

NANTYGLO & BLAINA TOWN COUNCIL CYNGOR TREF NANT-Y-GLO A BLAENAU

Mrs T Hughes Town Clerk/RFO

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Minutes of the Meeting of the Full Council held via a hybrid meeting at the Council Chamber, Blaina Institute, High Street, Blaina at 6.10pm on Tuesday 26th July 2022

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

Present: Councillor L Harris, Town Mayor, presiding
Councillors G Morvan, K Jenkins, L King, M Williams (remote), B Lucas,
K Jones JP & D Hillman (remote).

In attendance: Mrs T Hughes, Town Clerk / RFO
Inspector Hannah Lawton, Gwent Police
Huw Rowlands, Co-ordinator, Gwent Police

Prior to the commencement of the meeting the Town Clerk informed of the fire procedure in the event of an emergency. **Resolved** to note the information received.

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

To receive: Inspector H Lawton & H Rowlands, Co-ordinator – Gwent Police.

Members were reminded to note the Standing Orders relating to guest speakers:

1. Members to receive the presentation.
2. Questions to be invited at the end of the presentation.
3. Members were requested to ask only one question each – if time allows AND with permission of the Chair, a second question may be asked.
4. Members were reminded that there was to be no discussion or exchange of points of view between Members and that all dialogue was to be directed through the Chair.

The Town Mayor welcomed and introduced Inspector Hannah Lawton and Huw Rowlands from Gwent Police to the meeting.

Inspector Lawton thanked the Chair for the opportunity to attend the meeting.

Inspector Lawton informed that the We Don't Buy Crime initiative was established in March 2021 and was centred around all crime such as theft and burglary etc which materially benefited the criminal. The initiative highlighted the techniques used by the Police and the initiative has led to an

increase in detection rates and results. It looks into the crime methods used and how such offences were committed. Gwent Police were looking to work with Town and Community Councils to help implement the initiative by helping to identify suitable 'pockets' of areas i.e. areas in which 75% of households would be willing to participate.

An online presentation was shown to Members and the link would be sent to the Town Clerk for distribution.

Inspector Lawton informed that Gwent Police were working with a large sector and were able to identify trends and assets and the information was published to act as a deterrent. A person was currently in custody as a result of the initiative who was also wanted by Police for other offences.

Questions were invited as this juncture:

Q: Was Nantyglo covered by this initiative?

A: No information was available regarding local areas but the initiative did link in with local patrols for intelligence and a collaborative approach.

Q: There had been a number of ongoing issues suffered by the Community Centre next door to Blaina Police Station – had these issues been resolved?

A: As above, there was no information available at that moment regarding local areas.

Q: Regarding the markers used for property – does each marker have its own unique DNA?

A: Yes and this ensured a 100% conviction rate. Each marker marks up to 100 items and the accompanying deterrent signage in the areas means that houses in these areas are much less likely to be targeted by thieves. It also means that any stolen items could be traced and returned to owners.

Q: approximately 20 years ago, marker pens were provided by Gwent Police for local people to mark their belongings. This was a tried and tested method in Blaina.

A: There are also free bike marking events ongoing throughout the area. It was agreed that the idea of marking property was not new but that the current system was much more effective and had been proven as a deterrent by the University of Warwick. Officers also provide advice to victims and preventative measures had been implemented as a result of the intelligence gathered.

Q: What was the cost of the marker pens?

A: £10 for Gwent residents and Gwent Police can provide and erect the deterrent signage for the areas.

Q: A Member thanked Inspector Lawton and Huw Rowlands for an excellent and informative presentation but expressed surprise that the Neighbourhood Watch scheme was no longer in force.

A: Inspector Lawton informed that if the Town Council helped to fund the cost of the markers then the deterrent signage would be erected by the Police and would display the Town Council's logo which would result in positive publicity and evidence that the Town Council had invested in the community. Research from the University of Warwick has shown that such signage had been proven to reduce the risk of a property being burgled again by 74%.

Q: Had Blaenau Gwent Community Borough Council had any involvement with the initiative?

A: Discussions with the Safer Neighbourhood Team and Community Safety Department.

- Q: Whilst the discount price of £9.95 per marker set is appreciated, it would be a very large financial commitment for the Town Council to fund to enable a 75% take-up of households. The Town Council would like to get involved with such a positive scheme for the community if the cost could be lowered. Much of its success would also rely on the information received by and co-operation with local neighbourhood Police teams.
- A: It might be better to target specific and smaller areas rather than the whole area but a minimum of a 75% take-up would be required in each area of a minimum of 100 houses. It could be considered and discussed as an ongoing project.
- Q: What is the lifespan of the markers?
- A: The effects of the markers are guaranteed for 5 years and there is another commercial product for exposed areas (such as roofs) that has been checked and found to be effective 15 years later.

The Town Mayor thanked Inspector Hannah Lawton and Co-ordinator Huw Rowlands for a very informative and interesting presentation and thanked them for attending.

Councillor D Hillman joined the meeting in person at this juncture.

Inspector Hannah Lawton and Huw Rowlands left the meeting at this juncture.

Declaration of Interest

Members were invited to declare matters of interest either at the beginning or at any time during the proceedings. Please note that all declarations of interest must be recorded in the book provided. **Resolved** to note that Councillor G Morvan declared an interest in item 8a.

1. Apologies:

Members were invited to consider the apologies for absence received and to formally resolve to accept. **Resolved** to note that apologies were received from Councillor C Hillman and Mrs N Horner, Assistant Officer. **Further Resolved** to accept the apologies received.

Councillor D Hillman apologised for his late attendance in person. **Resolved** to note the information received.

2. Town Mayor's Communications:

The Town Mayor's communications for July 2022.

The Town Mayor informed that July had been very quiet with no activities taking place but was looking forward to events and activities resuming after the summer recess.

Resolved to note the information received.

3. Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held 28th June 2022 (pages 15 – 20):

Members were invited to consider the above minutes and if appropriate to approve them as an accurate record of proceedings.

a) Matters arising, for information & clarification only:

Page 16 (item 4a) – Councillor D Hillman informed that the minutes should read that it was suggested to compile a site plan for proposed/possible locations for the planters and that Councillor D Hillman did not refuse delivery.

Resolved that the minutes be approved.

5. Minutes of the Events Committee Meeting held 28th June 2022 (pages 21 – 23)

Members were invited to consider the above minutes and if appropriate to approve them as an accurate record of proceedings.

a) Matters arising, for information & clarification only:

Page 22 (item 3) – Councillor Jenkins stated that some plants had been stolen from the planter located at the Nantyglo sign (at the Brynmawr border).

Resolved that the minutes be approved.

5. Minutes of the Planning & Highways Committee Meeting held 12th July 2022 (pages 24 – 25)

Members were invited to consider the above minutes and if appropriate to approve them as an accurate record of proceedings.

a) Matters arising, for information & clarification only:

Resolved that the minutes be approved.

6. Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held 12th July 2022 (pages 26 – 29)

Members were invited to consider the above minutes and if appropriate to approve them as an accurate record of proceedings.

a) Matters arising, for information & clarification only:

Page 28 (item 4) – In response to a query, the Town Clerk informed that this was ongoing but had been delayed due to the Assistant Officer being ill.

Page 29 (item 7a) – In response to a query, the Town Clerk informed that the pitcher purchased was the plastic 'jug' type for use at events held in the Council Chamber.

Resolved that the minutes be approved.

7. 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) Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council:

E-mail response from Planning Officer in respect of representations made.

Resolved to note the information received.

b) One Voice Wales:

- i Welsh Government consultation – 'A Fairer Council Tax'.

Resolved to note the information received.

- ii Welsh Government consultation – Extending the Well-being of Future Generations Act's well-being duty.

Resolved to note the information received.

c) Gwent Regional Partnership Board (for information):

Information re: surplus beds.

Resolved to note the information received.

Additional correspondence received with permission of the Chair:

d) Blaenau Gwent Foodbank (for information):

E-mail acknowledging receipt of recent financial donation received from the Town Council. The e-mail also provided information as to the number of adults, children and families assisted by the financial donations made by the Town Council since the start of April 2022.

Members agreed that it was pleasing to receive such detailed feedback but also saddened that so many people required such help in 2022.

Resolved to note the information received.

*Councillor G Morvan declared a professional interest in item 8a. **Resolved** that Cllr Morvan remain in the meeting for the item but not to take part in any decision.*

8. Planning Applications:

Members were invited to consider any further applications that might be received prior to the meeting:

- a) Planning Application No. C/2022/0188 – Phoenix House, Surgery Road, Blaina, NP13 3AY:

Timber framed outbuilding to be situated in front garden to be used as a consultation / meeting room.

In response to a query, Councillor Morvan informed that the structure was to be permanent and that this was clarified with the planning department.

It was commented that this was a good and informative application.

Resolved that no representations or objections be made.

9. Application to the Community Grant Fund:

Members were invited to consider the listed application(s). Members were also reminded that applications would need to be considered in conjunction with the current policy.

None received to date.

Resolved accordingly.

10. Members Updates:

Members were invited to inform and provide updates of any recent activities and / or concerns:

- Councillor K Jenkins:

Councillor Jenkins informed that as a school governor he had attended Coed y Garn Primary school 'graduation' ceremony which celebrated those pupils moving on to other schools. Pupils wore caps and gowns and were a credit to the school and that the ceremony was a lovely event.

- Councillor D Hillman:

Councillor Hillman informed that Councillor C Hillman had attended a similar 'graduation' ceremony at Blaen y Cwm Primary School to celebrate the pupils.

Resolved to note the information received.

Councillor G Morvan gave his apologies for the Events Committee Meeting and left the meeting at this juncture.

Meeting closed at 7.20pm