



**BLAENAVON TOWN COUNCIL**  
**MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING**  
**HELD ON WEDNESDAY 22nd 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:** A. Lewis (In the Chair) L. Cowles, N. Matthews, M. Wheeler, S. Maslen, J. Hunt.

**Absent:** T. Porter.

**Youth Representatives:** Boyd Paynter & Daniel Morse

**Chaplain:** Dr Fr Chris Walters

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

**Visitors:** Inspector Lee Stachow – Gwent Police (Geographical Inspector for Torfaen)

**Members of public:** None present.

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

Cllr Lewis expressed condolences on behalf of Blaenavon Town Council to former Cllr Keen and her family following their recent bereavement.

**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
- Cllr Parfitt
- Cllr Davies
- Cllr Evans
- Cllr Beavan

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 Maslen - Personal - item 13

### **4. To receive a policing update from Inspector Lee Stachow (Geographical Inspector for Torfaen)**

Inspector Stachow provided members with a brief policing update in relation to recent crime figures, and these were nothing out of the normal trends in Blaenavon.

The only slight increase was in relation to car theft which had seen a slight increase. ASB figures were the same as 2024 and that there will be planned pro active work by the neighbourhood teams who are now more settled.

The funding for the off – road biking initiative has now ended, and this will be managed moving forward by the neighbourhood teams. The plan is to run two operations monthly with regular updates via social media. The community safety partnerships are also working well.

An update was provided in relation to a recent incident at Riverside Drive which was an isolated incident and the risk level moving forward is low with not threats to the public.

A discussion took place around E Bikes and the issues that surround the use of them. Legislation needs to be improved as it is very difficult to manage the risk involved.

There will now be an extra Police Constable working the town centre area and extra officers will be deployed to offer increased presence on bonfire night.

Members thanked Inspector Stachow for the update. Inspector Stachow then left the meeting.

**Resolved:** Members noted the update.

### **5. To receive a TCBC update from Ward Councillors.**

Councillor Liam Cowles provided members with a TCBC Update. Cllrs Horler and Jones were unable to attend but no reasons were provided.

Cllr Cowles reference three areas in his update which referenced the following.

#### **Garn Lakes.**

The works are ongoing which include a floating platform at the top lake and tree removal linked to flooding

### **Riverside Drive.**

Cllr Cowles had met with officers from Bronafon housing regarding the recent incident and confirmed that door to door engagement had taken place to reassure residents. TCBC community safety team were also offering support in the area.

### **Arthur Jenkins Nursing Home.**

Cllrs Cowles provided members with a brief update in relation to the closure of the home notice and explained that this was a 28 day notice. The staff had been informed, and residents and families also had been updated.

It was also explained that TCBC will support this process, and he urged members to read the Care Inspectorate report from August 2025.

Cllr Cowles responded to several questions from members in relation to tree felling at Garn lakes and logistical questions relating to the closure of the Arthur Jenkins Nursing Home.

**Resolved:** Members noted the update

### **6. Mayor's Announcements: To receive the mayor's announcements.**

Due to the mayor not being present. This was deferred to the November 2025 meeting.

**Resolved:** Mayor to provide an update at the November 2025 Council Meeting.

### **7. Council Meetings: To confirm the minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on the 24th of September 2025.**

Minutes were read for accuracy with no amendments.

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

All members in agreement.

**Resolved:** Minutes accepted as a true and accurate record.

### **8. Chief Officer's Update: To receive the Chief Officer's update.**

The Chief Officer provided members with the following update.

**Item 18** within the minutes as per the instructions from members, the Chief Officer has forwarded the Town Council's nomination to Delyth Harries TCBC monitoring officer relating to the Ethics and Standards committee at TCBC and received acknowledgement.

**Item 22** within the minutes as per the instructions from members, the Chief Officer has written to Cllr Peter Jones TCBC the chair of the Torfaen Local Partnership committee and explained the Council's decision to withdraw from the partnership.

Cllr Jones has noted the decision and has stated that BTC would be more than welcome to rejoin in the future and would miss the Council's positive contribution.

In relation to the Xmas lights switch on planned for the 28/11/25, the Chief Officer has forwarded to TCBC's safety advisory group (SAG) the following documentation.

- Event Planning document
- Risk assessment document
- Street Trading document

He has also secured the necessary Temporary Event Notice from TCBC which has also been forwarded to SAG and also requested landlord's consent from TCBC regarding the use of Market Street car park and forwarded all of the mentioned documents to them for reference.

The Chief Officer has received confirmation that this has been forwarded for consultation. Once this has been authorised then the necessary licences will be forwarded in early November.

The Xmas tree is being installed week commencing the 24/11/25. The Xmas lights will be delivered by festive lighting in early November and installed by Enerveo lighting as soon as they are received. Mr Chris Wallace the depot manager has been spoken to, and this has been confirmed.

Since the last meeting Sophie and the Chief Officer have held meetings with TVA regarding the Community Transport Scheme, and this will be discussed further at agenda item 14.

Chris Langford and the Chief Officer will be erecting the Xmas Crib also week commencing the 24/11/25.

On the 21/10/25 together with the mayor and the Chief Officer attended the One Voice Wales Gwent Valleys Area Committee meeting, where they discussed the Torfaen Charter and provided an update regarding Council activities and forthcoming events which was extremely well received.

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

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

Cllr Maslen updated members that on the 19<sup>th</sup> of October 2025 she attended a Churches Together meeting at Bethlehem Chapel which received an update from a charity called 'Open Table' representing LGBTQIA+ communities who's residents feel alienated.

The meeting was not well attended but the clergy are keen for this to progress, and the charity are self-funded.

Members asked what outreach work had been done within the community, a brief discussion took place around this point.

**Resolved:** Members noted the update

**10. To receive an update from Sophie Johnson - Community Development and Wellbeing Officer (October 2025)**

Sophie Johnson the CWD Officer had forwarded an update to members ahead of the meeting.

A brief update was provided covering the following Town Council projects namely the Film Club, Mothers and Daughters which are still capturing a high number of attendees.

A further update was provided relating to the following projects namely.

Half term swimming, Civic awards evening, Xmas Lights switch on, Keep Wales Tidy Hwb and the forthcoming fashion show being held at the Heritage Centre.

**Resolved:** Members noted the update

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

Blaenavon Town Council Youth Representatives Boyd Paynter and Daniel Morse provided members with an update relating to the following pieces of work that they had undertaken.

The Youth Representative Instagram profile was going well and had increased in numbers during the past 30 days.

At the recent TVA Awards Evening, Boyd won the Youth Volunteer of the year award.

In relation to the pensioner club project regarding phone usage, there hadn't been much progress to date but will be hopeful that an update can be provided at the November 2025 meeting.

The Chief Officer enquired about the recent TCBC Youth Leadership Programme. Boyd Paynter provided a brief overview of the programme and its functionality. A fuller update will be provided at the November 2025 meeting.

**Resolved:** Members noted the update.

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

Fr Walters explained to members that the proposed Town Council carol service was now not able to proceed due to the fact that St Peter's Church is the only venue available and they will be holding their own carol service on the 7<sup>th</sup> of December 2025.

There will be invitations to Cllrs to deliver readings.

**Resolved:** Members noted the update.

**13. To discuss and make any relevant determinations relating to a potential Carol Service at St Peter's Church in December 2025**

The Assistant Chief Officer provided members with an update in relation to the proposed carol service and mirrored the update from Fr Walters.

Cllrs Wheeler and Hunt offered to partake in readings at St Peter's Church carol service on the 7<sup>th</sup> of December 2025.

**Resolved:** Members noted the update.

**14. To receive an update and make any relevant determinations regarding the North Torfaen Community Transport Scheme.**

The Chief Officer together with the CWD Officer provided members with an overview of the Community Transport Scheme.

The scheme agreement was displayed via the projector screen with an explanation relating to the recent steering group meetings that had taken place.

The main difficulties identified was the recruitment of volunteer drivers.

A solution to this was marketing and as a result the steering group have agreed to work in partnership with the Media Agency to promote awareness and develop a strategic approach to identify potential volunteer drivers.

The scheme has one driver at present, and it is hoped to launch the campaign at the end of November 2025. A brief update was given relating to the terms of reference and this would be forwarded to all Cllrs.

It was clarified that members of the steering group were not trustees and a welcome pack relating to driver criteria was also discussed together with the requirements of driver insurance.

**Resolved:** Members noted the update.

**15. To receive an update and make any relevant determinations relating to the Town Council fashion show being held at the Heritage Centre on the 28th of October 2025.**

Cllr Lewis and the CWD Officer provided members with an update in relation to the proposed fashion show at the Heritage Centre.

It was explained that ticket sales were not being sold as quickly as the previous show and 80 tickets needed to be sold otherwise a £350 fee would be required.

A brief discussion took place amongst members regarding this together with the support that would be required at the end of the show to clear up.

**Resolved:** Members noted the update.

**16. To discuss and make a determination regarding a joint tourism survey between Blaenavon Town Council and Abergavenny Town Council (A.T.C).**

The survey was forwarded to all members ahead of the meeting and shown on screen.

The Chief Officer informed members that he had been in discussions with A.T.C and had expressed concerns regarding the form produced by The Media Agency. It was felt that the form did not meet the requirements of a survey appropriate for Blaenavon Town Council in alignment with tourism objectives.

Members discussed the form at length and agreed there were several issues. It was noted that the form did not reflect the broad range of outdoor activities available in the area, nor did it reference the Brecon Beacons National Park or other key attractions.

Members also felt that the form appeared to be aimed at both residents and visitors, whereas it should be targeted more towards tourists.

The content was considered basic, and questions were raised about how the information gathered would be collated and used.

It was proposed by Cllr Hunt and seconded by Cllr Matthews that the Chief Officer refer the Council's concerns back to A.T.C for further consideration and discussion.

All members in agreement.

**Resolved:** Chief Officer to refer the Council's concerns back to A.T.C for further consideration and discussion.

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

Cllr Matthews presented an overview of the time capsule project to mark the 25th Anniversary of Blaenavon's World Heritage status, in partnership with Blaenavon Heritage VC Primary School.

Suggestions included writing, art and poetry competitions linked to Blaenavon and adding items representing everyday life to the time capsule, possibly to be buried within the school grounds.

It was also suggested that guests could include John Rodger, former World Heritage Site Coordinator.

The CWD Officer advised that she had been in contact with the school, who are keen to participate, and a meeting is scheduled to take place following the October half term.

Members and youth representatives discussed potential dates, and the involvement of the Youth Ambassadors and local businesses and a copy of the video 'Mynavon.'

It was proposed by Cllr Matthews and seconded by Cllr Wheeler to progress the project and engage with the school, local businesses, and the Youth Ambassadors.

All members in agreement.

**Resolved:** To engage with the school, local businesses, and the Youth Ambassadors to progress the project.

**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.**

- Positivity Wellbeing Hampers & Youth Engagement Project

The CWD Officer forwarded the project proposal to all members prior to the meeting which was shown on screen and provided members with an overview.

The project supports young people in Blaenavon to build confidence, wellbeing, and life skills in a safe youth club environment.

Through creative activities such as making Positivity Wellbeing Hampers, it promotes empathy, positive relationships, and healthy coping strategies while helping to reduce anti-social behaviour and highlight young people's positive role in the community.

Members had a brief discussion.

It was proposed by Cllr Cowles to support the project with a financial award to a maximum of £600. This was seconded by Cllr Hunt.

All members in agreement.

**Resolved:** Project supported with a financial award to a maximum of £600

## **19. 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:** Front Extension/alterations
- **LOCATION:** 8 Upper Coedcae Road, Blaenavon.
- **DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED:** Change of use
- **LOCATION:** Queen Victoria Inn, Blaenavon.
- **DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED:** Rear garden – Holiday retreat with timber buildings
- **LOCATION:** Little Oaks, Llanover Road, Blaenavon.
- **DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED:** Rear extension
- **LOCATION:** 16 Oak View Court, Blaenavon.
- **DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED:** Replace Garage
- **LOCATION:** 16 Upper Woodland Street, Blaenavon

Members discussed the proposed development of Little Oaks, Llanover Road, Blaenavon.

It was proposed by Cllr Matthews and seconded by Cllr Cowles that the Town Council support, in principle, the planning application due to its anticipated positive impact on tourism and issue a statement of support.

All members in agreement.

**Resolved:** No objections from members on any of the planning applications.

## **20. To receive, discuss and make any relevant determinations concerning items relating to correspondence.**

None received.

Cllr Lewis proposed to adhere to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

This was seconded by Cllr Hunt.

All members in agreement.

**Resolved:** The Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 was adhered to.

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.

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

A document page with several horizontal black redaction bars. The page is mostly blank, with faint blue markings visible through the paper, including the word 'CONFIDENTIAL' and some numbers.

Recording confirmed as restarted by the Chief Officer at 20.21 hrs.

Meeting ended at 20:21hrs.

Chairman Signed:

*H. E. C. E.*

Date: 26/11/25

