

NANTYGLO & BLAINA TOWN COUNCIL

CYNGOR TREF NANT-Y-GLO A BLAENAU

Mrs T Hughes - Town Clerk/RFO
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Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held remotely at 1.25pm on Tuesday 11th January 2022.

A meeting to which members of the public were entitled to attend.

Present: Councillor G Morvan, Chair of the Finance & General Purposes Committee, presiding
Councillors K Jones JP; D Hillman; C Hillman; L Harris and K Jenkins.

In attendance: Mrs T Hughes, Town Clerk / RFO
Mrs N Horner, Assistant Officer

The Chair wished all in attendance a Happy New Year and hoped that everyone had an enjoyable Christmas.

Prior to the start of the meeting the Town Clerk informed that there were no members of the press or public in attendance. **Resolved** to note the information received.

Declaration of Interest

Members were invited to declare matters of interest either at the beginning or at any time during the proceedings. Members were reminded that all declarations must be recorded in the book provided. **Resolved** to note that Councillors D Hillman and C Hillman declared a non-pecuniary interest in item no. 2c.

1. Apologies for absence:

Members were invited to consider the apologies for absence and to formally resolve to accept. **Resolved** to note that apologies were received from Councillors K Rowland; L Emanuel and M Williams. **Further Resolved** to accept the apologies received.

2. Correspondence:

Members were invited to consider the listed correspondence, plus with the Chairman's permission, any urgent information that might be received prior to the date of the meeting.

a) One Voice Wales – (for information)

i E-mail re: Welsh Taxes etc (Power to Modify) Bill.

Resolved to note the information received.

ii Training sessions available for January, February & March 2022.

Members were informed to contact the Town Clerk or Assistant Officer if interested in undertaking any of the training sessions.

Councillor K Jenkins informed that he had recently undertaken the modules re: Chairing Skills and The Council Meeting and that in his opinion, the training costs were unjustified given the cost of membership to One Voice Wales although it was agreed that some knowledge was gained as a result of attending the training.

Resolved to note the information received.

lii E-mail re: Welsh Government draft budget 2022/23.

Resolved to note the information received.

b) Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC):

Members were invited to consider the renewal of subscription for 2022 in respect of the SLCC.

In response to a query the Town Clerk informed that membership of SLCC was beneficial to staff as it provided much comprehensive and practical information and guidance. The Town Clerk confirmed that the subscription cost to SLCC for 2022/23 was £234.00.

Resolved that the subscription be renewed.

Councillors D Hillman and C Hillman declared a non-pecuniary interest in item 2c.

c) Aneurin Bevan Community Health Council – (for information):

Notice re: Planning Meetings of ABCHC to take place on 12th January 2022 via Teams.

Resolved to note the information received.

d) Welsh Government – (for information):

E-mail re: Consultation – The Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021: Community and Town Councils statutory guidance | GOV.WALES

Resolved to note the information received.

e) Blaenau Gwent CBC – (for information):

I Update from Blaenau Gwent CBC & Town Councils (December 2021).

Members considered the information received from Blaenau Gwent CBC and the following comments were made:

- Blaina was to be included as one of the Towns
- Reference was made to the Public Service Board update but no update had been received.
- Nantyglo and Blaina residents were treated as second class citizens by Blaenau Gwent CBC and that there was a need to write to the Leader of Blaenau Gwent CBC in respect of this.
- Blaina was omitted from pages 215 (1.1) and 216 (3.1)
- Nantyglo and Blaina Town Council should be included within the Blaenau Gwent well-being plan although it could be assumed that as Blaina was to be classed as a town, Blaina would now be included within the plan.
- The Terms of reference stated as appendix 1 on page 219 had not been received.

- Blaina had not been included in the strategy for some time despite the initial statement from Blaenau Gwent CBC that Blaina would receive the investment after Abertillery.
- Blaenau Gwent CBC now has a Town Centre Manager appointed who could be invited to a future meeting of the Town Council as a guest speaker.
- The Town Mayor informed that he and the Mayoress had attended the Blaenau Gwent CBC Christmas Sleigh as it was on its visit around the borough, The Mayor informed that the event went very well and that the Tourism Officer at Blaenau Gwent CBC had filmed the Town Mayor and Mayoress with the sleigh (for information).

Resolved to note the information received.

- li E-mail re: Gwent Public Services Board consultation on the Draft Gwent Well-being Assessment.

Councillor D Hillman informed that he had previously requested that a member of the Joint Committee of Local Councils be appointed to the Gwent Public Services Board to represent Town & Community Councils within Blaenau Gwent. To date there had been no response to this request.

Resolved to note the information received.

Additional correspondence received with permission of the Chair:

- g) Urdd Gobaith Cymru (for information):

Letter received via e-mail thanking the Town Council and confirming safe receipt of the £100 donation.

Resolved to note the information received.

3. **S.137 donations (Local Government Act 1972 & Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015:**

As previously resolved, Members were invited to consider making further financial donations to Blaenau Gwent Foodbank to assist residents of Nantyglo and Blaina for the month of January 2022.

The Town Clerk informed that as resolved in the Finance & General Purposes Committee meeting of 14th December 2021, a letter was sent to Blaenau Gwent Foodbanks repeating the request to publicise the donation sent by the Town Council and that the Town Council may need to reconsider future donations if no response was forthcoming. To date, no response had been received from Blaenau Gwent Foodbank.

Members agreed that the lack of publicity and response from Blaenau Gwent Foodbank was concerning, frustrating and disappointing, especially when this had been requested for some time. It was also confirmed that Blaenau Gwent Foodbank had not acknowledged the donations for some time. Members also queried whether or not Blaenau Gwent Foodbank had the appropriate governance procedures in place. The Chair informed that as the donations were not made by Blaenau Gwent Foodbank applying for a grant via the Town Council's Grants Policy but under s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Town

Council could not request Blaenau Gwent Foodbank to submit an application form for the ongoing funding being considered.

A discussion ensued and the following actions were considered:

- To stop the donations to Blaenau Gwent Foodbank with immediate effect
- To continue with the monthly donations up until the end of the winter period (end of March 2022) and then review
- Or to continue with the current resolution of reviewing the decision on a monthly basis and check if any response had been received

Some Members commented that if the donations were stopped by the Town Council then this would affect the community of Nantyglo and Blaina who benefited from Blaenau Gwent Foodbank. It was also commented that Blaenau Gwent Foodbank had not shown any professionalism.

Resolved that a donation of £200.00 be made to Blaenau Gwent Foodbank in respect of January 2022 and **Further Resolved** review any future donations to be made on a monthly basis taking into account if any response or communication had been received by Blaenau Gwent Foodbank.

4. **Application to the Community Grant Fund:**

Members were invited to consider the listed application(s), plus with the Chairman's permission any additional applications that might be received prior to the date of the meeting. Members were also reminded that applications would need to be considered in conjunction with the current policy.

a) *None received to date.*

Resolved accordingly.

5. **Salem Chapel:**

Members were invited to consider the attached inspection report:

- December 2021.
Comments and queries were invited:
The Town Clerk and Assistant Officer informed that whilst the condition of the Chapel was as reported in December's Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting, there had been an issue with the intruder alarm sounding at differing times, often at night. This had been reported and complained about by a neighbour. The Chapel had been inspected regularly on such occasions and there was no evidence of forced entry and the alarm had not shown any faults. It was thought that it might have been the presence of rats that had triggered the alarm. Mr R Dunham had also inspected the Chapel and had laid down poison.

Members considered the safety issue of the Assistant Officer checking the Chapel when the alarm was reported during the evening/night.

Resolved that the report be approved and **Further Resolved** that the alarm company be contacted to check the alarm and if it was possible to desensitise it slightly if the alarm company agreed to avoid things such as rats setting the alarm off.

6. Confidential Information:

The following item(s) may contain information that was of a confidential or personal nature and was therefore exclusive to Members of the Town Council only. (Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960). Motion **Resolved**.

a)

Meeting declared closed at 2.50pm.

