



BLAENAVON TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 26th November 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: L. Evans (chair), A. Lewis L. Cowles, N. Matthews, M. Wheeler, S. Maslen, J. Hunt, J Davies, T Porter, A Bevan, T Griffin, I Parfitt.

Absent: None.

Youth Representatives: Daniel Morse.

Chaplain: Dr Fr Chris Walters

Officers: Kevin Warren - Chief Officer (CO)

Visitors: None

Members of public: None present.

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

1. To receive any questions from the public.

None received.

2. To receive and accept apologies.

Youth Representative – Boyd Paynter – Work Commitment.

3. Declarations of Interest

None received.

4. To receive an update from TCBC Ward Councillors.

Members received an update from Cllr Cowles who explained that he had attended the TCBC Full Council Meeting on the 28/10/25 and on behalf of Blaenavon Town Council he opposed the community review recommendations from TCBC.

The recommendations will now be forwarded to the Boundary Commission, and a further consultation will be progressed. Cllr Cowles will update members when he receives any further information.

Cllr Cowles explained that as a result of attending the TCBC Full Council meeting in September 2025, he was now able to report that the play area at Forgeside will now be refurbished, and the appointed contractors Wicksteed will be commencing work in the near future.

Cllr Cowles also provided an update in relation to roadworks on Cwmavon Road commencing on the 1/12/25 for a period of fourteen weeks.

This was to facilitate repair works. The road will be the subject of traffic light control and if members have any reported concerns, then contact Cllr Cowles who would contact TCBC Highways.

Resolved: Members noted the update from Cllr Cowles.

5. Mayors Announcements

Cllr Evans provided members with the following update.

Attended the following events

- Remembrance Day Parade.
- Town Council Civic Awards and Grant evening.
- Blaenavon Book launch.
- Met with the Slovakian Ambassador on the 24/11/25.

Resolved: Members noted the update.

6. Council Meetings: To confirm the minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on the 22nd of October 2025.

Minutes were 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 accepted as a true and accurate record.

7. Chief Officer's Update: To receive the Chief Officer's update.

The Chief Officer provided members with the following update.

Item 16 within the minutes as per the instructions from members, the Chief Officer relayed the position of the Town Council regarding the joint tourism survey with Abergavenny Town Council. There will be a further update relating to this at agenda item 13.

On the 1/11/25 together with the fellow officers and Cllrs, the chief Officer attended the BTC Civic award evening at Forgeside Community Centre.

The commemorative bench for former Cllr Alan Jones will be arriving on the 27/11/25 and will be in situ at the Heritage Centre. The Chief Officer thanked Cllr Lewis for arranging receipt of delivery.

The Chief Officer explained that he had spoken with Leslie Jones and she has requested if the 19/12/25 at 11am would be suitable for the informal unveiling of the commemorative bench with just a small cohort of family, Cllrs and requested friends.

The Chief Officer has provisionally agreed to this, and he will email everyone early next with the final arrangements.

Also, since the last meeting, the Chief Officer has held briefing sessions with the mayor and deputy mayor discussing Council operational and financial matters and also operational meetings with his fellow officers relating to future planning and current projects.

Resolved: Members noted the update

8. To receive Cllr updates regarding recent attendance at outside bodies committee meetings, together with any relevant community / partnership engagement.

Members received the following Cllr updates

Cllr Matthews explained that on the 21/11/25 he met with the other chairs of the World Heritage Site Partnership working groups, along with the World Heritage Site Coordinator, to discuss the review of the World Heritage Site Management Plan which is currently ongoing.

One of the matters that was brought up, which is relevant to Blaenavon Town Council at this early stage, is that the Council may be asked to run World Heritage Day next year.

Cllr Matthews commented that he thinks the Council will be able to consider that in due course probably in January 2026 as part of the budget setting process but was making councillors aware that this is on the horizon.

Cllr Hunt explained that last month he attended the board of the Torfaen Museum Trust and was pleased to report that after extensive work, the museum received full accreditation from the museums association UK.

Cllr Griffin explained to members that he attended a TVA meeting at Bethlehem Chapel, which was very useful and was about how to get people with lived experience to get involved in Community initiatives, how to encourage them, how to protect them, and how to regulate them, to make that work which is really positive.

Also on the 13th of November 2025, Cllr Griffin attended the AGM of the Torfaen Sea Cadets and is now the Chair of Torfaen Sea Cadets.

Cllr Porter informed members that he attended Blaenavon Heritage School in his capacity as school governor and explained that attendance for the school was currently 94%. There was one pupil linked to a modified timetable and there have been no exclusions.

It was also explained that the school is engaging with an outside agency in relation to bullying and that the 3G pitch and fencing around the school was progressing.

The school had praised the local community support officers who attend the school and 94% of parents attended the recent parents evening.

Resolved: Members noted the updates

9. To receive an update from Sophie Johnson - Community Development and Wellbeing Officer (November 2025)

No update provided – Sophie currently on sick leave.

Resolved: Members noted the update

10. To receive an update from Blaenavon Town Council's Youth Representatives

Blaenavon Town Council Youth Representative Daniel Morse provided members with an update regarding an idea in relation to establishing a TikTok account which could be aligned to local businesses and local tourism.

A brief explanation was presented regarding how the account would work and the benefits of it in practice. The account would be managed by Daniel and Boyd in the same way that the Instagram account is managed.

Members were keen to see the account established and would await a further update in due course.

Resolved: Members noted the update.

11. To receive an update from Fr Dr Chris Walters (Chaplain to Blaenavon Town Council)

Father Walters updated members with the following.

There would be a Carol Service at St Peters Church on the 7/12/25 at around 7pm. Cllr Maslen to email all councillors with details.

Also father Chris will be out of action for 3 months due to a pre-planned operation and therefore would not be able to attend Council meetings.

Resolved: Members noted the update.

12. To discuss and make any relevant determinations regarding the Town Council Civic Event.

The Chief Officer provided a brief summary regarding the Town Council Civic Event and outlined that there was a lot of hard work involved in the preparation of the event which included managing the following.

- Awards, grants, and certificates.
- Recipient invites.
- Entertainment.
- Room preparation
- Buffet,

The Chief Officer further explained that he didn't feel that attendees realised the depth and breadth of the work that goes into the event which also includes the cost.

The cost for the civic event was £2,042 This is a significant amount of money for one evening.

A discussion took place amongst members regarding the event, generally it was an enjoyable event but as previously discussed there was consideration to hold the event every other year.

Members felt that last year's event was more enjoyable and that the awarding of grants could be a consideration for change together with finding suitable nominees to receive civic awards also, the overall cost of the event could be better spent within the community.

Members accepted that a lot of hard work went into the setting up of the event but now is the time to have a break from the Civic awards evening and maybe to only consider giving an award to recognise outstanding community service as a one off award.

Further discussions took place regarding better advertising of the event so that more nominees could come forward, and that the event evening could have been longer as it was very brief.

It was raised whether a working group could be established to discuss the matter further, but no determination was made on that point.

Resolved: Members noted the updates.

13. To discuss and make any relevant determinations regarding the Abergavenny Tourism Charter

The Chief Officer displayed the draft charter via the projector screen. It was explained that a previous survey had been discussed and this was not suitable. This was relayed to Abergavenny Town Council and consideration was to develop a tourism charter.

A discussion took place amongst members. It was explained that the proposed charter would be a decision for both Councils to formulate an agreement, but Abergavenny Town Council are very supportive of the charter in terms of a tourism and heritage partnership.

It was agreed to arrange further discussions with Abergavenny Town Council in 2026 to ratify the charter.

Resolved: Members noted the update. Further discussions to take place in 2026

14. To discuss and make any relevant determinations regarding the appointment of a Blaenavon Town Councillor representative to attend the One Voice Wales Annual General meeting being held remotely on the 21st January 2026

The Chief Officer explained to members that he had forwarded the request from OVW to them for consideration. It was also explained that the OVW AGM was postponed in September 2025 due to a shortage of attendees.

The Council's previous nomination to attend the September 2025 meeting was Cllr Griffin. The requirement now is to appoint a representative and a reserve.

Cllr Griffin agreed to be the Council's appointed representative and Cllr Davies agreed to be the reserve.

It was proposed by Cllr Evans and seconded by Cllr Cowles that the nominations be accepted.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Cllr Griffin to be the Council's representative with Cllr Davies in reserve.

15. To receive an update and make any relevant determinations relating to the use of a Time Capsule to make the 25th Anniversary of World Heritage Status

Cllr Bevan provided an update to members and explained that in Sophie's absence she had picked this up and had been in discussion with Nikki Westwood who is leading on this for the school.

An agreement was made on two dates for the burying of the time capsule and the presentation of the certificates. The work that has been submitted by pupils has now been judged by Cllrs Beavan, Wheeler, and Davies.

Cllr Beavan explained that she was keen to get as many members as possible to attend the school for the burial of the time capsule on the 1/12/25 at 1:30pm and then the school assembly on the 5/12/25 to present the certificates.

Cllr Beavan also explained that after the presentation, it was agreed for a group of Cllrs to take part in the school podcasts which would incorporate a World Heritage theme for Blaenavon.

A further discussion took place regarding what items members wanted to insert into the capsule which included photographs, drone images and matters related to climate.

The Chief Officer updated members regarding vouchers for the prize winners and what was the determination from members on this?

It was proposed by Cllr Evans and seconded by Cllr Parfitt that the Chief Officer purchase 3 x £50 WH Smith vouchers.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Chief Officer to purchase 3 x £50 WH Smith vouchers.

16. To discuss and make any relevant determinations regarding the appointment of six Councillors to form the Budget Setting Working group 2026/27

The Chief Officer explained to members that this is an important working group as previous members will confirm. The interim internal audit is scheduled for the 1st and 2nd of December 2025 with Community Finance Solutions.

In terms of the budget setting working group, the Chief Officer outlined that he would require six Cllrs.

To capture and reflect consistency, the group should be made up of the mayor, chair of finance, past mayor, past chair of finance, Cllr Cowles in his capacity as a TCBC Cllr and one other Cllr.

The Chief Officer has scheduled for the budget setting working group to meet week commencing the 8/12/25 commencing at 5:30pm in the council chamber.

Cllr Maslen offered to fill the remaining post.

This was proposed by Cllr Evans and seconded by Cllr Beavan.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Budget Setting Working Group to consist of Cllrs Evans, Lewis, Matthews, Wheeler, Maslen, and Cowles.

17. 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.

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

The planning applications were forwarded to members ahead of the meeting, which presented as follows.

- **DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED:** Installation of Air Source Heat Pumps to serve the waiting room and the shop
- **LOCATION:** Big Pit (Blaenafon) Trust Ltd, Gilchrist Thomas Industrial Estate, Blaenavon
- **DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED:** Installation of ASHPs to serve the waiting room and the shop.
- **LOCATION:** Big Pit (Blaenafon) Trust Ltd, Gilchrist Thomas Industrial Estate, Blaenavon.
- **DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED:** Installation of ASHPs to serve the Pithead Baths. Proposal to include an associated enclosure and a new AHU unit.
- **LOCATION:** Big Pit (Blaenafon) Trust Ltd, Pithead Baths, Gilchrist Thomas Industrial Estate
- **DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED:** Installation of ASHPs to serve the Pithead Baths. Proposal to include an associated enclosure and a new AHU unit.
- **LOCATION:** Big Pit (Blaenafon) Trust Ltd, Pithead Baths, Gilchrist Thomas Industrial Estate
- **DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED:** Proposed new car park and associated external works.
- **LOCATION:** Garn Welfare Institute, Garn Road, Garn Yr Erw.
- **DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED:** Retention of 3 bedroom ground floor flat.
- **LOCATION:** 70A High Street, Blaenavon, Torfaen.

No objections from members on any of the planning applications.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: No objections from members.

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

The Chief Officer informed members that there had been one item received namely a letter from the Chairman of the Blaenavon Camera Club, thanking the Town Council for their grant of £250

Members were also advised that an acknowledgement of thanks by the Blaenavon History Group had been placed in their recently published book.

Resolved: Members noted the update.

Cllr Griffin requested permission from the Chairman to present to members an urgent update

This was authorised.

Cllr Griffin provided an update relating to the findings from the working group that had been established to look at the feasibility for a community event to be held at Garn Lakes.

Cllr Griffin further explained that the group had held meetings with officers from TCBC namely Kate Blewett and Andrew Osborne who have been incredibly helpful.

Overall, there have been no reasons identified why the Garn Lakes event could not be resurrected. In terms of practicalities and planning, this would be in 2027. Therefore a decision in principle is requested for the working group to proceed in the potential planning of an event in 2027.

A discussion took place amongst members based on the information received from the working group. It was stated that the previous Garn Lakes events were extremely popular with Blaenavon residents.

It was also mentioned by members that this could be aligned with the Town Council's ongoing strategy for tourism and heritage and in principle this proposal should be considered.

Members also raised the possibility of partnership with Abergavenny Town Council together local attractions and businesses. TCBC officers have also confirmed that they would provide advice and support if the event were agreed.

It was proposed by Cllr Parfitt and seconded by Cllr Griffin that consent in principle is given for the working group to continue the planning for an event in 2027.

Resolved: Members agreed consent in principle for the working group to continue the planning for an event in 2027.

It was proposed by Cllr Evans to invoke the Public Bodies Admissions to meetings Act 1960; this was seconded by Cllr Hunt.

All members in agreement

By virtue of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and the public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting on the basis that disclosure thereof would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Recording confirmed as stopped by the Chief Officer at 19:55 hrs.

Both Youth Representatives and Chaplain left the meeting.

20. To discuss and make any relevant determinations regarding TCBC Community Review 2023-25

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21. To receive an update and make and relevant determinations concerning the council's legal duty of care in relation to the physical and psychological welfare of council employees.

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11. **What is the primary purpose of the following statement?**

11. *W. C. W. (William C. W.)* (1869-1947) (1910-1947)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

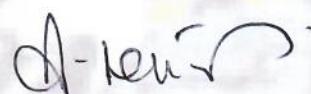
22. To discuss and make any relevant determinations concerning community relations following alleged instances of abuse and the spreading of misinformation concerning Councillors and employees

[REDACTED]

Recording confirmed as restarted by the Chief Officer at 20.16 hrs.

Meeting ended at 20:16 hrs.

Chairman Signed:



Date: 28/1/26