



17th 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 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 26th 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.

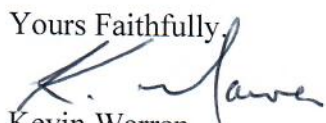
Members of the public have the right to ask questions at Council meetings and to speak in Welsh or English, provided that at least three working days' notice in writing of the question has been provided to the Chief Officer.

Agenda

1. To nominate and make a determination to elect a Chairperson to transact the business recorded within the agenda.
2. To receive any questions from the public.
3. To receive and accept apologies.
4. **Declarations of Interest:** Members are invited to declare any interests they may have in any items on the agenda.
5. To receive a policing update from Sgt Craig Ellis (**Gwent Police**)
6. **Mayor's Announcements:** To receive the Mayor's announcements.
7. **Council Meeting:** To confirm the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on the 22nd of March 2023.
8. **Chief Officer's Update:** To receive the Chief Officer's update.
9. To receive Cllr updates regarding recent attendance at outside bodies committee meetings.
10. To receive an update from Sophie Johnson - Community Development and Wellbeing Officer (**April 2023**)

11. To receive, discuss and note the Internal Audit report for the 2022/23 financial period.
12. To discuss and make any relevant determinations regarding the proposed Bronwen Lewis concert at the Workmen's Hall in September 2023.
13. To discuss and make any relevant determinations regarding the donation request from Mr Walter Waygood regarding the forthcoming photography exhibition.
14. 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)**
15. To discuss, consider and make any relevant determinations for recognition of achievement to Elliot Whiting, Sam Warrilow, Ryan Keen and Gareth Priest who recently climbed 5,500 meters to Mount Everest base camp to raise monies for the sepsis charity. **(Cllr Keen)**
16. To receive, discuss and make a determination regarding a quote for office equipment from Orbits IT.
17. To receive, discuss and make a determination regarding the purchase of hybrid meeting hardware from Owl Labs UK.
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.
 - Sophie Johnson (CWDO) – Coffee and Craft Project.
 - Sophie Johnson (CWDO - Animals Interactive Well-Being Project (Amended)
19. To receive, discuss and make a determination regarding planning applications.
 - **SPRI/22/P/0861/HAZ**
 - **SCUL/23/P/0173/HH**
20. To receive, discuss and make a determination regarding donation requests.
21. To receive, discuss and make any relevant determinations concerning items relating to correspondence.
 - Letter from Blaenavon Rugby Club.
 - Letter from Ty - Hafan.
 - E-mail received from Dawson Evans - TCBC
22. Other Matters **(At the discretion of the Chairman)**

Yours Faithfully,


Kevin Warren

Chief Officer.

Blaenavon Town Council.



Summary (Notes) of the Full Council meeting of Blaenavon Town Council held on **Wednesday the 26th 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 Full Council meeting to be held on **Wednesday the 24th of May 2023**.

In attendance:

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

Officers: Kevin Warren (Chief Officer), Kerry Jones (Assistant Chief Officer).

Visitors: None present.

Members of public: None present.

The Full Council meeting was opened at 6:30pm by the Chief Officer, Kevin Warren who welcomed everyone and expressed thanks for attendance.

Mr Warren explained to members as there was no Mayor or Deputy Mayor in attendance members needed to nominate a chairperson for the meeting.

1. To nominate and make a determination to elect a Chairperson to transact the business recorded within the agenda.

A discussion took place amongst members to elect a Chairperson to transact the Council business.

Cllr Nathan Matthews was nominated by Cllr Beavan. This was seconded by Cllr Cowles.

All members in agreement.

Cllr Matthews assumed the position of Chairperson for the remainder of the meeting.

Resolved. Cllr Matthews elected as Chairperson.

2.To receive any questions from the public.

None received.

3.To receive and accept apologies.

The Chief Officer informed the Chairperson that the following apologies had been received.

- Cllr Jones - Holiday.
- Cllr James – Maternity leave.
- Cllr Harris - Holiday.
- Cllr Evans – Work commitment.

It was proposed by Cllr Wheeler and seconded by Cllr Hunt that the apologies be accepted.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Apologies accepted.

4.Declarations of Interest

The following declarations of interest were raised.

- Cllr Keen – item 15 - Personal Interest.

Resolved: Members noted the declaration of interest.

5.To receive a policing update from Sgt Craig Ellis (Gwent Police)

Sgt Ellis did not attend the meeting. No apologies had been received. A discussion took place amongst members regarding the non-attendance.

It was agreed for the Chief Officer to write to Sgt Ellis and ask for an explanation to his non-attendance and to invite him to a future Full Council meeting.

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

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Chief Officer to write Sgt Ellis (Gwent Police).

7. Council Meeting: To confirm the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on the 22nd of March 2023.

The minutes were read for accuracy with no amendments.

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

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Minutes approved as a true and accurate record.

13. To discuss and make any relevant determinations regarding the donation request from Mr Walter Waygood regarding the forthcoming photography exhibition.

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

A discussion took place amongst members regarding the request which was a request for £994 as part funding for an art exhibition and book publication namely 'Family of Blaenavon' that is scheduled to take place between July and October 2023 in the Workmen's Hall Blaenavon.

It was proposed by Cllr Parfitt and seconded by Cllr Beavan that the donation request be supported with a £994 award.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Members approved a donation request of £994. Chief Officer to facilitate the transaction and update Mr Walter Waygood.

14. 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).

Cllr Matthews informed members that the Town council working group had held a meeting earlier this evening with Forgeside Rugby Club Community Garden, Cllr Matthews provided members with an update.

Cllr Matthews explained that planning for both events were in the advance stages and are progressing well. Many of the attractions have now confirmed their attendance and include Ice-cream van, music bands, burger van, bar, disco, inflatables and ride, craft market and street food stalls and mobile port -a- loos to list a few.

Bunting, Coronation flag and cardboard life sized King Charles had arrived and will be taken to the grounds on Saturday the 6th of May 2023.

It was suggested to carry out a litter pick at Forgeside Rugby Club grounds at the end of the event. Cllr Beavan agreed to make the arrangements and to transport all litter picking equipment to the event.

Members commented that that both events looked to be excellent community family days with good partnership working, demonstrating to the community of Blaenavon the good work of the Town Council.

Members also discussed the need to attend and support both Coronation events especially at the set-up and clean up times.

The Chief Officer added that the current spend to date is £2,731 which is well under the agreed budget and excellent value for money.

Bunting will be installed in Broad Street on Friday the 28th of April 2023 and remain in place throughout the summer.

A rota for Cllr availability of attendance on both days was proposed by Cllr Matthews. This was seconded by Cllr Hunt.

All members in agreement.

A press release has been drafted in readiness for distribution to local press offices. This was proposed by Cllr Cowles and seconded by Cllr Hunt.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Availability of attendance rota to be drafted. Chief Officer to forward press release to local newspaper press offices.

15. To discuss, consider and make any relevant determinations for recognition of achievement to Elliot Whiting, Sam Warrilow, Ryan Keen and Gareth Priest who recently climbed 5,500 meters to Mount Everest base camp to raise monies for the sepsis charity. (Cllr Keen).

Cllr Keen informed members that in May 2018 Skyla Whiting passed away aged 5 years from sepsis. In 2018 a group of fundraisers climbed the Welsh Three Peaks and raised £3k for the Sepsis charity.

In March 2023 the group flew out to climb Mount Everest, completing twelve eight-hour days of trekking to reach Mount Everest base camp. They raised a further £8.5k for the charity.

Cllr Keen suggested that letters of recognition could be sent to all four men and consideration given to a donation to the Sepsis Charity.

Cllr Cowles proposed a donation of £250 for the Sepsis charity and four letters of recognition be sent to each of the men. This was seconded by Cllr Parfitt.

All members in agreement.

Resolved. Chief Officer to compile letters of recognition and facilitate the transaction of £250 to the Sepsis charity.

16. To receive, discuss and make a determination regarding a quote for office equipment from Orbits IT.

Prior to the meeting the Chief Officer forwarded to all members a quotation from Orbits I.T for the purchase of IT hardware namely a laptop and two monitors.

The current office equipment is very old and problematic. Orbits I.T have supplied the council previously and have found the equipment and I.T support to be excellent. The quotation is £1,222 which is well within the set budget.

Cllr Parfitt proposed the purchase of the office equipment. This was seconded by Cllr Beavan.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: IT quote from Orbits IT authorised. Chief Officer to transact contract and payment.

17. To receive, discuss and make a determination regarding the purchase of hybrid meeting hardware from Owl Labs UK.

The Chief Officer forwarded to all members a link to view the Owl meeting hardware system and explained that this system is in use in other local Community Councils which was impressive.

The Town Council must facilitate hybrid meetings in accordance with Section 47 of the Local Government and Election's (Wales) Act 2021.

Previous quotations had been received to supply cameras and microphones within the chamber varying from £3 - £4k. Currently we are using a laptop which is not ideal and can be troublesome. The cost of the Owl system is £1,108. A vast saving on the previous option.

Cllr Hunt proposed to purchase the Owl equipment. This was seconded by Cllr Parfitt.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Chief Officer to transact the purchase of the Owl hybrid meeting system.

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. The Chief Officer provided an overview to members.

- Animals Interactive Well-Being Session.

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

The one hour twenty-minute well-being sessions involve 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 to be confirmed 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.

Based on feedback from the community we would now like to extend the session and provide lunch for the children attending. This will allow more time for the children and adults to

socialise, engage and provide a balanced meal for the children. The lunch bag will be provided by a local business.

A brief discussion took place amongst members.

It was proposed by Cllr Parfitt and seconded by Cllr Keen.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Project authorised.

- Coffee and Craft Sessions – In Partnership with Stori (Previously Hafan Cymru)

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.

Stori began as Hafan Cymru more than thirty years ago, to help people living in fear of domestic abuse. Today, they support anyone in a situation that makes it hard to live safely at home. That could be due to mental health problems, substance misuse, domestic violence, or other challenges.

They provide the space, support, and skills for those times when people are ready to build themselves a brighter, safer future. The sessions are open to all residents, and the crafts will vary every week ranging from creating bird feeders, decorating canvas bags, windmills, flowerpots, and some Coronation themed crafts.

The sessions have been running from the Resource Centre for a few months and have a small group following. By supporting these with more varied and exciting craft activities, plus, publicity, we are hoping to attract more residents and give them the opportunity to take part.

These partnership sessions will run on a six-month trial basis to gauge popularity and success.

A brief discussion took place amongst members.

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

All members in agreement

Resolved: Project authorised.

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

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

- **DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED:** Hazardous Substance application for the storage and or use of hazardous substances as defined in tables A, B, C, D and E of the application at Water Treatment Products LTD
- **LOCATION:** Unit 1 Gilchrist Thomas Court, Blaenavon, Torfaen

Proposed by Cllr Wheeler and seconded by Cllr Beavan.

All members in agreement.

Resolved. No objections from members.

- **DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED:** Detached garage.
- **LOCATION:** 11 Rowan Way, Woodland View, Blaenavon

Proposed by Cllr Beavan and seconded by Cllr Wheeler.

All members in agreement.

Resolved. No objections from members.

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

None received.

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

The Chief Officer requested permission from the Chairman to present two matters before members which he explained were time sensitive.

This was authorised by the Chairman.

The Chief Officer informed members that at the last Town Council meeting Caroline Genever – Jones, TCBC provided members with an overview regarding a Community Review.

The Chief officer added that on the 25th of April 2023 he had received the Community Review draft Terms of Reference from TCBC which had been forwarded to all members.

It is the duty of TCBC to carry out a Community Review every 10 years, the last being carried out in 2012 and implemented in 2013.

There are concerns over timings with only a four-week period to submit representations regarding the terms of reference. Cllr Matthews proposed to setup a working group to go through the documentation and feed back to Cllrs.

The Chief Officer added that there is a huge input required for an in-depth response which needs to be well managed. Members will require the response to consider by the next finance meeting which is the 10th of May 2023 in order that it can be signed off and forwarded to TCBC by the 25th of May 2023.

Cllr Hunt proposed to set-up a working group, this was seconded by Cllr Wheeler.

All members in agreement.

Resolved. Community Review working group to be established.

Cllr Matthews asked members who they wanted to sit on the working group. Cllr Cowles informed members he is unable to sit on the group as he is also a Borough Councillor, and this is not permitted.

Cllr Matthews proposed to join the group this was seconded by Cllr Hunt.

Cllr Hunt proposed to join the group this was seconded by Cllr Wheeler.

Cllr Wheeler proposed to join the group this was seconded by Cllr Beavan.

The Chief Officer will be the 4th group member.

The working group was established and proposed by Cllr Matthews and seconded by Cllr Keen. The meeting date would be the 3rd of May 2023 following the Annual General Meeting.

All members in agreement.

Resolved. Working Group members agreed.

The Chief Officer requested from members if they would consider making a determination relating to the purchase of a gift for Cllr James, who has recently given birth to her first child called Lowri.

A discussion to place between members and it proposed by Cllr Keen and seconded by Cllr Beavan to purchase a gift voucher to the value of £50.

All members in agreement.

Resolved. Chief Officer to purchase a £50 gift voucher for Cllr James.

Meeting ended at 19.58 hrs.



BLAENAVON TOWN COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 26th of April 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) L. Cowles, A. Beavan, J. Hunt, S. Keen, I. Parfitt, T. Porter, M. Wheeler.

Officers: Kevin Warren (Chief Officer), Kerry Jones (Assistant Chief Officer).

Visitors: None present.

Members of public: None Present

The Full Council meeting was opened at 6:30pm by the Chief Officer, Kevin Warren who welcomed everyone and expressed thanks for attendance.

Mr Warren explained to members as there was no Mayor or Deputy Mayor in attendance, therefore members needed to nominate a chairperson for the meeting.

1. To nominate and make a determination to elect a chairperson to transact the business recorded within the agenda.

A discussion took place amongst members to elect a chairperson to transact the Council business.

Cllr Nathan Matthews was nominated by Cllr Beavan. This was seconded by Cllr Cowles.

All members in agreement.

Cllr Matthews assumed the position of chairperson for the remainder of the meeting.

Resolved. Cllr Matthews elected as chairperson.

2. To receive any questions from the public.

None received.

3.To receive and accept apologies.

The Chief Officer informed the chairperson that the following apologies had been received.

- Cllr Jones - Holiday.
- Cllr James - Maternity leave.
- Cllr Harris - Holiday.
- Cllr Evans - Work commitment.

It was proposed by Cllr Wheeler and seconded by Cllr Hunt that the apologies be accepted.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Apologies accepted.

4.Declarations of Interest

The following declarations of interest were raised.

- Cllr Keen – item 15 - Personal Interest.

5.To receive a policing update from Sgt Craig Ellis (Gwent Police)

Sgt Ellis did not attend the meeting. No apologies had been received. A discussion took place amongst members regarding the non-attendance.

It was agreed for the Chief Officer to write to Sgt Ellis and ask for an explanation to his non-attendance and to invite him to a future Full Council meeting.

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

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Chief Officer to write Sgt Ellis (Gwent Police).

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

The Mayor, Cllr Jones provided apologies for the meeting. Mayor's update deferred.

Resolved: Members noted the update.

7. Council Meeting: To confirm the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on the 22nd of February 2023.

The minutes were read for accuracy with no amendments.

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

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Minutes approved as a true and accurate record.

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

The Chief officer provided the following update for members.

Item 4 within the minutes as per the instructions from members.

On the 23rd of March 2023 the Chief Officer updated members that he had written to Sharon Ford, Chairman of the Board of Directors at the Workmen's Hall requesting the following.

- A copy of the board meeting minutes dated the 15th of March 2023.
- An explanation why two of the board members on the 13th of March 2023, had no knowledge of the planned maintenance listed for the 7th of May 2023.

The Chief Officer outlined to members that they were copied into this request. As members are also aware, a response was received from Sharon Ford on the 28th of March 2023.

Item 11 within the minutes as per the instructions from members.

On the 23rd of March 2023 the Chief Officer transacted the three ratified payments to the following organisations.

- The Pantry - Awarded £5k.
- Forgeside RFC Community Garden - Awarded £5k.
- Blaenavon Blues AFC - Awarded £5k.

Having received an update from Bethlehem Chapel, £5k has also been transacted to them. So, all the Community Brew transactions are now completed and have been drawn down from last year's budget.

Item 12 within the minutes as per the instructions from members, the Bronwen Lewis contract has now been signed, and this will be discussed in more detail at item 12 within the agenda.

Item 13 within the minutes as per the determination by members at the March 2023 Full Council meeting.

The partnership working arrangements with Forgeside Rugby Club and the Heritage Centre regarding the King's Coronation events has progressed. This will be discussed in more detail at item 14 within the agenda.

Item 16 within the minutes as per the determination and instruction by members at the March 2023 Full Council meeting regarding donation requests, transactions of £250 to the following organisations have been completed.

- Blaenavon Netball Club
- Ty - Hafan Children's Hospice
- Forgeside Rugby Club

Item 18 within the minutes as per the determination and instruction by members at the March 2023 Full Council meeting.

On the 24th of March 2023 on behalf of the Council the Chief Officer arranged the delivery of a hand tied bouquet of flowers to Cllr James.

Cllr James was extremely grateful regarding the gesture by her colleagues at the Town Council and stated that they really cheered her up.

Also, on behalf of the Council, the Chief Officer sent a get-well card to Mr Alf Morgan regarding his recent operation and stay in hospital. We have been informed that Alf is now out of hospital and is recovering well.

On the 17th of April 2023 together with the Town Council's appointed internal auditor Mr Andy Smith (Community Finance Solutions) the Chief Officer conducted the end of year internal audit covering the 2022/23 financial period.

This has been forwarded to members. The internal audit report will be discussed further at item 11 within the agenda.

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

Cllr Parfitt enquired about the Community Brew funding. The Chief Officer explained that the service level agreement with TCBC ended on the 31st of March 2023.

There is a planned evaluation meeting to follow. An external company has been appointed to evaluate the participatory budget projects across Gwent. The Chief Officer and project lead Cllr Marc Harris have delivered an overview of the project.

Resolved: Members noted the update.

9. To receive Cllr updates regarding recent attendance at outside bodies committee meetings.

Cllr Wheeler informed members that he attended Forgeside Rugby Club community garden anniversary event on the 26th of April 2023 and provided a brief overview.

Cllr Wheeler explained that there were several people in attendance including Geraint, Chairman of Forgeside Rugby Club, Victoria, the garden designer, and members of the Royal

Horticultural Society (RHS). A photographer made a video for the RHS and children from the local school planted a tree.

Cllr Wheeler was interviewed for the video on behalf of the Town Council and expressed how good the event was.

Cllr Hunt informed members that he attended a meeting for Torfaen Museum Trust who have been successful in their bid for a 'Warm Space' in Torfaen.

There have been issues with auditing and Cllr Morgan had to step down due to a conflict of interest as a Cllr of finance for TCBC.

There have been discussions to decommission the historical musical instrument collection to free storage space.

Cllr Porter attended Blaenavon Heritage Primary School governors meeting last term. There had been a bullying incident and one pupil was expelled. The school has implemented a plan to deal with the issue.

The school budget has a surplus of 6.1k and forecast 3.1k for next year. The leisure centre is looking to extend their opening hours, nothing is confirmed yet.

Resolved: Members noted the update.

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

Sophie provided the following update to members which was delivered by the Chief Officer.

Second swimming session on 14th April 2023 was a great success with sixty-five attendees, an increase from February's session. Feedback from all involved and the community afterwards was hugely positive with everyone who took part wanting the sessions to continue. Another session is arranged for the next half term holiday which is Friday 2nd June 2023.

Torfaen Leisure Trust have now confirmed they have secured funding to provide the pool free of charge, for this session, and a further five throughout the year. This means the only cost to the Council is the coach hire which is £180.

There was a fantastic response from the community for the Easter Heritage Trail, over 70 children completed the trail alongside mums, dads, grandparents, aunts, and uncles, it's estimate over 150 in total. It was great to invite them into the chamber to receive their certificates and eggs and gain an insight into their thoughts on the trail.

Positive feedback was received from every participant, stating that it was a lovely opportunity to discover the heritage of the town and a great multi-generational activity to do with their families and friends.

The trail increased footfall in Broad Street with adults commenting that they hadn't visited Broad Street for several years, and they weren't aware of certain new business in the town.

Cook Stars cookery sessions were a success again this half term. There will be four sessions over the summer holidays. Due to the demand for these, Cook Stars will be running their regular (payable) cookery sessions from Bethlehem Chapel every other week starting from May 2023, which is a great addition to activities on offer in the town.

Play and Wellbeing Camp run by Torfaen Play and funded by the Town Council ran over the Easter holidays and was fully booked. Sophie, Councillors Keen, Harris and Matthews visited the site and were provided with an update from Julian Davenne, Play Service Manager.

The provision continues to go from strength to strength with great uptake, facilities and varied activities for the children attending. These camps are also invaluable to parents during school holidays.

Sophie has been involved in the preparations for various Coronation events and activities, including, arrangements with Forgeside RFC for the Coronation Garden party, Heritage Centre Coronation craft fayre, schools' poetry competition, street party decoration packs and competition, plus the business competition.

The Council have now taken over the funding and running of Befriending Cinema Club, with support from Torfaen Community Connectors. The sessions are very popular with consistently high numbers every month.

Feedback from these sessions has highlighted the need for a similar evening session / social event to help combat loneliness and isolation during this time.

Torfaen Community Connectors have expressed an interest in running an evening session in partnership with the Town Council in the same way as the Befriending Cinema Club is run. Sophie will update Councillors when details are available.

Talks with Torfaen Sports Development are continuing regarding the extra Over 60s provision. They are also looking to provide in Blaenavon, in partnership with the Town Council gym sessions for 11–16-year-olds. Sophie will update Councillors when further information has been received.

Sophie has attended meetings with Building Resilient Communities to discuss ways to continue partnership working, they are keen to be involved in projects that the Town Council are providing over the next year.

Torfaen Adult Community Learning have requested our assistance with ensuring Blaenavon residents can overcome barriers to attending a health and wellbeing event they are holding in Cwmbran on 31st May 2023.

Sophie is currently assessing local interest in attending, if there is enough interest then Torfaen Adult Community Learning will provide a free bus service for residents which will be booked, managed, and attended on the day by Sophie.

Sophie visited Abersychan Comprehensive school to meet with Rob Borrowdale, the Family and Community Outreach lead, who runs their Food Hub once a week.

They currently have between 20/30 families relying on this, a large amount of these is from Blaenavon, this has increased since the provision started in September.

Due to national issues with their suppliers (Eastern Valley Foodbank) they no longer receive donations from two out of their three original suppliers. Ways were discussed how the Town Council could potentially support the school and donated items which were very gratefully received. Further details will be provided to Members later regarding potential involvement.

Sophie is currently making enquiries with several activity providers / institutions regarding summer activities and trips for the community based on feedback from residents.

Resolved: Members noted the update.

11. To receive, discuss and note the Internal Audit report for the 2022/23 financial period.

The report was forwarded to members prior to the meeting for their perusal. The Chief Officer provided members an overview of the report.

This was a full audit, carried out by the Town Council internal auditor Mr Andy Smith. The report is very positive and shows good financial governance. The report was unqualified.

The feedback received from Mr Smith, who is financial auditor to several Community Councils was excellent, stating that the Town Council are way above other Community Council's in terms of budget setting.

Cllr Matthews referenced the income and expenses method instead of receipts and payments. The Chief Officer explained that from June 2023 this will be piloted. Mr Smith will attend a future meeting and present to members regarding the matter.

Resolved: Members noted the update.

12. To discuss and make any relevant determinations regarding the proposed Bronwen Lewis concert at the Workmen's Hall in September 2023.

The Chief Officer provided members with an update.

Whilst there had been difficulties with communication from the Hall which delayed proceedings, the contract with Handshake Ltd has now been signed and booking confirmed.

A copy of the contract and rider tech information has been forwarded to the Hall for their perusal. A response has been received confirming that the Hall has no issues with the requirements.

A breakdown of costs from the Hall has been received which is £535 in addition to the contract costs of £3,500 plus VAT.

Cllr Beavan added she believed it would be a sell-out event and that perhaps closer to the time we could advise attendees as to where to park. The Chief Officer will produce a briefing document and local car parks will be listed.

Kerry informed members that she had a meeting planned with Terry Gardener next week to discuss ticketing and Hall capacity.

The concert will be advertised on local social media groups and posters distributed to businesses and notice boards within the town.

Handshake Ltd have agreed not to promote the concert initially, enabling residents the opportunity to purchase tickets first.

Resolved: Members noted the update.

13. To discuss and make any relevant determinations regarding the donation request from Mr Walter Waygood regarding the forthcoming photography exhibition.

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

A discussion took place amongst members regarding the request which was a request for £994 as part funding for an art exhibition and book publication namely 'Family of Blaenavon' that is scheduled to take place between July and October 2023 in the Workmen's Hall Blaenavon.

It was proposed by Cllr Parfitt and seconded by Cllr Beavan that the donation request be supported with a £994 award.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Members approved a donation request of £994. Chief Officer to facilitate the transaction and update Mr Walter Waygood.

14. 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).

Cllr Matthews informed members that the Town council working group had held a meeting earlier this evening with Forgeside Rugby Club Community Garden, Cllr Matthews provided members with an update.

Cllr Matthews explained that planning for both events were in the advanced stages and are progressing well. Many of the attractions have now confirmed their attendance and include Ice-cream van, music bands, burger van, bar, disco, inflatables and ride, craft market and street food stalls and mobile port -a- loos to list a few.

Bunting, Coronation flag and cardboard life-sized King Charles had arrived and will be taken to the grounds on Saturday the 6th of May 2023.

It was suggested to carry out a litter pick at Forgeside Rugby Club grounds at the end of the event. Cllr Beavan agreed to make the arrangements and to transport all litter picking equipment to the event.

Members commented that both events looked to be excellent community family days with good partnership working, demonstrating to the community of Blaenavon the good work of the Town Council.

Members also discussed the need to attend and support both Coronation events especially at the set-up and clean up times.

The Chief Officer added that the current spend to date is £2,731 which is well under the agreed budget and excellent value for money.

Bunting will be installed in Broad Street on Friday the 28th of April 2023 and remain in place throughout the summer.

A rota for Cllr availability of attendance on both days was proposed by Cllr Matthews. This was seconded by Cllr Hunt.

All members in agreement.

A press release has been drafted in readiness for distribution to local press offices. This was proposed by Cllr Cowles and seconded by Cllr Hunt.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Availability of attendance rota to be drafted. Chief Officer to forward press release to local newspaper press offices.

15. To discuss, consider and make any relevant determinations for recognition of achievement to Elliot Whiting, Sam Warrilow, Ryan Keen and Gareth Priest who recently climbed 5,500 meters to Mount Everest base camp to raise monies for the sepsis charity. (Cllr Keen).

Cllr Keen informed members that in May 2018 Skyla Whiting passed away aged 5 years from sepsis. In 2018, a group of fundraisers climbed the Welsh Three Peaks and raised £3k for the Sepsis charity.

In March 2023 the group flew out to climb Mount Everest, completing twelve eight-hour days of trekking to reach Mount Everest base camp. They raised a further £8.5k for the charity.

Cllr Keen suggested that letters of recognition could be sent to all four men and consideration given to a donation to the Sepsis Charity.

Cllr Cowles proposed a donation of £250 for the Sepsis charity and four letters of recognition be sent to each of the men. This was seconded by Cllr Parfitt.

All members in agreement.

Resolved. Chief Officer to compile letters of recognition and facilitate the transaction of £250 to the Sepsis charity.

16. To receive, discuss and make a determination regarding a quote for office equipment from Orbits IT.

Prior to the meeting the Chief Officer forwarded to all members a quotation from Orbits I.T for the purchase of IT hardware namely a laptop and two monitors.

The current office equipment is very old and problematic. Orbits I.T have supplied the council previously and have found the equipment and I.T support to be excellent. The quotation is £1,222 which is well within the set budget.

Cllr Parfitt proposed the purchase of the office equipment. This was seconded by Cllr Beavan.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: IT quote from Orbits IT authorised. Chief Officer to transact contract and payment.

17. To receive, discuss and make a determination regarding the purchase of hybrid meeting hardware from Owl Labs UK.

The Chief Officer forwarded to all members a link to view the Owl meeting hardware system and explained that this system is in use in other local Community Councils which was impressive.

The Town Council must facilitate hybrid meetings in accordance with Section 47 of the Local Government and Election's (Wales) Act 2021.

Previous quotations had been received to supply cameras and microphones within the chamber varying from £3 - £4k. Currently the Council are using a laptop which is not ideal and can be troublesome. The cost of the Owl system is £1,108. A vast saving on the previous option.

Cllr Hunt proposed to purchase the Owl equipment. This was seconded by Cllr Parfitt.

All members in agreement.

Resolved: Chief Officer to transact the purchase of the Owl hybrid meeting system.

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. The Chief Officer provided an overview to members.

- Animals Interactive Well-Being Session.

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

The one hour twenty-minute well-being sessions involve 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 to be confirmed 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.

Based on feedback from the community we would now like to extend the session and provide lunch for the children attending.

This will allow more time for the children and adults to socialise, engage and provide a balanced meal for the children. The lunch bag will be provided by a local business.

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.

- Coffee and Craft Sessions – In Partnership with Stori (Previously Hafan Cymru)

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.

Stori began as Hafan Cymru more than thirty years ago, to help people living in fear of domestic abuse. Today, they support anyone in a situation that makes it hard to live safely at home. That could be due to mental health problems, substance misuse, domestic violence, or other challenges.

They provide the space, support, and skills for those times when people are ready to build themselves a brighter, safer future. The sessions are open to all residents, and the crafts will

vary every week ranging from creating bird feeders, decorating canvas bags, windmills, flowerpots, and some Coronation themed crafts.

The sessions have been running from the Resource Centre for a few months and have a small group following. By supporting these with more varied and exciting craft activities, plus, publicity, we are hoping to attract more residents and give them the opportunity to take part.

These partnership sessions will run on a six-month trial basis to gauge popularity and success.

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.

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

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

- **DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED:** Hazardous Substance application for the storage and or use of hazardous substances as defined in tables A, B, C, D and E of the application at Water Treatment Products LTD
- **LOCATION:** Unit 1 Gilchrist Thomas Court, Blaenavon, Torfaen.

Proposed by Cllr Wheeler and seconded by Cllr Beavan.

All members in agreement.

Resolved. No objections from members.

- **DEVELOPMENT PROPOSED:** Detached garage.
- **LOCATION:** 11 Rowan Way, Woodland View, Blaenavon

Proposed by Cllr Beavan and seconded by Cllr Wheeler.

All members in agreement.

Resolved. No objections from members.

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

None received.

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

- Letter from Ty - Hafan.

The Chief Officer explained to members that he had received a letter of thanks from Ty Hafan thanking the Town Council for their generous donation.

- Letter from Blaenavon Rugby Club.

A letter from Mr Mike Doolan, Blaenavon RFC has been received thanking the Town Council for the grant received via the Community Brew project submission along with photographs of the fence works.

- E-mail received from Dawson Evans – TCBC

Cllr Cowles as per the request by members contacted Mr Dawson Evans (TCBC) with regards to the planned maintenance on the 7th of May 2023 at the Workmen's Hall.

A response has been received from Mr Evans who suggested that TCBC were not aware of any maintenance taking place.

The Town Council have now moved forward with two planned events to celebrate the King's coronation so the matter in relation to the Hall was now not relevant. The reply from Mr Evans is for information purposes only.

Resolved: Members noted the update.

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

The Chief Officer requested permission from the Chairman to present two matters before members which he explained were time sensitive.

This was authorised by the Chairman.

The Chief Officer informed members that at the last Town Council meeting Caroline Genever – Jones, TCBC provided members with an overview regarding a Community Review.

The Chief officer added that on the 25th of April 2023 he had received the Community Review draft Terms of Reference from TCBC which had been forwarded to all members. It is the duty of TCBC to carry out a Community Review every 10 years, the last being carried out in 2012 and implemented in 2013.

There are concerns over timings with only a four-week period to submit representations regarding the terms of reference. Cllr Matthews proposed to setup a working group to go through the documentation and feed back to Cllrs.

The Chief Officer added that there is a huge input required for an in-depth response which needs to be well managed. Members will require the response to consider by the next finance

meeting which is the 10th of May 2023 in order that it can be signed off and forwarded to TCBC by the 25th of May 2023.

Cllr Hunt proposed to set-up a working group, this was seconded by Cllr Wheeler.

All members in agreement.

Resolved. Community Review working group to be established.

Cllr Matthews asked members who they wanted to sit on the working group. Cllr Cowles informed members he is unable to sit on the group as he is also a Borough Councillor, and this is not permitted.

- Cllr Matthews proposed to join the group this was seconded by Cllr Hunt.
- Cllr Hunt proposed to join the group this was seconded by Cllr Wheeler.
- Cllr Wheeler proposed to join the group this was seconded by Cllr Beavan.

The Chief Officer will be the 4th group member. The working group was established and proposed by Cllr Matthews and seconded by Cllr Keen.

The meeting date would be the 3rd of May 2023 following the Annual General Meeting.

All members in agreement.

Resolved. Community Review Working Group established.

The Chief Officer requested from members if they would consider making a determination relating to the purchase of a gift for Cllr James, who has recently given birth to her first child called Lowri.

A discussion to place between members and it was proposed by Cllr Keen and seconded by Cllr Beavan to purchase a gift voucher to the value of £50.

All members in agreement.

Resolved. Chief Officer to purchase a £50 gift voucher for Cllr James.

Cllr Cowles requested permission from the Chairman to present a brief update of urgent business.

This was authorised by the Chairman.

Cllr Cowles informed members that yesterday, April 25th, 2023, the Leader of TCBC, Cllr Anthony Hunt announced a pause on consultation of the proposed three/four weekly bin collection.

Future planned roadshows will now be used to obtain residents' ideas on how to increase recycling whilst collecting the purple lidded bins twice monthly.

If ratings do not improve, then consultation could return. There are no imminent changes planned at present.

Meeting ended at 19.58 hrs.

Signed Chairman: *N. Matthews*

Date: 24/5/23.