

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

Mrs T Hughes Town Clerk/RFO

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Minutes of the hybrid Meeting of the Full Council held at 6pm on Tuesday 23rd April 2024 at the Council Chamber, Blaina Institute, High Street, Blaina.

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

Present: Councillor K Jenkins, Town Mayor, presiding
Councillors D Hillman, C Hillman, K Jones JP, L Harris, J Bond & M Williams (remote).

In attendance: Mrs T Hughes, Town Clerk / RFO
Mrs N Horner, Assistant Officer
Mr M Brooks, member of public

Prior to the start of the meeting the Chair informed of the fire procedure. **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. Please note that all declarations of interest must be recorded in the book provided. **Resolved** to note that no such declarations were received.

4. 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 Councillors G Morvan. **Further Resolved** that the apologies be accepted.

2. Town Mayor's Communications:

The Town Mayor's communications for April 2024.

The Town Mayor informed that he had been ill for the last few weeks but was now improving. He and his Consort would be in attendance at the event to mark Llys y Capel's 35th anniversary on 29th April 2024. The Town Clerk reminded that all Members were invited to the event.

Resolved to note the information received.

3. Questions from the Public:

To receive any questions from the public regarding matters on the agenda (please note this was limited to 10 minutes).

Resolved to note that no such questions were received

4. **Minutes of the Meeting of the Town Council held 26th March 2024 (pages 134 – 138)**
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 136 (8a) – in response to a query, the Town Clerk informed that a reply and been sent to Mrs Gunter and a further response had been received.
Page 138 (12a) – in response to a query, the Town Clerk informed that an update would be provided at the end of the meeting as per the agenda item.
Resolved that the minutes be approved.
5. **Minutes of the Events Committee Meeting held 26th March 2024 (pages 139 - 141)**
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 140 (4) – should be 'David'.
Resolved that the minutes be approved.
6. **Minutes of the Task & Finish Group Meeting held 27th March 2024 (pages 142 - 144)**
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 142 (3) – in response to a query, it was clarified that the recommended venue for the provision of a cinema showing was Brynmawr Cinema.
Page 144 (6) – in response to a query, it was confirmed that no response had been received and that this would be queried.
Page 144 (7) – should be 'David'.
Resolved that the actions agreed be ratified.
7. **Minutes of the Planning & Highways Committee Meeting held 9th April 2024 (pages 145 - 147)**
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 146 (3b) – in response to a query, the Town Clerk informed that whilst Blaenau Gwent CBC (Highways dept) had been contacted, they were unable to take any monitoring action due to a lack of funds. The Go Safe team (Gwent Police) had been informed & they had responded that their records did not show and collisions on the road in question, but that they would contact Mr Mullen to discuss and consider possible appropriate action.
Resolved that the minutes be approved.

8. Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held 9th April 2024 (pages 148 -151)

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 149 (4) – the Chair of the JCLC informed that an excellent meeting took place and was attended by representatives of all four Town & Community Councils.

Page 150 (8) – Members commented that the planters throughout Nantyglo & Blaina had bloomed well and had greatly enhanced the local area. The Town Mayor congratulated Members on a very good job.

Resolved that the minutes be approved.

9. 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 & Torfaen Local Nature Partnership (for information):

Agenda of meeting and information of other events taking place.

Resolved to note the information received.

Additional correspondence received with permission of the Chair:

b) Aneurin Leisure (for information):

Aneurin Leisure website had stated that 'Blaina Library (based in Blaina Institute) would be reopening on Monday 22nd April 2024 following extensive maintenance work to address health & safety issues with a deep clean planned for next week'. The library would be open on Mondays, Thursdays & Fridays from 9.30am until 1pm & then from 2pm until 4pm. Members were also informed that Blaina ICC informed that the Blaenau Gwent Hub was currently operating from Blaina ICC on Mondays from 9am until 5pm and Citizens Advice Bureau was operating from Blaina ICC on Thursday mornings.

The Town Clerk informed that the information provided had very recently changed again and that the Blaenau Gwent Hub was now situated in Blaina Library, although it was unclear if Citizens Advice was.

Resolved to note the information received.

c) Blaina Community Institute Ltd:

A letter regarding fire safety responsibilities had been received requesting that the Town Council designate a Fire Marshall & Deputy Fire Marshall, who would be responsible for checking the Town Council Offices, Chamber (& upstairs toilets) to ensure that everyone has vacated the building by the designated fire exit.

In response to a query, both the Town Clerk and the Assistant Officer informed that they were happy to be the designated Fire Marshal & Deputy Fire Marshall for the Town Council Offices within Blaina Institute.

Resolved that the Town Clerk & Assistant Officer be the designated Fire Marshall & Deputy Fire Marshall for the Town Council Offices within Blaina Institute.

d) Reverend Roy Watson – British Empire Medal Award Ceremony (for information):

Members were informed that Reverend Roy Watson had invited all Members of the Council to an event where he would be awarded the British Empire Medal by the Lord Lieutenant of Gwent, Brigadier Robert Aitkin CBE. The event was to take place at 2.15pm on Friday 24th May 2024 at Coed y Garn Primary School, Parrot Row, Blaina.

Reverend Roy Watson thanked Members of the Town Council for the nomination which resulted in him being awarded the British Empire Medal, especially Councillor G Morvan who spent many hours compiling the relevant & information.

Resolved to note the information received.

10. Blaina Library:

Members were invited to consider the information received from Blaina Community Institute Ltd in respect of the future of Blaina Library.

Members considered the information, and the following comments were made:

- Blaina Library was a key facility for the residents of both Nantyglo & Blaina and it was vital for it to remain open.
- A public petition had already been set up in support of the library to remain open and could be accessed (in person) at the charity shop, High Street, Blaina amongst other places.
- The library also offered other necessary services to residents of both Nantyglo & Blaens such as photocopying, Blaenau Gwent advice hub as there were no longer any Blaenau Gwent Council offices open for such a service, Citizen Advice, local groups and warm spaces etc.
- The issue stated by Aneurin Leisure was that users of the library could not access the toilet at the Institute for health & safety reasons via the corridor due to the café and the location of the kitchen, although the toilets were easily accessible to users of the library via the main entrances of the building.
- It appeared that Aneurin Leisure Trust seemed to use the issue of access to toilets as a diversery tactic to justify the reason for its closure.
- It had been stated that very low numbers of users of the library had been given as a reason for closure.

Members agreed that it was necessary to oppose the closure of the library and support Blaina Community Institute Ltd in keeping Blaina Library open. Members also agreed to contact the Scrutiny Committee at Blaenau Gwent CBC and demand that Blaenau Gwent CBC support keeping Blaina Library open. Members also agreed that Aneurin Leisure Trust be contacted to request the reasons why they had proposed to close Blaina Library.

Resolved to note the information received. **Additionally Resolved** that the actions detailed above be undertaken and **Further Resolved** to support Blaina Community Institute Ltd in keeping Blaina Library open.

11. Application to the Community Grant Fund:

None received to date.

Resolved accordingly.

Mr M Brooks, member of the public left the meeting at this juncture.

12. Confidential Information:

The following item(s) might 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). **Resolved** that the motion be supported.

Meeting declared closed at 6.55pm