

NANTYGLO & BLAINA TOWN COUNCIL

CYNGOR TREF NANT-Y-GLO A BLAENAU

Mrs T Hughes - Town Clerk/RFO
Council Offices, Blaina Institute, High Street, Blaina NP13 3BN
Swyddfa'r Cyngor, Sefydliad Blaenau, Y Stryd Fawr, Blaenau NP13 3BN
Tel: 01495 292817 e-mail: clerk@nantygloandblainatc.co.uk

Minutes of the hybrid Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held at 6.25pm on Tuesday 14th May 2024 at the Council Chamber, Blaina Institute, High Street, Blaina

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

Present : Cllr D Hillman, presiding, Chair of Finance & General Purposes Committee
Councillors K Jones JP, C Hillman (remote), L Harris, J Bond, L King & M Williams (remote)

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

Prior to the start of the meeting, the Town Clerk informed that no members of the press or public were 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 Cllr D Hillman declared a personal interest in item 3b.

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 G Morvan & K Jenkins.
Resolved that the apologies be accepted.

2. Questions from the Public:

To receive any questions from the public regarding matters itemised on the agenda (limited to 10 minutes total).

Resolved to note that no such questions were received.

3. Correspondence:

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

a) One Voice Wales – (for information)

National Awards Conference 2024 report.

Members offered congratulations to Blaenavon Town Council and other local Councils.

Resolved to note the information received.

*Cllr D Hillman declared a personal interest in item 3b and **Resolved** that he remain in the meeting but not take part in the discussion or voting.*

b) Mr Richard Hancocks, The Royal British Legion (Blaina Branch) – (for consideration & information):

Members were invited to consider the request from Richard Hancocks of the Blaina Branch of the Royal British Legion in respect of an event to commemorate the 80th anniversary of the D Day Landings in Normandy.

Members were also informed that an invitation from Mr Richard Hancocks on behalf of the Royal British Legion had been extended to Lord Lieutenant and High sheriff Gwent and to all Members of the Town Council.

Members considered the request and the Town Clerk informed that a contribution towards the refreshments could be made under s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972 which would also be applicable as the Royal British Legion (Blaina Branch) had requested that the Town Council co-hosted the event.

Members agreed that as co-hosts of the event, it would be reasonable to make a donation to fund 50% of the cost of the buffet as stated i.e. a donation of £240.00.

Members also noted the invitation received from the Royal British Legion (Blaina Branch) in respect of the event.

Resolved that a donation of £240.00 be made to the Royal British Legion (Blaina Branch) and **Further Resolved** to note the information received.

Additional correspondence received with permission of the Chair:

c) Abertillery & Llanhilleth Community Council & Blaenau Gwent Headteachers (for consideration):

E-mail request from Abertillery & Llanhilleth Community Council to consider supporting Blaenau Gwent Headteachers in respect of the impact on schools due to reduced budgets.

Councillor M Williams joined the meeting at this juncture.

Members considered the e-mail and letter, and the following points were made:

- This issue was now a national issue.
- The provision of education for school children was a basic and mandatory service provision by principal councils.
- All schools appeared to be facing dire financial difficulties.
- At a meeting at Coed y Garn Primary, Alun Davies (MS) 'skirted' the issue of finance for schools.

- If the Senedd were able to finance extending the Senedd building and additional members of the Senedd then surely adequate finance should be made available for schools.

Resolved to note the information received and **Further Resolved** to support the issue stated via a letter of support.

4. **Town Council Insurance:**

Members were invited to consider the quotations received in respect of the Town Council insurance which requires renewal on 1st June 2024:

- Aviva via broker James Hallam Ltd (current provider & broker) - £5,258.54
- Zurich – unable to provide quotation
- Ansvar – no quotation provided

Members were additionally informed that many insurance companies would not provide insurance or a quotation in respect of an unoccupied listed building, hence it was much more efficient to obtain a quotation and correct level of cover via a broker who could contact a number of specialist insurance companies for a quotation.

Members discussed the information and there were a number of queries in respect of the wording in the renewal standard information submitted by Aviva.

The Town Clerk / RFO informed that dealing with a broker who was qualified to advise on such a specialised and complex area and who undertook an extensive tendering exercise on behalf of the Town Council meant that the Council could be confident that the correct level of cover etc was sought for the Council's individual requirements and in line with audit requirements. Trying to obtain a quotation via an internet search engine was impossible due to factors such as Salem Chapel.

Resolved that the Town Council insurance for 2024/25 be renewed with Avia via James Hallam Ltd as specified in the policy.

5. **Liaison Meeting with Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council:**

Members were informed that a Liaison Meeting with Blaenau Gwent CBC was to take place at **10.00am on Wednesday 29th May 2024 via MS Teams**. No agenda or other information had been received to date. Members were informed that the Council Chamber would NOT be available that day due to the Town Clerk being on annual leave and it being a non-working day for the Assistant Officer.

Members considered the information and requested that a pre-meeting be arranged together with contacting other Town/Community Councils to enquire if they were able to host those members who preferred to attend the pre-meeting and Liaison meeting in person. Members also agreed that the issue of Christmas Lights (inspection of lampposts) and the issue of schools funding (see item 3c) be submitted as agenda items for consideration at the Liaison meeting.

Resolved to note the information received and **Further Resolved** to submit the issues of Christmas Lights (inspections of lampposts) & funding for schools as agenda items. **Also Resolved** to enquire if any of the 3 other Town/Community Councils were able to host members who preferred to attend the Liaison meeting in person.

6. 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 May 2024.

Resolved that a donation of £200.00 be made to Blaenau Gwent Foodbank for May 2024 in respect of Nantyglo & Blaina residents.

7. 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 are also reminded that applications would need to be considered in conjunction with the current policy.

a) Llys y Capel Social Club:

In respect of a query, the Town Clerk / RFO informed that Llys y Capel had not received such a financial donation within the last 12 months.

Members considered the application and stated that it complied with the Council's financial grant policy.

Resolved that a financial donation of £100.00 be made to Llys y Capel Social Club.

8. Salem Chapel:

Members were invited to consider the attached inspection report:

• April 2024:

Questions & queries were invited.

In response to a query, the Town Clerk informed that whilst the physical condition of the Chapel continued to deteriorate but, without any specialist knowledge, there did not appear to be any obvious additional issues.

Resolved that the report be approved.

9. Members Updates:

Members were invited to provide any updates or information.

• Internal Audit – Town Clerk / RFO:

The Town Clerk informed that the report from the Internal Auditor had very recently been received and that it provided the Town Council with a clean bill of financial and governance health, containing only one small recommendation. The report would be included on the agenda at the next appropriate meeting.

Resolved to note the information received.

- 35th Anniversary event at Llys Y Capel, Blaina – Cllr C Hillman:

Cllr C Hillman informed that Councillor K Jenkins, Town Mayor, his Consort, Mrs Lynne Higgins, Councillors C & D Hillman and Councillor L Harris attended the 35th anniversary event at Llys y Capel as invited and informed that it was a very enjoyable event and the perfect event to celebrate Llys y Capel's 35th anniversary.

Resolved to note the information received and **Further Resolved** that a letter from the Town Mayor and Members of the Council be sent to Llys y Capel.

- Rights of Way Meeting – Cllr L Harris:

Cllr Harris informed that following the Rights of Way meeting held by Blaenau Gwent CBC she intended to highlight issues that had arisen with the bridge at Cwmcelyn due to it being on a public right of way, and hopefully to investigate the possibility of funding in order to maintain the bridge.

Resolved to note the information received.

10. **Confidential Information:**

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

Meeting declared closed at 7.05pm