

MAESTEG TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of a **HYBRID** meeting of the **EXTRAORDINARY COUNCIL** held remotely via Microsoft Teams and at the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Talbot Street, Maesteg, on **Tuesday, 26th March 2024**.

COUNCILLORS

IN PERSON:

R Martin (Chair)

P Davies, P Jenkins, A LeGeyt, M Rowlands, G Thomas, G Williams and I Williams

ONLINE:

F Abedalkarim. AR Davies and L Thomas

APOLOGIES:

R Collins, C Davies, C Knight, R Lewis and R Penhale-Thomas

NO APOLOGIES:

A James

DECLARATION OF INTEREST: Cllrs P Davies, and P Jenkins declared an interest in any items relating to Bridgend County Borough Council.

512. TO DISCUSS WARD SPECIFIC FUND SPEND PROJECTS AND FUNDING TO BE CARRIED OVER TO 2024-25 FINANCIAL YEAR

Members queried how to spend their remaining ward specific funds by the end of the financial year and whether they could carry over the funds into 2024-25 financial year.

Members were provided with extracts from the following minutes in 2023-24:

- Full Council 02/05/2023 - Minute 613,
- Finance Committee 23/05/2023 - Minute 30,
- Full Council 06/06/2023 - Minute 34 whereby the recommendations of the Finance Committee were accepted:
 - **Projects already agreed and costed in March 2023 be purchased from the reserves in 2023-24.**

Members were also advised that the Chair of Finance had responded to one of the emails stating:

1. Audit and accounting obligations – as a council we have to declare our accounts at “year end” and on that day we have to account for the cash in the bank, the years expenditure and the current commitments.

Commitments are defined as a “future payment obligation” and we have to make a provision to carry that spend into the new year since we will be obligated to pay it. So in this respect the clerk is correct only costed and committed projects can be carried over from revenue.

2. Budget carryover ... this is at complete discretion of the council, if you have 3k left at the end of the year in your ward fund and the council is happy there is no

reason you can't carry it over. It makes no sense to push wards to "use it or lose it", also wards may wish to save for something bigger.....but this is a full council decision. I know some councillors didn't want the ward fund and voted for it not to be carried over in the past.

I would put it on the agenda for the next meeting I can't see any reason why not to just increase the ward fund next year by that left over this year rather than race to spend it now? The money just goes back into reserves so no reason we can't move it back in April's meeting. I would suggest that we put a Cap on the carry over, so it gets spent and doesn't just keep rolling up unless its earmarked for a specific project?

Current budgets remaining in the Ward Specific Fund

Ward	Budget 2023-24	Budget Remaining
Caerau	£6,470.00	£3,346.91
Maesteg East	£5,000.00	£1,795.18
Maesteg West	£5,000.00	£4,235.86
Nantyffyllon	£5,000.00	£5,000.00

Clerk advised that any new projects that require placing on the highway will require permission from BCBC.

In addition to this we will need to discuss with our floral displays contractor the costs for installing and watering the units.

Flowers for the hanging baskets and 3-tiered planters will need to be discussed with our hanging basket contractor and these will be different to those already agreed from last year as the plants for these were ordered in October/November 2023.

The following projects have been emailed to the Clerk:

Previous projects	March 2022 unit price	March 2024 unit price
3-Tired octagonal planters	£519.00	£525.00
Delivery		Calculated on ordering
	March 2023 unit price	March 2024 unit price
self-watering hanging baskets	£40.95	£43.00
Post mounted brackets	£36.75	£38.00
Delivery	£54.50	Calculated on ordering

Caerau - £3,346.91

1. Hanging Baskets – Blaencaerau Rd x 2 = £86.00
2. Octagonal 3-Tiered Planter – Blaencaerau Rd = £525.00 + VAT + delivery
3. Compost for the planter and Caerau Market Garden will supply flowers.
LBS can do 30 bags of compost (15 Nanty ward and 15 Caerau) for £164.99 including VAT plus £2.40 delivery. This was a verbal quote over the phone I would need to confirm again when placing an order if all are in agreement.
 $164.99/120 \times 100 = £137.49$ (exc. VAT)
 $137.49 + 2.40 = 139.89 / 2 = \mathbf{£66.95}$
4. New rail – along the path leading from Fowlers Place to Bedw Street see quote from MET Fabrications **£2,550.00 + VAT** (permission from adjacent house has been given to Cllr P Davies).

Cllr P Davies explained that permissions had been granted for all projects except for the hanging nasket on the CCTV column. Cllr Davies also advised that permission would be needed every year from BCBC to plave the hanging baskets onto the lighting columns and that that the Ward would like 5 hanging baskets to be placed onto the Blaen Pub hanging basket brackets instead of on the street lighting and cctv columns. It was agreed to update the below table:

Costs – funds available = £3,346.91

	Cost	Changes to quantities	Updated cost
Hanging baskets x2	£86.00	5	£215.00
Post mounted brackets x2	£76.00	To be placed onto the hanging basket brackets of the Blaen pub	
3-tiered planter	£525.00		
Compost	£65.75		
Hand Rail	£2,550.00		
TOTAL exl. Delivery & VAT	£3,273.95		£3,355.75

Maesteg East - £1,795.18

Cllr F Abedalkarim & Cllr P Jenkins requested:

1. Planters at:
 - Heol Faen – on small green
 - Heol Cae David – on green

Costs – funds available = £1,795.18

3-tiered planter x 2	£1,050.00
TOTAL exl. Delivery & VAT	£1,050.00

Cllr I Williams advised that he was not aware of these projects and that the large green at Heol Faen was used by children as a play area. Cllr I Williams was not in favour of

this project. Cllr P Jenkins advised that an email was sent to all ward members and assumed that Cllr I Williams had agreed to the project. Cllr F Abedalkarim also advised that he sent the email to all ward members.

Cllr P Jenkins also advised that V2C are happy to plant daffodil bulbs in their green spaces in September / October 2024.

Maesteg East Members in attendance were asked to vote on the projects:

Cllr	For / Against
F Abedalkarim	For
P Jenkins	For
A LeGeyt	For
I Williams	Against

As per previous ward fund projects the majority of members need to be in agreement for a project to proceed, therefore the proposed projects will go ahead pending all necessary permissions from BCBC & V2C

Maesteg West - £4,235.86

1. Planter at Park View

	March 2022 unit price	March 2024 unit price
3-Tiered octagonal planters	£519.00	£525.00
Delivery		Calculated on ordering

2. Hand rail on the steps leading from Commercial Street to Church Street

Cllr L Thomas requested that the single tiered planter at Park View is replaced with a 3-tiered planter, this was agreed by all ward members previously. The handrail had been agreed in principle, however no costs had been received to date. Cllr I Williams asked if the fabrications company on Ewenny Road had been contacted – Clerk advised that yes MET Fabrications had been contacted but had yet to quote for the handrail. Cllr I Williams also advised that there was a fabrication company in Pyle but could not remember the name of the company.

Costs – funds available = £4,235.86

3-tiered planter x 1	£525.00
Handrail	Still waiting for costs
TOTAL exl. Delivery & VAT	£525.00

The proposed projects will go ahead pending all necessary permissions from BCBC.

Nantylfyllon - £5,000.00

1. 15 bags of compost for Magazine Street planters

LBS can do 30 bags of compost (15 Nanty ward and 15 Caerau) for £164.99 including VAT plus £2.40 delivery. This was a verbal quote over the phone I would need to confirm again when placing an order if all are in agreement.
 $164.99/120 \times 100 = £137.49$ (exc. VAT)
 $137.49 + 2.40 = 139.89 / 2 = \mathbf{£66.95}$

Flowers for Magazine Street planters 1m x 1m x 1m?

Costs – fund available = £5,000.00

Compost	£65.75
TOTAL exl. Delivery & VAT	£65.75

Chair of Finance advised that there are 2 options available for Council:

1. Close the books for 2023-24 and only the costed projects to be carried over
2. Carry over all ward fund underspends to 2024-25 – however Council would need to decide how much is carried over per year and whether a cap of £10,000 therefore wards would not be able to carryover multiple years underspends.

Cllr G Thomas **proposed**, seconded by Cllr R Martin & P Jenkins that ward fund underspends are carried over into the following financial year and capped at £10,000.00 members agreed with the proposal.

RESOLVED:

- Above projects are agreed – pending necessary permissions by BCBC & V2C
- Wards can carry over underspends to the following financial year and this is capped at £10,000.00

513. TO DISCUSS ADDITIONAL BCBC NNDR REQUESTS

04/03/2024 – Email forwarded to all members and to BCBC

Please see attached response from Valuation Office for merging the building back into 1.

As part of the process they asked about the offices upstairs as to long term rentals – we advised them of Llan Middle Community Council – they have been sent a letter as they will be responsible for the rates for their office.

There are 4 2-sided sheets received and I am unsure as to the final rating as they all have different amounts on them. I have extracted the below tables from the sheets, I think we use the 2023 rating list information (highlighted in yellow below) = £10,750.00 per year

Valuation office reference	Billing Authority Building reference	Notice of New entry in the 2017 rating list	Ratable Value	Schedule of alterations to the rating list 2017 for the billing authority area of Bridgend					
				Previous entry ref	£	Previous entry ref	£	Revised entry ref	£
				Citizens Advice Bureau 1 st floor council chambers		Maesteg Town Council Ground floor council chambers		Maesteg Town Council Chambers	
39690364	2511309992998777	14/02/24	£10,750.00	2511309990998711	5,900.00	2511309990998722	6,400.00	2511309990998777	10,750.00
Valuation office reference	Billing Authority Building reference	Date of Alteration to the 2023 rating list	Ratable Value	Schedule of alterations to the rating list 2023 for the billing authority area of Bridgend					
				Previous entry ref	£	Previous entry ref	£	Revised entry ref	£
				Citizens Advice Bureau 1st floor council chambers		Maesteg Town Council Ground floor council chambers		Maesteg Town Council Chambers	
39694458	2511309992998777	14/02/24	£11,250.00	2511309990998711	6,400.00	2511309990998722	6,800.00	2511309990998777	11,250.00
Valuation office reference	Billing Authority Building reference	Notice of New entry in the 2017 rating list	Ratable Value	Schedule of alterations to the rating list 2017 for the billing authority area of Bridgend					
				Previous entry ref	£	Revised entry ref	£	Revised entry ref	£
						Room F10 1st Floor Council Chambers		Maesteg Town Council Chambers	
39697469	2511309990998666	15/02/24	£10,250	2511309990998777	10,750.00	2511309990998555	830.00	2511309990998666	10,250.00

Valuation office reference	Billing Authority Building reference	Date of Alteration to the 2023 rating list	Ratable Value	Schedule of alterations to the rating list 2023 for the billing authority area of Bridgend					
				Previous entry ref	£	Revised entry ref	£	Revised entry ref	£
						Room F10 1 st Floor Council Chambers		Maesteg Town Council Chambers	
39697469	2511309990998666	15/02/24	£10,750.00	2511309990998777	11,250.00	2511309990998555	890.00	2511309990998666	10,750.00

12/03/2024 - Emailed BCBC & cc'd all members:

I am a little confused, following the below email sent to you on 4th March with the changes from the Valuation Office we have been sent the attached email from BCBC Taxation requesting that Maesteg Town Council pay £11,833.04 please can you explain how we now owe this amount when we have already paid the following to BCBC:

A/c No	Ref No	Charge for period	£	Date paid
9257567	NN11309990998666	01/04/2018 – 31/03/2024	£19,029.50	08/11/2023
5900278	NN11309990998722	01/04/2023 – 31/03/2024	£3,638.00	AS PER DD

Our Internal auditor has asked for a year by year breakdown for payments due and payments already made as we believe that BCBC have not taken into account our payments made. Please can you look into the issues raised and explain the invoice sent to MTC

13/03/2024 – Email received from BCBC and forwarded to all members:

Thank you for your email, I have attached a breakdown of the charges due on the relevant assessments. As a result of your request to the Valuation Office to merge the original two assessments with effect from 01.04.18, and then split that assessment with effect from 01.07.19 into two new assessments, this authority received a schedule of alteration to the list and made the necessary amendments to our records, and revised notifications were issued.

This authority has taken account of all payments made on the original two account numbers from 1st April 2018 onwards and have transferred and offset the payments against charges due.

The direct debit payments received on account number 5900278 from 01.04.23 to date only totals £1353.48 and not £3638.00.

I would advise that the original assessment for Maesteg Town Council (5900278) had received Small Business Rates Relief since 2017 to which there was no entitlement. This authority only removed the relief from that account effective from 01.04.23. However, because of the merger of the assessments any reliefs previously granted cannot be awarded to the new accounts and therefore the full charge has become payable.

Members were provided with the following breakdowns received from BCBC

These two accounts show the position prior to the amendments you requested from the Valuation Office. They no longer exist with effect from 01.04.18 - amendments shown below:

NN11309990998722	Maesteg Town Council, Gnd Floor, Council Chambers, CF34 9BW						
Old a/c - 5900278	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	
Charge for period	3289.60	3366.40	3424.00	3424.00	3424.00	3638.00	
SBRW	-3070.29	-3141.97	-3195.73	-3195.73	-3195.73	0.00	
Less TRL	-106.45	-53.23	0.00	0.00	0.00	-2284.52	
Payable	112.86	171.20	228.27	228.27	228.27	1353.48	
Paid	-112.86	-171.20	-228.27	-228.27	-228.27	-1353.48	
Total Paid							-2322.35

NN11309990998711	Property Address - Citizens Advise Bureau, 1st Floor Council Chambers, CF34 9BY						
Old a/c - 9146750	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	
Charge for period 01.04.2018	3032.60	3103.40	3156.50	3156.50	3156.50	3424.00	
SBRW	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Less TRL	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	

Payable	3032.30	3103.40	3156.50	3156.50	3156.50	3424.00	
Paid	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	-19029.50	
Total Paid							-19029.50

Property Merged 2 into 1 wef 01.04.18							
NN11309990998722 & NN11309990998711							
into							
NN11309990998777							
NN11309990998777	Maesteg Town Council, Council Chambers, CF34 9BW						
New Account - 9257161	RV 10750						
	2018	2019					
Charge for period (01.04.18 - 30.06.19)	5525.50	1405.90					
Total Payable (01.04.18 - 30.06.19)							6931.40
Property Split 1 into 2 wef 01.07.19							
NN11309990998777							
into							
NN11309990998555 & NN11309990998666							
NN11309990998555	Room F10, 1st Floor Council Chambers, CF34 9BY						
New Account - 9257364		RV 830				RV 890	
		2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	
Charge for period (01.07.19 - 31.03.24)		328.03	444.05	444.05	444.05	476.15	
Total payable (01.07.19 - 31.03.24)							2136.33
NN11309990998666	Maesteg Town Council, Council Chambers, CF34 0BY						
New Account - 9257567		RV 10250				RV 10750	
		2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	
Charge for period (01.07.19 - 31.03.24)		4050.99	5483.75	5483.75	5483.75	5751.25	
Total payable (01.07.19 - 31.03.24)							26253.49

SUMMARY - MAESTEG TOWN COUNCIL		
Old A/c 5900278 cr	-2322.35	credit
Old A/c 9146750 cr	-19029.50	credit
New A/c 9257161 (01.04.18 - 30.06.19)	6931.40	charge
New A/c 9257567 (01.07.19 - 31.03.24)	<u>26253.49</u>	charge
Balance now due	11833.04	balance

Direct Debit payments for a/c 5900278	
period 01.04.23 - 23.03.24	
15.04.23	53.07
15.05.23	54.00
15.06.23	54.00
15.07.23	149.41
15.08.23	149.00
15.09.23	149.00
15.10.23	149.00
15.11.23	149.00
15.12.23	149.00
15.01.24	149.00
15.02.24	<u>149.00</u>
Total paid	1353.48

MTC owe BCBC **£11,833.04**

Llan Middle CC owe BCBC **£2,136.33**, Llani Middle CC are querying this as they pay rent to MTC and believe that this is included within the rent – Clerk has advised that the Valuation Office have advised that they are liable for the NNDR for their office as MTC do not use this room.

Members discussed the information received and can't understand where this extra request has come from and surely it is a mistake on BCBC part?

Members were still unsure about all the payments MTC had already made.

A member asked if MTC are entitled to reclaim this money back as it is public money? Clerk asked where would we reclaim it from as NNDR is not VAT rated so could not reclaim VAT – the member stated that it could be added to precept requirement – Chair of Finance advised that MTC could not increase the precept as this would increase the council tax to residents.

Cllr P Davies **proposed**, seconded by G Thomas that we ask our internal auditor to look into this issue. Members agreed to this proposal.

RESOLVED: ask the Internal Auditor to query this NNDR with BCBC

514. TO DISCUSS THE ONLINE AUDIO ISSUES

Members queried when the online audio issues would be resolved. Clerk advised that the deputy clerk is currently in discussions with both our internet provider and IT Support provider.

Cllr L Thomas advised that the audio company in last week's trial meeting advised that they would talk to both the internet provider and IT Support provider, however they

have now rescinded this offer as they advise that this is outside of their remit. Members feel that the audio system is not fit for purpose and needs to be rectified asap. Some members feel that they system should be returned, and a refund received. Other members feel that we should investigate all aspects of the internet and laptop specifications etc before making any decisions. It was agreed to invite both ITCS and Solutions in Technology to attend remotely to our next Full council meeting to see the issues.

RESOLVED: To invite ITCS & Solutions in Technology to attend remotely to our next Full council meeting to see the issues.

Minutes emailed to all Councillors to Read on 27th March 2024
Minutes accepted at a hybrid meeting of the Council held on 2nd April 2024

Signed

Mayor