

**MAESTEG TOWN COUNCIL
COUNCIL MEETING**

Minutes of a HYBRID meeting of the **FULL COUNCIL** held at the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Talbot Street, Maesteg and remotely via Microsoft Teams and, on **Tuesday, 5th September 2023**

PRESENT:

COUNCILLORS:

R Martin (Mayor)

F Abedalkarim, AR Davies, C Davies, P Davies, A James,
P Jenkins, C Knight, A Le Geyt, R Lewis,

R Penhale-Thomas, M Rowlands, G Thomas, L Thomas, and
I Williams

APOLOGIES:

Apologies were received from Cllrs R Collins, G Williams

DECLARATION OF INTEREST:

Cllrs C Davies, P Davies, P Jenkins, and R Penhale-Thomas declared an interest in any items relating to Bridgend County Borough Council.

207. POLICE MATTERS

Members welcomed Sgt Watts, accompanied by a PCSO, of South Wales Police and the following crime figures were provided;

Maesteg Crime Statistics for August 2023

	Caerau / Nanty	Maesteg East	Maesteg West	Llan	Total in category
Robbery	0	0	0	0	0
Drugs	0	0	0	0	0
Dwelling burglary	0	0	0	0	0
Burglary other	2	0	0	1	3
Theft of vehicle	1	2	1	1	5
Theft from vehicle	1 (1 att)	1	7 (2 att)	0	9
All other theft	13 (1 att)	21	7	0	41
Damage	8	9	5	2	24
Violence against The person	23(5)	10(2)	13	5 (1)	51(6)
Domestic related Occurrences	5	6	4	0	15
All crime total	48	43	33	9	127
ASB total	7	4	5	2	18
Drink Driving	0	0	0	0	0

Members thanked the officers for their attendance and raised the following concerns;

- Tesco have installed better equipment to deal with shoplifting, has there been any improvement and are other shops within the valley following suit?
Tesco have seen a reduction in shoplifting instances, other shops are not currently investing in further measures. An increase in shoplifting in these shops since Tesco launched the new equipment has also been noticed.
- Noise pollution has been reported to South Wales Police and no resolution has been noted
Noise pollution is dealt with by the Shared Regulatory Services and Licensing not the Police
- Any update on anti-social behaviour on Hermon Road from the weekend?
These figures are from August so have not consulted September's documentation
- Vandalism to a bench on commercial street, CCTV was provided, is there an update?
We do have patrols through Commercial and Talbot Street over the weekends to try and combat these issues. Recommend all instances reported to SWP. No update on this particular issue.
- Could we request Police assistance for the residents of Pit Street being subject to a person banging on doors and threatening residents in what appears to be an intoxicated state.
We are aware of the individual and have worked with them in the past to correct this behaviour. We encourage all residents to report all aspects of ASB to SWP. Going forward for this issue, with more reports, we can issue a Community Protection Notice giving SWP more powers to deal with the situation.
- Issues within the Market Square and the public toilet to the rear of MTC building:
 - are defecating in the sink and on the walls
 - using the rear fire exit to urinate
 - drugs being dealt in the corridor to the toilet*Please keep reporting these incidents and ask all the market traders to report incidents.*

Sgt Watts finished by asking members to encourage the community to report all suspicious behaviour, ASB and other criminal activity to SWP. The best way to do this is the online form, with this information resource can be allocated much easier to problem areas but can only do so when issues are reported.

He continued, stating that because of community information, South Wales Police have closed down several Cannabis farms recently taking an estimated £250,000 worth of cannabis off the streets and have started criminal proceedings against those responsible. Stopping drug factories such as these in their infancy results in the criminals not being able to establish a foothold within the community and will deter gang and drug related offences.

RESOLVED: to note the information

208. TO RECEIVE THE CHRISTMAS LIGHTING MANAGER FROM CENTREGREAT

The Mayor welcomed Mr A Gough and Mr R Lewis from Centregreat to discuss Christmas Lighting and outline what they can offer Maesteg Town Council for the future along with plans for the lights we have in situ with them currently.

The officers mentioned that the current displays we have with Centregreat are showing signs of age and are looking dated when erected. He asked if Maesteg Council have a plan for what is needed – members confirmed that they are happy to take suggestions from the experts.

Anthony continued, stating that there are colour options from white, blue, green and multicoloured – multicoloured is making a comeback in recent times he claimed. With motifs, these can also be done as a theme or random and sporadic but must be small enough to leave 450mm from the highway to allow HGV's to pass without causing an accident.

Members were happy to allow Centregreat to comeback with a proposal which would outline the theme and type of lights throughout the Town Centre. Centregreat advised that the current lights can be repurposed throughout the valley in the other wards of Maesteg. Some members raised concerns about the lights not working in previous years, they were advised that Centregreat do test all the lights prior to them being erected and that many of the issues are to do with the fixings on the lampposts which change and can collect water.

Members asked if there was a leasing option available for new lights. They were advised that there is a 3-year leasing option and if you purchase lights outright, there would be an estimated 5-year lifespan for peak performance. Centregreat advised that they can come back with a proposal for Christmas lights by the end of the week and there would be roughly an 8-week lead-time from order date so there is every possibility that new lights could be installed for Christmas 2023.

Members thanked the representatives of Centregreat and agreed to review the proposal from Centregreat, when received. It was noted that Centregreat include emergency cover, so, if a lamppost was to fall down at 3am then they could have this remedied almost immediately.

RESOLVED: to await a proposal / quote from Centregreat

209. TO RECEIVE THE MAYORS REPORT

The Mayor advised that she attended the following events:

- 24th August - Curtain Up Performance of Legally Blonde
- 27th August Classic Car Show
- 6th September V2C Maesteg Park Community Growers Opening

RESOLVED: to note the information

210. MINUTES

The following minutes, copies of the which minutes have been circulated to Members, were taken as read, accepted as a true record and signed by the Mayor:

- **Full Council** – 01/08/2023 emailed 03/08/2023

The minutes of the following meetings:

- **CONFIDENTIAL Communications Committee** – 08/08/2023 emailed 14/08/2023
- **CONFIDENTIAL Communications Committee** – 22/08/2023 emailed 16/08/2023

were taken as read, and discussed the recommendation with the following observations:

- a) Council accepts the quote from Quote 2 due to the committee seeing its integration in person.

Members raised concerns about the amount of capital required to upgrade the audio equipment given an alternative quote received for a lesser amount. The committee members advised that the minutes outline the reasoning for the recommendation but mentioned that the servicing was local compared with the alternative company being based in England. The alternative company also didn't offer any physical examples when they attended so it was difficult for them to base a recommendation on something they have not seen in person. The recommended company offers products directly from the industry leaders in audio equipment and have fantastic pedigree and longevity.

A member mentioned that legislation now dictates that hybrid meetings are here to stay and the requirement to offer accessibility to all members of the Council and community is there and currently Maesteg Town Council are lacking in fulfilling it. This is due to outdated equipment that often goes silent for those attending online, the sound quality when working is poor for those attending online and the speakers on the current microphones also produce an echo within the chamber making it difficult for online users to be heard by those attending in person. The member continued stating that this investment for the Council solves an important issue for at least another 10 years and in essence, the Council is buying a service for the community – to allow them to hear everything that is being said within a meeting.

Following a lengthy discussion, a vote on the recommendation was held:

Cllr	For/Against	Cllr	For/Against	Cllr	For/Against
F Abedalkarim	Against	P Jenkins	Against	R Penhale-Thomas	Against
AR Davies	For	C Knight	Against	M Rowlands	For
C Davies	For	A LeGeyt	For	G Thomas	For
P Davies	For	R Lewis	Against	L Thomas	Against
A James	For	R Martin	For	I Williams	Against

Results:

8 For

7 Against

With 8 votes for the recommendation, the recommendation stands and the quote from Quote 2 is accepted.

- The minutes of the **CONFIDENTIAL Bus Sub Committee – 30/08/2023** emailed 30/08/2023 meeting were taken as read and the following recommendations were discussed with the following observations:
 - a) Council accepts the quote from Forge Travel to run the trial bus route 37 with a clause to re-evaluate every six months
 - b) To agree a Tuesday and Friday for the trial.
 - c) To include Oakwood Estate within the trial and if successful add more areas.

A member requested that the trial is re-evaluated every 3 months and that the contract could be cancelled with 1 month notice. It was agreed that the finer detail of the contract would be discussed with the winning tender.

Cllr G Thomas **moved** and seconded by Cllr L Thomas that all 3 recommendations are accepted.

MATTERS ARISING

211. MINUTE 147

MINUTES – RECOMMENDATIONS FROM FINANCE COMMITTEE

- 02/08/23: Financial Regulations updated and placed onto the website
- 02/08/23: Updated S137 policy & application form placed onto the website
- 03/08/23: letter emailed to all outstanding CAT Grant clubs

Following responses:

Maesteg Celtic Bowling Club (MCBC)	Caerau AFC	FC Maesteg	Caerau All Whites
Maesteg Celtic Bowling Club are still interested in the grant allocated to us when we took over the maintenance of the bowling green which we have been doing for three years now.	No response to date	No response to date	Are still waiting on BCBC to sign off the CAT. Have been advised that paperwork is ready to be signed off and BCBC advising that this hasn't been

<p>We have changed our bank account since applying the new account is with Credit Union.</p> <p>MCBC have provided invoices for the equipment purchased and are waiting on a suitable lease from the Sports Club</p> <p>BCBC have advised: The requirement is that a self-management agreement needs to be in place. As this has not happened funding cannot be released sadly.</p>			<p>completed yet due to staff shortages.</p>
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- 03/08/23: Moved £3,000 back into General Fees
- 03/08/23: Moved the King's Coronation event from S137 into Summer Festival
- 03/08/23: Internal Auditor Tender sent to all those listed and placed onto website and social media

A member requested that the clerk send final letters to those organisations that have yet to respond, and state that if no intent to apply is there then the grant funding will become unavailable.

RESOLVED: Email the 2 clubs who didn't respond to advise: Following no response to the letter sent on 3rd August 2023 - this funding will be withdrawn at the end of the financial year (March 2024) unless you advise that you are still in the process of the CAT.

212. MINUTE 152

REFERRALS – Nantyllyllon Bus Shelter

02/08/23: Quote 2 company contacted to proceed with the repairs to Nantyllyllon Bus Shelter - To date no date given to complete the works

RESOLVED: to note the information

213. MINUTE 154

CHRISTOPHER WILLIAMS PAINTINGS – FOI REQUEST

03/08/23: Emailed BCBC to ask them what they wish to happen to the paintings

04/08/23: Response - Thank you for your email. Further to my email on 19th July, I have requested clarification from the relevant department whether there are plans for the paintings

RESOLVED: to note the information

214. MINUTE 155

REQUEST TO CLEAR WEEDS

03/08/23: Emailed Bridgend College to enrol CMO onto next available weed spraying course.

CMO to attend course on 21st, 22nd and 23rd of August. Assessments will take place on the 29th and 30th August.

Clerk advised that the CMO will need to re-sit the practical assessment.

RESOLVED: to book the CMO onto the practical assessment.

215. MINUTE 156

UPDATE ON BLAENCAERAU PLAYGROUND

02/08/23: Following update emailed to all members:

I've chased up Rachel at V2C as there's a few things to explore, which include an application to WG for the Assets Collaboration Programme phase 3.

I've raised with V2C the situation in relation to them potentially contributing a third of the cost, however, they remain relatively stuck on not contributing financially to the potential new park but in providing a nil value land transfer and possible labour/materials from their contractors as a contribution, but I'm not sure how that will work.

Another key aspect is cost of liability insurance for a play park and the ongoing maintenance

Clerk advised that a further update is to be discussed as a delegate report later in the meeting.

RESOLVED: to note the information

216. MINUTE 158

ANNUAL RETURN OF ACCOUNTS YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2023

Following the Notice of Electors Right 10/07/23 – 04/08/23 No member of the public asked to the finance files.

07/08/23: Deputy Clerk delivered 2022-23 paperwork to Audit Wales in Swansea

RESOLVED: to note the information

217. MINUTE 160

FLY TIPPING – REAR CARMEN STREET

03/08/:23: Quotes were received and forwarded to Caerau Ward Members. The following quote - £460 (ex. vat) was agreed by the Caerau Ward Members and company asked to proceed with the clearance.

Prior to the clearance the company were asked for their waste carriers license, which was provided, and checked alongside the NRW database.

18/08/23: all waste removed, photograph forwarded to Caerau Members, transfer of waste document received and invoice paid.

In addition to this Cllr P Davies has visited residents and advised that this is a one off and MTC can't keep clearing the lane if locals are going to fly tip there.

The member continued, stating that a request has been sent to BCBC for a no fly tipping sign to be placed in the area. Clerk advised that BCBC may not agree to this as the lane is unadopted. The member advised that he will keep the Clerk updated and maybe MTC could erect a sign.

RESOLVED: To await further update

218. MINUTE 161

RBL – REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

03/08/:23: Emailed the road closure company to proceed with the road closure on Remembrance Sunday

RESOLVED: to note the information

219. MINUTE 164

USE OF LAND: BRIDGE STREET

04/08/:23: Emailed BCBC to ascertain the costs involved in widening the bridge and if they could provide any civil engineer company details - No response to date

RESOLVED: to note the information

220. MINUTE 166

MAYORS CONSORT CHAIN

11/08/23 KPM Advised chain will be another 2-3 weeks

RESOLVED: to note the information

221. MINUTE 169

WARM COAT FOR CHILDREN SCHEME

03/08/:23: Emailed the uniform swap shop to advise that Council have agreed for them to use the building 2 mornings a week in addition to storage.

RESOLVED: to note the information

222. MINUTE 176

FINANCE – VAN SIGNAGE

09/08/2023: The following companies were contacted to ask for quotes for the van signage:

- <http://www.pcsigns.net/>
- Vernon Cox
- <https://weekswork.co.uk/>

Following quotes received to have the MTC Crest and name placed onto the van sides and rear:

Quote 1	Quote 2	Quote 3
£250 +VAT		

Members were forwarded a mock up design. The website is due to be changed to .gov so Cllr AR Davies has requested the website be taken off the van until this is done. Cllr F Abedalkarim has requested the Councils telephone number to be added to the design.

Despite only the 1 quote coming back, given that the amount is not a significant sum, members agreed to accept quote 1 but to change the website to a telephone number to account for the .gov domain name change coming in the near future.

RESOLVED: Proceed with van signage from Quote 1

223. MINUTE 178

BCBC RED/GREY BAGS

02/08/23: Emailed Quote 3 to proceed with the 1,100 litre wheely bin

Clerk advised that no start date has been given for the contract

RESOLVED: to note the information

224. MINUTE 181

UNADOPTED LANE – OVERGROWTH REMOVING – REAR OF BANK STREET.

03/08/:23: Asked CMO to remove the overgrowth rear of bank street.

14/08/23: CMO advised he has visited the lane and will take appropriate measures. He did advise that some residents have asked previously to leave the lane overgrown as this discourages substance misuse in the lane but he will talk to the residents about concerns prior.

RESOLVED: to note the information

225. MINUTE 183

REQUEST FROM CLLR F ABEDALKARIM – DEFIBRILATOR

A number of emails have been shared with Maesteg East Ward members and Maesteg First Responders. BCBC Cllr M Hughes has contacted the Crown Inn who are more than happy to give permission for a defib to be affixed to the property.

25/08/23: Clerk emailed MediTec for a quote to purchase a defibsafe cabinet and NF1200 to be located on the Crown Inn, Maesteg. In addition to this Clerk has looked online and the defibwarehouse have many different packages available for the NF1200 and prices range from £1,399 upto £1,469 ex.VAT

https://defibwarehouse.co.uk/product-category/defibrillator-packages/for-outdoor-use/?filtering=1&filter_product_brand=76

Cllr P Jenkins advised: Thank you for full updates, and would support the proposed advised position at the crown inn.

27/08/23: Cllr P Jenkins:

Firstly, having been in correspondence with Nic (first responders) would you seek the opinion on fellow cllrs about a bespoke training session on both the use of CPR AND THE DEFIBRILLATOR, this has been offered by the first responders specific to MTC MEMBERS AND STAFF. Should we wish to avail ourselves of this.

Members were notified that the community first responders have stated that the area requested is already covered by a defibrillator so having one outside the swimming pool is not required. Members commented, stating that the defibrillator within the swimming pool is for swimming pool use only due to the nature of individuals exercising within. Members thought it prudent that there be one outside the swimming pool as well. It was agreed that Maesteg East members approach the Workingmen's Club to place a defibrillator outside on their wall for general public use.

RESOLVED:

- To advise Maesteg First Responders of the proposed new location and proceed with the purchase of 2 defibrillators
- To ask Community First Responders to arrange training session for MTC on the use of CPR and Defibrillator

226. **MINUTE 187**

POWER WASHING COMMERCIAL STREET AND TALBOT STREET

Following quotes received to power wash Commercial Street and Talbot Street:

Quote 1	Quote 2	Quote 3
£8,250 +vat = £9,900 In addition, can also include Aldi car park for an extra £4,400	£3,360.00 +vat = £4,032.00 Commercial St = £1,920.00 Talbot St = £1,440.00	

07/08/23 BCBC contacted us after hearing about our plans to have Commercial Street and Talbot Street cleaned and had the following to say;

if we attempt the street cleansing ourselves with a private company – BCBC can hold us responsible for any damage that may occur or already be in place. We could take before and after video/images to combat that but they did say that if MTC are not happy with the lack of response and action from the street cleansing team and MTC wish to proceed with doing it ourselves then it'll be best to setup a face-to-face meeting with Janine Nightingale who is the corporate director of communities (which includes street cleansing) to discuss terms going forward. This will likely be done through a service level agreement and would need to be signed off formally.

Currently talks are underway with BCBC and we will share the outcome when there is one.

The deputy clerk advised members that BCBC were made aware of the Councils ambition to cleanse the streets and entered into discussions for BCBC to undertake the work given that the Town Council have no power to cleanse the highway and the land is the property of BCBC. Since this matter has arisen, members advised that the cleansing truck has visited Maesteg and cleaned Talbot Street which has made a noticeable difference. A member mentioned that Commercial Street still appears to not be completed which they were advised that this should be undertaken.

Clerk advised that the quotes received were for 1 cleansing session.

RESOLVED:. To note the information

227. **MINUTE 189**

SUMMER EVENTS - EPM

03/08/:23: Emailed EPM to advise that Members liked both proposals but were concerned with the short notice of which to decide. It was agreed to ringfence the remaining funds (circa £15k) and tender for the events next summer

RESOLVED: To arrange an Events committee meeting

**228. MINUTE 191
SPRING BULBS**

02/08/:23: 63 x 25 kg sacks of Spring Bulbs ordered.

RESOLVED: to note the information

**229. MINUTE 192
SANTAS GROTTO 2023**

02/08/:23: Winning tender contacted to proceed with Santa's Grotto 2023

29/08/23: Events Committee to meet with the winning tender to discuss the finer details of the quote. – details of which are within delegates reports later in the meeting.

RESOLVED: to note the information

**230. MINUTE 193
FINANCIAL APPLICATIONS**

Still waiting on banking details from Safe Haven Maesteg as when setting up the payment the bank advised that there was no such account.

Emails of thanks received from:

- Caerau Primary School

Clerk advised that the application for a basketball camp has been retracted as Basketball Wales will issue certificates to all attendees

RESOLVED: to note the information

**231. MINUTE 195
PLANNING**

A member raised the issue that planning application P/23/427/FUL should have been had the objection that as a residential street it would not be appropriate to set up a commercial business.

RESOLVED: to forward the above concerns to planning

232. LIST OF PAYMENTS FOR THE MONTH OF AUGUST 2023

RESOLVED:

That the tables of **Expenditure (£20,117.02) Income (£3,313.76)** during the month of August 2023; 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 Mayor.

Members were also provided with:

- list of payments to be made in September 2023 totalling **£21,624.90**
- A copy of the Receipts and Payments Account which includes expenditure against the budget and the budget remaining and an income analysis.

The Clerk advised that Solutions in Technology charge a non-direct debit administration fee for the photocopying contract and asked permission to set this payment up as a direct debit – members agreed.

The Mayor has asked about opening an instant access savings account for the Mayors Charity. Clerk has found the following options available for business customers:

Bank	Savings Type	Minimum deposit	Interest paid monthly
Lloyds Business Account	instant access savings	minimum £1	1.11% AER 1.10% Gross
TSB Business	instant access savings	Minimum £1	0.90% AER 0.90% Gross

Members advised that the Mayors Charity is traditionally separate from the Council and the Council has no say in where the money goes or how the account is managed and it is not scrutinised by the Council in any way.

CMO Summary Report – August 2023

The month of August have included the following works:

- Weekly building checks that include:
 - fire alarm
 - emergency lighting
 - legionnaires disease
- Twice weekly bin emptying on the cycle track and daily bin emptying at Llynfi Rd car park
- Inspect and, where necessary, cut back overgrowth or clear debris: Fp. 6, 15, 20, 23a, 27, 36, 37, 37a, 38, 40, 41, 45a, 57, 64, 77, 78, 82, old Tyson road and lower cycle track, Bridlepath 77
- Milage at start of month – 56,575 at end 56,834 (259 total miles)
- Inspected fly tipping to rear of Carmen street – removed what I could
- Attended Pencoed College to complete Weed Spraying course.

Works to be Carried out Next Month;

- Weekly building checks that include:
 - fire alarm
 - emergency lighting
 - legionnaires disease
- Weekly bin emptying on the cycle track and Llynfi Rd car park
- Inspect and, where necessary, cut back overgrowth or clear debris on rights of ways

CORRESPONDENCE

233. REQUEST FROM CLLR P JENKINS

Emil received 16:30 on 26/07/23: Can you add the reduction in bus services in our valley, IE first Cymru withdrawal of early bus to Bridgend.

Deputy Clerk advised: The cut-off date for adding items to the paperwork was yesterday about midday. Hasn't Ross raised the issue with BCBC? I thought I may have seen him discussing that with someone online

Yes, he has, but as a council we should be seen to support and report the problems relating to the termination of the early bus at the very least

14/08/23 Cllr P Jenkins updated us with the newly proposed timetable of service 70 and 71 to come into effect from 3rd September 2023;

Service Period	Service	From	Time of Last Bus
Current	70	Cymmer	2024
From 3 September	70	Cymmer	1750
Current	71	Cymmer	1715
From 3 September	71	Cymmer	1720
Current	70	Bridgend	2020
From 3 September	70	Bridgend	1705
Current	71	Bridgend	1735
From 3 September	71	Bridgend	1735

Following a discussion, it was **agreed** that the Clerk to write to BCBC & First Cymru to advise the Council object to the changes in the timetable.

RESOLVED: to write to BCBC & First Cymru

234. NEWSLETTERS / FLYERS / BRIEFING NOTES/ CONSULTATIONS

Emailed to all Councillors for information:

- Hartshorn House August 2023 Newsletter
- Business @ Bridgend August E-news Newsletter
- Street name former Blaenllynfi Infants School
- Self Defence Classes for Women and Girls - Commencing Tue 8th Aug 23 - weekly concluding Tue 26th Sep 23.

- New Artwork at Maesteg Town Centre
- HIGHWAYS ACT 1980 - BRIDGEND COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL(DIVERSION OF RESTRICTED BYWAY 76 MAESTEG) PUBLIC PATH DIVERSION ORDER NO.1 2023
- Public Services Ombudsman for Wales - Annual Report 2022 23
- Community Green Spaces – nominations
- The latest news from Maesteg Town Hall – have also asked for a site visit to be arranged for MTC Cllrs
- BCBC Footfall Review January - June 2023
- OVW – August & September training dates

RESOLVED: to note the information

235. REFERRALS

- **03/08/23:** Cllr C Davies – 2 blocked drains outside Sparkle Box, Maesteg
- **14/08/23:** Cllr C Davies - The bench that I think MTC are responsible for at Heol Ty Gwyn near Brewers bungalow is no longer there it needs to be replaced apparently a car crashed into it and damaged it some years ago and it never got replaced?
- **14/08/23:** Cllr C Davies - Bin needs attention at the forge site near forge travel also poo bags on floor
Response: Reported to cleanupthecounty and awaiting a response.
- **14/08/23:** Member of the public approached the deputy clerk in regards to overgrowth in a gutter and loose render to the back of Andrews Butchers. We reported to BCBC town center manager.
Response: Building Control - I have already reported this to Building Control and I received a response from the officer Jack Edwards on 25th July that he had made contact with the owner and the dangers were to be removed in the next few days. He will be attending site to check this has been carried out. With regards to the guttering, I am in the process of arranging with the owner to get these cleared as soon as possible
- **18/08/23:** Fallen tree near BMX Cycle Track - Please see below image of a tree that has fallen onto the highway as you go up to the BMX track. The CMO advised that cars can still pass but the tree poses a threat as its nearly fully fallen. We have reported it to Bridgend, I believe they may say this falls on unadopted land so may resort to the CMO clearing the tree and he has said if that is the case, he would need help which would be fine for me. A number of members advised they would assist the CMO if needed.
Response 19/08/23: Cllr P Davies advised that the tree has been removed from the road

RESOLVED: to note the information

236. THANKS FROM ESTONIAN FAMILY

Cllr C Davies advised that his Estonian family would like to thank MTC for allowing them to visit the council chambers.

RESOLVED: to note the information

237. REQUEST FROM NANTYFFYLLON MINING MUSEUM

Nantyffyllon Mining Museum request to the Town Council is to re-site the dram that is located off the highway at the start of the Nantyffyllon ward, where it is surrounded by overgrowth, and almost unseen from where it is currently located, to a more prominent site in the frontage of Nantyffyllon Miners Institute. Should the Council agree, it would be subject to permission from CADW, I have asked Big Pit, and a private mine, to try find another dram without having any success, hence this request.

Therefore, we are asking Maesteg Town Council to consider this request, whilst we seek the relevant permission from CADW. The elected site for a dram is in the railing enclosed area in the frontage of the institute, where it would be a prominent display, and reflect the History of this building and our Town.

We as trustees intend to refurbish with grant funding the whole building which will give greater use to the community, and the ability to reflect the culture and art of our community, as it did many years ago

A member objected to this proposal on the grounds that the dram is visible from the main road going both ways. He admitted that there is some overgrowth surrounding the dram which could do with clearing – requested that the CMO clear the overgrowth and re-paint the dram

Another member felt that the dram would be better suited to being relocated to Nantyffyllon Miners Institution. It was noted that the newly proposed location would have the dram only visible to traffic going via the bottom road and would be sitting behind a fence and additionally, would likely be blocked most time by users of the gym in the basement of the Museum.

A member suggested that the current dram stay in situ in its current location and he would approach TATA steel who have community programs and a request can be put to TATAs apprentices to create a new dram for the miners' institute – members agreed with this suggestion.

RESOLVED:

- Ask CMO to clear overgrowth around the dram and to re-paint the dram
- Await the outcome of the TATA Steel community programme.

238. CYCLE PATH BENCHES

The CMO advised us that 2 picnic benches have been vandalised on route to the keeper of the colliery. The benches are on NRW/BCBC land and were previously repaired by a local tradesman free of charge.

Cllr C Knight emailed; This is unbelievable, maybe we should rethink Phil's suggestion of putting a camera in that area. To Actually catch a vandal on camera would be such a deterrent. We are running out of options. Someone is destroying public property for fun. Beyond disgusting.

Cllr AR Davies responded; Whilst I wouldn't oppose the installation of some sort of recording device, it's worth noting that these have had little impact on areas such as schools. We still get a large amount of vandalism in the school at Caerau and the culprits aren't particularly phased by being caught on camera; rather the opposite where they seem to enjoy knowing it is being recorded and they'll then play up to the cameras. Even with the CCTV evidence, the police are unlikely to take the matter further as we have found countless of times in school with damaged drain pipes, benches, teepees, polytunnel, windows, fires, break ins, cabins, sheds etc. Endless list!

RESOLVED: A member requested that the Council discusses CCTV options in its next full Council meeting.

239. RELOCATE FLAGPOLE TO THE FRONT OF THE BUILDING?

Following the ongoing works by Dawsons. It was discovered that the flag on top of the building had no base so resulted in direct contact with the leadwork of the roof and, over time, has led to the leadwork being depleted – resulting in a leak.

Members have previously mentioned their desire to move the flag to the front of the building on the pavement.

It was noted that the Christmas tree occupies the space to the front of the building and has the footings installed for it. A member suggested that when the Town Hall reopens then the Council have the option to move the flagpole to the front of the building.

RESOLVED: to await the opening of the Town Hall

240. DOMAIN NAME CHANGE

16/08/23: Deputy Clerk has chased ITCS again for an update for the .gov.uk domain name change.

24/08/23: Clerk chased ITCS and cc'd all members.

Response 24/08/23 from ITCS:

Unfortunately, the process isn't as smooth or simple as what buying a normal domain is.

First we had to try and get help from Welsh gov on the process and ensuring we had the correct information in order to proceed. Once we had this confirmed we were there advised that in order to proceed we need to become a registrar of the JISCO community.

We have requested for us to be considered for approval; however, we are now in the hands of the JISC Service. They are in the process of auditing all their registrars and will not accept our request until they have completed this.

We have continually chased and have been advised that there is no ETA at the moment.

We have reached out to other registrars on the list to see if we can work with them on buying and managing the domain, but the 5 companies we have tried – that are noted on the list- no longer offer this service. We are thinking that perhaps the auditing service is reducing the list of registrars.

We will continue to work through the list until we receive notification of our request to apply is approved, however this is very time consuming, resulting in several hours of online chat and phone calls.

We do understand this is frustrating, and we are feeling this frustration too, as we are not being helped by the organisations.

We will continue and will keep you informed,

RESOLVED: to await further updates

241. T&CC'S CLERKS MEETING

Clerk attended a T&CC's Clerks meeting on 21/08/23 – many issues highlighted to BCBC including:

- lack of response to referrals made by T&CC's and BCBC Cllrs
- Fix My Street – in theory a good system, although when we are being sent emails with photographs etc we are unable to just forward the email as we used to making this system a longer time waste for Clerks as we are having to save photographs and then upload fix my street and upload the information.
- BCBC Officer mentioned T&CC's purchasing new bins / dog waste bins here at Maesteg we have done that, however BCBC will NOT empty these additional bins although they allow us to purchase and site them. Luckily, we have a Community Maintenance Officer who empties them and we are in the process of entering into a contract to dispose of the waste

Clerk also advised that some BCBC members are unaware of the correct procedure for member referrals and that BCBC members had made MTC aware that the member referrals system isn't working and they rarely get any responses. Recently they have also been told that the response time has gone up to 6 weeks!

Response 25/08/23: I will forward on to the Portal team who are doing the training on the new referral system and see if they can organise some 1-1 sessions with the Cllrs you have identified.

The system is now out of the hands of DS now and Members are encouraged to utilise the portal as much as possible to process their own referrals or 'report its', the latter being potholes or street lighting issues etc. With regards to the 'report its' which is the system that you would be accessing for reporting these types of things, the one advantage here is that they go straight to the relevant inspector and added to their list rather than being emailed maybe to an officer, potentially being delayed in that officer's inbox and then eventually passed on to the relevant inspector. The idea is that the response should be quicker. Not sure if this is the same for Fix my street if I am entirely honest but it is generally the view that whilst it might take a bit longer to input, it is going direct to the relevant location for it to be dealt with - though as was raised at the meeting on Monday, some of the automated responses do need to be explored and the Democratic Services Committee Working Group are looking into that with Officers.

A member stated that BCBC has been running training on the members referral system quite often and members, if struggling to use it, should attend.

RESOLVED: To note the information.

242. ISSUES WITH TOILET TO THE REAR OF MTC BUILDING

MTC Cleaner has advised of the following issues with the public toilet to the rear of MTC building:

- men urinating against the fire exit door to the rear of the building
- there are people selling drugs in the corridor leading to toilet to the rear of the building
- SW Police – has asked if MTC can put CCTV in the toilet corridor to deter people from selling drugs
- The alcoholic who gives MTC cleaner abuse is also targeting our Cleaner whilst working in Tesco's

Responses from Cllrs:

- Could we not ask the Police to patrol the market more often? I have no objection to us using cctv, but surely regular patrols around the market would be a better deterrent? I'm am also concerned that any other options MTC pursue for public toilets would be abused
- Thank you for this information appalling behavior for anyone to be subjected too
- This is a shocking state of affairs, could we put the issue of CCTV cameras on the agenda for the next Full Council so we can agree to get some quotes for consideration by the finance committee. Obviously, the other issues will have to be dealt with by SWP.

- I agree this is shocking, we certainly need the camera, we can't allow our facilities to be abused like this. The druggies know there are no cameras, perfect place to deal. The police should be making a case of the alcoholic abusing Liz, no one should have to put up with this, I'm surprised Tesco hasn't acted on it if their staff are getting tormented. I can't believe how much effort we have to put in just to keep the toilets open for public use, abused by the minority.

Liz has advised that Tesco have supported her with the alcoholic and have given a warning that if he is seen abusing staff again he will be banned from Tesco's Maesteg

In addition to the above the Clerk also mentioned a WhatsApp message sent to all members 05/09/23 advising that on Saturday 2nd August the cleaner arrived to clean to the public toilet and that someone had defecated in the sink and on the wall. The cleaner would like to know what Council are going to do about this ongoing issues with the public toilet?

Members agreed that this issue occurs too often and something needs to be done. Members discussed the following options:

- Install cctv in the corridor
- Close the toilet until a more suitable solution is found
- Install a keypad lock and give the code to the market traders who can then give it out to the public
- Only have the toilet open during office hours (9:30am – 2:30pm)
- Duty of care to employee – should close temporarily

Cllr L Thomas **proposed**, seconded by Cllr R Martin that CCTV be placed in the corridor leading to the toilet to act as a deterrent and hopefully catch the culprits.

Members asked the Clerk to check with SWP what crime is being committed with the defecation on the walls, in the sink etc.

Members requested that the projects committee meet and research the adapting the current outside store room into a public convenience and alternative options for replacing the car park toilet.

RESOLVED:

- Ask SW Police what crime is being committed
- Look at legalities of installing CCTV
- Research installing CCTV into the corridor
- Projects committee to meet

243. REQUEST FOR HANDRAIL ADJACENT TO 263C BRIDGEND ROAD, MAESTEG - POSSIBLE MAESTEG EAST WARD PROJECT FOR MAESTEG TOWN COUNCIL

Email received from BCBC Cllr M Hughes whereby all Maesteg East members were copied into:

As you will see as below, I've been pressing Highways to supply and fix a handrail at the above location – see photo as attached. This would be to assist residents and pedestrians to safely climb the steep steps leading to Bridgend Road from the rear of the properties and from the back lane serving Maddock Butchers. I have finally received the response which reads that - as there has not previously been a handrail at this location - Highways are not in a position to - and will not - arrange for a new handrail to be installed.

This has come as a big disappointment to local residents, and particularly to the gentleman who lives at Number 263c who is finding it very difficult to negotiate the steps in order to carry out his day-to-day activities.

I should therefore be most grateful if you would consider including the provision of a new handrail at this location on to the list of projects to be funded under your designated ward fund.

Dear Councillor Hughes,

I refer to the above and your request for updates regarding this matter. Please accept my apologies for the time taken to reply as there have been a number of departments that I have needed to consult and also undertake a review of our records for the area, and finally a meeting has been held with the resident of 263 who has raised this matter with you.

Based on the site meeting with the resident by our streetworks officer, on 1st June 2023 it was apparent that there has been no removal of a handrail in the area by the Statutory Undertakers who have worked in the area. In discussions the resident had advised that "...he would just like to have a handrail put on the side of the bus stop wall, as he has become more unsteady with age, he is finding the top three steps very dangerous. He also, must carry all of his recycling up the steps once a week for pick up by Kier."

The comment that there was no handrail here before is also evidenced by reviewing google images from as far back as 2009

We have also discussed the matter with the Highway Inspector who does not recall there being a handrail at this location.

In looking at the area there are no signs that a handrail has been removed, and the handrail that is present, clearly ends at the rear of the bus shelter.

In regard to handrails and their installation, whilst the Highway department would maintain existing handrailing, we are not obligated and under any duty to improve a highway, which the introduction of a new hand rail would constitute.

As such and having reviewed the matter we do not believe that there was a handrail here previously and consequently there is no intention to introduce one at this time.

We note your comment that you were advised that a handrail is to be installed however as stated above that would normally only occur when one is present previously and has become damaged or failed. We do not believe that to be the case here.

27/08/23 Cllr P Jenkins: if not yet formally requested I would seek to request as a town council who,s powers allow the fitting of handrails etc, that we fit a handrail at side of 263 Bridgend road both sides from top steps down toward existing rail situated lower down, an if necessary, further down to rear of lane.

29/08/23 Cllr C Knight: I know this area. It's already 90% covered with handrail, I assume you mean the small top section with no rail. I think it depends on price if we was to use our ward fund, do you have any idea on prices ? The steps only lead to the butchers as you said and garages so do I think it's used very often and almost all the residents have back entrances so wouldn't need to use the steps, with the exception of the gentleman you mentioned as he lives in a flat with no back entrance but there is an access lane very near with no steps. I think those steps was used years ago when we had factories in the area, I assume that's why BCBC refused to take on the job. Why they didn't install handrail on the whole section when they was doing the job is amazing

Cllr P Jenkins **proposed**, seconded by Cllr F Abedalkarim and A LeGeyt, that the Town Council install a section of handrail to make safe the whole area.

RESOLVED: proceed with installing a handrail

*****9:00pm was reached. Members agreed to suspend standing orders to complete the meeting. Cllr G Thomas wished his objections to suspending standing orders be noted and left the meeting*****

Cllrs AR Davies and A James left the meeting at 9:10pm

244. WAR MEMORIALS CLEANED PRIOR TO REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

Previously MTC have engaged with the local stonemason to clean both war memorials (Maesteg & Caerau) during the week before remembrance Sunday.

In 2022 there was some confusion as to authorised this and Clerk advised that this authorisation is given every year to the Stonemason as this is an annual occurrence and that the local stonemason is used.

Members **agreed** to use the same stone mason as in previous years to clean the war memorials prior to Remembrance Sunday.

RESOLVED: To engage with the stonemason to clean both war memorials before Remembrance Sunday

245. TUDOR ESTATE

A number of emails received (forwarded to all members) between Cllr P Davies and SW Police regarding a litter pick / clear up in Tudor Estate on 2nd September and whether MTC could contribute towards the hire of a skip.

Clerk responded: I believe Council previously agreed to the Caerau Ward Spend for a skip to be used in a clean-up day – See Minute 541 of Full Council 07.03.23 of which it was also agreed in Full Council 06.06.23 that any Projects already agreed and costed in March 2023 be purchased from the reserves in 2023-24

The litter pickers were purchased and given to Caerau Ward Members.
Further emails between Caerau Ward members querying the change of location for an area that V2C should be maintaining as it is within their remit.

RESOLVED: to note the information

246. FINANCIAL APPLICATIONS

Members were provided with application forms from the following organisations:

1. Special Families Maesteg

Date received: 02/08/23

Request £500 to upgrade the main function/meeting room

Recent bank statement provided.

Last applied for S137 December 2020

RESOLVED: Council to donate the sum of £500 under Section 137 of the Local Government Act (as amended)

2. Garth Senior Citizens Association

Date received: 22/08/23

Request £500 towards the upgrade of 16 double glazed windows

Recent bank statement provided.

Last applied for S137 December 2022

RESOLVED: Council to donate the sum of £500 under Section 137 of the Local Government Act (as amended)

247. DELEGATES REPORTS

1. Santa's Grotto meeting 29/08/2023

Clerk & Cllr C Davies met with the winning tender for Santa's Grotto 2023 to discuss some of the detail of the quote.

Clerk advised the following:

- There is a traffic order in the bus station and that they would not be able to unload props in the bus station, however they may be able to use the trader's delivery area (Clerk will double check with BCBC).
- Previously MTC have asked local groups / choirs to perform on the Saturdays using the bandstand – agreed this would add to the atmosphere
- Previously Casey's Café have given free hot drink & mince pie to those watching the performances (funded by MTC) although unsure if this will happen this year due to Casey's Café currently having the business up for sale – will ask Casey's café nearer the time
- There is a free car park in Llynfi Road – advised that they should not park in Asda car park as there is a time limit of approx. 2 hours
- The Christmas parade is on 2nd December and that there will be road closures in place therefore they may want to cut off sessions at 3pm.

Option A

The companies preferred choice would be to use the empty unit in the market square. Clerk advised that we have emailed BCBC to ask about the unit in Maesteg Market Square as a Christmas grotto.

BCBC Response 29/08/23 (after the meeting): I don't foresee the unit being taken before Christmas. I will make arrangements to seek the necessary approvals and issue a licence for use of Unit 14

Should the unit be available the entrance & exit would be in the market square, whereby they would also have a gazebo as a waiting area for families.

The company asked if successful with the unit could we get a detailed plan of the unit with confirmation of power supply regulations, Fire regulations and fire assembly point.

Cllr C Davies asked how many families would be accommodated – advised that maximum of 6 children per session.

Clerk advised that the sessions are free and that MTC would supply wrapped gifts. Also queried whether families book a session or would it be a turn up and wait? Clerk advised that previous company issued tickets via Eventbrite. The company agreed to set up Eventbrite ticketing and for sessions to be 6 minutes - they stressed that there would be fluidity on the days whereby if a family didn't use up the 6 minutes the next family would be able to attend earlier and likewise if any families turn up on the day, they may be able to squeeze them in between sessions.

Option B

If the unit is unavailable, we would need to advise ASAP for option B

A gingerbread hut style wooden shed in the market square – would be a smaller version of the dressed unit. Would also need the use of a power supply – Clerk advised that we have an outdoor power outlet located behind the building.

RESOLVED: Members thanked the Clerk for the update.

2. Verbal update on Blaencaerau Park by Cllr M Rowlands

Cllr M Rowlands provided the Council with handouts that outlined an appraisal for entering into a tripartite agreement with BCBC, V2C and Maesteg Town Council in order to have the Blaencaerau playpark refurbished.

Being a new venture for Maesteg Town Council, V2C also provided considerations for the Council to note in terms of managing a playpark which are;

- Annual ROSPA report cost: approx. £100 per annum
- Monthly Play Park Inspections- monthly auditing reporting by a trained
- Playground inspector: Playground inspector cost: RPII Level 1 Inspector Course Valid for 3 years - Cost for RPII training is £1795 + VAT/group Exam each is £245/person Duration is 2 days
- Public Liability Insurance costs.
- Replacement of Parts - dependant on equipment

Cllr Rowlands advised that in order to facilitate the transfer of Blaencaerau Play Park to Maesteg Town Council (MTC) and provide a solution focussed approach, the below sets out considerations and options for the park's refurbishment.

Current Context

MTC's solicitors have been provided with all of the information to date that they have asked for. The Land Value is £3,000 as undertaken by McGaw & Co Property Consultants on 7/8/23.

Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) has always inspected the play area on a monthly basis, replaced and/or maintained component parts and coordinated the annual ROSPA reports.

On 2 August 2023, BCBC forwarded the ROSPA report that took place on 12 June 2023 to Valley to Coast (V2C) and on recommendations from this report, V2C took the decision to temporarily close the park.

Options for a partial refurbishment:

Currently, the play park has two pieces of equipment - a toddler swing and a multiplay unit that comprises a climbing frame and a slide. The ROSPA report recommended that the multiplay unit was a high risk and should be replaced.

The toddler swing and other component parts of the park - flooring, fence, gate, bin and bench were lower risk.

Valleys to Coast are prepared to contribute towards a partial refurbishment: consisting of the replacement of the bench; bin and repainting all of the fence; gate refurbishment, and the removal of the multiplay unit costs. Approximate total amount = £3,350. See table below.

If this tripartite commitment from V2C, MTC and BCBC can be agreed, to support a partial refurbishment ahead of the asset transfer, this could be the first stage of the park's upgrade. Post transfer, MTC would be able and eligible to apply for further external funding to add extra play equipment to extend the play offer

RESOLVED: Members thanked Cllr Rowlands for the update and were happy for him to continue his work in regards to Maesteg Town Council taking over the ownership of Blaencaerau Playpark.

3. Verbal update by Cllr F Abedalkarim on the BCBC T&CC Forum meeting held on 29/08/2023

Cllr F Abedalkarim advised of his attendance to the meeting and that several handouts will be sent to Maesteg Town Council which he suggests are read, a keynote is the 20 minute neighbourhoods' document.

RESOLVED: to note the information and read the reports once received

248. PLANNING

The following applications had no objections:

Ref: P/23/456/FUL
Applicant: Ms S Jeynes
Location: Ty Newydd 29D Neath Road Maesteg CF34 9PG
Proposal: Demolish existing conservatory and replace with orangery with roof lantern across the entire rear elevation
Ask For: Richard Hawkey

Ref: P/23/452/FUL
Applicant: Mr L Price
Location: 30 Princess Street Maesteg CF34 9BD
Proposal: Rear single storey sunroom extension
Ask For: Richard Hawkey

Ref: P/23/382/FUL
Applicant: J Jones
Location: 27 Union Street Maesteg CF34 0BG
Proposal: Single storey extension to rear with flat roof
Ask For: Ashita Guru

The following application members objected to based on access and negative impacts to the local environment;

Ref: P/23/473/RLX
Applicant: RES
Location: Upper Ogmore Valley Between Blaengwynfi, Nantymoel & Blaengarw in Bridgend & Neath Port Talbot CF32 8AH
Proposal: Vary condition 2 of PEDW Ref DNS/3213662 (P/20/893/DNS) to increase the rotor diameter of the proposed wind turbines from 105m to 117m - the overall tip height of the wind turbines will remain as consented -Affecting footpaths 31 & 103 Ogmore Valley and bridleways 38 & 64 Ogmore Valley
Ask for: Phil Thomas

The following application members objected to based on how will they gain access to the area as V2C has given some of this land to the community growers.

Ref: P/23/420/FUL
Applicant: Kendall Developments Ltd
Location: Plot adjacent to 29 Fairfield Avenue Maesteg CF34 9LP
Proposal: 3no. 3-bedroom link dwellings
Ask for: Steven Jenkins

Minutes emailed to Councillors to Read on 12th September 2023

Minutes accepted at a Hybrid meeting of the Council held on 3rd October 2023

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Mayor