



BLAENAVON TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE COUNCIL FINANCE MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 8th of OCTOBER 2025 AT 6.30 PM.

Pursuant to the requirements of Section 47 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021, the meeting was held on a hybrid basis in the Council Chamber at 101, High Street Blaenavon and remotely.

In attendance:

Councillors in attendance: A. Lewis (In the Chair), L. Evans, I. Parfitt, M. Wheeler, A. Beavan, S. Maslen, J. Davies, L. Cowles, J. Hunt, N. Matthews (online)

Absent: Cllr T. Porter.

Youth Representatives: Boyd Paynter, Daniel Morse.

Chaplain: Father Dr Chris Walters

Officers: Kevin Warren (Chief Officer, CO), Kerry Jones (Assistant Chief Officer, ACO)
Sophie Johnson (Community Wellbeing Development Officer, CWDO)

Visitors: None present

Members of public: None present.

The finance meeting was opened at 6:30pm by the Deputy Mayor Councillor Lewis 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 Griffin

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

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Apologies accepted.

3. Declarations of Interest.

- Cllr Lewis – Personal – Agenda item 16
- Cllr Cowles – Personal – Agenda item 8
- Cllr Hunt – Personal – Agenda item 8

4. Council Meetings: To confirm the minutes of the Council Finance Meeting held on the 10th of September 2025.

Minutes were displayed on screen and read for accuracy with no amendments.

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

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Minutes approved as a true and accurate record.

5. Responsible Finance Officer's Update: To receive and consider the September 2025 financial update.

Mr Warren (RFO) forwarded to members the September 2025 financial reports electronically in advance of the meeting which detailed the following areas:

- Income and Expenditure
- Credit Card Payments
- Cheque Payments
- Bacs Payments
- Cash Book Transactions
- Bank Reconciliation (Bank Statement 189)
- Project Expenditure
- Budget
- VAT
- Petty Cash

Mr Warren presented to members each of the above areas of finance for September 2025 and highlighted any relevant information.

Members were invited to ask any questions in relation to the information presented. Members were happy with the presentation.

It was proposed by Cllr Wheeler and seconded by Cllr Beavan that the financial reports for September 2025 be accepted.

Resolved: Financial update for September 2025 accepted by members.

6. To receive, discuss and approve the audit opinion and conclusion of audit received from Audit Wales for the financial year 2024/25.

The Chief Officer provided members with an overview of the audit opinion 2024/25 received from Audit Wales. This had been sent to all members ahead of the meeting and was shown 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 Hunt and seconded by Cllr Beavan to approve the audit opinion for 2024/25.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Audit opinion 2024/25 noted and approved by members.

7. To receive, discuss and note the Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru Draft Annual Remuneration Report 2026/27.

The Chief Officer provided an overview of the report and accompanying briefing document, which had been forwarded to members prior to the meeting and shown on screen.

Members noted that a financial loss compensation allowance is now available for unpaid leave to attend Council business (£67.45 for under four hours and £134.90 for over four hours).

The report is currently in draft form and will need to be budgeted for once approved.

A comparison was made between Borough Councillor and Town Council Officer salaries. Borough Councillors have received a 6.4% annual increase since 2022, with a basic salary of £21,044, while Town and Community Council Officers received 3.2%.

Combined basic salaries for Blaenavon's three Borough Councillors is £63,132, with the Leader of Torfaen on £67,000.

Resolved: Members noted the update.

8. To discuss and make any relevant determinations to support a Schools Eisteddfod Event in partnership with Pontypool Community Council being held at Pontypool Active Living Centre in March 2026.

The CWD Officer provided members with an update on the forthcoming Eisteddfod event, outlining the arrangements and confirming that Blaenavon Heritage VC Primary School had expressed interest in taking part.

It was explained that the Town Council's contribution would be £400 to cover transport costs for pupils over the two-day event.

Members discussed the proposal and agreed that it was an excellent opportunity for the school to participate in.

It was proposed by Cllr Evans and seconded by Cllr Hunt that the Town Council support the initiative.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Contribution of £400 authorised to cover transport costs for Blaenavon Heritage VC Primary School's participation in the Eisteddfod.

9. To discuss and make any relevant determinations to support a Torfaen wide School's Eco Quiz Event in partnership with Pontypool and Cwmbran Community Councils in June 2026.

The CWD Officer provided members with an update on the forthcoming **Eco Quiz** event, scheduled to take place during Eco Week in June 2026, and outlined the proposed arrangements.

It was noted that both Cwmbran and Pontypool Community Councils currently hold school eco quizzes, and this new event aims to be a Torfaen-wide initiative, providing Blaenavon Heritage VC Primary School with the opportunity to participate.

The Town Council's contribution towards the event would be **£250**.

Members discussed the proposal and agreed that it represented another excellent opportunity for the school to take part.

It was proposed by Cllr Beavan and seconded by Cllr Hunt that the Town Council support the initiative.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: A contribution of £250 authorised to support Blaenavon Heritage VC Primary School's participation in the Eco Quiz event.

10. To discuss and make any relevant determinations regarding the purchase and installation of Remembrance Poppies at locations across Blaenavon.

The Assistant Chief Officer provided members with an overview of costings, number of poppies required and suggested installation locations throughout the town.

A brief discussion took place amongst members.

It was proposed by Cllr Beavan and seconded by Cllr Hunt that the Town Council support the initiative through the purchase of 100 lamp post poppies.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: One hundred lamp post poppies to be purchased and displayed across Blaenavon.

11. To discuss and make any relevant determinations regarding the arrangements for the Remembrance Day Parade planned for the 9th of November 2025.

The Chief Officer provided an update on the forthcoming Remembrance Day Parade, scheduled for Sunday, 9th of November 2025, and outlined the proposed arrangements.

All documentation has been submitted to TCBC, road closures have been confirmed, and associated costs will be covered by TCBC.

The Deputy Lord Lieutenant has been invited, with confirmation expected by the first week of November. The parade booklet has been updated and will be shared with the Blaenavon Branch of the RBL.

The wreath-laying protocol, as detailed in the briefing document circulated prior to the meeting, was agreed by members.

Resolved: Members noted the update.

12. To receive an update and make any relevant determinations relating to the Town Council's Civic and Awards Event evening being held on the 1st of November 2025.

The Assistant Chief Officer provided an update on the upcoming event, confirming that all plans are in place and Officers will be on site from 2:00pm on the day to oversee set-up.

Members were asked to attend the Welfare Hall on Sunday, 2nd of November, between 2:00pm and 4:00pm to assist with the collection of goods and equipment.

Clrs Beavan and Davies offered to assist.

Resolved: Members noted the update.

13. To discuss and make any relevant determinations relating to potential Tourism Objectives for Blaenavon.

The Draft Tourism Objectives were forwarded to all members ahead of the meeting detailing an action plan for the next five years.

Cllr Matthews provided members with an update as per his attendance at the Exploring and Enjoying Blaenavon Industrial Landscape Group meeting on 29th August 2025.

The 2018 - 2023 Action Plan was reviewed and noted that most of the 44 actions had not been delivered.

Work has now commenced on the new 2025 - 2030 action plan, which includes twenty initiatives, several of which are already in progress.

Members reviewed the draft vision and objectives outlining priorities for tourism and heritage development from 2025 - 2030, including partnership working, destination planning, cultural promotion, and community engagement.

It was proposed by Cllr Hunt and seconded by Cllr Beavan that the Town Council adopt the Tourism Objectives for inclusion in the BILWHS Management Plan 2025 – 2030.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Blaenavon Town Council to adopt the Tourism Objectives for inclusion in the BILWHS Management Plan 2025 – 2030.

14. To receive an update and make any relevant determinations relating to the purchase and installation of a commemorative bench for former Councillor Alan Jones.

The Assistant Chief Officer presented members with an overview and comparative costings from three suppliers for the provision of a commemorative bench for former Cllr Alan Jones.

Following a brief discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Evans and seconded by Cllr Cowles that the bench be purchased from Ogilvie Engineering.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: A commemorative bench for former Cllr Alan Jones be purchased from Ogilvie Engineering.

15. To discuss and make any relevant determinations regarding the Heritage Litter Picking Group.

The Assistant Chief Officer provided an update on the Town Council's Heritage Pickers litter picking sessions and related social media activity. It was noted that no sessions had taken place in the past four months, with low public and Cllr attendance prior to this, and no recent activity on the Facebook page.

The Town Council has now registered with Keep Wales Tidy as a Litter Picking Hub, with a launch event being planned in partnership with Keep Wales Tidy, TCBC, Bron Afon Housing and Blaenavon Heritage VC Primary School.

Members discussed whether to withdraw the Heritage Pickers sessions and close the Facebook page or to retain them alongside the new hub.

Following discussion, it was proposed by Cllr Parfitt and seconded by Cllr Hunt that the Heritage Pickers group and Facebook page remain active in addition to the Town Council's role as a Litter Picking Hub.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Heritage Pickers group and Facebook page to remain.

16. To discuss and make any relevant determinations to work in partnership with the Heritage Centre to host a Xmas Market.

As members were aware, due to the high costs associated with hosting a Christmas Market at the Workmen's Hall and the increasing number of similar events locally, it had been decided that the Town Council would not hold its own Christmas Market this year.

However, the CWD Officer provided members with an update on the Heritage Centre's Christmas Market plans and outlined the opportunity for the Town Council to support the event by funding the costs of Santa's appearance and sweets for children, which would not otherwise be provided.

A brief discussion took place amongst members.

It was proposed by Cllr Cowles and seconded by Cllr Davies to support the joint initiative with the Heritage Centre's Christmas market through funding the cost of Santa's appearance and sweets for children.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Blaenavon Town Council to fund the cost of Santa's appearance and sweets.

17. To discuss and make any relevant determinations regarding the appointment of a Councillor Representative for Churches Working Together.

Cllr Maslen proposed to be the appointed representative. This was seconded by Cllr Hunt.

All members in agreement.

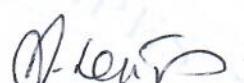
Resolved: Cllr Maslen to represent the Town Council on the Churches Working Together Committee.

18. To discuss and make a determination regarding potential Town Council projects for allocation into the Project Action Plan 2025/26. Relevant updates or new projects as notified.

None received.

Meeting ended at 19.39 hrs.

Chairman Signed:



Date: 12/11/25