BLAENAVON TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 27th MAY 2026 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 (Chair) L. Cowles, N. Matthews, A. Beavan, M. Wheeler, S. Maslen, J. Davies, T Griffin, T. Porter, J. Hunt.

Youth Representatives: Boyd Paynter.

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

Visitors: Bethan McPherson (Head of Communities and Renewal TCBC) & Simon Rushton regarding TCBC roles within Blaenavon.

Members of public: None present.

The Full Council meeting was opened at 6:30pm by Mayor Cllr 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 Parfitt
- Cllr Evans

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

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Apologies accepted.

3. Declarations of Interest

- Cllr Cowles – item 17 – Personal.
- Cllr Lewis – item 15 – Personal.
- Cllr Griffin – item 21 – Personal.

4. To receive an update from Bethan McPherson (Head of Communities and Renewal TCBC) regarding TCBC roles within Blaenavon.

The presentation was forwarded to all members prior to the meeting.

Bethan McPherson and Simon Rushton provided members with an overview of the Community Capacity Team's roles and responsibilities and also delivered a summary of the presentation, including an introduction to the Five Ways of Working.

Members were happy with the presentation.

Resolved: Members noted the update.

5. To receive a TCBC update from Ward Councillors.

Apologies were received from Cllr Jones and Cllr Horler.

Cllr Cowles provided Members with the following update:

The TCBC Annual Meeting took place on Tuesday 26th May. There were few changes to appointments.

Cllr Hunt was reappointed as Leader and Cllr Clarke was reappointed as Deputy Leader. The Cabinet was also reappointed, and Chairs of all committees were confirmed.

It was noted that the Appointments Committee within Torfaen, which authorises the appointment of Officers, will now operate as a joint committee with Blaenau Gwent for Officers whose roles span both authorities.

Following recent local social media posts regarding the introduction of parking charges by Bannau Brycheiniog National Park at Keeper's Pond and Foxhunter, it was clarified to members that the charges are voluntary and there are no plans to introduce compulsory charging at this time.

A survey of the Arthur Jenkins Care Home building has now been completed.

Two internal TCBC proposals are currently being explored for the future use of the building, alongside one expression of external interest. It was noted that any future use of the building will be for community benefit.

A further update will be provided in due course.

Resolved: Members noted the update.

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

- Attended Torfaen Sea Cadets evening.

Resolved: Members noted the update.

7. Council Meetings: To confirm the minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on the 22nd of April 2026.

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.

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

Item 8 within the minutes as per the instructions from members a follow up e-mail was sent to the secretary of the County Association RBL.

A response had been received. The matter had been discussed at the County Association and Blaenavon branch RBL are aware.

A meeting has been arranged in June 2026 with the County Association, Chief Officer and Cllrs.

Update to follow.

Since the last meeting, the Chief Officer has held briefing sessions with the mayor, deputy mayor discussing Council operational and financial matters and operational meetings with 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 Davies attended the Governors meeting at Ysgol Bryn Onnen.
- Cllr Hunt attended the Torfaen Museum Trust meeting.
- Cllr Griffin attended the Sea Cadets evening.

Resolved: Members noted the updates.

10. To receive an update from Sophie Johnson- Community Wellbeing Development Officer (May 2026).

The Community Wellbeing Development Officer's report for May 2026 was forwarded to all members prior to the meeting.

The CWD Officer provided Members with an overview of the report.

There were no questions from members.

Resolved: Members noted the update.

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

Daniel and Boyd provided members with an update on the Instagram account. The highest views this month were for the reel posted of the new Mayor, again proving that reels generate most engagement.

'Meet the Councillor' reels will be recorded following the college exam period, and the youth representatives will contact members directly to arrange.

The Family Quiz arrangements are being finalised. Any raffle prize donations will be gratefully received.

Resolved: Members noted the update.

12. To receive and approve the Town Council Annual Return and Financial Governance Statement for 2025/26.

The Town Council's Annual Return and Financial Governance Statement for 2025/26 had been forwarded to all members prior to the meeting.

Members discussed questions 1 – 10 of the annual governance statement within the annual return and provided relevant responses for submission to Audit Wales.

The remainder of the document was viewed by members who were happy with the content. The annual return 2025/26 was signed by the mayor on behalf of the Council.

It was proposed by Cllr Wheeler and seconded by Cllr Griffin that the annual return and financial governance statement 2025/26 be approved.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Annual return and financial governance statement for 2025/26 approved for submission to Audit Wales.

13. To receive, discuss and make any relevant determinations regarding an update from the Events Working Group relating to Blaenavon World Heritage Day.

Cllr Beavan updated members following a meeting of the Events Working Group.

During the Working Group meeting the CWD Officer provided members with an update following a meeting that had taken place between the Chief Officer, Mike Bendal - Safety Advisor, Chris Langford and CWD Officer.

During this meeting Chris and Mike highlighted concerns about the event's timeline and safety considerations.

Mike with extensive experience in large scale events, emphasised the risks involved and strongly suggested a smaller scale event this year due to the short preparation time.

Members discussed at length the feasibility of organising an event at such short notice and the implications.

Funding issues were raised, at present there had been no funding confirmation from TCBC which prevented the appointment of a project manager and booking of attractions or artists.

Further discussions included safety risks, including Martin's Law, road closures, alternative locations, and if the possibility of a parade was feasible.

Cllr Matthews proposed to consult with Dave Leech or Jo Gauden before the June 2026 Finance meeting for a final decision on funding. This was seconded by Cllr Cowles.

Amendment:

Cllr Griffin proposed to plan a smaller scale event, not a World Heritage Day as previously delivered. This was seconded by Cllr Beavan.

A recorded vote took place.

Six (6) Cllrs, namely, Cllrs A. Lewis, A. Beavan, T. Griffin, M. Wheeler T. Porter and S. Maslen voted for the amendment.

Four (4) Cllrs, namely Cllrs J. Davies, L. Cowles, J. Hunt and N. Matthews voted against the amendment.

The amendment stands.

Resolved: To plan a smaller scale event, instead of a World Heritage Day as previously executed.

14. To discuss and make any relevant determinations relating to a potential Mayor's Civic Ceremony and Grant Funding Awards Evening.

Members discussed the possibility of holding a combined Mayor's Civic Ceremony and Grant Fund Awards Evening.

Potential venues and dates were considered.

It was proposed by Cllr Griffin and seconded by Cllr Davies that the event be held at Blaenavon RFC, date to be confirmed.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Mayor's Civic Ceremony and Grant Fund Awards Evening to be held at Blaenavon RFC, date to be confirmed.

15. To discuss and make any relevant determinations to work in partnership with the Heritage Centre to host a Christmas Market to be held on November 14th, 2026.

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 again this year 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 Hunt to support the joint initiative.

All members in agreement.

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

16. To discuss and make a determination regarding a suitable date for the Christmas Lights switch on 2026.

The event is expected to follow a similar format to last year. Initial enquiries and provisional bookings have been made with the entertainment and food providers used previously.

Members discussed potential dates for the event.

It was proposed by Cllr Griffin and seconded by Cllr Beavan that the Christmas light's switch on event will take place on 27th November 2026.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Town Council Christmas Lights switch on event to be held on 27th November 2026.

17. To discuss and make a determination regarding Forgeside RFC Community Garden grant application request.

The ACO provided members with an update from Forgeside RFC Community Garden following the request made at the May 2026 Finance meeting.

Members discussed the potential for the Town Council to purchase the marquee directly, with community groups able to loan it when required.

It was proposed by Cllr Cowles and seconded by Cllr Beavan that the ACO seek further information from Forgeside RFC Community Garden before any decision is made regarding the purchase of an inflatable marquee.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: The ACO to make further enquiries with Forgeside RFC Community Garden.

18. To discuss and make a determination regarding potential Town Council projects for allocation into the Project Action Plan 2026/27. Relevant updates or new projects as notified.

The proposed Bike Workshop project was forwarded to all members prior to the meeting.

A brief discussion took place amongst members.

It was proposed by Cllr Hunt and seconded by Cllr Griffin.

All members in agreement

Resolved: Bike Workshop project supported.

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

Two planning applications was forwarded to members prior to the meeting.

- 54 King Street Blaenavon - site clearance.
- Charles Street Green Blaenavon - noticeboard.

Resolved: No objections from members.

20. To receive, discuss and make any relevant determinations concerning items relating to Correspondence.

None received.

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.

Cllr Beavan proposed to adhere to the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960. This was seconded by Cllr Cowles.

All members in agreement.

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

Youth representative B. Paynter left the meeting at 20.06 hrs

The recording was confirmed as stopped by the Chief Officer at 20.06 hrs

21. To receive, discuss and make any relevant determinations relating to staffing concerns.

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[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

Recording confirmed as restarted by the Chief Officer at 20.30 hrs

Meeting ended 20:30 hrs

Chairman signed: **Date: 24//6/2026**