

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

Mrs T Hughes Town Clerk/RFO

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Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on Tuesday 22nd January 2019.

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

Present: Councillor G Morvan, Chairman
Councillors R Pagett; G Watkins; R Abbas; L Harris; K Jenkins; E Morgan; D Hillman; C Hillman; K Treharne

In attendance: Mrs T Hughes, Town Clerk
Miss H Roberts, Assistant Officer

To receive: Mrs S Hopkins and Mr J Waite – Senior Planning Officers, Blaenau Gwent CBC
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 Chairman, a second question may be asked.
4. Members were reminded that there is to be no discussion or exchange of points of view between Members and that all dialogue was to be directed through the Chairman.

At the beginning of the meeting, Councillor Morvan explained the fire procedures and regulations in place should an emergency occur.

Councillor Morvan welcomed guest speakers, Mrs Hopkins and Mr Waite. Members were reminded of Standing Orders relating to guest speakers.

Both Mrs Hopkins and Mr Waite thanked members for inviting them to the meeting. Mr Waite explained the main consideration for planning applications and explained the legislation surrounding this. Mr Waite explained that applications should be in accordance with the development plan unless material considerations say otherwise. He explained what could be considered a material consideration. He further explained that when a planning application has been received, the weight of the material considerations would be at the judgement of the Planning Authority. As long as these considerations have been considered, there should be no involvement of the courts.

Mrs Hopkins explained to members what could be commented upon when the Town Council receive planning applications for consideration, i.e. material considerations. Material considerations that the Town Council should take into account include noise and neighbour considerations.

Property values would not be considered a material consideration. Additionally, Mrs Hopkins emphasised that land ownership disputes were not a material consideration, they would be considered as civil disputes. Members were assured that applications take into account national and local considerations. They were informed that the effect of an application on a property's value was not relevant.

Questions were received at this juncture:

Q. There had been a lot of planning applications for Tanglewood, Blaina recently. What would the health and safety considerations be, and would the effect of the digging and movement put the area at risk of landslide?

A. Land stability is a valid concern. Ground stability would be considered a material concern and due to the history of the area, the Coal Authority would be consulted.

Q. Several applications for Tanglewood have been received, what would be the planning gain?

A. There were no 106 section obligations. Off-site options for affordable housing had been considered for this area, there was a viability issue in Blaenau Gwent due to groundworks. Facilities such as playparks could only be provided in a development if there had been a demonstrated need. In respect of schooling, the Education Department would look at the size of the local school and consider whether there would be a need to expand provision. Again, this would be a judgement call – if a development were to have a large impact on the community, then these issues would be considered.

Q. Neighbour notifications were not always included in applications.

A. The Local Authority were duty bound to consult surrounding houses, if there were to be a potential wider impact, there would be further application consultations. Properties adjoining the boundary would at a minimum be notified. Press and site notices were usually placed around site for the public to view. Members can assume that if there would be no neighbour comments, there would be no issues and proceed with the application.

Neighbourhood consultations and major developments have differing PAC (Pre-Application Consultation) processes. For a major development, consultations would take place within the community, Local Authority, ward members, National Resources Wales, Welsh Water, etc. This would shape the development before it comes into planning, this also informs the development before consultation, e.g. if parking issues were raised and were made known, then the applicant should address these issues.

Q. If neighbours object, would the Town Council be notified?

A. The consultations are simultaneously executed; therefore, the Town Council would not be informed.

Q. Who would be responsible for identifying the location of mine shafts?

A. The applicant would be responsible for identifying the location of the mine shafts. Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council is aware of the shafts in the area. Location investigations are assessed by the Coal Authority and Blaenau Gwent's engineers. That report would carry potential recommendations. Typically, these conditions would be applied to planning permissions to confirm works have been completed as requested.

Q. There are concerns about the drainage in Tanglewood.

A. Drainage is an issue in Tanglewood. If there are drainage proposals, Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council would consult with Welsh Water, so the process is being advised at all times on technical issues by skilled staff.

". "Would LDP "Loca" Development Plan) boundaries be moved to accommodate developments?

A. Within the LDP revision process, boundaries can change. Once the LDP is adopted, there would be no flexibility. The Planning Committee could overturn the Planning Department's recommendations which goes against the provision of the plan. Some applications suit being outside the planning boundary, e.g. stables. The precedent could be used as a material consideration, e.g. if a house had been built outside the boundary.

Councillor Abbas presented the guest speakers with a booklet on behalf of the Town Council, Planning and Faith Communities at this juncture.

Members were informed that they could ask further questions via email and should there be any queries in respect of future applications, that they could also contact Mrs Hopkins and Mr Waite.

The Chairman thanked Mr Waite and Mrs Hopkins for attending the meeting.

Resolved to note the information received.

Mr Waite and Mrs Hopkins 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** that none declared.

1. Apologies:

Resolved that apologies were received from Councillors K Jones, V Seymour, C Bridgeman and B Lucas.

Councillor Morvan informed members that he contacted Councillor Seymour and was informed that he had not been able to attend meetings and was told that he would make every effort to attend the next meeting. **Resolved** to note the information received.

2. Town Mayor's Communications:

The Town Mayor to inform of his activities during December 2018 and January 2019.

Councillor Morvan spoke about the Fun Nights and the Concerts which were held in both wards, Nantyglo and Blaina during the Christmas period. Overall, these were successful, however it was noted that the turnout for the Nantyglo Fun Night was low and it was concluded that this was due to insufficient advertising.

Recently, Councillor Morvan had received a late invite to the grand unveiling of the Jack Williams Gateway Bridge. Unfortunately, Councillor Morvan was unable to attend this event and Councillor K Jones had attended on his and the Town Council's behalf. The event was successful and well attended.

Resolved to note the information received.

3. Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held 27th November 2018 (pages 93- 99)

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 99 – Members were reminded that a resolution was already in place.

Resolved that the minutes be approved.

4. Minutes of the Planning & Highways Committee Meeting held 10th December 2018 (pages 100-102)

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 100 – Note omission of 'Chair, presiding'

Resolved that the minutes be approved.

5. Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held 10th December 2018 (pages 103-107)

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 Planning & Highways Committee Meeting held 14th January 2019 (pages 108 – 111)

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.

7. Minutes of the Finance & General Purposes Committee Meeting held 14th January 2019 (pages 112 – 117)

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 113 - To include 'would do his best to accommodate'

Page 116 – d) Correction 'dates' not 'datse'

Page 117 – New reserves account for Events Committee

Resolved that the minutes be approved.

8. 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) National Library of Wales:

E-mail providing details of 'Living Memory' Workshops.

Resolved to note the information received.

- b) Older People's Commissioner for Wales:

Newsletter

Councillor Abbas informed the Town Clerk that she should expect an email from Mr David Arnold in respect of a meeting which was to be held at Blaina Community Centre on 11th February 2019 10am-1pm in respect of a matter relating to this item.

Resolved to note the information received.

c) Western Power Distribution:

Invitation to annual stakeholder workshops.

Councillors D Hillman and C Hillman would attend this event on behalf of the Town Council.

Resolved to note the information received.

d) Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council:

- i. E-mail response from Ms Bernadette Elias (Head of Governance & Partnerships) in respect of letter concerning Consultation Meetings with Town/Community Councils.

Resolved to note the information received.

Additional correspondence received with the permission of the Chairman:

- ii. E-mail invitation to the official bridge naming at A465 by Costain – Monday 21st January 2019.

Councillor K Jones attended this event on behalf of the Town Council as detailed in the Town Mayor's Communications, Item 2.

Resolved to note the information received.

e) One Voice Wales

E-mail in respect of 'Turning up the volume on action: Alzheimer's Society Cymru 2019'

Members were informed to notify the Town Clerk should they wish to attend.

Resolved to note the information received.

f) Stuart Bees

Response in respect of the recent press release from One Voice Wales: 'Urgent improvements needed to internal audit arrangements at Town and Community Councils in Wales.'

Mr Bees sought the permission of the Council to write a personal response, explaining that he was disappointed that Nantyglo and Blaina Town Council had not been cited as 'good practice' in respect of the above item.

Resolved to permit Mr Bees to write and send a response.

g) One Voice Wales

- i. Information guide to helping water customers struggling to pay

Resolved to note the information received.

- ii. Agenda for the Larger Local Councils Committee to be held on Wednesday 6th February 2019.

Members were informed to notify the Town Clerk should they wish to attend this event.

Resolved to note the information received.

9. 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 may be received prior to the date of the meeting. Members are also reminded that applications will need to be considered in conjunction with the current policy.

- a) None received to date.

Resolved accordingly.

10. Street Lighting and associated issues and problems within Nantyglo and Blaina (Councillor G Watkins):

Members were invited to consider and discuss the above item.

Councillor Watkins thanked members for the opportunity to discuss this item. Residents had raised several issues concerning the lack of street lighting, both on side streets and main streets. Residents had commented there have been difficulties driving and that there were no street lights on the A467 between Brynmawr and Abertillery. Concerns were raised should a car break down on this road with a potential electrical fault that they would not be seen. It was also noted that drivers were finding it difficult to see pedestrians.

Councillor Watkins also commented that poor street lighting does not encourage anyone to leave the house after dark and felt as a result that this was not fulfilling the Future Generations Act. Members were informed that both Councillor Peter Baldwin and Nick Smith, MP were looking into the issue.

Several members commented on the wastage of lights during hours of daylight. They also noted that this was a prevalent issue on social media. The lack of cat's eyes on the road was raised as an additional safety issue. Members queried whether it would be possible to invite an officer from the Highways Department in Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council as a guest speaker.

Resolved that a letter be written with members' concerns and to include an invitation for a guest speaking opportunity for an officer from the Highways Department.

11. Town Council School Governor to Coed y Garn Primary:

Members were informed that the Town Council's current school governor to Coed y Garn Primary, Councillor K Treharne was unable to continue in this role. Members were invited to consider another candidate to fulfil this role.

Councillor Treharne informed members that these meetings were always held on an evening when she would not be available. Councillor Treharne informed members that she was a Governor at Ysgol Bro Helyg so was able to act as a link there.

Councillor Abbas spoke of his links with Coed-y-Garn Primary School and informed members that he would be happy to take this post.

Resolved that Councillor Abbas be appointed as a Governor at Coed-y-Garn Primary School.

12. Achievement & Recognition in the Community Awards (ARC):

Due to time limits, Member were invited to consider the necessary arrangements to facilitate the annual ARC Awards, including:

- Date of Awards

Members were given an option of suitable dates.

Resolved that the ARC Awards 2019 be held on 4th April 2019.

- Categories of awards

Members agreed that the same categories as last year would be suitable.

Resolved that the categories be the same as in 2018.

- Artist, venue & buffet

Members were informed that the buffet would cost approximately £210 (dependent on the number attending) and the artist would cost approximately £100.

Resolved that the ARC Awards be held at Nantyglo RFC.

Resolved that a buffet be ordered.

Resolved that an artist be booked.

- Awards and certificates

Resolved that awards and certificates be purchased and awarded, comparable with 2018 costs.

- Compere

Members discussed this item; several members showed an interest in being compere.

Resolved that Councillor Treharne perform the role of compere and that Councillor D Hillman act as a reserve.

13. Events Committee:

Following the recent Resolution of the Council that the Events Committee become a Standing Committee, Members were asked to consider if appropriate that the Events Committee Meetings take place monthly at 6pm prior to the Planning & Finance Committee Meetings which take place on the second Monday of the month.

Members discussed the suitability of times and showed preference towards holding Events Committee meetings prior to the Full Council meetings.

Resolved that Events Committee meetings be held prior to the Full Council meetings.

14. Planning Applications:

Members were invited to consider the listed application(s), plus with the Chairman's permission, any additional applications that may be received prior to the date of the meeting.

- a) Plan Application No. C/2019/0006 – Plot 34 Beech Tree Crescent, Tanglewood, Blaina
Re-consultation – Revised plans.

Resolved that no representations or objections be made.

- b) Plan Application No. C/2019/0010 – Plots 33, 35, 39, 40 and 41 Beech Tree Crescent, Tanglewood, Blaina
Proposed development.

Resolved that no representations or objections be made.

15. Licensing Applications:

Members were invited to consider the listed application(s), plus with the Chairman's permission, any additional applications that may be received prior to the date of the meeting.

None received to date.

Resolved accordingly.

16. Members' Updates:

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

Councillor Jenkins raised an issue concerning waste collections. Councillor Jenkins read a letter received from Mr Perry, Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council. Councillor Jenkins expressed concerns over collections, understanding that the system had been implemented to encourage families to recycle.

Members discussed this issue, with many seeing both sides of the argument. Members noted that the Local Authority had stringent targets, else a hefty fine would be incurred. Members agreed that it was difficult to target families who did not recycle, and additionally concerns were raised around fly tipping. Members discussed that there was a lack of education surrounding recycling and also demonstrated a preference towards bags rather than trolley boxes.

Members were in support of objecting to the strictness/strength of Mr Perry's letter.

Resolved that a letter be written objecting the strictness/strength of Mr Perry's letter.

Councillor C Hillman informed members of issues concerning hypodermic needles being found on private property which borders Blaenau Gwent's property. Members were informed that the Local Authority would not remove the needles from the private property. Members expressed concerns regarding this issue. **Resolved** that a letter be written in respect of the hypodermic needles and be sent to the Executive Member for the Environment Committee.

Councillor Morvan informed members of Mr D Powell's funeral which would be taking place 1st February 2019 at 12 noon at Gladstone Street Church (Prims). Councillor Morvan also informed members that Reverend Roy Watson would be retiring in 2019. Councillor Morvan wished to recognise Reverend Watson's work and proposed that the Town Council support an application for an honour. Councillor Morvan informed members that he had already made tentative enquiries with the Deputy Lord Lieutenant. It would be preferable to arrange the paperwork before he retired. Members supported this and were reminded that the nominee should not be aware of the nomination. **Resolved** that the Town Council support the nomination of an honour for Reverend Watson.

Resolved to note the information received.

17. 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).

127 (18/19)

128 (18/19)