

14th July 2020

Dear Councillor.

You are hereby summoned to attend a FULL COUNCIL MEETING OF BLAENAVON TOWN COUNCIL to be held at 6:30 pm on WEDNESDAY 22nd July 2020

The meeting will be held remotely in accordance with the Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Meetings) (Wales) Regulations 2020

Any members of the public who also wish to attend on this basis, please contact the Clerk so that arrangements may be made for them.

Members of the public have the right to ask questions at Council meetings and to speak in Welsh or English, provided that at least 3 working days' notice in writing of the question has been provided to the Clerk.

<u>Agenda</u>

- 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. Chairman's Announcements: To receive Chairman's announcements.
- 5. To receive an update from Inspector Aled George, Gwent Police.
- **6. Council Meeting:** To confirm the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on the 24th June 2020.
- **7. Council Meeting:** To confirm the minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on the 6th May 2020.
- 8. Clerk's Update: To receive Clerk's update.

- **9.** To receive Cllr updates regarding recent attendance at outside bodies committee meetings.
- 10. To re appoint a Cllr to represent Blaenavon Town Council on the Torfaen Museum Trust.
- 11. To receive an update from Rebecca Smith Healthy Blaenavon Officer.
- 12. To consider and discuss an overview of the Code of Conduct for Councillors.
- 13. To consider and make a determination for the holding of the Grant Aid, Civic Award evening and the Mayor's Civic Service for 2020.
- **14.** To consider and make a determination regarding the process / timeline for the co-option of the vacant Councillor seat for the Blaenavon West ward.
- **15.** To discuss and make a determination regarding a letter received from Julie James AM in response to the Town Council's letter dated the 5th June 2020 concerning financial support for Town and Community Councils.
- **16.** To consider and make a determination regarding the sending of a letter from the Town Council to Heather Cox, in recognition of her outstanding contribution to the community during the lockdown period.
- **17.** To discuss potential Town Council projects for allocation into the Project Action Plan 2020/21. Relevant updates or new projects as notified.
- Cllr Alan Parry The erection of a bandstand at Blaenavon Park to commemorate its 100th Anniversary in 2021.
- Cllrs Jackie Huybs and Alan Jones The erecting of Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) at Cwmavon Road and Varteg Road, Blaenavon.
- 18. Correspondence.
- 19. Planning Applications.
- 20. Donation requests

Yours Faithfully

Kevin Warren. MInstLM. FCMI.

Clerk to the Council.



BLAENAVON TOWN COUNCIL MINUTES OF THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 22nd JULY 2020 AT 6.30 PM.

The meeting was held remotely in accordance with the Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Meetings) (Wales) Regulations 2020.

In attendance:

Councillor: A. Jones (In the Chair)

Councillors in attendance: L. Cowles, Jac Denley-Jones, J. Huybs, N. Horler, A. Parry, L. Evans, S. Bright.

Officers: Mr K. Warren (Clerk to the Council), Lyndsey Harris (Administrator)

Visitors: Inspector Aled George (Gwent Police), Rod Denley-Jones (Resident)

The meeting of the full council was opened at 6:30pm by the Chairman Councillor Alan Jones who welcomed everyone to the meeting and expressed thanks for attendance.

1. To receive any questions from the public.

None

2. Apologies:

Cllr G. Davies (Domestic Issue)

Cllr E. Harvey (Work Commitment)

Cllr G. McCann (Work Commitment)

Members accepted the reasons for apologies.

Proposed by Cllr. Alan Parry seconded by Cllr Jac Denley-Jones.

Resolved: Apologies accepted.

3. <u>Declarations of interest</u>

None declared.

4. Chairman's Announcements

 On July 14th, 2020, the Chair attended a Teams meeting with the Clerk to the Council Kevin Warren and Healthy Blaenavon Officer, Rebecca Smith with Welsh Government to discuss the Public Service Board.

The Chair explained that an update of this meeting will be presented in the Clerks update.

- Attended a virtual Rotary Club meeting with Deputy Chair Liam Cowles
- Attended the official opening of Blaenavon Rugby Club Beer Garden with the Clerk on Wednesday 16th July 2020, Cllr. Huybs also attended the event to take photographs.

Resolved: Members noted the update.

5. To receive an update from Inspector Aled George, Gwent Police.

The Chair welcomed Inspector Aled George to the meeting and invited him to introduce himself to members and provide an update on Blaenavon.

Inspector George began by thanking the Chair and Members for welcoming him to the meeting. He informed members with some background information to his early life and career progression since joining the Police Force. He noted that of all of the towns within Torfaen he is most familiar with Blaenavon as he has family that live within the town.

He proposed that he would meet with members on a quarterly basis to give an overview of Blaenavon in terms of crime and anti-social behaviour trends and to inform them of any new initiatives that are likely to be set up with partners.

He went on to update on some statistics within Torfaen over the last couple of months, and explained the figures were skewed by the impact of Covid19 so are not particularly representative.

- October onwards has seen a reduction in crime, dwelling burglaries, shed breaks and vehicle crime has seen some significant reductions within Pontypool and the wider area of Pontypool including Blaenavon.
- Significant continuation of issues in relation to public order, anti-social behaviour, and violence without injury. The outbreak of Covid and subsequent lockdown, had shown significant reductions in those type of crimes since the 23rd March and the national lockdown saw a significant reduction in calls for incidents of neighbours and family disputes. This lasted a number of weeks before returning to normal.

Inspector George then went on to highlight his plan to approach crime within Torfaen and emphasised the need to target particular individuals within communities that are repeat offenders.

He went on to explain the impact of Covid 19 in terms of staffing issues, absences and safety precautions put in place to protect the force. He noted that anti-social behaviour is still an issue within Blaenavon. He has set up meetings with Ward Managers to discuss the reopening of some services, such as youth clubs and youth outreach services, putting some contingencies in place, for when restrictions are eased and services can be resumed with social distancing measures in place.

He invited members to share in their views and comments as to how the Council and the Police can work together going forward.

The current Ward Manager Sarah Brakespear has been given a temporary promotion to Sergeant on response. Her replacement is PC Dan Thomas. The next update to the Council would be done by PC Thomas, giving him the opportunity to introduce himself.

Inspector George ended his presentation by noting the good partnership work and forward-thinking approach that Blaenavon Town Council is displaying with projects like the Healthy Blaenavon Initiative, taking a problem solving and long-term solutions to issues.

The Chair thanked Aled for his presentation and opened questions to members.

Cllr. Denley-Jones asked the Inspector if the volume of police presence has increased within Blaenavon recently because she had noticed an increase in Police Vehicles outside her house in recent weeks.

The Inspector responded by saying that the amount of police covering Blaenavon has not increased but the police patrol cars are now based within their allocated town to pick up response calls rather than being office based.

Cllr Alan Jones noted that anti-social behaviour within the town is bad and highlighted a recent incident where glass bottles had been smashed on the Blaenavon Rugby Club pitch. He asked the Inspector what solutions he had to tackle this kind of behaviour.

The Inspector noted that the behaviour of youths within Blaenavon may be as a result of the lack of activities available as a result of Covid and also because of the isolation that tackles the town because of its location.

Inspector George hoped that by working with partners, the youth services, and the Council that ideas and solutions could be addressed to tackle these issues.

Cllr Jackie Huybs thanked the Inspector for his comprehensive report and noted that in the short time since he had been in his new role, he had already researched a great deal about Blaenavon and learnt a lot about the town which she found very reassuring.

Cllr Alan Jones thanked the Inspector for his presentation and offered the support of the Council.

At this point Inspector Aled George left the meeting.

Resolved: Members noted the update by Inspector George.

6. To confirm the minutes of the Full Council meeting held on 24th June 2020.

The minutes were approved by members for accuracy. This was proposed by Cllr Liam Cowles and seconded by Cllr Jac Denley-Jones

Resolved: Minutes accepted as a true record.

7. To confirm the minutes of the Annual General meeting held on 6th May 2020.

The minutes were approved by members for accuracy.

Cllr Liam Cowles noted that there was a typo on page 3 of the minutes, his surname was missing the letter 'w'. This was noted and will be amended.

Cllr Lewis Evans noted that he would like to add a note to the minutes to say that he had certain communication problems and was unable to be heard or could not hear parts of the meeting.

Cllr Samantha Bright also added she would like an amendment to be added to the votes, that she voted for Councillor Alan Jones and not for Jac Denley-Jones, the Clerk noted that he would check this.

Resolved: Minutes accepted as a true record. Clerk to organise amending the minutes as stated.

8. Clerk's Update.

Mr Warren provided the following update for members:

- Item 6 within the previous minutes, the Clerk wrote to Kelly Hayes of Pontypool Dragons and informed her of the Councils decision to award £125 to the club. The payment was transferred via Bacs. The Clerk received an email from Kelly thanking the Town Council for their generous donation.
- Item 8 within the previous minutes regarding Rebecca Smith's requested to use some of the emergency fund money to purchase books, craft items, seeds, and growing kits to distribute to families over the summer period. Lyndsey purchased some of these items which will be distributed to the identified families when Rebecca returns from leave. He explained that around £400 worth of items had been purchased which will be distributed back to the residents of the town.
- Item 10 within the previous minutes regarding writing a letter concerning the litter bins at Charles Street. The Clerk has written to Steven Jarret TCBC regarding the relocation of some of the bins being relocated to other areas within the town. He reported that he was still awaiting a response.
- Item 16 within the previous minutes regarding the donation to Blaenavon Medical Practice for safety screens. The Clerk wrote to Maria Potter to inform her of the Councils decision and a donation of £119.40 has been transferred via BACS. The Clerk received an email from Maria Potter thanking the Town Council for their continued support.
- 8th July 2020, the Clerk held a virtual meeting with Rachael O'Shaughnessy, Environmental and Sustainability Manager at TCBC, regarding the Public Service Board, Participatory Budgeting. He recalled a previous Council meeting in February 2020 where Councillor Gareth Davies requested £5,000 with match funding for the Vocal Eyes project.

He explained the meeting with Rachael was held to find out what was happening in terms of the other partners (Health Board, Bron Afon and Natural Resources Wales) input and outcomes.

The Clerk went on to inform members that potentially with the project match funding with the partnership approach this could be £25,000, potentially rising to as much as £100,000 which he explained was because of the Participatory Budget Fund and pilot scheme within Blaenavon.

He explained that Blaenavon Town Council are the only partner that has contributed to date with £5,000 in March 2020, and further meetings with the Public Service Board will take place in September 2020 to find out why there has been a delay with other partners.

TCBC are meeting shortly to discuss their contributions. When this information is received the Clerk will update members.

The Clerk informed members that he is currently awaiting the Public Service Boards Annual Report. The report has not yet been published but the Clerk has looked at the document, the Healthy Blaenavon Project and Blaenavon Town Council has been held up as an exemplar in terms of supporting and managing Smart Living Projects

 14th July 2020, the Clerk explained that together with Cllr Alan Jones and Healthy Blaenavon Officer Rebecca Smith they held a Teams meeting with two Consultants employed by the Welsh Government namely Andrew Rogers, and Bruce Whitear.

The Clerk went on to explain that the consultants were interested in the work completed to date by the Healthy Blaenavon Project and Participatory Budgeting Project linked with the Public Service Board Plan. They were keen to find out the methodology behind the projects, the delivery and demand, and how the Town Council had tackled issues of poverty, isolation, and education.

They are using Blaenavon Town Council as an exemplar to report back to Welsh Government and the Public Service Board to report their findings on this new approach of working with community conversations.

The Clerk gave them an overview of the management and delivery of the project to date and they were impressed with the style and methodology of the project so far. The consultants will report back to the PSB and Welsh Government with their report which the Clerk will send out to members when he receives a copy.

- 13th & 20th July 2020, the Clerk attended a socially distanced meeting alongside Cllr Alan Jones and Cllr Jackie Huybs with Craig Williams, TCBC Highways Department. The meeting concerned the rise in speeding offences and safety issues within the town. The conversation highlighted the availability of SIDS (Speeding Indicator Devices) and the possibility of them being installed in particular hotspots within the town. The Clerk explained that this issue will be addressed later in the meeting by Cllr Jackie Huybs as part of her project proposal.
- The Clerk informed members that he had been working with Lyndsey on the current Town Council Business Plan which is due for review for sign off in the September Full Council meeting.

• The annual contribution of £250 to Blaenavon Branch Royal British Legion has been paid via BACS, an email of thanks was received by Cyril Morgan which the Clerk sent out to members. The Clerk also informed members there will be a VJ commemoration on the 15th August 2020 at the cenotaph and he has ordered a wreath to be laid on behalf of Blaenavon Town Council at this service.

Resolved: Members noted the update.

9. <u>To receive Councillor updates regarding recent attendance at outside bodies committee meetings.</u>

Councillors Liam Cowles and Alan Jones attended the business meeting of Pontypool Rotary Club on Tuesday 7^{th} July 2020 via Zoom.

Mr. Bob Rogers was elected President-Elect at the meeting. They were thanked for our partnership and the President, Doug Warren, said that he hoped that this will continue and be more active when we are out of the woods with the Covid-19 Pandemic.

They were informed that the invoice for the yearly membership will be sent out in due course and it was confirmed with the Secretary, Reverend Canon Brian Pippin, that he should send the invoice to our Clerk, Kevin Warren.

Additionally, there was a discussion about the Rotary Club funding a musical performance in the Heritage School in Blaenavon as they had done last year. They were also informed the Rotary Club would be funding cricket equipment for school aged children.

It was made clear that the club wanted this to benefit disadvantaged school children in the North of the borough and so could well be of benefit to children in Blaenavon. Cllr Alan Jones assured the Rotarians that he would assist them in any way he could with these ventures.

Resolved: Members noted the update.

10. <u>To re appoint a Cllr. To represent Blaenavon Town Council on the Torfaen Museum Trust.</u>

The matter for this re appointment arose when Cllr Alan Parry volunteered to be the representative for Blaenavon Town Council. He was not aware that the role would mean that he would need to be named as a Director and Trustee for the Museum.

Cllr Parry subsequently wanted to step down as a representative. The Chair invited members to come forward as a representative for the Council for this role. Cllr Jac Denley-Jones asked if there is a way that a Councillor from Blaenavon Town Council could be a representative without having to be a Trustee?

The Chair instructed the Clerk to find out these details and for it to be added as an agenda item in the next Full Council meeting in September 2020.

Cllr Samantha Bright added that when she was previously a representative for the Council, she had to be a Director and a Trustee.

Resolved: Clerk to find out more information and report back to members during September 2020 Full Council meeting.

11. To receive an update from Rebecca Smith - Healthy Blaenavon Officer.

Rebecca had sent her monthly report out to members prior to the meeting and was not in attendance to go through the report as she was on leave.

The Chair asked if there were any questions relating to her report?

There were no questions from members.

Resolved: Members noted the update.

12. To consider and discuss an overview of the Code of Conduct for Councillors.

The Clerk informed members that he has forum updates from the SLCC (Society of Local Council Clerks) and regularly attends meetings with Clerks from Wales and the UK.

He highlighted that there seems to be a lack of knowledge and understanding of the terms of the Code of Conduct and breaches are often made due to this lack of knowledge.

The Clerk stressed to members the importance of these guidelines and the duties as Councillors observe the code.

The Clerk emailed the links to the online courses provided by One Voice Wales and suggested to members that it would be helpful to refresh their memories regarding the Code and invited members to email or call him regarding any questions or queries they may have regarding the code of conduct

Resolved: Members noted the update.

13. To consider and make a determination for the holding of the Grant Aid, Civic Award evening and Mayor's Civic Service for 2020.

The Clerk presented to members some options regarding the Civic Awards Ceremony 2020 in respect of the cancellation of the Ceremony in April 2020 due to the Covid19 pandemic.

He explained that the guidance and updates from Welsh Government are changing regularly and having looked at legislation around social gatherings and the risk levels, it would be best for a review to be made in September 2020

Members were all in agreement that this should added as an agenda item in September 2020

Resolved: Members agreed to review in this motion at September's 2020 Full Council meeting.

14. To consider and make a determination regarding the process/timeline for the co-option of the vacant Councillor seat for Blaenavon West Ward.

The Clerk informed members that no letters were received from the electorate for an election process for Councillors, therefore a co-option process is now available for the Council to progress.

The Clerk displayed the Notice of Co-option via the share screen.

He went on to explain that the notice will be advertised on the 10th August 2020, closing date 7th September 2020. Expressions of interest will be sent to members by the Clerk for perusal. The candidates will have just over two weeks to prepare a 5-minute presentation which will take place at Full Council in September 2020.

Members were all in agreement with the details displayed in the notice and accepted the dates outlined.

This was proposed by Cllr Bright and seconded by Cllr Parry.

Resolved: Members were all in agreement, Clerk to advertise notices for vacant seat on August 10th, 2020.

15. To discuss and make a determination regarding a letter received from Julie James AM in response to the Town Council's letter dated the 5th June 2020 concerning financial support for Town and Community Councils.

The Clerk displayed a letter received from Julie James AM dated, 25th June 2020 via the share screen which had previously been sent out to members for perusal.

The Clerk went on to explain that Ms James will shortly be meeting with members from One Voice Wales to discuss some of the issues that were raised in the letter sent from Blaenavon Town Council.

The Clerk is awaiting an update from Lyn Cadwallader (OVW) to determine whether he requires representatives from Blaenavon Town Council to attend this meeting.

The Clerk advised members to delay the response to this letter until the meeting has taken place.

It was proposed by Cllr Liam Cowles to delay the response to Julie James. This was seconded by Cllr Jac Denley-Jones

Resolved: Members were all in agreement, Clerk to wait for a response from OVW.

16. To consider and make a determination regarding sending of a letter from the Town Council to Heather Cox, in recognition of her outstanding contribution to the community during the lockdown period.

The Clerk explained how Cllr Gareth McCann brought to his attention the work and fundraising carried out by Heather Cox within the community during the lockdown period and suggested that the Council could perhaps write to her to offer their appreciation.

A discussion took place amongst members regarding the letter and the consideration for creating an additional award which could be added to the Civic Awards for Ms Cox. Cllr Cowles suggested consideration for the award be made further down the line.

A discussion regarding the possibility of holding an additional award ceremony to recognise these people within the community be held later in the year

Cllr Alan Jones proposed this be added as an agenda item for November 2020 full Council meeting, this was seconded by Cllr Liam Cowles.

All members voted in favour of this proposal.

Cllr Alan Parry proposed the letter of thanks be written to Ms Cox; this was seconded by Cllr Alan Jones.

Resolved: Members were all in agreement, Clerk to write a letter to Heather Cox.

17. To discuss potential Town Council projects for allocation into the Project Action Plan 2020/21. Relevant updates or new projects as notified

<u>Cllr Alan Parry – The erection of a bandstand at Blaenavon Park to commemorate its 100th Anniversary in 2021.</u>

The project proposal was emailed to members prior to the meeting for perusal and was shown via the share screen.

The proposal detailed the following.

2021 will be the 100th anniversary of Blaenavon Park. In relation to Blaenavon, there was formally a bandstand located at the park and was removed many years ago.

The proposal is to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the park by erecting a small bandstand to replicate history and offer this structure as a legacy of the Town Council moving forward.

The proposal would initially look at local firms to erect the bandstand which could be built from hardwood or other sustainable materials such as resin plastics and potentially wrought iron.

There are many options for securing the base of the bandstand and this could be on a concrete plinth or on legs that are sunk into the ground. The base of the stand would be around 4m in diameter.

The structure would consist of a single entrance with open sides and a conical roof structure. The draft cost of the project will consist of the design, material, labour & planning.

The plan is to seek match funding from other sources namely the Welsh Government, World Heritage, CADW, National Lottery and TCBC as examples.

The project will involve a close working partnership with TCBC as landlords. If consent is approved, the bandstand would form part of the Town Council asset register and be insured on the Town Council Policy. A programme of maintenance of the bandstand could be built into the Council's annual budgetary forecasts.

Total Cost of Project: £25 - 30k (approx)

Further detailed quotes to be supplied. In principle a contribution of £5k from Blaenavon Town Council supported by other match funding opportunities that will need to be explored moving forward.

Benefits:

- Improving a local attraction.
- Offering a new location for Town Band competitions.
- Increasing visitor numbers.
- Increase the use of the park for local residents.
- Providing further opportunities for events during the spring and summer months.
- Local business will feel supported.

A discussion took place amongst members where it was decided that a scoping exercise be carried out and brought back to the Council for further consideration.

Cllr Huybs proposed supporting the scoping exercise this was seconded by Cllr Liam Cowles.

Members were in all in favour.

Resolved: Members noted the update. Clerk to look into costs and permissions required for the building and installation of the bandstand and the possibility of a partnership approach to raise additional funds needed.

<u>Cllrs Alan Jones & Jackie Huybs – The erection of Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) at Cwmavon Road and Varteg Road, Blaenavon.</u>

The project proposal was emailed to members prior to the meeting for perusal and was shown via the share screen.

Traffic calming on roads entering and leaving Blaenavon

Concerns have been expressed by residents over speeding vehicles on Cwmavon Road and Varteg Road for many years, and fresh complaints during the lockdown period about the issue having worsened dramatically.

It has been pointed out that Speed Indicator Devices (SIDs) have been located at Cwmavon Road leading into Abersychan and on Llanyrafon Way in Cwmbran.

Torfaen Council has a number of SIDs in storage, and the proposal is for the Town Council to fund the placement of two SIDs at the above-mentioned locations.

Torfaen Council's Principal Traffic Management & Road Safety Officer has confirmed it would be an option for the Town Council to take possession of two of the SIDs and that it will cost around £200 per post for their permanent installation plus the cost of the SIDs

Total cost anticipated not more than £1000.

Benefits:

- The SIDs will act as a reminder to motorists that they are entering a 30mph area
- The opportunity to capture data on traffic speeds and to use that data, if necessary, to apply for and introduce further traffic calming measures
- A safer environment for local residents, children and animals and the reassurance that the Council is listening to them

A discussion took place amongst members.

Cllr Alan Parry proposed supporting the project, this was seconded by Cllr Liam Cowles.

Members were in all in agreement.

Resolved: Members were in all in agreement. Clerk to contact Craig Williams and organise installation of SIDS.

18. Correspondence.

The Clerk informed members that he had received 1 letter of correspondence.

Norman Jones - Planning TCBC - removal of telephone boxes.

The Clerk detailed an email he had received on the 2nd July 2020 from Norman Jones TCBC planning regarding an update from BT regarding the removal of two telephone boxes located in Blaenavon.

The Clerk displayed the letter via the share screen which detailed the locations of the telephone boxes along with a log of calls made during the course of a month.

Woodland Street logged 1 call a month. George Street logged 11 calls per month.

A discussion took place amongst members. Cllr Huybs suggested she did a poll on Facebook to determine what people in the community would want.

The Clerk informed Cllr Huybs that he would need a response to notify TCBC by the 3rd August 2020.

Cllr Jackie Huybs proposed a Facebook Poll to determine the decision, Cllr Bright seconded the proposal.

Members were all in agreement.

Resolved: Members noted the update. Cllr Huybs to notify the Clerk within 1 week of the response date. Clerk to inform TCBC of the decision.

19. Planning.

The planning applications for July 2020 had been sent out to members via email.

The Clerk had distributed all applications to members for their observations prior to the July 2020 full council meeting.

The Clerk displayed the planning applications received from TCBC planning department in July 2020 via the share screen.

Cllr Alan Jones declared an interest as a TCBC Councillor.

 PROPOSAL: Alterations and replacement two-storey rear extension to restore existing retail unit, including replacement shop front and provision of 3 no. 1-bed flats, access, parking and associated works

LOCATION: 46 Broad Street, Blaenavon, Pontypool

CHAL/20/P/0363/FUL

PROPOSAL: Rear Extension

LOCATION: 13 Capel Newydd Avenue, Blaenavon, Pontypool

AFOO/20/P/0356/HH

Resolved: No objections or concerns were raised..

20. Donation Requests

No donation requests were received.

At 8.06pm the meeting ended.

Chairman Signed:

Date: 24/9/20