



18th October 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 a meeting of the Full Council which will be held on a hybrid basis in the Council Chamber at **101, High Street, Blaenavon** and remotely on **Wednesday the 25th of October 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 Chief Officer.

Agenda

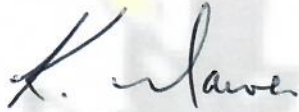
1. To receive any questions from the public.
2. To receive and accept apologies.
3. **Declarations of Interest:** Members are invited to declare any interests they may have in any items on the agenda.
4. To receive a presentation from Mr Justin Jones (Principal Planner Economy and Environment at TCBC) regarding the recent DNS Windfarm Applications.
5. **Mayor's Announcements:** To receive the mayor's announcements.
6. **Council Meeting:** To confirm the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on the 27th of September 2023.
7. **Chief Officer's Update:** To receive the Chief Officer's update.
8. To receive Cllr updates regarding recent attendance at outside bodies committee meetings, together with any relevant community / partnership engagement.
9. To receive an update from Sophie Johnson - Community Development and Wellbeing Officer (**October 2023**)

10. To receive, discuss and make any relevant determinations regarding the Welsh Government's Review of Democratic Health in the Community and Town Council Sector.
11. To receive an update from the Town Council's communications working group regarding the draft newsletter and website.
12. To discuss and make any relevant determinations in relation to twinning opportunities for Blaenavon Town Council.
13. To discuss and make any relevant determinations in relation to the creation of Town Council Youth Representatives in accordance with the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011.
14. To receive an update and make any relevant determinations in relation to the Town Council's Xmas Market at the Workmen's Hall on the 18th of November 2023.
15. To receive an update and make any relevant determinations in relation to the Christmas Light / Carol Service event on the 24th of November 2023.
16. To discuss and make any relevant determinations in relation to a suitable date and location for the next Town Council litter pick.
17. To receive an update and make any relevant determinations regarding the forthcoming civic event and awards evening on the 3rd of November 2023.
18. 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.
 - Stori Craft Group Project - Sophie Johnson.
 - Early Years Music and Movement Group Project - Sophie Johnson.
19. To receive, discuss and make a determination regarding planning applications.
 - SCUL/23/P/0580/HH
 - TBRA/23/P/0612/HH
 - TBRA/23/P/0659/TPO
20. To receive, discuss and make a determination regarding donation requests.
 - Rebecca Osmond - Shining Stars Music Academy.
21. To receive, discuss and make any relevant determinations concerning items relating to correspondence.
 - Blaenavon Blues Firework Display - Email received 17/10/23.
 - Mic Morris Trust - Email received 11/10/23.

- Torfaen Play Service - Partnership Working Christmas Card Competition.
Email received 18/10/23.

22. Other Matters (At the discretion of the Chairman)

Yours Faithfully.



Kevin Warren. MIOl. FCMI.
Chief Officer & RFO
Blaenavon Town Council



Summary (Notes) of the Full Council meeting of Blaenavon Town Council held on **Wednesday the 25th of October 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 Full Council meeting to be held on **Wednesday the 22nd of November 2023**.

In attendance:

Councillors: Cllr. N. Matthews (In the Chair) A. Beavan, J. Hunt, S. Keen, M. Wheeler, I. Parfitt, L. Cowles, M. Harris, A. Jones.

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

Visitors: Justin Jones, Principal Planner Economy, and Environment, TCBC

Members of public: Daniel Morse, Julie Williams.

The Full Council meeting was opened at 6:30pm by Mayor Cllr Nathan Matthews 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 Evans – Birthday.

It was proposed by Cllr Keen and seconded by Cllr Harris that the apologies be accepted.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Apologies accepted.

3. Declarations of Interest

- Cllr Wheeler – Personal – item 20
- Cllr Harris – Personal – item 20

- Cllr Hunt – Personal – item 4

Resolved: Declarations of interest noted by members.

6. Council Meeting: To confirm the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on the 27th of September 2023.

The minutes were read for accuracy with no amendments.

It was proposed by Cllr Keen and seconded by Cllr Beavan that the minutes be accepted.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Minutes approved as a true and accurate record.

12. To discuss and make any relevant determinations in relation to twinning opportunities for Blaenavon Town Council.

Cllr Matthews updated members with the progress since the presentation regarding twinning with Hrastnik, Slovenia which was made in the last Town Council meeting.

There is to be a remote meeting on Friday 27th November 2023 to further discuss the proposals in more detail.

Members also had a lengthy discussion around the existing twinning with Coutras, France. Members were keen to re-establish contact with the twinning group in Coutras.

Cllr Matthews proposed to contact Coutras as appropriate. This was seconded by Cllr Beavan.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Contact to be reinstated with Coutras as appropriate.

A further discussion took place amongst members with regards to the possibility of twinning with Hrastnik.

Cllr Matthews proposed a meeting with Marko Funkl to discuss the twinning opportunities with Hrastnik. This was seconded by Cllr Jones.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Meeting with Marko Funkl to be arranged.

13. To discuss and make any relevant determinations in relation to the creation of Town Council Youth Representatives in accordance with the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011.

Cllr Matthews explained to members that two youth representatives under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 can be appointed.

The process would need to be formally launched and advertised. A selection process would then take place. The selected panel will be able to attend Town Council meetings but will not be able to vote.

A discussion took place amongst members.

It was proposed by Cllr Cowles to implement the youth representative panel in accordance with the Local Government Wales Measure 2011. This was seconded by Cllr Matthews.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Chief Officer to initiate the process.

16. To discuss and make any relevant determinations in relation to a suitable date and location for the next Town Council litter pick.

Cllr Hunt informed members that Oliver litter, and fly tipping prevention officer TCBC has invited Torfaen Wheelers Group to a litter pick session at Garn Lakes on 9th November 2023 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. The invite was extended to all members.

Members discussed the date and location for the next Town Council litter pick.

It was proposed by Cllr Matthews that it will take place 3rd December 2023 at 10.00 a.m. at Forgeside. This was seconded by Cllr Cowles.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Litter pick to take place 3rd December 2023 at Forgeside.

18. 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.

Two projects were submitted to members by Sophie Johnson for their perusal in advance of the meeting. Sophie provided an overview to members.

- **Coffee and Craft Sessions in Partnership with Stori**

To continue to work in partnership with charity Stori (previously known as Hafan Cymru) to deliver a weekly coffee and craft session at Blaenavon Resource Centre, free to all residents.

The Town Council will feature on the posters and marketing for the session.

The sessions are open to all residents, and the crafts will vary every week ranging from

creating bird feeders, decorating canvas bags, windmills, flowerpots, origami and themed crafts.

Members had previously agreed to support the sessions on a six-month trial basis to gauge popularity and impact on residents.

Over the past six months the sessions regularly have around 8/10 participants, with an additional 3/4 children taking part each week during the school holidays. By continuing to support these with varied and exciting craft activities, plus publicity, we are hoping to continue to attract residents and give them the opportunity to take part.

A brief discussion took place amongst members.

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

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Project authorised.

- **Early Years Music and Movement Group – Shining Stars Academy**

To work in partnership with a Blaenavon based business, Shining Stars Academy, to subsidise the cost of their early year's music and movement group classes, enabling more families to attend and benefit from these, for a trial period of three months, January – March.

Feedback from the community has shown a lack of access to activities for parents with young children, with the cost being one of the barriers. By subsidising the cost of the sessions, from £5 per child to £2.50 per child, we can help make it easier for families to attend these classes.

A discussion took place amongst members.

It was proposed by Cllr Cowles to support the project with a caveat that the subsidised sessions apply to Blaenavon residents only. This was seconded by Cllr Jones.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Project authorised with caveat to only support Blaenavon Residents.

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

The Chief Officer had forwarded the planning applications to members ahead of the meeting and they were presented as follows.

- **DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED:** Alteration/extension to first /ground floor.
- **LOCATION:** 20 lower Garn Terrace, Blaenavon, Torfaen

Resolved. No objections from members.

- **DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED:** Two storey rear extension.
- **LOCATION:** 75 Llanover Road, Blaenavon, Torfaen.

Resolved. No objections from members.

- **DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED:** Reduction to tree.
- **LOCATION:** Glenn Dale, Cwmavon Road, Blaenavon.

Resolved. No objections from members.

20. To receive, discuss and make a determination regarding donation requests.

The Chief Officer forwarded the donation requests to members prior to the meeting for their perusal.

Members discussed the donation request, namely:

- Shinning Stars Music Academy – Rebecca Osmond

Rebecca requested financial assistance of £250 from the Town Council to support the community with a sensory play provision.

A discussion took place amongst members.

It was proposed by Cllr Harris and seconded by Cllr Cowles to that a donation of £250 be authorised.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Donation of £250 authorised. Chief Officer to facilitate the transaction.

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

The Chief Officer forwarded to members the relevant email correspondence prior to the meeting for their perusal. There were three requests.

- **Blaenavon Blues AFC** – Sponsorship for the annual firework display.

A discussion took place amongst members regarding the sponsorship request which was for the forthcoming firework display.

It was proposed by Cllr Cowles and seconded by Cllr Keen that the request be supported with a £250 award.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Donation of £250 authorised. Chief Officer to facilitate the transaction.

- **Mic Morris Trust** – a request for £1500 for the purchase of medals.

A discussion took place amongst members regarding the donation request which was for £1500 to purchase medals for the Mic Morris 10k race 2024.

It was decided to discuss the request further during the budget setting process for next year.

This was proposed by Cllr Matthews and seconded by Cllr Cowles.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Donation not supported at this time. Deferred for further discussions in line with budget setting process.

- **Torfaen Play Service** - Partnership Working Christmas Card Competition.

A brief discussion took place amongst members to work in partnership to design and produce a series of Christmas Cards which will be created by children and young people in the Blaenavon area.

There will be a selection of ten cards, with one overall winner. This will then be presented at Blaenavon Council at an agreed time and date. There would be no additional cost to the town council.

A brief discussion took place amongst members regarding the partnership working request.

It was proposed by Cllr Harris and seconded by Cllr Jones to support the request.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Partnership project working request approved.

22. Other Matters (At the discretion of the Chairman)

None presented.

Meeting ended at 20.06 hrs.



BLAENAVON TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 25th of OCTOBER 2023 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: Cllr. N. Matthews (In the Chair) A. Beavan, J. Hunt, S. Keen, M. Wheeler, I. Parfitt, L. Cowles, M. Harris, A. Jones.

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

Visitors: Mr Justin Jones, Principal Planner Economy, and Environment, TCBC (On Line)

Members of public: Daniel Morse, Julie Williams.

The Full Council meeting was opened at 6:30pm by the Mayor Cllr Nathan Matthews 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 Evans – Birthday.

It was proposed by Cllr Keen and seconded by Cllr Harris that the apologies be accepted.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Apologies accepted.

3. Declarations of Interest

- Cllr Wheeler – Personal – item 20.

- Cllr Harris – Personal – item 20.
- Cllr Hunt – Personal – item 4.

Resolved: Declarations of interest noted by members.

4. To receive a presentation from Mr Justin Jones (Principal Planner Economy and Environment at TCBC) regarding the recent DNS Windfarm Applications.

Mr Justin Jones (TCBC) provided members with the following update in relation to the recent DNS Windfarm Applications.

Mr Jones explained that there are three areas / sites proposed for wind farm development these being Torfaen, Caerphilly, and Blaenau Gwent.

The proposal is for six turbines to be erected in the Abertillery development. This will be the closest to Blaenavon and is currently out for public consultation which ends in early December 2023.

There are several events and drop-in sessions organised, one being held at The Workmen's Hall, Blaenavon on the 10th of November 2023 between 3pm and 7pm and members were encouraged to attend.

There are three stages to the process.

Stage one – Pre - application. Inception meetings and pre - application advice. The developer publicises the draft proposals. Engages with the local authority and communities. Identifies issues and exchanges views. Statutory public pre-consultation.

Community benefits should be discussed at this early stage. As part of the process the developers will submit a Community Involvement Statement (CIS). The local planning authority (LPA) will then prepare a local impact report.

Stage two – Application.

The developer submits a formal application. At this point Pedw will notify the Town Council.

There will then be a five-week period to make a submission to Pedw. It is important at this stage of the process to clarify all concerns regardless of whether they are believed to be significant or not, otherwise it cannot be brought up at the examination stage.

Following the five-week period, Pedw will notify the Town Council and there will be an opportunity to respond.

Stage Three - Examination.

A planning inspector will look at the application and determine the procedure. Examinations can be written representations, hearing or public inquiry or a combination of all three. A decision should be made within 36 weeks.

The report is written by the inspector (by week 24) and the application is determined by Welsh Ministers and a decision issued.

Local Impact Reports (LIR)

- A fee paid by applicant for LIR £7,750 (refundable if deadline missed)
- LPA must submit an LIR within five weeks of notification.
- Details of the likely impact of the proposed development on the authority's area, based on their local knowledge and robust evidence of local issues and should list the impacts and their relative importance.
- Provide factual, objective view of the impacts of the proposed development on the area in terms of their positive, neutral, and negative effects.

Mr Jones offered to share a document link containing information with members which gives step by step information on how to engage in the process if they felt it would be helpful.

A discussion took place amongst members and a series of questions and concerns were raised:

- There has been lots of questions regarding access and connecting to the National Grid. Are there details available of landscape works to connect into the National Grid?

Mr Jones confirmed that on the Abertillery proposal there are details of how it will connect to the National Grid and details of how the turbines will get to site.

There are also details available of the decommissioning of the turbines which can be found within the construction management plan.

- Members raised concerns regarding the peat depth survey report that has been carried out. There doesn't seem to be any reference relating to peat and the risk from peat instability and peat landslide from constructing access roads.

Mr Jones confirmed a study of the peat had been carried out. There is a 100-meter variant on the access road, shown on the plan and a 50-meter variant for each turbine. It was suggested that these concerns are raised at an early stage and could also be discussed at the drop-in session.

Mr Jones explained further that a formal declaration has been made to Pedw by the developers stating that they wish to pursue this application. They must submit their application within one year of that declaration.

Therefore, it is essential for the Town Council to make representations at an early stage. These will then be addressed when the application is submitted.

The Chairman thanked Mr Jones for attending the Full Council meeting and for providing and informative update to members.

Resolved: Members noted the update.

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

The mayor provided members with a summary of events and functions attended during the last month.

- 02/10/2023. Attended the Communications Working Group meeting in the Council Chambers.
- 04/10/2023. Attended the Premiere of the Hidden Histories of Blaenavon Film held at the Workmen's Hall.
- 05/10/2023. Attended TCBC's Foundational Economy meeting with Bethan McPherson and Tim Monckton of Torfaen County Borough Council in the Council chambers.
- 05/10/2023. Chaired the Healthy Blaenavon Strategic Partnership Board meeting in the Council Chambers.
- 12/10/2023. Met with Angela Lewis of the Blaenavon Over 50s Forum in the Council chambers.
- 17/10/2023. Attended the Communications Working Group in the Council chambers.
- 17/10/2023. Attended the One Voice Wales Gwent Area Committee meeting.
- 25/10/2023. Attended a meeting with Paul Egan OVW regarding the Welsh Government's Democratic Health in Town and Community Council's project.
- 25/10/2023 Met with Daniel Morse concerning youth engagement with Blaenavon Town Council in the council chambers.

Cllr Matthews also explained that he has had regular meetings with officers and Cllrs throughout the month.

Resolved: Members noted the update.

6. Council Meeting: To confirm the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on the 27th of September 2023.

The minutes were read for accuracy with no amendments being offered.

It was proposed by Cllr Keen and seconded by Cllr Beavan that the minutes be accepted.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Minutes approved 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 9 within the minutes as per the instructions from members. The food hamper to the value of £50 has been compiled and delivered to Victory Church by Sophie Johnson.

Item 12 within the minutes as per the instructions from members. The Chief Officer has written to Sharon Ford at the Workmen's Hall thanking them for their co-operation regarding the Bronwen Lewis concert. Email received from Sharon noting the Council's appreciation.

Item 17 within the minutes as per the instructions from members. The Chief Officer has written to the 'Friends of the Green' and updated them on Town Council's donation of £250, this was transacted to them on the 28/9/23.

On the 5/10/23 together with the mayor the Chief Officer attended a meeting in the Council chambers with TCBC officers relating to their foundation economy programme concerning business grants in particular Broad Street.

Members will be updated fully when this commences and will ask them to attend a Full Council meeting to brief members.

Also, on the 5/10/23 together with the mayor and Cllr Hunt, the Chief Officer attended the Healthy Blaenavon Partnership meeting held in the chamber and chaired by the mayor.

On the 13/10/23 attended a meeting in the Council chamber with Dave Williams from the Heritage Railway regarding event partnership working. It has been arranged for David and members from the events team to attend the next Finance meeting in November 2023 to update members.

On the 17/10/23 the Chief Officer attended the Communications Working Group meeting to discuss the completion of the forthcoming newsletter. This will be discussed further at item 11 within the agenda.

On the 16/10/23 the Chief Officer attended a TCBC licensing hearing held at the Civic Centre Pontypool together with Cllr Wheeler whereby they presented the Town Council's application to vary the current street trading permit. This will be further discussed at item 14 within the agenda.

On the 25/10/23 the Chief Officer together with the mayor held a team's meeting with Paul Egan the Deputy Chief Executive of OVW whereby a discussion took place regarding the Welsh Government's Democratic Health project.

Paul is advising the task and finish group, and he represents the 735 Town and Community Council across Wales. This will be discussed further at item 10 within the agenda.

Blaenavon Town Council have been approached based on our recent projects to be used as an exemplar council in relation to be promoting democratic health within our community.

The Xmas Lights have been delivered and are in storage, The Chief Officer has conferred with his contact at Enerveo who will be arranging the light installation in mid-November and their team will be attending our Xmas light switch on to facilitate the switching on duties.

Also, the installation of the Xmas tree has been confirmed with TCBC for mid-November and this as members are aware will sit adjacent to the Xmas crib in Market Street.

As members are aware, the 2022/23 audit requirements were submitted to Audit Wales on the 19th of July 2023 together with documents relating to their further requests submitted to them at the end of August 2023.

The Chief Officer has received no further requests for information and is awaiting the audit conclusion and opinion. When this is received, members will be updated.

In relation to the Community Review, the Chief Officer has been asked by TCBC to attend a briefing session at the Civic Centre on the 9/11/23 together with other clerks across Torfaen to receive a summary of the Community review task and finish group's draft recommendations for Blaenavon.

The Chief Officer will report back to members officially at the Full Council meeting in November.

Since the last meeting, the Chief Officer has held weekly briefing session with the mayor discussing Council operational and financial matters and also operational meetings with 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.

Cllr Wheeler informed members that he had attended two AGM meetings for Torfaen Community Transport. Members have received the report. There was nothing further to add.

Cllr Hunt informed members that Caitlin Gingell had stood down as curator at Torfaen Museum. There had been discussions between Torfaen and Blaenavon Museum to network within Blaenavon.

Cllr Hunt also informed members that there had been some feelings of disquiet and changes at Bethlehem Chapel. Things are now more settled. The TVA opening doors programme withdrew from Bethlehem Chapel.

Cllr Hunt has been asked by TVA to sit on the steering group panel by TVA for the opening doors programme.

Cllr Matthews updated members that attendance at the Healthy Blaenavon Strategic Partnership meeting was improved on last month. They are planning to hold a community event in the new year which will focus on overcoming negativity in the community.

At a previous Town Council meeting, concerns were raised regarding the direction of the group. It was felt that the Town Council needed more input into the delivery of the group's strategy. Cllr Matthews has requested a meeting with Emma Davies - McIntosh to discuss the agenda for the next meeting scheduled for 9th of November 2023.

Cllr Matthews attended the One Voice Wales Gwent Valleys Area Committee meeting. The main focus of the meeting was a presentation given by Alison Owen, project co-ordinator for the Community Transport Association.

There appears to be a lack of community transport within Blaenavon, this could be discussed further with Kevin Weaver, Torfaen Community Council Group.

There were updates from various Community Councils regarding their current projects and initiatives.

Resolved: Members noted the updates.

9. To receive an update from Sophie Johnson - Community Development and Wellbeing Officer (October 2023).

Members were provided with the following update.

- In partnership with TCBC CELT+ team, the eight week yoga and mindfulness programme began at beginning of September 2023. There has been a very positive response to these sessions from residents of various ages to date.

The sessions are due to end this week, due to the popularity and feedback from the community Sophie has started to look at other ways to deliver these.

- Attended meetings with Healthy Blaenavon partners regarding feedback on the initiative, looking at the ripple effect of the work.
- Attended various meetings with Torfaen Sports Development Officers regarding the sessions that currently run in partnership with them. The sessions that paused over the summer holidays have now restarted with numbers picking up in the Mums and

Daughters' group and teen gym sessions, however, Family Club numbers are lower than before the summer holidays.

- Attended meetings with the Inspire Project team who support young people aged 12-19, regarding future projects for young people in Blaenavon and how we can support these.
- In partnership with TCBC Multiply team and Garnsychan Partnership we have planned a five week 'Cooking on a Budget' course at The Pantry using the recipe books that the Town Council produced last year.

The sessions are now into the fourth week and have been fully booked. Multiply are pleased with the engagement of the sessions and are planning on offering a further five week course to residents.

- Attended the Play Sufficiency Action Meeting with Torfaen Play and other representatives from organisations across Torfaen. The success of the Play and Well Being Camps over the summer was discussed and information was shared on the provision provided by the Town Council over the summer months and throughout the year.
- Attended the Intergenerational Group which took place at the Workmen's Hall with Ysgol Bryn Onnen and members of the community. The event was joined by members of the RBL, created poppies and looked further into the lives of Blaenavon soldiers whose names feature on the cenotaph.
- Alongside Cllrs and officers, Sophie has worked on the Town Council's newsletter in relation to photos, content, printing, and distribution.
- Attended the energy saving event at Workmen's Hall on the 3rd of October arranged by Building Resilient Communities to offer support for the event and engage with residents.
- Made regular school visits. Little Voices group have now resumed after the summer holidays. There have been visits to the Arthur Jenkins care home to engage with residents in arts & craft activities and have planned this year's project around making these visits regularly focusing on the heritage of Blaenavon and the residents' memories of the town.
- Continues to attend various groups and activities to engage with and support residents.
- Planning for the Christmas Lights Switch on and Craft Fayre both taking place in November 2023.

- Attended the Over 50's Forum to discuss the events, projects, and services the Town Council offer, and circulate the activity timetable.
- Pumpkins have been collected from Ty Poeth Farm, with 30 being kindly donated. Collection of these and the goodie bags will commence tomorrow from 10am-2pm, and continues Friday, Monday, and Tuesday of next week.

The winning pumpkin will receive a hamper of prizes. Forgeside RFC have also asked us to promote composting their pumpkins at the community garden. We have had a huge amount of interest already, and based on last year's response, predict this project to be popular.

- Other half term activities include Cook Stars cookery session and a swimming session. Torfaen Play will also be running their Play and Wellbeing Camp Tuesday-Thursday of half term.
- Compiled food bank donations for Victory Church Harvest Festival which will be distributed to those in need in the community via their Trussel Trust Food Bank. The donation was very gratefully received, and the church have asked to pass on their thanks to Councillors.
- Attended volunteer meetings at Bethlehem Chapel to look at the way forward for them and how the council can support.

Resolved: Members noted update.

10. To receive, discuss and make any relevant determinations regarding the Welsh Government's Review of Democratic Health in the Community and Town Council Sector.

The chairman outlined to members that in response to the May 2022 elections, where only 22% of Welsh seats were contested, Rebecca Evans, Minister to Finance and Local Government, issued a written statement and set-up a task force to consider how the sector can be improved.

Members were told that a meeting took place earlier today with Paul Egan, One Voice Wales, to discuss Blaenavon Town Council's role in influencing that task force. Also, the prospect that the Town Council will be invited to share our good practices with the task force.

The Chief Officer added that the email and survey sent by Paul Egan has been forwarded to all members. It is crucial that clerks and members complete the survey to obtain viewpoints right across Wales. The deadline for the surveys to be submitted is 27/11/2023.

Blaenavon Town Council will have a formal invite to speak directly to Ministers and others to demonstrate what Blaenavon Town Council achieves and delivers within the community.

A brief discussion took place amongst members. It was requested if a subcommittee needed to be formed.

The Chief Officer informed members that he will be attending a briefing session on 9/11/2023. The working group which was established for the Community Review will be reconvened.

Following the briefing the Chief Officer will update the working group. The working group will then compile recommendations and update members at November's Full Council meeting.

Resolved: Members noted the update.

11. To receive an update from the Town Council's communications working group regarding the draft newsletter and website.

Cllr Matthews confirmed that the draft newsletter had now been completed.

The Chief Officer has forwarded the draft copy to all members for their perusal. All amendments have been completed, the newsletter has been signed off and authorised to print.

They should be ready for collection by next Tuesday and will be delivered to the community soon after. The project has come well within the set budget of £2,500 with printing costs of £964^{+VAT} together with delivery costs of £240.

A discussion took place amongst members regarding how the newsletter aligns with the Welsh Government's democratic health policy and how it will convey to all residents what the Town Council deliver and how finances are spent for the benefit the community.

The group will continue to meet to review the Town Council website.

Resolved: Members noted the update.

12. To discuss and make any relevant determinations in relation to twinning opportunities for Blaenavon Town Council.

Cllr Matthews updated members with the progress since the presentation regarding twinning with Hrastnik, Slovenia which was made in the last Town Council meeting.

There is to be a remote meeting on Friday 27th November 2023 to further discuss the proposals in more detail.

Members also had a lengthy discussion around the existing twinning with Coutras, France. Members were keen to re-establish contact with the twinning group in Coutras.

Cllr Matthews proposed to contact Coutras as appropriate. This was seconded by Cllr Beavan.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Contact to be reinstated with Coutras as appropriate.

A further discussion took place amongst members with regards to the possibility of twinning with Hrastnik.

Cllr Matthews proposed a meeting with Marko Funkl to discuss the twinning opportunities with Hrastnik. This was seconded by Cllr Jones.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Meeting with Marko Funkl to be arranged.

13. To discuss and make any relevant determinations in relation to the creation of Town Council Youth Representatives in accordance with the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011.

Cllr Matthews explained to members that two youth representatives under the Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 can be appointed.

The process would need to be formally launched and advertised. A selection process would then take place. The selected panel will be able to attend Town Council meetings but will not be able to vote.

A discussion took place amongst members.

It was proposed by Cllr Cowles to implement the youth representative panel in accordance with the Local Government Wales Measure 2011. This was seconded by Cllr Matthews.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Chief Officer to initiate the process.

14. To receive an update and make any relevant determinations in relation to the Town Council's Xmas Market at the Workmen's Hall on the 18th of November 2023.

The Assistant Chief Officer Kerry Jones provided members with the following update.

It was explained that over 40 stalls have confirmed their attendance with G W Crafters and have paid in advance. Santa and the grotto are booked and confirmed with Santa available to visit throughout the day.

Likewise, the face painter and art sessions with Heads 4 Arts have confirmed their attendance. A Christmas film will be shown twice on the day.

Posters for the event have been distributed and shared on social media. The purchasing of selection boxes has started, with a further 300 being collected on Friday this week.

Kerry explained that she will formulate a rota for Cllrs who are available to help on the day of the event and will forward via email asap. The previous two years have been very successful with an excellent attendance which is good for tourism and the economy of the town.

Cllr Hunt informed Kerry that a discussion took place at tonight Workmen's Hall Board meeting. There were questions raised about the number of stalls and space available within the Hall.

Kerry confirmed that the numbers were the same as last year and that an email to confirm this had been sent to Sharon Ford.

Resolved: Members noted the update.

15. To receive an update and make any relevant determinations in relation to the Christmas Light / Carol Service event on the 24th of November 2023.

The Chief Officer provided the following update to members.

In order to support this evening event, a variation has been made to the existing street trading permit. This was authorised by the TCBC licensing panel on the 16/10/2023 and has been forwarded to all members. A Temporary Event Notice has been completed and forwarded to TCBC. Landlord's consent has also been requested from TCBC.

Members were informed that Sophie has compiled an event poster, and this will be shared on social media platforms and throughout the town from the 26/10/23.

The Christmas lights, tree and crib have all been arranged for installation in November. Sophie informed members that the gaming van, teacup ride, food stall, bar and entertainment have all confirmed their attendance, including Shining Stars, Blaenavon Town Band, Blaenavon Male Voice Choir, Blaenavon Santa, Travis George and Pashy Pops.

The purchase of glow sticks and selection boxes had been made to give to children during the evening.

Resolved: Members noted the update.

16. To discuss and make any relevant determinations in relation to a suitable date and location for the next Town Council litter pick.

Cllr Hunt informed members that Oliver litter, and fly tipping prevention officer TCBC has invited Torfaen Wheelers Group to a litter pick session at Garn Lakes on the 9th of November 2023 between 9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m. The invite was extended to all members.

Members discussed the date and location for the next Town Council litter pick.

It was proposed by Cllr Matthews that it will take place on the 3rd of December 2023 at 10.00 a.m. at Forgeside. This was seconded by Cllr Cowles.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Litter pick to take place 3rd December 2023 at Forgeside.

17. To receive an update and make any relevant determinations regarding the forthcoming civic event and awards evening on the 3rd of November 2023

The Chief Officer provided members with the following update.

The Chief Officer along with the Assistant Chief Officer attended a meeting at the Constitutional club on the 24/10/23. Requirements, including room setup and PA system were discussed with staff.

A buffet for eighty attendees has been ordered including a selection of gluten free options. The civic award plaques and booklets have been ordered and will be available for collection early next week. Invites have been sent with 60 already confirming their attendance.

Resolved. Members noted the update.

18. 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.

Two projects were submitted to members by Sophie Johnson for their perusal in advance of the meeting. Sophie provided an overview to members.

- **Coffee and Craft Sessions in Partnership with Stori**

To continue to work in partnership with charity Stori (previously known as Hafan Cymru) to deliver a weekly coffee and craft session at Blaenavon Resource Centre, free to all residents. The Town Council will feature on the posters and marketing for the session.

The sessions are open to all residents, and the crafts will vary every week ranging from creating bird feeders, decorating canvas bags, windmills, flowerpots, origami and themed crafts.

Members had previously agreed to support the sessions on a six-month trial basis to gauge popularity and impact on residents.

Over the past six months the sessions regularly have around 8/10 participants, with an additional 3/4 children taking part each week during the school holidays. By continuing to

support these with varied and exciting craft activities, plus publicity, we are hoping to continue to attract residents and give them the opportunity to take part.

A brief discussion took place amongst members.

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

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Project authorised.

- **Early Years Music and Movement Group – Shining Stars Academy**

To work in partnership with a Blaenavon based business, Shining Stars Academy, to subsidise the cost of their early year's music and movement group classes, enabling more families to attend and benefit from these, for a trial period of three months, January – March.

Feedback from the community has shown a lack of access to activities for parents with young children, with the cost being one of the barriers. By subsidising the cost of the sessions, from £5 per child to £2.50 per child, we can help make it easier for families to attend these classes.

A discussion took place amongst members.

It was proposed by Cllr Cowles to support the project with a caveat that the subsidised sessions apply to Blaenavon residents only. This was seconded by Cllr Jones.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Project authorised with caveat to only support Blaenavon Residents.

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

The Chief Officer had forwarded the planning applications to members ahead of the meeting and they were presented as follows.

- **DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED:** Alteration/extension to first /ground floor.
- **LOCATION:** 20 lower Garn Terrace, Blaenavon, Torfaen

Resolved. No objections from members.

- **DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED:** Two storey rear extension.
- **LOCATION:** 75 Llanover Road, Blaenavon, Torfaen.

Resolved. No objections from members.

- **DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED:** Reduction to tree.

- **LOCATION:** Glenn Dale, Cwmavon Road, Blaenavon.

Resolved. No objections from members.

20. To receive, discuss and make a determination regarding donation requests.

The Chief Officer forwarded the donation requests to members prior to the meeting for their perusal.

Members discussed the donation requests, namely:

- Shinning Stars Music Academy – Rebecca Osmond

Rebecca requested financial assistance of £250 from the Town Council to support the community with a sensory play provision.

A discussion took place amongst members.

It was proposed by Cllr Harris and seconded by Cllr Cowles to that a donation of £250 be authorised.

All members in agreement.

Resolved. Donation of £250 authorised. Chief Officer to facilitate the transaction.

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

The Chief Officer forwarded to members the relevant email correspondence prior to the meeting for their perusal. There were three requests.

- **Blaenavon Blues AFC** – Sponsorship for the annual firework display.

A discussion took place amongst members regarding the sponsorship request which was for the forthcoming firework display.

It was proposed by Cllr Cowles and seconded by Cllr Keen that the request be supported with a £250 award.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Donation of £250 authorised. Chief Officer to facilitate the transaction.

- **Mic Morris Trust** – a request for £1500 for the purchase of medals.

A discussion took place amongst members regarding the donation request which was for £1500 to purchase medals for the Mic Morris 10k race 2024.

It was decided to discuss the request further during the budget setting process for next year.

This was proposed by Cllr Matthews and seconded by Cllr Cowles.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Donation not supported at this time. Deferred for further discussions in line with budget setting process.

- **Torfaen Play Service** - Partnership Working Christmas Card Competition.

A brief discussion took place amongst members to work in partnership to design and produce a series of Christmas Cards which will be created by children and young people in the Blaenavon area.

There will be a selection of ten cards, with one overall winner. This will then be presented at Blaenavon Council at an agreed time and date. There would be no additional cost to the town council.

A brief discussion took place amongst members regarding the partnership working request.

It was proposed by Cllr Harris and seconded by Cllr Jones to support the request.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Partnership project working request approved.

22. Other Matters (At the discretion of the Chairman)

None presented.

Meeting ended at 20:06 hrs.

Signed Chairman: *W. Matthews*

Date: 22/11/23.