



Summary (Decisions) of the Full Council meeting of Blaenavon Town Council held on **Wednesday the 23rd of October 2024 at 6:30 pm** on a hybrid basis in the council chamber at **101 High Street Blaenavon** and remotely in accordance with the **Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021**

The full minutes of the meeting are subject to confirmation at the Full Council meeting to be held on **Wednesday the 27th of November 2024**.

In attendance:

Councillors: Cllr. N. Matthews (In the Chair) L. Cowles, M. Wheeler, S. Templeton, S. Keen, I. Parfitt, A. Lewis, A. Beavan, J. Hunt.

Officers: Kevin Warren (Chief Officer), Kerry Jones (Assistant Chief Officer)

Visitors: Andy Parfitt-Jones & Mark Parfitt-Jones – Little Oakes Retreat

Members of public: None present.

The Full Council meeting was opened at 6:30pm by Mayor Cllr Nathan Matthews who welcomed everyone and expressed thanks for attendance.

1. To receive any questions from the public.

None received.

2. To receive and accept apologies.

The Chief Officer informed the chairperson that the following apologies had been received.

- Cllr Jones
- Cllr Evans

It was proposed by Cllr Wheeler and seconded by Cllr Hunt that the apologies be accepted.

All members in agreement.

Resolved - Apologies accepted.

3. Declarations of Interest

- Cllr Hunt – Items 19 & 23 - Personal
- Cllr Parfitt – Item 18 - Personal

7. Council Meetings: To confirm the minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on the 25th of September 2024.

Minutes were read for accuracy with no amendments.

It was proposed by Cllr Templeton and seconded by Cllr Cowles that the minutes be accepted.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Minutes accepted.

11. To receive, discuss and approve the audit opinion and conclusion of audit received from Audit Wales for the financial year 2023/24.

The Chief Officer provided members with an overview of the audit opinion 2023/24 which had been sent to members ahead of the meeting. This was presented on the projector screen.

It was explained that the audit opinion received from Audit Wales was unqualified with no recommendations relating to the Town Council's Financial Management / Governance.

It was proposed by Cllr Matthews and seconded by Cllr Hunt to approve the audit opinion for 2023/24.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Audit opinion 2023/24 noted and approved by members.

13. To receive, discuss and make any relevant determinations relating to the survey responses regarding the TCBC Community Review.

The TCBC Community Review Task & Finish Group met on 17th September 2024, following a pause due to recent general elections. TCBC's Community Review consultation responses were reviewed to develop final recommendations.

TCBC has requested that members and officers meet with the Task & Finish Group to discuss the survey responses and recommendations. The proposed dates being between the 30th October and the 5th November 2024.

Members discussed the outcome of the review and noted that only forty survey responses were received representing less than 1% of the electorate. While the responses generally supported TCBC's proposal to reduce the number of Town Councillors in Blaenavon from twelve to ten and merge the east and west ward.

Members noted a wide range of opinions, some of which were clearly outside the scope of the community review terms of reference.

The low response rate raised concerns about basing electoral reform on such limited input. Additionally, members noted that the consultation was conducted exclusively online, which may have excluded parts of the community.

Cllrs Matthews, Hunt, Templeton, Wheeler, and Cowles expressed interest in attending the proposed meeting to discuss the outcome of the review, with a preferred date of the 5th of November 2024.

This was proposed by Cllr Matthews and seconded by Cllr Wheeler.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Cllrs Matthews, Hunt, Templeton, Wheeler, and Cowles to attend the proposed meeting on 5th November 2024. Chief Officer to inform TCBC.

14. To receive, discuss and make any relevant determinations relating to the recent update from Hafod Group and TCBC regarding the proposed closure of the Arthur Jenkins nursing home.

Councillor Cowles shared with members via the Chief officer an update from Hafod Care and TCBC relating the Arthur Jenkins Care home ahead of the meeting.

Cllr Cowles updated members that Hafod Care has declined to extend its services beyond the 5th of December 2024. As a result, residents will need to be relocated from the care home, and this process has resumed.

Another healthcare provider has shown interest in taking over from Hafod Care but will need to register with the Care Inspectorate Wales, which is a lengthy procedure.

Should this provider register successfully, they may be able to assume Hafod's 99-year lease with TCBC, transferring it from Hafod to the new provider.

Cllr Cowles proposed that Cllr Daniels from TCBC attend the next full council meeting to provide members with a more detailed update, this was seconded by Cllr Matthews.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Cllrs Daniels to be invited to November 2024 Full Council Meeting.

15. To appoint a Councillor representative to the Local Council's Partnership Committee.

The Chief Officer explained to members that Cllrs Jones and Templeton are the appointed representatives on the Local Partnership Committee. However, due to Cllr Jones's absence, another member will need to be appointed.

Cllr Hunt expressed an interest in becoming the representative for the Town Council.

It was proposed by Cllr Matthews and seconded by Cllr Wheeler that Cllr Hunt be the Town Council representative.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Cllrs Hunt to be the appointed representative to the Local Council partnership Committee.

16. To appoint a Councillor as a signatory to Blaenavon Town Council's bank account and online banking authorisations.

The Chief Officer explained that currently with Cllr Jones absent, there is a need for a fourth banking signatory.

Cllr Keen expressed an interest in becoming a signatory.

It was proposed by Cllr Matthews and seconded by Cllr Beavan that Cllr Keen becomes a bank signatory for the Town Council.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Cllr Keen to be a appointed bank signatory for 2024/25.

20. To discuss and make a determination regarding potential Town Council projects for allocation into the Project Action Plan 2024/25. Relevant updates or new projects as notified.

- **Flower Box Project - Cllr Parfitt**

Cllr Parfitt provided members with a brief overview of the project. This will include a general clean-up of the roundabout and refilling of planters to include spring bulbs and winter flowers. Abergavenny Garden Centre continue to be very supportive.

Photographs will be forwarded and shared on social media.

Cllr Hunt proposed to support the project. This was seconded by Cllr Keen.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Project approved.

21. To receive, discuss and make a determination regarding planning applications.

The Chief Officer forwarded the planning application to members ahead of the meeting.

- **Development Proposed:** Felling of tree for construction of accessible pedestrian path.
- **Location:** Flower Park Blaenavon

Cllr Hunt raised concerns about the timing of tree felling in relation to bird nesting/wildlife.

Members discussed that a survey had likely been conducted by a professional, knowledgeable about nesting seasons and the timing of felling.

Cllr Hunt proposed that there be no objection, provided that an appropriate expert had been consulted. This was seconded by Cllr. Beavan.

Cllr Hunt to leave with the Chief Officer.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Condition of approval noted by members and to be submitted to TCBC Planning.

22. To receive, discuss and make a determination regarding grant application requests.

The Chief Officer forwarded two donation requests to members prior to the meeting for their perusal.

Members discussed the donation requests, namely:

Emma Livings – Twinkle Toes Dance School.

It was proposed by Cllr Keen to support the request. This was seconded by Cllr Templeton.

All members in agreement.

Resolved – Application authorised.

Matthew Cox – Blaenavon Blues AFC

It was proposed by Cllr Cowles to support the request. This was seconded by Cllr Wheeler.

All members in agreement.

Resolved - Application authorised.

23. To receive, discuss and make any relevant determinations concerning items relating to correspondence.

The Chief Officer explained that two items of correspondence had been received.

Joy Merrifield

A thank-you card was received from Joy Merrifield, expressing her gratitude for the Town Council's Civic Award she had received for her commitment to Blaenavon.

She expressed how proud and grateful she felt and congratulated the Council on a wonderful event.

Email received from Wendy Horler dated the 13th of October 2024.

Cllr Matthews together with the Chief Officer received an email from Wendy Horler with regards to the award received by Blaenavon Community Museum. This was forwarded to all members ahead of the meeting along with Cllr Matthew's response.

Resolved: Members noted the updates.

Emergency time sensitive item as authorised by the Mayor Cllr Matthews.

Cllr Hunt informed members about the felling of the Sycamore Gap tree in September 2023.

Since then, the tree has shown promising regrowth. Saplings from seeds collected by the National Park are being distributed nationwide to communities who present a case for receiving a "Sapling of Hope."

Cllr Hunt is a member of two groups who are applying for a sapling for Blaenavon and requested the Council's support for this in principle. He noted how this aligns with the town's motto, "Hope is not Broken."

Cllr Matthews proposed to support the initiative. This was seconded by Cllr Keen.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Initiative supported.

Meeting ended: 20.01 hours