local Councils
Cllr Ken Jones Cllr Des Hillman Cllr Carole Hillman Cllr Andrew Fryer	Town Mayor Representative Representative Representative	Blaenau Gwent CBC Liaison Meeting with Town Councils – three of the five representatives, including the Town Mayor
Cllr Ken Jones	Representative	Blaenau Gwent CAB
Cllr Michael Williams	Representative	Blaina Ward Action Group
Cllr Mark Evans	Representative	Blaina Gwent Heritage Forum
Cllr Michael Williams	Representative	School Governors – Ystruth Primary
Cllr Lynne Higgins	Representative	School Governors – Coed Y Garn Primary
Cllr Glyn Morvan	Representative	Blaenau Gwent Armed Forces: Covent Steering Group
Cllr Glyn Morvan Cllr Lynne Higgins	Leader of Council	One Voice Wales
Cllr Glyn Morvan	Leader of Council	One Voice Wales Larger Councils Representative
Cllr Des Hillman Cllr Carole Hillman	Representative Representative	Planning Application Observer BGCBC

Training Plan 2025/26

Introduction:
The Local Government & Elections (Wales) Act 2021 places a duty on Town & Community Councils in Wales to set out a training plan for both councillors and staff to enable them to undertake their respective roles for the betterment of not only the Council and the Community it serves, but also the councillors' personal development.

Training

Training is defined as *'a planned process to develop the abilities of the individual and to satisfy the current and future needs of the organisation'.*

Learning can be categorised into the following:

- Intuitive – learning by what happens by chance, and we may not be conscious of it.
- Incidental – learning by reflection on particular events or activities.
- Retrospective – a system approach to reflecting on activities and identifying what we learned from them.
- Proactive – planning to learn from an activity, reflecting on it and planning to use what has been learned.

It is anticipated that councillor / staff learning will reflect many of the above.

Training Aims

The Council's training aims are the following:

1. To improve the understanding of its councillors, of their role as a local Councillor, the powers available to the Council and how best to utilise the resources available to the Council for the betterment of the residents it serves.
2. To provide the necessary training to its staff to ensure that they can undertake their respective roles.
3. To ensure an acceptable level of succession planning to:
    a) Ensure the Council can operate effectively following local elections and potential changes to the Council membership.
    b) Ensure the Council can continue to operate during times where staff may be unavailable (e.g., holidays, sickness, staff turnover etc.)

Staff Training

All new staff to take Induction Training	As & when required
All staff to undertake staff appraisals to develop their training needs	Annually

All office-based staff encouraged to undertake the following, for which the Council will provide financial support: 1. ILCA – Introduction to Local Council Administration 2. FILCA – Financial Introduction to Local Council Administration 3. CILCA – Certificate in Local Council Administration	On-going
All staff encouraged to read regular publications and updates from internet websites: • SLCC • The Clerk • One Voice Wales	Monthly
All staff encouraged to attend training relevant to the position.	On-going

Both Town Clerks are now signed up to the Society of Local County Clerks (SLCC) and will begin appropriate job training.

Council:

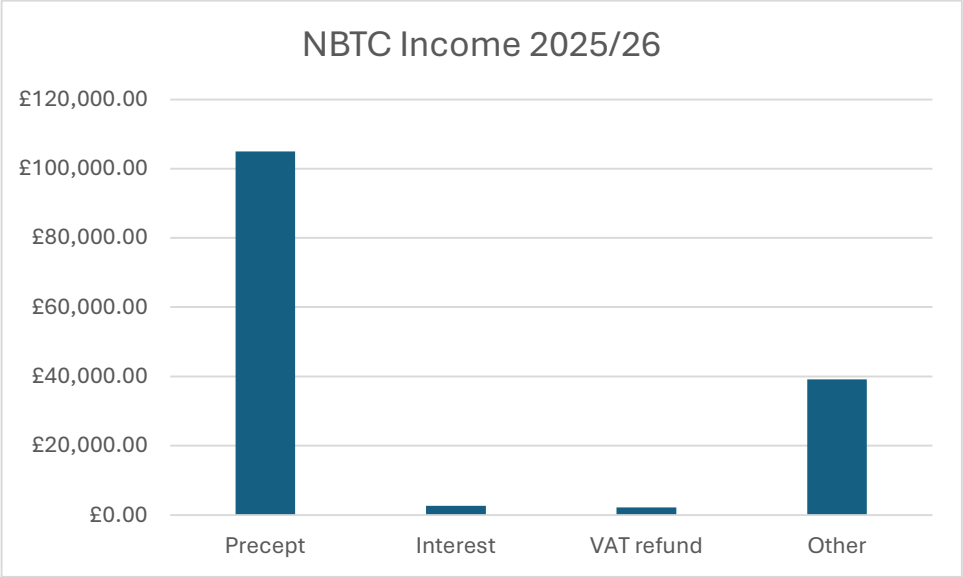
Council to allocate a training budget to cover provision of training activities, attendance at conferences and training publications for councillors and staff	Annually

Councillors Training:

All councillors are provided with New Members Induction Pack following Local Council Elections as soon as practicable after the local elections.	Every 4 years (or following local elections)
All councillors are encouraged to complete a skills audit to identify training needs.	Annually
All councillors shall undertake training in the Code of Conduct within 6 months of acceptance of office.	Election to Office
All councillors are encouraged to attend conferences and training events as appropriate to councillors and Council's needs and responsibilities.	Annually
All councillors are encouraged to read the following publications: • The Good Councillors Guide • Governance & Accountability – A Practitioners Guide	On Election to Office

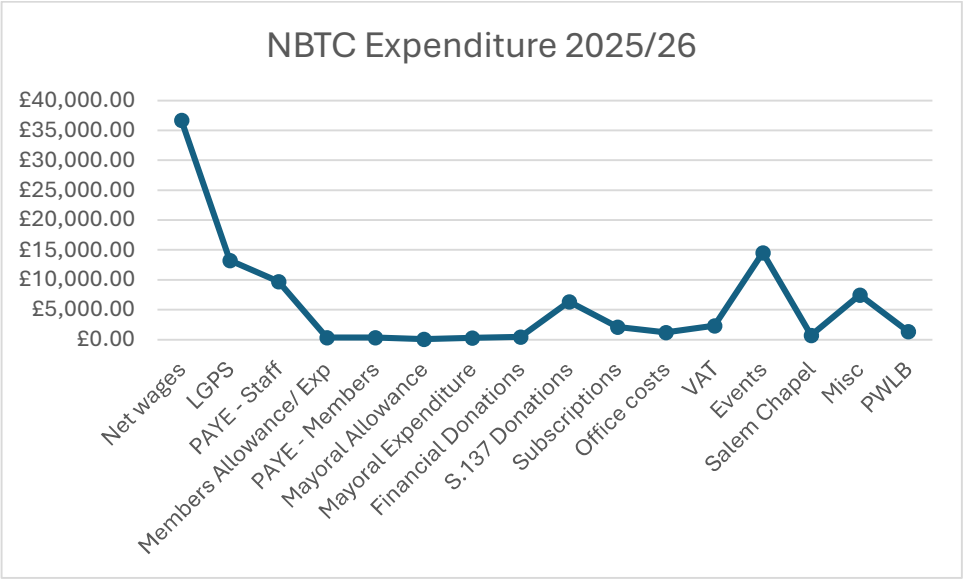
Finance - Income & Expenditure for 2025/26

Income



The main source of funding for Town councils is the funds raised through what is referred to as a precept (a charge) to council tax under section 41 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992. Nantyglo & Blaina Town Council calculates its budget requirement for a financial year in accordance with section 50 of that Act and issue a precept to the billing authority. In 2025/26 the Nantyglo & Blaina Town Council precept was £105,000 A band D property for Council Tax paid £38.35 for the year towards the Town Council. The income for Nantyglo & Blaina Town Council for 2025/26 was from the precept, interest, VAT refund, donations and the sale of Salem chapel and contents.

Expenditure



Financial Donations

Month	Donation/ Grant to	Amount
April 2025	Blaenau Gwent Food Bank Royal British Legion, Blaina Branch	£200 £3,425
May 2025	Blaenau Gwent Food Bank Lys Y Capel	£200 £100
June 2025	Blaenau Gwent Food Bank	£200
July 2025	*No Donations/ Grants This Month*	
August 2025	Blaenau Gwent Food Bank Royal Voluntary Memory Café (dementia Café)	£200 £100
September 2025	Blaenau Gwent Food Bank	£400
October 2025	Blaenau Gwent Food Bank Brynmawr Rotary	£200 £500
November 2025	Blaenau Gwent Food Bank	£200
December 2025	Blaenau Gwent Food Bank Tiny Sprouts Play Group	£200 £75
January 2026	Blaenau Gwent Food Bank	£200
February 2026	Blaenau Gwent Food Bank	£200
March 2026	Blaenau Gwent Food Bank Riverside Tenants Association	£200 £100

Assets

Historic Films (Chartist & Blaina WWII)	Civic Chains (Mayor and Consort)	Furniture and Office Equipment (Clerks Office)
Millenium Wall	Christmas Lighting	Owl Pro Meeting System
Public Seating	Festive Banners	Wall Map of Nantyglo
Artifacts in Council Chamber	WWI & WWII – Pen & Ink Drawings	Memorial to CSM J.H. Williams VC
Silverware	Memorial Benches (x2)	Christmas Train Set
Educational Films (scotch Cattle), Wall mounted TV & control box	Educational Films (Blaina Riots), Wall mounted TV & control box	Planters (Placed within Community)

Salem Chapel and all contents were sold in 2025, with the sale becoming final in January 2026.

Events

Nantyglo and Blaina Town Council facilitated or participated in the following local events for 2025-2026.

Easter Eggs were provided to children in each of the four local schools, Ystruth Primary School, Coed Y Garn Primary School, Blaen Y Cwm Primary School and Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Helyg.

The 80th Anniversary of VE Day was held at the War Memorial In Central Park, where N&BTC supported Royal British Legion Blaina Branch.

Annual Meeting was held in May, where the Town Mayorship was handed from Town Councillor Glyn Morven to Town Councillor Ken Jones JP.

During the summer, Nantyglo and Blaina Town Council funded three activities for local residents

- Free Cinema Screenings at Market Hall Cinema
- Free swimming sessions at Abertillery Leisure Centre
- Free Playscheme sessions held in Central Park, Cwmcelyn.

In Bloom 2025 was held, with several participants and an awards ceremony taking place in October.

A 'Brick Memorial Unveiling' event was held at Blaina Community Sports Club, where Blaina born rugby legend David Watkins was celebrated. A 'Brick' had been purchased by N&BTC and hung in Blaina Community Sports Club where the unveiling happed with members of Mr Watkin's family attended. During the event, local cyclists who took part in a 300 mile charity bike ride raising money for Hospice of the Valleys was also awarded a Mayoral Certificate in recognition of their outstanding charity work.

N&BTC once again supported the Royal British Legion Blaina Branch on Remembrance Sunday.

Schools Joint Christmas Carol Concert was held in December with Blaen Y Cwm Primary School, Coed Y Garn Primary school both attending and Ystruth Primary School hosting. All of the schools put on some wonderful performances, especially of note Coed Y Garn who had several participants drop out due to illness at the last second.

N&BTC continued to provide Christmas Lights throughout Nantyglo and Blaina, however some were stolen from Blaina. After being contacted by various news outlets a kind donation from MLD Electrical to help replace the lights was donated to N&BTC.