

**MAESTEG TOWN COUNCIL
COUNCIL MEETING**

Minutes of a meeting of the **Council** held remotely via Microsoft Teams and at the Council Meeting Room, Council Offices, Talbot Street, Maesteg, on **Tuesday, 3rd August 2021.**

PRESENT:

COUNCILLORS:

A James (Deputy Mayor)

R Collins, AR Davies, P Davies, K Edwards, P Jenkins, R Martin, W May, R Penhale-Thomas, C Reeves, S Smith, G Thomas, L Thomas, P White and I Williams,

APOLOGIES were received from Cllrs L Beedle and R Lewis

DECLARATION OF INTEREST:

Cllrs R Collins, P Davies, K Edwards, R Penhale-Thomas and P White declared an interest in items relating to Bridgend County Borough Council, including Development Control and Licensing.

Cllrs C Reeves and I Williams declared an interest in items that may relate to Llangynwyd Middle Community Council.

Cllr L Thomas declared an interest in items that may relate to AWEN Cultural Trust.

Cllr P Jenkins declared an interest in the following planning application:
P/21/592/OUT

Cllr C Reeves declared an interest in the following planning application: P/21/349/FUL

103. POLICE MATTERS

Unfortunately, there was no police presence at the meeting however SW Police did provide the following crime figures:

Maesteg Crime Statistics for July 2021

	Caerau / Nanty	Maesteg East	Maesteg West	Llan	Total in category
Robbery	0	0	0	0	0
Drugs	0	0	1	0	1
Dwelling burglary	0	0	0	0	0
Burglary other	1	0	0	0	1
Theft of vehicle	0	0	0	0	0
Theft from vehicle	0	1	0	0	1
All other theft	3	4	7	0	14

Damage	5	1	3	0	9
Violence against the person	25	16	18	8	67
Domestic related occurrence	11	6	3	2	22
All crime total	34	22	29	8	93
Anti-social behaviour total	11	7	10	2	30
Drink Driving	0	3	0	0	3

Members advised that they were disappointed that there was no police presence at the meeting and request that the Clerk write to the Sgt's requesting that if they cannot attend maybe another officer or PCSO could attend.

RESOLVED: Clerk to write to the Sgt's

104. MAYORAL EVENTS

The Deputy Mayor advised that he had visited 4 couples to celebrate their Golden Wedding Anniversaries.

105. MINUTES

The Following Minutes;

- **Full Council** – 06/07/2021 – emailed to members 08/07/2021
- **Finance Committee** – 20/07/2021 – emailed to members 23/07/2021
- **Finance Committee Confidential Minutes** – 20/07/2021 – emailed to members 23/07/2021
- **Extraordinary Council** – 27/07/2021 – emailed to members 28/07/2021

copies of which had been circulated to Members, were read, accepted as a true record, all recommendations agreed and signed by the Deputy Mayor.

MATTERS ARISING

106. MINUTE 69

LLYNFI WOODLAND GROUP – EXTRA BIN

Clerk has been advised that this bin has been vandalised and set on fire, the CMO and ROW Contractor visited the location and only the inner bin remains where the outer casing has melted. A member advised that they had reported the damaged bin and for members to note that it is located in a remote area and the inner bin had potatoes wrapped in foil inside. It was **agreed** to replace the bin with a metal bin, however should the bin be vandalised again Council to assess whether or not to replace.

RESOLVED: to order a replacement metal bin

107. MINUTE 72

REQUEST FOR GRIT BINS AT VARIOUS LOCATION IN MAESTEG

Following no comments received from Caerau Ward locations the request has been forwarded to BCBC to order and install Grit Bins at the following locations:

1. North Street - On the grass verge opposite 15 North Street
2. George Street - On the footway either side of the entrance to George Street, Caerau, at the side of either 28 or 29 Cymmer Road.
3. Top of Evans Terrace - On the adopted section of carriageway at the top of Evans Terrace near the wall of 11 Evans Terrace or near the wall of 30 Carman Street.
4. Hartshorn Terrace - Grass verge adjacent 9 Hartshorn Terrace, Caerau.

The following locations have been identified for the remaining wards and letters to the residents have been sent a few comments also received so far:

Maesteg East

1. On the grass verge at the junction between 26 & 38 Chestnut Grove
2. On the footway near to the junction for 96 – 112B mill view = request from resident for this to be located opposite side to the sign
3. On the grass verge opposite 17 Cross Street
4. Opposite 41 Harvey Street by the street sign

Maesteg West

1. Adjacent to the lamp post outside 112 Yr Ysfa = request from resident to install between properties 53 & 54 or 60 & 61.
2. Outside 49 Cwrt Coed Parc near the lamp post
3. At the junction of fairfield avenue / pen yr ysgol and school road outside ysgol cynnwyd sant
4. Ewenny Rd near to the Bethania St junction

Nantyffyllon

1. Behind the grave yard opposite Old Anne's Enterprises
2. Opposite the Old Rock garage

RESOLVED: to note the information

108. MINUTE 75

NEW FLAG FOR COUNCIL OFFICE

Clerk advised that the new flag has been erected.

RESOLVED: to note the information

109. MINUTE 76

REQUEST FOR BUSINESS CARDS – MAYOR & DEPUTY MAYOR

Business cards have been received and delivered to those members.

RESOLVED: to note the information

110. MINUTE 88

BRIDLEWAY 46 MAESTEG: EMERGENCY TEMPORARY CLOSURE

Notice has been placed onto MTC website and the temporary closure has been extended for up to 6 months.

RESOLVED: to note the information

111. MINUTE 95

TO DISCUSS THE BUDGET

A member advised that following the meeting whereby there was a lack of investment strategy for Maesteg Town Council the next day there was a scathing report on another Town Council whereby it stated that the lack of investment strategy placed the Town Council at risk if their bank were to become bankrupt, they would only be eligible for £85k payback. It was agreed that the Clerk and new Chair of Finance look into investments as a matter of urgency.

RESOLVED: Clerk & new Chair of Finance to look into investment opportunities

112. AGENDA ITEM 7 – TO APPOINT A NEW CHAIR OF FINANCE

Following the Extraordinary Council Meeting it was agreed to appoint a new Chair of Finance at the next Full Council Meeting.

The following nominations were received:

Cllr K Edwards **proposed** and seconded by Cllr I Williams that Cllr L Thomas be nominated – to which Cllr L Thomas declined the nomination

Cllr R Martin **proposed** and seconded by Cllr W May that Cllr G Thomas be nominated – to which Cllr G Thomas accepted the nomination for Chair of Finance.

Following no other nomination, it was agreed that Cllr G Thomas be appointed Chair of Finance.

RESOLVED: Cllr G Thomas appointed Chair of Finance

113. LIST OF PAYMENTS FOR THE MONTH OF JULY 2021

RESOLVED:

That the tables of **Expenditure (£35,750.29)**, **Income (£2,648.82)** during the month of July 2021; copies of which had been circulated to Members, which included the DD payments, Faster Online Payments and Bank Reconciliation be accepted, confirmed and signed by the Deputy Mayor.

Members were also provided with:

- list of payments to be made in August 2021 totalling £17,694.92

- A copy of the Receipts and Payments Account which includes expenditure against the budget and the budget remaining.
- An income analysis was also provided.

Clerk also advised members that we had received revised quote for chimney repair work = additional £741.60 to which members unanimously agreed to the work proceeding.

CORRESPONDENCE

114. COVID-19 SPECIFIC UPDATES & MEDIA UPDATES

Emailed to all Councillors for information:

- BCBC Media Updates
- Welsh Government
- Keep Wales Safe

RESOLVED: to note the information

115. NEWSLETTERS / FLYERS

Emailed to all Councillors for information:

- OVW Remote training sessions August 2021
- BAVO – Community Navigators
- BCBC – Reporting Anti-Social Behaviour

RESOLVED: to note the information

116. REQUEST TO DISPLAY VERNON HARTSHORN EXHIBITION

Request from South Wales Miners' Museum as to whether the Vernon Hartshorn Exhibition can be temporarily displayed at Maesteg Town Council until the refurbishment works at Maesteg Town Hall are completed.

Measurements of the exhibition boards were supplied and the Deputy Clerk measured the upstairs meeting room. The exhibition will fit; however, it will require multiple rows which will leave no space for tables or chairs – the room would then not be able to be used by other groups.

Members raised concerns that if the display would be displayed it would prevent other groups from using the room, however members had no concerns if it were to be stored in one of the store rooms in the basement.

RESOLVED: Clerk to advise that we can store the exhibition in a store room but would be unable to display the exhibition.

117. COUNCILLOR EMAIL ADDRESSES

Due to a number of Councillors still having difficulties accessing they're @maestegcouncil.org emails, Cllr L Thomas has offered to assist members resolve their issues.

A member advised that he was still entitled to receive emails to his personal email address and the Clerk has sought advice from the Monitoring Officer with the following advice received:

If the sole use has been agreed by Council, with adequate notice that personal emails will stop, then you can circulate just to that address.

As you have mentioned information using the official email mitigates GDPR issues. As this has been dovetailed into other agenda items, I would suggest taking a specific report on this item and noting that the new email will be used from xx date. There may be occasions due to technical difficulties you will have to hand deliver or send to an alternative address but this should be done as an exception, and with due consideration of the circumstances.

Members were happy that Cllr L Thomas had offered to assist members and that members would contact Cllr L Thomas if they still had any issues.

RESOLVED: to note the information

118. THANK YOU

Answer machine message of thanks for flowers from Mr & Mrs Thomas.

RESOLVED: to note the information

119. REFERRALS

- Overgrowth on the walkway linking Llynfi Road Car Park to Plasnewydd Street

Response: Thank you for contacting Bridgend County Borough Council regarding the Hazarding (Cut back vegn/brmbles/ogrth. Cln out ditches) at Plasnewydd Street Adopted Link Footway To Talbot Street Rear Lane, , Maesteg .

An order has been issued to undertake the removal of the Hazarding (Cut back vegn/brmbles/ogrth. Cln out ditches) concerned.

- Overgrowth overhanging footpath and the walkways of Church Street and Llynfi Road

Response: Thank you for your email it has been logged and reported with the relevant department. Clerk advised that they had cut back the overgrown hedge but had omitted the section of overgrowth by the bridge and Heras fencing.

- We've had several reports of dangerous overhanging branches on road B4282 (Neath Road, Maesteg) before the entrance to Maesteg Golf club on the left-hand side as driving up the hill. The reports state it's a very thick branch and has the potential to cause serious damage if someone is to hit it.

Response: Thank you for the information this has been reported to the relevant department who will investigate the matter.

Deputy Clerk advised that this branch has now been removed.

- A member raised the issue of overgrowth of brambles on the footpath of Crown Road and Crown Row. - Clerk to forward the overgrowth on Crown Road and Crown Row to BCBC again

RESOLVED: to confirm actions and note the information

120. BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL (MILL STREET, CWMFELIN, MAESTEG) TEMPORARY TRAFFIC ORDER 2021

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Council as the Highway Authority for Cwmfelin in exercise of its powers under Section 14(1) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (as amended), and all other enabling powers, intends in not less than 7 days from the date of this Notice to make an Order which will temporarily introduce the restriction set out in the schedule below.

The Order is necessary due to insufficient width of carriageway to maintain vehicular traffic during vegetation removal and masonry repairs on a Network Rail structure and is in the interest of public safety.

The Order will come into force on the **28/07/2021** and it is anticipated will be operative between **22.00 and 06.00 from the 28/07/2021 to 31/07/2021**, or until such time as the works are completed, and will continue in force for a maximum period of 18 months.

Schedule

1. No person shall cause any vehicle to proceed in Mill Street, Cwmfelin - 20 metres either side of rail bridge (a total distance of approximately 50 metres).

The restriction shall however only apply at such time and to such extent as shall from time to time be indicated by traffic signs prescribed by The Traffic Signs Regulations and General Directions 2016.

The alternative route is via Bridgend Road, Castle Street, Talbot Street, Commercial Street, Bethania Street, Llwydarth Road, Maesteg Road, Mill Street and reverse in opposite direction

Access will be maintained for pedestrians and emergency vehicles.

RESOLVED: to note the information

121. STONES IN CAERAU

Email received with the following comments:

For the past couple of weeks, we have been keeping an eye on the state of the engraved 'Stones' near the school, where prominent people from Caerau have their names engraved to signify their commitment to Caerau.

We would wish to inform Maesteg Town Council, as custodians of the 'Stones' that they are being damaged and need to be addressed and returned to the condition they were meant to be in.

We understand that David James (Stonemason) has been involved in the engaging in the past and maybe he could address the situation on your behalf

Community heritage and acknowledgement is extremely important to all with the locality and it may also be pertinent to emphasise the importance of the 'Stones' via your website.

Members discussed the complaint and agreed that the stones needed attention, it was also discussed that a number of years ago it was agreed that members would also advise of names that needed to be added to the monument. Cllr A James advised that he would take photographs of the monument and provide these to the Clerk.

Cllr G Thomas **proposed** and was seconded by Cllr W May that the repair work for the monument be sent out for tender.

RESOLVED:

- Cllr A James to photograph the monument
- Clerk to go to tender for the repairs

122. COMPLAINT RE ROADWORK BY PAPERMILLS

Dear Cllrs, as WEPA are a private company and it's a private company causing all the mayhem and disruption on the main road out of the valley to the main communication routes! Can I ask what recompense WEPA are putting back into the community they are inconveniencing through their commercial enterprise and expansion? Have they been given any Corporate Social Responsibility liability by BCBC as part of their planning application, If any? Their Construction Design Management Construction Phase Plan would have been submitted to BCBC and approved by BCBC for all the Highways Chapter 8 disruption so I'm hoping the community is getting something back from WEPA as a way of saying thank you for putting up with all the inconvenience during their private commercial venture. Is there a way of finding out?

Members deliberated the complaint and were disappointed that the complainant felt that there was no recompense to the area in spite on the major investment. The development has brought many jobs to the area within construction and more jobs to be created once the development has been completed. Members did agree that there has been poor communication with the traffic management whereby at peak times there should have been manned traffic management to avoid the massive tailbacks however, it was noted that once the traffic island is installed in August there shouldn't be as much disruption.

Members also noted that historically WEPA have invested in many local sports clubs and when the development was passed by BCBC it was agreed that WEPA would make a significant contribution to the active travel network for cycling and walking.

RESOLVED: Clerk to advise complainant that there were jobs created as part of the development and that historically WEPA have invested in many local sports clubs and when the development was passed by BCBC it was agreed that WEPA would make a significant contribution to the active travel network for cycling and walking. Any other concerns should be directed to BCBC.

123. **INSURANCE RENEWAL**

Your Long-term agreement (LTA) is due for renewal on 25/09/2021 and if your policy details remain unchanged, we'd like to offer you the following options:

- A 5-year LTA premium of £3,173.32
- A 3-year LTA premium of £3,339.21
- A 1-year standard premium of £3,505.11

Please let us know how you would like to proceed. If we don't hear from you by 25/09/2021, we will issue your renewal documents based on the 1-year standard premium, without the LTA discount applied.

Members discussed the quote and agreed that 3 quotes should be received before making any decision. However, it was also noted that there was an ongoing claim with the insurance company being investigated and that it may be appropriate to renew for a year whilst this is ongoing.

Cllr P Jenkins **proposed** and seconded by Cllrs W May and G Thomas that Maesteg Town Council renew for 1 year and then look at other insurance providers.

Members voted on the **proposal** with the following vote:

Name	Vote	Name	Vote
Cllr R Collins	Disagree	Cllr W May	Agree
Cllr A R Davies	Disagree	Cllr R Penhale-Thomas	Disagree
Cllr P Davies	Disagree	Cllr C Reeves	Disagree
Cllr K Edwards	Agree	Cllr G Thomas	Agree

Cllr A James	Disagree	Cllr L Thomas	Disagree
Cllr P Jenkins	Agree	Cllr P White	Disagree
Cllr R Martin	Disagree	Cllr I Williams	Agree

Unfortunately, due to technical issues Cllr S Smith was not present for the vote and was unable to reconnect to the meeting.

Agree = 5
Disagree = 9

Following the results of the vote it was agreed that the Clerk check with OVW whether it is prudent to stay with the same insurer until the claim has been investigated or whether to continue with obtaining 3 quotes.

RESOLVED: Clerk to seek advice from OVW and to follow the advice received.

124. FREE IPAD LOAN SCHEME FOR ANY CARERS - PARTNERSHIP PROJECT WITH AWEN LIBRARIES - BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH

Awen Libraries is running an iPad loan scheme with the support of Connecting Carers, a project set up to support anyone in a caring role to access support, connect with others, keep in touch with family or use for any activities that can make life easier and support well-being.

You can borrow an iPad from any library in Bridgend borough - simply call or email Paula Lunnon -paula.lunnon@wales.coop or call on 07776 961253 or speak to Rob Jones at the library on 01656 754840 or email libraries@awen-wales.com

The library staff will be on hand to help you learn how to use the iPad, and there are courses (absolute beginners 1hr long) that you can do to develop your skills, or you can join free group activities for you or the person you are caring for.

It's free to loan an iPad, and it's free to join the library so give us a call or pop us an email.

RESOLVED: to note the information

125. ROOMS/PROPERTY TO LEASE – BRIDGEND

Email received enquiring into available rooms to lease for the Diabetic Eye Screening Service to hold clinics in Bridgend. If this is of interest, I would be extremely grateful to hear back from yourselves re different available options. There are a number of requirements we are looking to meet (listed below). However, I understand that it is unlikely that all of the below will be accommodated, however, it would be useful to understand what is available.

- 2/4 rooms
- A waiting area
- Toilets

- Staff dining/rest room
- Parking
- Public transport access
- Light switches in rooms
- Minimum 3m span within rooms
- Access for disabled (ramps/toilets)
- 3 power points in rooms
- Ground floor or lift access
- Storage space
- Phone signal

Additional:

Office space or additional spare room

Lockable doors

No carpets in rooms

Furnished; suitable number of chairs and desks

Sinks in rooms

Ideally, we are looking at a Monday-Friday (8am-5.30pm) booking. However, understandably this might not be possible and I'd be grateful to hear back re the possible options and availability.

Members discussed the request and the Clerk advised that with Special Families using 2 of the upstairs offices was unsure if there was enough space for them to utilise. It was **agreed** that instead of members speculating the requirements to invite the Diabetic Screening Service to the building to ascertain whether or not its suitability.

RESOLVED: to invite the Diabetic Screening Service to the building to ascertain whether or not its suitability.

126. IRP REVIEW OF THE REMUNERATION FRAMEWORK FOR COMMUNITY AND TOWN COUNCILS

An electronic copy of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales draft consultation and proposals of the remuneration framework for Community and Town Councils forwarded to all members.

Whereby the IRP request comments or observations on the proposals by 27 August 2021.

The Summary of proposals are:

1. A basic payment for each member of the council which will be restructured to meet the potential for an agreement with HMRC for exemption from taxation
2. Payments to members undertaking a role that carries additional responsibility will continue to be part of the Framework on the basis set out in Table 2.

3. An attendance allowance for attending approved council business may be paid to members. This is additional to the payments as set in 1 and 2 above.
4. Payments for loss of earnings will be retained in the Framework.
5. Payments in respect of travel and subsistence will remain unchanged.
6. Contribution towards costs of care and personal assistance will remain unchanged.

We propose to establish 5 groups using the size of council electorate as set out in **table 1** below.

Table 1

Group 1	Electorate in excess of 14,000
Group 2	10,000 to 13,999
Group 3	5,000 to 9,999
Group 4	1,000 to 4,999
Group 5	Under 1,000

Table 2 indicates the proposed structure for payments and allowances. These are appropriate to each of the 5 Groups.

Table 2 - The application of the Remuneration Framework by relevant Group

Group 1 (Electorate >14,000)

Basic Payment	Mandatory for all Members
Senior Role Payment	Mandatory for 1 member; optional for up to 7
Attendance Allowance	Optional
Loss of Earnings	Mandatory
Travel and Subsistence	Optional
Costs of Care	Mandatory

Group 2 (Electorate 10,000 to 13,999)

Basic Payment	Mandatory for all members
Senior Role Payment	Mandatory for 1 member; optional up to 5
Attendance Allowance	Optional
Loss of Earnings	Mandatory
Travel and Subsistence	Optional
Cost of Care	Mandatory

Group 3 (Electorate 5,000 to 9,999)

Basic Payment	Mandatory for all members
Senior Role Payment	Optional up to 3 members
Attendance Allowance	Optional
Loss of Earnings	Mandatory
Travel and Subsistence	Optional
Cost of Care	Mandatory

Group 4 (Electorate 1,000 to 4,999)

Basic Payment	Mandatory for all members
Senior Role Payment	Optional up to 3 members
Attendance Allowance	Optional

Loss of Earnings	Mandatory
Travel and Subsistence	Optional
Cost of Care	Mandatory
Group 5 (Electorate <1,000)	
Basic Payment	Optional
Senior Role Payment	Optional
Attendance Allowance	Optional
Loss of Earnings	Mandatory
Travel and Subs	Optional
Cost of Care	Mandatory

N.B. Clerk has checked with Electoral Section of BCBC and the electorate within Maesteg Town Council Boundary as of 02/08/2021 is: 13,020 therefore Maesteg Town Council would fall within Group 2

Caerau Ward – 2638
 Maesteg East Ward – 3764
 Nantfyllon Ward – 2251
 Maesteg West Ward – 4367

Total – 13,020

Cllr W May **proposed** and was seconded by Cllr L Thomas that Maesteg Town Council agree to the proposals. It was noted that Cllr P Jenkins advised that he wanted it noted that he has always disagreed with the IRP system.

RESOLVED: that Maesteg Town Council agree to the proposals.

127. FINANCIAL APPLICATIONS

Cllr G Thomas declared an interest in this item and left the meeting; therefore, took no part in the discussion on the financial application.

MAESTEG NETBALL CLUB

Maesteg Netball club operates across the valley to provide both fitness and mental health wellbeing to young people through competitive sport. The club serves all areas of the Llynfi valley and encourages inclusion for all in sport. As with all other sport in Wales the club has been forced to close due to the world-wide pandemic, but as the rules relax, we are looking to reopen this essential service to the community. The club is a not-for-profit organisation only funded by the parents of the children, and as you can imagine significant changes are required to enable covid safe facilities outdoors. Maesteg Park FC have kindly offered the use of Tudor Park hard standing, but the club needs to purchase additional equipment to allow it to reopen in a safe and secure manner. The club is kindly requesting financial support to purchase equipment such as outdoor netball posts, Netballs, Bibs and Covid equipment such as sanitisers etc the cost of which runs to £600.

It was agreed that as the S137 Policy would be discussed later in the meeting that this item be deferred until the policy had been discussed.

Cllr G Thomas was asked to re-enter the meeting.

128. DELEGATES REPORT

Members were advised that there were no Delegates reports received for July 2021.

RESOLVED: to note the information

129. AGENDA ITEM 12 – TO DISCUSS SPRING BULBS FOR 2021-22

Members were provided with a list of organisations and individuals who requested Spring bulbs in 2020-21 and a list of those additional requests received for 2021-22.

As the Schools are currently on leave the number of bags per school has been kept the same as previous years.

Members provided additional groups who should be offered the spring bulbs for planting and it was agreed that the Clerk contact Bryncelyn Nursing Home, Ty Llwynderw assisted living and Friends of Maesteg Welfare Park.

The Clerk requested whether the crocus bulbs purchased last year were successful in the Spring to which members responded that they were very costly for the amounts actually received. It was agreed to only purchase daffodils this year.

RESOLVED:

- Clerk to contact Bryncelyn Nursing Home, Ty Llwynderw assisted living and Friends of Maesteg Welfare Park to see if they would like daffodils
- Clerk to proceed with ordering daffodils

130. AGENDA ITEM 13 – TO DISCUSS OPERATION LONDON BRIDGE

Members were provided with Operation London Bridge Guidance for Community & Town Councils. Whereby Operation London Bridge is the code name given to the passing of H M Queen Elizabeth the Second.

Cllr G Thomas **proposed** and was seconded by Cllrs L Thomas and W May that the procedure of Operation London Bridge for Maesteg Town Council be delegated to the Mayor and Clerk at that time. It was noted that Maesteg Town Council should follow BCBC.

Clerk queried whether a portrait of HM Queen Elizabeth II and a book of condolence should be purchased in preparation and it was agreed to purchase the items. However Cllrs AR Davies and P White disagreed to the purchase.

RESOLVED:

- The Maesteg Town Council procedure of Operation London Bridge be delegated to the Mayor and Clerk at that time.
- Clerk to purchase a portrait of HM Queen Elizabeth II and a book of condolence should be purchased in preparation

131. AGENDA ITEM 14 – WHATSAPP VOTING

The Clerk has received a number of phone calls and emails from Councillors advising that the use of WhatsApp for urgent matters is now illegal due to the recommencing of Council Meetings. Concerns include:

- Town councils are using WhatsApp voting to make non urgent decisions which are not being given the opportunity for debate at predetermined council meetings.
- The misuse of WhatsApp voting whereby the Clerk is being pressurised to use WhatsApp on non-urgent business,
- The system disregards declarations of interest from voting members. If we continue with this system then the democratic process of this council will be eroded
- I have been reliably informed that it is not legal for Councillors to vote on WhatsApp

Advice has been sought from the Monitoring Officer who has advised:

You should have provisions in your standing orders to make urgent decision. Usually, it will be the Chair in consultation with certain other members and can be done verbally if followed up in writing. I wouldn't recommend using WhatsApp.

I see from the minutes that this method has been used previously. As it seems to be accepted it wouldn't invalid decisions taken although I would suggest you amend your standing orders to cover urgent decisions.

Cllr P White **proposed** and was seconded by Cllr R Collins that Maesteg Town Council cease using WhatsApp voting as per the advice of the Monitoring Officer.

It was **agreed** that the Standing Orders Committee meet to revisit the Standing Orders

RESOLVED: Standing Orders Committee to meet and to revisit the Standing Orders

132. AGENDA ITEM 15 - S137 PAYMENT POLICY

Cllr K Edwards requested that the S137 Policy be discussed in Full Council, Clerk and Deputy Clerk provided previous Finance Committee Minutes relating to the S137 policy:

- Finance Committee Meeting – 01/07/2016 Minute 69
- Finance Committee Meeting – 28/04/2017 Minute 413
- Finance Committee Meeting – 21/05/2018 Minute 435

Members discussed the previous minutes relating to the S137 Policy and **agreed** that the policy should be looked at by the Finance Committee as a matter of urgency and that the policy should be clear and fair to all groups and clubs wishing to apply for financial assistance. It was noted that in 2021-22 budget for S137 also included funding for the Power of Wellbeing Act and it was suggested that within the budget S137 and Power of Wellbeing be split in the recording, again this was agreed to be discussed by the Finance Committee.

RESOLVED: Finance Committee to meet and to discuss S137 Policy

133. FINANCIAL APPLICATIONS

Cllr G Thomas declared an interest in this item and left the meeting; therefore, took no part in the discussion on the financial application.

Following this item being deferred until after the S137 Policy was discussed it was agreed that Maesteg Town Council stick to the current policy and

RESOLVED: Council donate the sum of £200 under Section 137 of the Local Government Act (as amended)

Cllr G Thomas was asked to re-enter the meeting.

134. AGENDA ITEM 16 – NALC LEGAL TOPIC NOTE (LTN) – COUNCILS’ POWERS TO DISCHARGE THEIR FUNCTIONS

Cllr K Edwards requested that the above be discussed as within the document it advises that full council committees are impractical.

The Clerk provided members with the NALC LTN and a copy of MTC Standing Orders.

A member read out section 19 whereby it states that:

Prior to the introduction of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 as amended by s.100 (2) of the 1972 Act which confirmed the right of the public and the press to attend committee meetings, it was the practice of many councils to appoint itself as a committee to exclude the press and the public. The practice is not common in recent years but NALC is sometimes asked if it is lawful. There is no lawful reason why a local council should not appoint itself as a committee but in

NALC's view, there is no cogent argument for this. NALC's view is supported in 'Knowles on Local Authority Meetings – A Manual of Law and Practice, 8th Edition.' Paragraph 9.68 on page 227 states that "a committee of the whole council cannot by definition be a committee of the parent body".

Following this advice Cllr W May **proposed** and seconded by Cllrs AR Davies and L Thomas that the Finance Committee reverts back to a 7-member committee opposed to a full council committee.

Members read section 36 (f) of the current Standing Orders whereby it states that Membership of Committees:

- Finance Committee – 7 members to include the elected Mayor for the ensuing year
- Membership of other Committees of Council – 5 members

Following this it was **agreed** to change the structure of the Finance Committee from full Council to 7 members. It was noted that members had already nominated a Chair of Finance and that the Mayor was also a member, leaving 5 positions to be fulfilled.

Cllr R Penhale Thomas **proposed** and was seconded by Cllr L Thomas that Cllrs K Edwards, R Penhale -Thomas and L Thomas be nominated.

Cllr AR Davies **proposed** and was seconded by Cllr P White that Cllr A James be nominated.

Cllr W May **proposed** and was seconded by Cllr L Thomas that Cllr R Martin be nominated.

Following the nominations, it was **agreed** that the following be Councillors be appointed as the Finance Committee.

Cllrs: G Thomas (Chair)
AR Davies, K Edwards, A James, R Martin, R Penhale -Thomas and L Thomas

It was also noted that smaller committee meetings could also now meet in the Council Chamber.

Members raised the issue of other Full Council Committees whereby it was agreed to place these on the agenda for a future meeting.

RESOLVED: To Agendarise the other full council committees for discussion at a future meeting

135. PLANNING

Cllrs R Collins, P Davies, K Edwards, R Penhale-Thomas and P White left the meeting; therefore, took no part in the discussion on planning proposals.

The following applications had **No Observations** due to the application being made by an employee of the Town Council:

Ref: P/21/592/OUT
Applicant: Mrs E O'Brien
Location: Garden of 14 St Cynwyds Avenue Maesteg CF34 9NR
Proposal: Two storey, 3-bedroom house and new vehicular access from highway
Case Officer: Lee Evans

The following application had **No Objections**; Cllr C Reeves declared an interest in this item and left the meeting; therefore, took no part in the discussion on this planning proposal.

Ref: P/21/349/FUL
Applicant: Conway Consulting
Location: 9 Daren Close Maesteg CF34 0YX
Proposal: Two storey side extension with balcony to rear of extension; replacement parking to front; widen access including dropped kerbs
Case Officer: Julie Earp

The following applications had **No Objections**;

Ref: P/21/622/FUL
Applicant: Samawi Ltd
Location: Land rear of Princess Street Maesteg CF34 9BD
Proposal: 1no. detached dwelling
Case Officer: Julie Jenkins

Ref: P/21/625/FUL
Applicant: Ms C Rees
Location: 37 Garnwen Terrace Nantyffyllon Maesteg CF34 0ET
Proposal: Two storey extension to rear elevation to provide kitchen/bathroom; dormer extension to rear elevation to provide bedroom
Case Officer: Julie Earp

Ref: P/21/525/FUL
Applicant: R Lewis
Location: 22 Ystad Celyn Maesteg CF34 9LT
Proposal: Single storey flat roof extension to rear and side garage
Case Officer: Julie Earp

Ref: P/21/626/FUL
Applicant: Mr M Moseley
Location: 7 Celtic Road Garth Maesteg CF34 0YJ
Proposal: Single storey side extension and porch to front
Case Officer: Julie Earp.

Ref: P/21/657/FUL
Applicant: Mrs B Davies
Location: 106 Llwydarth Road Maesteg CF34 9EU
Proposal: Rear extension with balcony and loft conversion with rear dormer
Case Officer: Euan Sexton

Ref: P/21/648/FUL
Applicant: Mr D Martin
Location: 46 Lansbury Crescent Maesteg CF34 9LY
Proposal: Two storey extension to side to provide family room/bedroom/bathroom
Case Officer: Euan Sexton

Members **Supported** the following application:

Ref: P/21/604/FUL
Applicant: Toolstation Ltd
Location: Unit 6 Spelter Industrial Estate Maesteg CF34 0TY
Proposal: External alterations and change of use from builders' merchant to use class B8 (Storage or Distribution)
Case Officer: Lee Evans

RESOLVED: To note the information.

Minutes emailed to all Councillors to Read on 4th August 2021

**Minutes accepted at a remote meeting of the Council
held on 7th September 2021**

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Mayor