



3rd April 2023

Dear Councillor.

Pursuant to the requirements of **Section 47 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021**, you are hereby summoned to attend the Council Finance meeting which will be held on a hybrid basis in the Council Chamber at **101, High Street, Blaenavon** and remotely on **Wednesday the 12th of April 2023 commencing at 6:30pm** for the purpose of transacting the business shown in the agenda set below.

Should you wish to attend the meeting remotely, you should contact the Chief Officer to the Council to request a remote invitation.

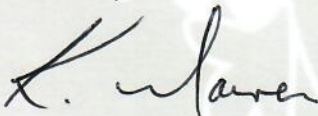
Members of the public have the right to ask questions at Council meetings and to speak in Welsh or English, provided that at least three working days' notice in writing of the question has been provided to the Clerk.

Agenda

1. To receive any questions from the public.
2. To receive and accept apologies.
3. **Declarations of Interest:** Members are invited to declare any interests they may have in any items on the agenda.
4. To receive a presentation and update from TCBC Public Services Support Unit regarding the launch of the Waste and Recycling Consultation Programme.
5. To receive a presentation and update from Caroline Genever Jones TCBC Elections and Business Manager regarding a Community Review relating to ward boundaries.
6. To receive an overview and update from Mr Walter Waygood regarding his forthcoming photography exhibition in Blaenavon.
7. **Council Meetings:** To confirm the minutes of the Council Finance meeting held on the 8th of March 2023.

8. To discuss and make a final determination regarding Blaenavon Town Council's position relating to assumed ownership and responsibility for the Ken Jones statue.
9. To receive, discuss and make any relevant determinations regarding an update from the Task and Finish Working Group relating to the King's Coronation Event - May 2023. **(Cllr Matthews)**
10. To receive, discuss and note the submission for Blaenavon Town Council's 2023 enrolment and re-declaration duties in compliance with The Pensions Regulator under the Pensions Act 2008.
11. To discuss and make a determination regarding litter picking signage in partnership with Blaenavon Heritage School, following on from a previous decision made in 2019.
12. To discuss and make a determination regarding potential Town Council projects for allocation into the Project Action Plan 2023/24. Relevant updates or new projects as notified.
 - Sophie Johnson (CWDO) - Tidy Butt Project.
 - Sophie Johnson (CWDO) - Skateboard Project.
 - Sophie Johnson (CWDO) - Animals Interactive Well-Being Project.
13. **Responsible Finance Officer's Update:** To receive and consider the March 2023 financial update and note the forthcoming internal audit dates covering the financial period 2022/23.

Yours Sincerely



Kevin Warren. MInstLM. FCMI.
Chief Officer.
Blaenavon Town Council.

AT SPES NON FRACTA



Summary (Notes) of the Finance Meeting of Blaenavon Town Council held on **Wednesday the 12th of April 2023 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 Council Finance Meeting to be held on Wednesday the **10th of May 2023**.

In attendance:

Councillors in attendance: A. Jones (In the Chair)

L. Cowles, A. Beavan, N. Matthews, J. Hunt, L. Evans, S. Keen, M. Wheeler, I. Parfitt.

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

Visitors: Caroline Genever-Jones, TCBC Elections Manager, Theresa Pearce & Kate Jenkins, TCBC Public Services. Mr Walter Waygood.

Member of public: None present.

The finance meeting was opened at 6:30pm by the Mayor Councillor Alan Jones who welcomed everyone and expressed thanks for attendance.

1. To receive any questions from the public.

None.

2. To receive and accept apologies.

- Cllr James – Maternity leave
- Cllr Harris – Work commitment

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

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Apologies accepted.

3. Declarations of Interest.

Cllr Cowles – Personal interest – Item 9

7. Council Meetings: To confirm the minutes of the Council Finance Meeting held on the 8th of March 2023.

Minutes were read for accuracy with no amendments.

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

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Minutes approved as a true and accurate record.

8. To discuss and make a final determination regarding Blaenavon Town Council's position relating to assumed ownership and responsibility for the Ken Jones statue.

Cllr Jones provided members with an overview of matters relating to the statue ownership and explained he had been involved from the start and understood that TCBC took responsibility of the statue when the Ken Jones Group was disestablished.

The statue was handed over to TCBC representatives. The statue has been damaged several times in the past and TCBC have repaired the statue.

Members raised several questions:

- Had there been any material changes since the last update from Dave Leech or Joanne Gauden?

Cllr Jones confirmed there had not.

- Will Blaenavon Town Council's insurance take over the insurance?

Cllr Jones confirmed the Town Council do not own the statue.

- What are the cost implications to Blaenavon Town Council if ownership is taken on?

The Chief Officer explained that costs for insurance cannot be assessed until the statue is in ownership.

The Chief Officer also explained that members have received updates from TCBC's communities' officer and cabinet member.

The email from the cabinet member at TCBC invites the Town Council to formalise the intent of the Ken Jones group to assume ownership. TCBC have absolved themselves of all responsibility.

No decision has ever been made by the Town Council to take ownership of the Ken Jones statue.

The Ken Jones group is disestablished, therefore, who will ownership be taken from? You cannot assume ownership from a group that does not exist.

The statue is currently damaged and undergoing repair by TCBC. There is no current valuation of the statue. If it is returned to Ivor Gardens, it is likely to be damaged again.

The Chief Officer further explained that there is no obligation for the Town Council to assume ownership of the statue. Correspondence to consider ownership by the Town Council was received in October 2014 and the Council failed to make a determination relating to ownership.

The Chief Officer explained that based on all the information currently known and available, it was advised not to assume ownership. Cllr Jones supported the Chief Officer on the advice.

Further questions and points were raised by members.

- If TCBC insured the statue, then they must own the statue?

The Chief Officer confirmed that on joining the Town Council he was informed by Kate Fitzgerald TCBC, to arrange annual inspections of the statue and to forward the report to TCBC, which formed part of the TCBC insurance. This has been completed since 2018.

The Chief Officer clarified that when the statue was damaged again in 2021, he contacted Sam Anstee at TCBC and was informed that TCBC do not own nor insure the statue.

- When the executive member attended the Town Council meeting, it was explained that she would get a legal statement from TCBC. Has that statement been forthcoming?

Cllr Jones confirmed that there had not been a legal statement from TCBC only a basic response.

The Chief Officer added that members had been provided with updates from Dave Leech and Cllr Gauden the Executive member at TCBC and that we are no further forward. Blaenavon Town Council need to make a decision regarding ownership. Advice remains unchanged, not to take ownership for the reasons outlined.

Cllr Evans proposed that with the current information and discussion that have been held that the Town Council do not take ownership of the Ken Jones statue.

This was seconded by Cllr Cowles who added that the Chief Officer write to TCBC explaining the decision with the points discussed, and the rationale why the Town Council have come to this decision, sending a copy to Dave Leech, Joanne Gauden and Steven Vickers.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Determination made not to assume ownership of the Ken Jones Statue. Chief Officer to inform TCBC.

9. To receive, discuss and make any relevant determinations regarding an update from the Task and Finish Working Group relating to the King's Coronation Event - May 2023.

Cllr Matthews updated members.

The Workmen's Hall will not facilitate a coronation event. Therefore, the Town Council will work in partnership with Forgeside Rugby Club Community Garden and the World Heritage Centre to deliver two community events.

The coronation event working group have held two meetings on the 29th March and 6th April 2023 where it was suggested that the Town Council support the two below events in addition to the previously agreed competitions.

- Sunday the 7th of May 2023 - Big lunch and first year anniversary of Forgeside Community Garden.
- Monday the 8th of May 2023 - Coronation fare with GW Crafters at The World Heritage Centre.

Posters will be shared on social media as well as distribution around the town. There will be bunting erected in Broad Street which will remain in place throughout the summer months.

The event on the 7th of May at Forgeside Rugby ground will include a craft market, street food stalls, disco, live local bands and bar along with first aid cover from St John Ambulance Service and extra portable toilet facilities.

The event on the 8th of May at the Heritage Centre will include a craft fair, balloon artist, face painter, children's craft sessions and music by Blaenavon Male Voice Choir.

Members were strongly encouraged to take part at both events including setting up on Saturday the 6th of May at Forgeside and helping with clearing up following the events.

Previously members approved a budget of £4k. The working group recommend an increase by £1k as a contingency plan for any additional costs.

It was agreed to set a contingency fund of £1k. This was proposed by Cllr Matthews and seconded by Cllr Wheeler.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: King's Coronation Event contingency budget of £1k authorised.

12. To discuss and make a determination regarding potential Town Council projects for allocation into the Project Action Plan 2023/24. Relevant updates or new projects as notified.

A series of proposed projects were submitted to members by Sophie Johnson for their perusal prior to the meeting.

Sophie presented the following projects to members for discussion and subsequent determinations.

- Sophie Johnson (CWDO) – Tidy Butt Project
- Sophie Johnson (CWDO) – Skateboard Project
- Sophie Johnson (CWDO) – Animals Interactive Wellbeing Project

Tidy Butt Project.

To work in partnership with Pontypool Community Council and Tidy Butt, a registered mental health charity, to deliver a full day well-being event for all year 10 pupils aged 14-15 years in St Albans and Abersychan High Schools during July 2023.

Over the two schools this event would reach around 700 young people.

Tidy Butt deliver wellbeing talks throughout South Wales to schools, businesses, and sports teams. During these thought-provoking presentations, they discuss mental health and wellbeing by covering key elements that mental health is built around.

They also look at the connection between mental and physical health, the things that could impact mental health both negatively and positively and the things people can control to positively impact their own mental health and mood.

The Wellbeing Day consists of five sessions / workshops, pupils will rotate around all five.

This will be delivered in each school, during the school day, each session is approximately forty-five to sixty minutes and run by a Tidy Butt facilitator.

A full day workshop costs £2000 per school x 2 schools = £4000. If 50% is funded in partnership with Pontypool Community Council, the total cost will be £2000.

Pontypool Community Councillors have expressed a keen interest in joint funding the project, this will be discussed and ratified at their Full Council meeting on the 26th of April 2023.

A brief discussion took place amongst members.

It was proposed by Cllr Cowles and seconded by Cllr Hunt to support the project.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Project authorised.

Skateboard Project.

To work in partnership with Torfaen Sports Development and Skateboard Academy UK to provide a total of five, two-hour skateboarding sessions for 11–16-year-olds during the school holidays.

Skateboard Academy UK are an accredited organisation who provide professional, high quality skateboard coaching and support to all ages throughout South Wales. They work with schools, Councils, sports organisations etc.

All equipment will be provided namely boards, helmets, ramps etc, meaning any young person interested in attending can do so.

Feedback from the community has highlighted a lack of activities for this age group during school holidays in the town, resulting in large groups of young people gathering in and around the town.

There will be one session during May / June half term and four (one a week) throughout August 2023. The cost of the project is £540 + VAT

A brief discussion took place amongst members.

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

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Project authorised.

Animals Interactive Wellbeing Project.

To deliver an animal well-being session to residents with Animals Interactive- trained practitioners in animal intervention therapies.

The project consists of one hour twenty-minute well-being sessions involving participants learning about, holding, and feeding a variety of different animals, including snakes, lizards, rabbit, guinea pigs, mice, meerkats, skunks, tarantula, fox, and therapy dog.

To be held in a venue in Blaenavon (TBC) for thirty participants.

Animals Interactive are a well-established, experienced organisation who deliver numerous animal well-being, therapy and care sessions in schools, residential homes, children's home, charities and communities throughout South Wales

The cost per session would be £129 plus room hire of approximately £50. Total cost of project: £179

A brief discussion took place amongst members.

It was proposed by Cllr Parfitt and seconded by Cllr Keen to support the project.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Project authorised.

13. Responsible Finance Officer's Update: To receive and consider the March 2023 financial update and note the forthcoming internal audit dates covering the financial period 2022/23.

Mr Warren updated members that all four Community Brew grants have been transacted to the successful local groups, totalling £20k. The remaining balance is £206.00.

Members were informed of the upcoming internal audit dates, which are Thursday 13th and Friday 14th April 2023. Mr Smith, the Town Council's appointed internal auditor will carry out a full audit for the period 2022/23.

The audit report will be presented by Mr Warren at the Full Council meeting on the 26th of April 2023

Mr Warren (RFO) forwarded to members the March 2023 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
- Project Expenditure
- Budget
- VAT
- Bank Statements

Mr Warren presented to members each of the above areas of finance for March 2023 and highlighted any relevant information.

Members were invited to ask any questions in relation to the information presented. There were none.

Members were happy with the presentation.

Resolved: Financial update for March 2023 accepted by members.

Meeting ended at 20.02 hrs.