

**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, 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2024**

**COUNCILLORS**

**IN PERSON:**

**R Martin (Mayor)**

P Jenkins, M Rowlands, G Thomas, L Thomas, G Williams, and I Williams

**ONLINE:**

F Abedalkarim, R Collins, AR Davies, C Davies, P Davies, and A Le Geyt

**APOLOGIES:**

C Knight, R Lewis, R Penhale-Thomas

**NO APOLOGIES:**

A James

**DECLARATION OF INTEREST:**

Cllr R Collins, C Davies, P Davies, and P Jenkins declared an interest in any items relating to Bridgend County Borough Council.

Cllr R Marting declared an interest in S137 application made by the Mayors Charity Fund.

Cllr M Rowlands declared an interest in S137 application made by the Llynfi BMX Club.

Cllrs C Davies & G Williams declared an interest in the confidential matter to be discussed.

**515. POLICE MATTERS**

The Mayor welcomed PCSO J Banks to the meeting who provided the following crime figures.

**Maesteg Crime Statistics for March 2024**

	Caerau / Nanty	Maesteg East	Maesteg West	Llan	Total in category
<b>Robbery</b>	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
<b>Drugs</b>	0	0	0	0	<b>0</b>
<b>Dwelling burglary</b>	1 attempt	1	1	1 att	<b>4</b>
<b>Burglary other</b>	0	0	0	1	<b>1</b>
<b>Theft of vehicle</b>	1	0	0	1 att	<b>2</b>
<b>Theft from vehicle</b>	0	2 (1 att)	0	3 att	<b>5</b>
<b>All other theft</b>	4	16	11	0	<b>31</b>
<b>Damage</b>	9	5	3	0	<b>17</b>
<b>Violence against The person</b>	23 (7)	8 (1)	15 (3)	0	<b>46 (11)</b>

Domestic related Occurrences	7	5	5	0	17
<b>All crime total</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>106</b>
<b>ASB total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Drink Driving</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>

**The following questions were raised:**

- Violence against the person appears high? This is not linked with any gangs this could be more verbal abuse has been logged
- The ASB experienced in our public toilet and resulting closure of this facility and any ideas on how the Council can combat this – PCSO Banks advised that patrols have been increased in the area and talks with businesses have taken place. The public are advised to report anything suspicious activity to SWP. PCSO Banks suggested that the Council reach out to other Councils to establish if they experienced this issue and what they did to overcome it.
- ASB by young people especially withing the Council building during the previous meeting. PCSO Banks advised that they have caught up with those youngsters and spoken to them. A member asked if ASB is an issue around Maesteg because of a lack of young person facilities in the area – PCSO Banks stated that that there are several youth clubs and activities going on within Maesteg and the youngsters in this case were in attendance of these activities so a lack of things to do for young people doesn't always correlate with a decrease in ASB.
- Do you know of the recent reports of caravans being damaged? PCSO Banks advised that they were aware and the investigation is ongoing.

The Mayor thanked PCSO Banks for attending the meeting.

**RESOLVED:** to note the information

Members asked if those online were able to hear the meeting – each online member was asked to respond:

- Cllr F Abedalkarim – audio not very good
- Cllr R Collins – not brilliant but able to hear
- Cllr AR Davies – its ok
- Cllr C Davies – audio is a bit hit and miss
- Cllr P Davies – not brilliant but able to hear
- Cllr A LeGeyt – Yes its ok

**516. RECEIVE THE MAYORS REPORT**

The Mayor advised that she attended the following events:

06/03/24	Mayors Charity Fund meeting
07/03/24	Billys Gym Boxwise graduation ceremony
09/03/24	International Womens Day
22/03/24	High Sherriff Ceremony

23/03/24	50 <sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary
28/03/24	Mayors Charity Fund meeting

The Mayor stated that a planned venue to host a Mayors coffee morning had pulled out so asked members if the Councils offices could be used. Members agreed to this request

**RESOLVED:** To note the information and agree to the Council building being used for a coffee morning.

## 517. 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** – 05/03/2024 emailed 06/03/2024.

The meetings of the **Events Committee** – 20/03/2024 emailed 21/03/2024 were taken as read and the following recommendations were accepted:

1. To accept the following events with EPM:
  - a. Christmas Parade
  - b. Keeper of the Colliery Run & family fun day – with **NO** additional race or cost for serious runners, a winner’s trophy still to be presented to the winner of each race.
2. To review a food & drink festival proposal when submitted, the event will be for the market square and be on a far smaller scale than originally proposed.
3. To accept tender Q2420064 for Santa’s Grotto in 2024 to the cost of £10,456.10.
4. To complete expression of interest form for the Christmas grotto.
5. Clerks to investigate the legislation for sponsorships of events from private companies. If deemed legal, Council to determine the scope of company involvement.
6. Clerks to investigate costings for a suitable camera that is able to take pictures and record video of our events to reduce costs and provide more online engagement.
7. Clerks to obtain costings of portable ‘picture frames’ with Maesteg Town Council branding to be used for photo opportunities at events.

- **Extraordinary Council** – 26/02/2024 emailed 27/0/24. Members were asked if they were able to read and digest the minutes or would they prefer to defer to next month. Members who were in attendance confirmed that the minutes were an accurate representation of the meeting and were taken as read, accepted as a true record, and signed by the Mayor:

**RESOLVED:** to note the information and accept the recommendations

## MATTERS ARISING

### 518. MINUTE 477

#### PROJECTS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS

08/03/24: Deputy Clerk attended an online tender session with BCBC REACH and emailed the following update to all members:

*I met with Reach today and we went through the tenders they received to complete our Council action plan. It was a lengthy meeting, and we went through each individual tender, and they all exceeded 16 pages of A4 as the brief that was given was very detailed.*

*The scoring process appears to have a company come out on top at this stage, but BCBC reach have to finalise the tendering process with their procurement team and approach the shortlisted companies before an official announcement and commitment is made.*

*Each company has said that they would like to meet and conduct interviews with all Cllrs, clerks and other stakeholders and a minimum sample size from our population which will be conducted online and in person (workshops most likely).*

*All companies have a pedigree in public consultation and this type of work, and the shortlisted ones have conducted work for the Welsh Government and other local authorities.*

*Although the final date to have a company appointed has passed due to several issues, the end date is still viewed to be November/December this year.*

*I have been advised that an official announcement can be made next week, the week after at the very latest. Following this, the company appointed will likely get in touch and start the process with us.*

*As more updates develop, I will keep you all posted.*

The deputy clerk advised that the initial meeting will take place with the appointed contractor next week where we will be informed of how the research will be conducted and that they wish to speak to all Councillors, if possible and any stakeholders associated with the Council

**RESOLVED:** To await further information.

### 519. MINUTE 478

#### BLAENCAERAU PLAYPARK

18/03/24: Emailed members with the following update:

We had an update today from Thomas and Thomas solicitors, they received amended plans for the transfer of Blaencaerau playpark which they needed to check with us.

V2C have amended the original transfer to now include a small car park which is adjacent to the park but separated by an adopted highway. The estate, and similarly in Tudor estate, has the type of parking where cars can only park away from their houses. Thomas and Thomas and we both believe that the car park is for the residents and not part of the playpark. The carpark is V2C property as confirmed by Thomas and Thomas and the small road that runs along the park is confirmed to be adopted by BCBC as well.

Thomas and Thomas wanted to confirm that we only want to transfer the park – which we have confirmed. They advised that if the car park was to be transferred then this would make us liable for the car park maintenance and any public or private liability that may arise from use of said car park.

Thomas and Thomas have gone back to V2C and are going to advise them that the transfer is getting rather messy and is not consistent with the previously agreed upon discussions. Hopefully a final amendment can be submitted and this matter be concluded as soon as possible. Thomas and Thomas have advised that there is no hold up their end and are as keen as us to resolve this matter.

We will update you all as we are made aware.

Cllr M Rowlands advised that when he spoke with V2C they were confused how the wrong documents were sent across. They have apparently now chased this up and the correct documents should be with our solicitors as soon as possible.

**RESOLVED:** To await further information

**520. MINUTE 479**

**OLD CHRISTMAS LIGHTING LOCATIONS**

06/03/24: Emailed Centregreat to chase the streetlight not working in Maesteg Park

The clerk advised that no reply has been received from Centregreat and the email was sent in November 2023. Members suggested contacting a more senior person within the organisation especially to fix the ongoing broken light in Maesteg Park.

**RESOLVED:** To contact a senior person in Centregreat

**521. MINUTE 482**

**WELSH GOVERNMENT - WORKPLACE RECYCLING LAWS 2024**

06/03/24: 3 x 50l bins ordered.

06/03/24: Plan B contacted

06/03/24: Recycling Policy added to the website

06/03/24: Copy of new recycling policy emailed to Clerk of Llan Middle Community Council

**RESOLVED:** To note the information.

**522. MINUTE 484**  
**DISABLED TOILET**

21/03/24: Members were advised that the public toilet to the rear of the building was covered in faeces again,

27/03/24: photos of the issue were emailed to all members with the following responses:

- Shocking!
- Absolutely disgusting!!

27/03/24: further email sent to all members: In addition to the images, the contractor who empties the sanitary waste bin in the disabled toilet advised us that he has found needles and other drug paraphernalia whilst emptying the sanitary bin and advised people, especially the cleaner, to be extremely careful since the needles were used and discarded without the point coverings.

We will be relaying this to the police.

Members emailed with the following responses:

- This is not acceptable, and we cannot ask our employee to deal with the disgusting mess. Especially if it's being used for drug use.

The town council toilet should be closed until further notice. This not something we want to do. But other people are probably witnessing this terrible mess and are at risk of being exposed to dirty needles.

This is industrial specialist cleaning, could we install a portable loo unit in the Market until we decide how we move forward with a permanent toilet in Maesteg? One with a cleaning contract.

We need the projects committee to meet and discuss the issue of permanent toilets in Maesteg. Any toilets installed in Maesteg would have to be manned. After all the police have rightly stated they are not toilet attendants, and neither is our cleaner.

- I agree the toilet should be closed for the foreseeable future until we have a long term solution.
- The toilets need closing with immediate effect. We cannot expect employees to deal with that sort of filth but the addition of used needles, it's a huge health and safety issue and a safeguarding matter where I am sure any liability insurance, we do have in place would be null and voided should injury or worse, infection, occur.

Likewise, the fact that we would be knowingly allowing our premises to be used illegally for drug use if they remained open moving forward is not acceptable.

28/03/24: Clerk discussed with the Mayor the issues and comments received and was instructed to close the toilet indefinitely.

Members echoed the already stated comments regarding the treatment of the toilet and resulting work the cleaner has to do to bring them back up to standard. Members discussed options that have been explored before and newer ideas but the situation appears tricky to keep the toilet open and not be abused especially with the finding of sharps in and around the bins. Members **agreed** that, for the interim, until a solution is found then the toilet is to remain closed and the Clerks are to source costings for Portaloo's to be housed in the market square and outside Wilkos (permissions depending). Clerk advised that the portable toilet company used prior to Covid do not clean the toilets they only empty and replenish the hand sanitiser and toilet paper.

**RESOLVED:** get costings and permissions for portable toilets to be located in market square and car park

**523. MINUTE 486**

**QUERY REGARDING LIFT**

19/03/2024: Emailed OTIS requesting if there is any update from the supplier on ordering the replacement part for our platform lift please?

Response 19/03/24 - The lift manufacturer has not been very helpful with providing the parts, the engineer has located some on an American website and has requested an order. The parts are currently on a 4-5 week lead time due to being made to order and coming from America, if we can improve the ETA at all we will update you further

**RESOLVED:** To await further information.

**524. MINUTE 493**

**BUS ROUTE 37 TRIAL**

Passenger figures to date on the bus trial:

Tuesday	Friday	No. of passengers
27/02/2024		23
	01/03/2024	16
05/03/2024		25
	08/03/2024	24
12/03/2024		23
	15/03/2024	26
19/03/2024		25

14/03/2024 – we received a call from a user of the bus service. The person explained that the bus timings don't allow for adequate shopping time within the town centre and that can only occur when catching the 9am service. The person was advised that this is a trial service which is to be reviewed and also if a later bus is caught then the driver lunch break can be avoided and would allow a few hours for shopping. The person also was unhappy as the bus service terminates outside the Garn Inn on its final

journey and would suggest the final route continues on the route past the Red Cow and Maesteg Park and take top road back to the depot.

Members **agreed** that receiving feedback is important for the service and all feedback will be taken to the review meeting which is to take place in around a months' time and if adjustments are needed then these can be discussed then. A member commented on the public who are using the service are thankful for this lifeline to get into the town centre to access local amenities that do not exist in Maesteg park.

**RESOLVED:** to note the information, any further comments should be kept for the quarterly Bus Sub-Committee meeting

**525. MINUTE 499**

**FREE PORTRAIT OF HIS MAJESTY THE KING FOR COMMUNITY, TOWN AND CITY COUNCILS IN WALES**

06/03/24: Emailed Cubiquity Media to apply for a free portrait of His Majesty The King.

**RESOLVED:** to note the information

**526. MINUTE 501**

**LAND ENQUIRY - LANE LEADING FROM FOWLERS PLACE TO THE REAR OF BEDW STREET, CAERAU.**

07/03/24: Cllr P Davies came into the office to assist a Land Registry search of the land to the rear of Bedw Street, Caerau. Unfortunately, no details were found for the location other than Filco Supermarkets owning the land just before the river.

**RESOLVED:** to note the information

**527. MINUTE 505**

**FINANCIAL APPLICATIONS**

Letter of thanks received from the following organisations:

- The Ajuda Foundation – The Purple Sunflower Project
- Llynfi Valley 11-25 project (The Courthouse)

**RESOLVED:** to note the information

**528. MINUTE 511**

**EVENTS COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATIONS**

28/03/24: Email received from BCBC to advise:

Thank you for your Expression of Interest for the Tourism Events Support Fund for “Keepers Colliers Run 10k and 5k Family Fun Day”.

I am pleased to confirm that we consider the Keepers Colliers Run 10k and 5k Family Fun Day to meet our eligibility criteria and would like to invite you to full application.



As part of the full application, we will require all event organisers to supply the following documents and to specify which aspect of the event you would like to use the grant for.

1. Event Management Plan
2. Event Budget
3. Event Marketing Plan

Full applications will be assessed and scored against the criteria in the attached guidance notes.

Bridgend Council has absolute discretion over the terms, eligibility and decision making of the Tourism Events Support Fund awards.

No expenditure should be incurred before grant approval, as the grants cannot be awarded retrospectively.

Please provide us with your Event Management Plan, Event Budget and Event Marketing Plan and please specify which aspect of the event you would like to use the grant for by Friday 5<sup>th</sup> April to be considered at the April Grants Panel, or by Friday 10<sup>th</sup> May to be considered at the May Grants Panel.

**RESOLVED:** to proceed with the application

## **529. LIST OF PAYMENTS FOR THE MONTH OF MARCH 2024**

### **RESOLVED:**

That the tables of **Expenditure (£17,397.60) Income (£2,442.83)** during the month of March 2024; 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 April 2024 totalling **£7,712.31**
- A copy of the Receipts and Payments Account which includes expenditure against the budget and the budget remaining and an income analysis.

One payment was for the annual maintenance of the lift. The Clerk stated that the lift has never worked even since we appointed the new contractor. Members suggested that this quote not be paid currently as it should be queried with the contractor and perhaps be suspended until the lift is in working order.

Cllr P Jenkins wished his objection to be noted for One Voice Wales membership, all other members are in agreement to pay the annual membership.

Members were also provided with the NNDR for 2024-25;

- NNDR for MTC building for 2024-25 = £6,041.50

Should we want to pay by DD we will need to set up a new DD agreement and the instalments would be 1 payment of £605.50 followed by 9 payments of £604.00 alternatively we could pay the full amount in 1 payment.

- NNDR for UNIT at Heol Ty Gwyn for 2024-25 = £1,798.40

Should we want to pay by DD we will need to set up a new DD agreement and the instalments would be 1 payment of £178.50 followed by 9 payments of £180.00 alternatively we could pay the full amount in 1 payment.

It was **agreed** to setup a direct debit payment to match the Councils other payments.

Chair of Finance advised that he will be sending out meeting availability to the finance committee members to review Q4 and end of year accounts.

### **CMO Summary Report – March 2024**

This month have included me taking the remainder of my annual leave each week due to build up over the year and the following works:

- Weekly building checks that include:
  - fire alarm
  - emergency lighting
  - legionnaires disease
- Weekly bin emptying on the cycle track
- Daily emptying bins in car park
- Inspect and, where necessary, cut back overgrowth or clear debris:  
Fp. 41, 42, 48, 52, 77
- Milage at start of month – 57960 at end 58053 (93 total miles)
- Inspected and cut back on cycle track from the tundra to the lights, Bridge Street to Castle street, Nanty primary steps and behind crown.
- Delivered dog waste bags to Noddfa (6) Maws (2) library (2).
- Fixed disabled toilet handle.
- Cleared some rubbish from offices.
- Picked up and placed laminated notices for bus service along the route.

### **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
- Daily bin emptying in Llynfi Rd car park
- Inspect and, where necessary, cut back overgrowth or clear debris on rights of ways.

Members were also provided with copies from CMO workbook for further detail to each day worked.

## **CORRESPONDENCE**

### **530. NEWSLETTERS / FLYERS / BRIEFING NOTES/ CONSULTATIONS**

Emailed to all Councillors for information:

- Comms Guide: Voter Registration Week
- Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW) Annual Report - February 2024
- BCBC - Bridgend Local Nature Partnership - Free Training Opportunity in Maesteg + Invitation to Take Part in Nature Recovery Action Plan
- Via OVW – Request for nominations for the King’s New Year Honours 2025
- BCBC - Street Alley Gardens
- BCBC Maesteg Placemaking Plan - <https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/my-council/consultations/> & officers in Market Square unit 14 at the following dates and times if you want to come along to speak to them:
  - i) Monday 11th March 2024: 10.00am and 1.00pm
  - ii) Tuesday 12th March 2024: 4.00pm and 7.00pm
- BCBC - Notice of Adoption of Bridgend County Borough Council Local Development Plan 2018 – 2033
- Maesteg Hospital Briefing - March 2024
- Morgannwg Endeavour Charitable Trust Golf Tournament

**RESOLVED:** To note the information

### **531. REFFERALS**

11/03/24: Heras fencing on the bridge between Llynfi Rd Car park and Plasnewydd Street

**Response: no response to date** – the mayor confirmed that the herras fencing has been thrown back into the river.

19/03/24: Request for wheelchair ramp to be installed in underground section of Llynfi Rd Car Park next to the steps by Argos

**Response 19/06/24:** I can confirm that blue badge holders can park in any bay for free, as long as they display their blue badge. Therefore, they are not limited just to the blue badge bays, also, with financial restraints at the moment, we do not have the funding available to undertake such a request. Also, to install a ramp in this particular area would mean losing two parking bays, this, in a car park that is at capacity most days.

I appreciate the difficulties faced, however, at this time, we are unable to grant such a request.

19/03/24: Footpath 41 + 42. Our maintenance officer was doing his rounds and said that there had been trees chopped down on footpaths 41 and 42. He says that it looks

like a professional has done it but wanted us to check in with yourself to see if this is authorised felling? Apparently the new gap opens up a view for a few houses to look out across the valley.

**Response: no response to date**

**RESOLVED:** To note the information

**532. ARCHIVING OLD MINUTES**

It is a legal requirement that Minutes of Town and Community Council meetings are kept indefinitely, these meetings should be kept in the Town Council for a minimum of 7 years and then sent to the Glamorgan Archives.

Clerk has emailed Glamorgan Archives as some of the historic minutes are bound and other years are not. Clerk has asked if the minutes need to be bound before being sent to them for archiving.

Following response received: *We are very happy to take unbound copies of minutes, we have both bound and unbound council minutes in our collection.*

*Before any records are sent to us we do ask if you can complete the attached Depositor Survey Form which will give us a little more information about the records and how much material you have to come to us. Once we have received the completed form back we can then make arrangements for you to deliver the records.*

Members **agreed** to the archiving of older minutes that are in situ in the Council offices.

**RESOLVED:** make arrangements for all historic minutes to be delivered to the Glamorgan Archives

**533. SAFE HAVEN MAESTEG**

Safe Haven Maesteg is asking if they can use part of their S137 grant to gift £50 of the grant money to help an Iranian family who have found themselves in Maesteg without any possessions, with the purchase of Gas & Electricity until they are able to set up their benefits.

Members discussed the request and sympathised with the family. Unfortunately it is against the S137 policy to use the funds for something else other than what they applied for, however, Cllr G Thomas **proposed**, seconded by Cllr I Williams that Safe Haven Maesteg apply for an additional grant for this purpose.

**RESOLVED:** To advise Safe Haven Maesteg to complete an additional S137 application form for the extra grant.

**534. REQUEST TO ADVERTISE A WALK**

Throughout the weekends of May, June, and July this summer I am hosting 15 history walks in various places across Glamorgan. What might be of particular interest to your Community Council, is that one of these walks is in your own backyard. All the information on your local walks is available on the link below. Things like how long the walk is in miles, the level of walker it is suited to, places visited, history topics discussed and so forth.

<https://grahamloveluckedwards.com/llangynwyd-bodvocs-stone-cadair-edward-ii/>

The general idea is a walk through some of our beautiful Welsh countryside, taking in sites of historic interest and the locations of some of our most wonderful legends. As we go round, we stop and bring their stories to life. Every walk ends at a lovely pub for some food and refreshments.

The full itinerary of walks is available to view at [www.glamwalks.co.uk](http://www.glamwalks.co.uk)

I was hoping you might want to share this information and publicise your local walk as it will encourage people to visit your area and may well have a longer-term impact. I have posters which I can get to you if needed.

Tickets are priced at £10 per walker per walk (which does not include food and drink at the pub).

Members agreed to advertise the walk on our website as long as it doesn't present a look of promoting one company over another.

**RESOLVED:** advertise the walks on our website

**535. FIRE DOOR TO THE REAR OF THE BUILDING**

As the carpenter previously engaged with to replace the fire doors to the rear of the building has yet to acknowledge or respond to emails the following companies have been contacted to quote for the works:

- IDM Doors Ltd – do not install wooden fire doors
- IG Carpentry
- Twenty-4.co.uk
- Firerite

We have received the following quotes in no particular order:

Quote 1	Quote 2	Quote 3
£1,948.60 +VAT Metal door – not suitable	£2,614.71 + VAT	

**RESOLVED:** Members agreed to quote 2 as this is the only suitable quote and all other options have been exhausted over a long time.

### 536. **ARMED FORCES COVENANT**

Mayor emailed to request that Maesteg Town Council sign the Armed Forces Covenant, email forwarded to all members.

Please use the link for the blank template to complete, and an example template with pledges added as well as a sheet of example pledges to look through for suggestions. When writing the pledges, please write them in your own words and to suit your council, not just copy and paste from the example, as too many others do in the first instance, only to have to re-write them 😊

<https://www.armedforcescovenant.gov.uk/about-the-covenant/>  
<https://www.armedforcescovenant.gov.uk/show-your-support/sign-the-covenant/>

If you'd like either myself or the Regional Employer Engagement Director, Craig Middle, to have a read through before submission please send it across, once agreed send to: [afcovenant@rfca.mod.uk](mailto:afcovenant@rfca.mod.uk)

Clerk queried signing the Armed Forces Covenant in BCBC and received the following response:

*Maesteg might have signed the 'Community Covenant' along with Bridgend, but this no longer exists and organisations and councils now all have to sign individually in their own right. I have searched the lists:*

*<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/search-for-businesses-who-have-signed-the-armed-forces-covenant> and the only one with any reference to Maesteg is BAVO*

RBL have advised: Yes MTC signed the AFC alongside BCBC and unless there are huge updates I see no reason why you as a Council need to resign and surely BCBC would have told you that the Covenant needs the signature of MTC!

Cllr P Jenkins **proposed**, seconded by Cllr G Thomas, that the Council re-sign up to the covenant.

**RESOLVED:** re-sign the Armed forces covenant

### 537. **MAESTEG TOWN HALL 2025**

15/03/2024 Email received: I hope you are keeping well, and thank you for your patience regarding Maesteg Town Hall activity.

We're not yet in a position to give any opening date or operations updates for 2024 but we would like all 2025 requests from user groups asap please.

We need your top three dates for any event you might consider requesting to hire MTH in 2025, we firstly would like to identify any clashes and then pencil requests into the 2025 diary to allow us to provisionally work around those requests as best we can.

Please send over your ideal dates in order of preference by end of day next Tuesday, if you do not have specific dates in mind please just put a month for now and we'll come back to you when we have collated the info. Please include any rehearsal/get in/out and if you would be looking to book Main Hall or Studio etc.

Very many thanks, have a lovely weekend.

18/03/2024 Clerk responded: Maesteg Town Council have requested the costs for hiring the Town Hall on numerous occasions and without this information we are unable to give you any dates.

AWEN have failed to give us any hire charges for the hall or studio. Please can you forward these and this will then be taken to a full council meeting to discuss. We will NOT be able to give you dates by the end of tomorrow as Council do not work like that.

Members **agreed** that the events committee should meet to discuss dates and provide these to the Town Hall, it was noted that giving dates does not confirm attendance of the Council, this is to be determined when hire prices are provided. Suggested events include the Mayors Civic Sunday and Christmas Parade Day

**RESOLVED:** Events Committee to discuss

### **538. CHAMBER SOUND UPDATE**

We held a 'mock' teams meeting with the contractor who installed the new microphone system, the clerks, and Cllrs F Abedalkarim, AR Davies, R Penhale-Thomas, L Thomas and P Davies.

We were able to recreate the issues that have been occurring for those attending online. The contractor strongly believes that the issue is either a connectivity one (from the internet router) or potentially a lack of processing power with the clerk laptops. We checked the processing usage of the clerk laptops when on the teams meeting and it takes up the majority of the available processing power whilst running a teams meeting.

Deputy Clerk brought his personal laptop in to test but it didn't have the required ports for what we plug in for a meeting we will get an adapter and run that test to see if it is a laptop bottleneck.

The microphone contractor has offered to speak and ask the right questions of our internet service provider to see if they can identify an issue that would cause the sound so be of such bad quality for those attending online. In our mock meeting today, attendees online were heard clearly within the chamber, but, the chamber sound was inconsistent for those online and the troubleshooting that was done confirms that the microphone system is working as it should. There is a p300 box that acts as the interpreter for teams and the microphone which is running correct and this has been

confirmed by the microphone contractor so all signs do support that this is a connection/IT issue.

Deputy Clerk has contacted our internet service contractor and will put them in contact with the microphone contractor and hopefully they can eliminate as many issues as they can and have the sound system working appropriately.

We currently do not have a timescale as to when the issues will be resolved, so we would urge members to attend meetings in person if possible until this is resolved.

The deputy clerk provided a brief update on the situation and passed on the advice from the Councils IT company. To eliminate some issues, we would need to trial a new laptop, potentially new connection wires for the system and potentially converting to a fibreoptic internet connection. One member wished for the Council to review the clutter in the current system and perhaps review the setup not to take away from the historic Council chamber.

Members **agreed** for the Clerks to obtain costings for a powerful laptop or desktop to live in the chamber. In the meantime other troubleshooting will continue with other laptops being used etc. During the discussion the Clerk completed a SPEED Test on the internet with Download Speed = 70.11Mb/s Upload Speed = 16.69Mb/s

**RESOLVED:** Clerks to continue to investigate connections issues, laptop issues

**539. REQUEST FROM OVW TO USE MAESTEG TOWN COUNCIL BIODIVERSITY SECTION 6 REPORT AS AN EXAMPLE OF BEST PRACTICE**

Cynnal Cymru are currently developing a new training module for OVW on 'Biodiversity basics'. They have chosen to include a screen shot of Maesteg TC's Section 6 report as an example of best practice. I just wanted to check you were happy with this?

The clerk advised that permission was granted

**RESOLVED:** To note the information

**540. BUS SHELTER DAVIES TERRACE, NANTYFFYLLON**

Cllr P Davies raised an issue with BCBC about the bus shelter in Davies Terrace, Nantyffyllon missing a Perspex panel. BCBC advised that the bus shelter is property of Maesteg Town Council and responsibility lays with MTC to fix. BCBC advised that they can fix the bus shelter and bill us, this would be to the sum of £204.

Members discussed the issue and agreed to the quote of £204 to repair the bus shelter

**RESOLVED:** To proceed with BCBC to repair the shelter



**541. DETERIORATION OF GRASS VERGES AT CHRISTOPHER ROAD AND HEOL Y LLWYNI**

23/03/2024 Cllr Fadhel Abedalkarim emailed:

*Following up to a concern of resident in 23 Christopher Road Garth made to Cllr Martin Hughes, I visited the area as well with Cllr Martin, took photos, and found the grass verges is muddied and in very poor condition.*

*I would be very grateful if our ward members support using ward fund to support a request which involve the supply and fitting of a heavy-duty rubber mesh one meter width minimum by ten-meter length level with the carriageway in the vicinity of 23 Christopher Road. Total no more than £500. This is a similar to that installed at the Grove Street in Nantyffyllon. I should be very thankful that should MTC agree to support this request.*

Cllr M Hughes of BCBC completed a members referral on the matter as the verges form part of the highway. BCBC had the following response;

*We note your comments regarding the replacement of the grass verge with a mesh or grid however there is no duty on a highway authority to carry out such improvements, and further our highway budgets are committed to undertaking maintenance works. As such we are unable to fund the request that you have made.*

*We note the concern regarding safety, however it should be noted that as grass verges they will invariably be uneven and/or naturally be wetter, especially when considering the increased rainfall being experienced latterly. As such highway users should not expect grass verges to maintained to the same standard as other metalled areas of the highway.*

*However, We can confirm that if MTC wish to progress the matter as per Grove road, Nantyffyllon we would be happy to meet to discuss potential options and then provide costs from an approved contractor for such works.*

Members discussed this and all agreed that there are many areas within the Town Council boundary that could benefit with this type of work. However, when the Council paid towards the works in Grove Street many years ago the cost was over £10,000.00, unfortunately there are too many areas that could require this type of work and the costs would be too high for Maesteg Town Council to consider. Additionally, a BCBC Cllr advised that BCBC currently advise that grass verges help with drainage and also that V2C are also trying to encourage ecology in built up areas using grass verges.

**RESOLVED:** To advise that Maesteg Town Council are UNABLE to assist with this.

**542. CLLR F ABEDALKARIM VISION FOR MAESTEG 2027**

**RESOLVED:** As Cllr F Abedalkarim was unwell, he had to leave the meeting early. Members agreed to discuss this item in next month's meeting and allow Cllr Abedalkarim to present his vision.

**543. FINANCIAL APPLICATIONS**

**1. MAYORS CHARITY FUND**

Cllr R Martin declared an interest in the following application and therefore left the meeting, past Mayor Cllr I Williams was asked to chair this application.

Date received: 28/02/2024

Request £350.00 - £500.00 to be determined by MTC towards The Mayors Charity Fund Spring Dance

Last received S137 funding in April 2019 = £443.00

Copy of Credit Union Paying in book provided.

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

**2. BOIS GOETRE HEN CHOIR**

Date received: 06/03/2024

Revised S137 Application form requesting £500.00 towards hiring Maesteg Town Hall for the Choirs 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Gala Concert in March 2025. 18 of the 30 choristers reside within the MTC boundary.

Receipts & Payments account sheet for period ending 31/12/23 and recent bank statement provided.

1<sup>st</sup> time to request S137.

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

**3. ST JOHN AMBULANCE CYMRU – MAESTEG CENTRAL DIVISION**

Date Received: 08/03/2024

Request £375.92 to purchase eight 6ft foldable tables for the St John Cymru Divisional Hall in Maesteg. They will replace the existing tables that are becoming unusable due to age.

1<sup>st</sup> time to request S137

Recent Bank statement provided and Year End accounts up to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2022

**RESOLVED:** Council to donate the sum of £375.92 under Section 137 of the Local Government Act (as amended).

#### **4. BILLYS GYM AND WELLNESS CENTRE**

Date received: 25/03/2024

Request £500 to boxing gloves and pads that would be provided to attendees during free inclusive boxing sessions for adults and children to improve mental health. The program is a 10-week program which has already been running and has seen attendance from children, disabled person groups, low income families and those with mental health issues.

1<sup>st</sup> time to request S137

Recent bank statement provided.

*\*\* Billys gym is a CIC (A community interest company) limited by guarantee is a 'not for profit' company, this means that it does not operate for private profit. Any profit generated is used to grow and develop its business which is benefiting an identified community or goes directly to benefit that community.*

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

#### **5. LLYNFI BMX RACING CLUB**

Cllr M Rowlands declared an interest in the following application and therefore left the meeting

Date received: 26/03/2024

We host an annual South-West Regional BMX Race as part of a series of ten races throughout the season, this year our event is on the 4th and 5th May 2024. We do not have amenities on site (no toilets or electricity) and therefore have to hire portable toilets and use generators and gas for running the event, this grant will support those costs we incur as a volunteer run club, and help make for a successful sporting event in our valley.

Last received S137 funding in July 2022 = £480.

Latest bank statement received.

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

#### **6. LLYNFI VALLEY ANGLING ASSOCIATION**

Date received: 26/03/2024

Request £500 to improve access for young and disabled people by clearing paths and overgrown areas. Also to offer free or reduced costs for young people to fish the river.

1<sup>st</sup> time to request S137 funding

Receipts & Payments year end to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2023 & latest bank statement provided.

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

**544. DELEGATES REPORT**

No reports received.

**RESOLVED:** To note the information

**545. PLANNING**

Cllr R Collins advised that he was on BCBC Planning Committee and therefore left the meeting before the planning applications were discussed.

A list of the following planning proposals received from BCBC to date, for discussion and observation.

The following applications had no objections:

Ref: P/24/91/FUL  
Applicant: Mr G Morris  
Location: 34 Yr Ysfa Maesteg CF34 9AG  
Proposal: Single storey side extension  
Ask for: Julie Earp

Ref: P/24/61/FUL  
Applicant: Unique Props Ltd  
Location: Land next to 113 Bridgend Road Maesteg CF34 0NB  
Proposal: Retention and completion of 3no. 3 bed link houses and 1no. one and half storey 3 bed dwelling and associated works (renewal of the application approval reference P/18/765/FUL)  
Ask for: Kittie Powell

Ref: P/24/131/FUL  
Applicant: Mr G Francis  
Location: 33 Hartshorn Terrace Caerau Maesteg CF34 0YA  
Proposal: Demolish existing outbuildings to side of house; construct two storey extension to side; construct garage and parking area to rear

The following application received an objection based on the size of the development not being in keeping with the surrounding area:

Ref: P/24/10/FUL  
Applicant: Mrs C Lewis  
Location: 5 Belmont Close Maesteg CF34 0LH  
Proposal: Replace boundary wall with one of increased height; retention of wooden playroom  
Ask for: Julie Earp

**546. RESOLVED: THAT THE COUNCIL GO INTO COMMITTEE**

**Pursuant to section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 and Local Government Act 1972, ss100 & 102 ‘Members of the public/press can be excluded by resolution if publicity would prejudice the public interest by reason of confidential nature of the business and arising out of the business to be transacted’**

**548. RESOLVED: THAT THE COUNCIL COME OUT OF COMMITTEE**

**Minutes emailed to Councillors to Read on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

**Minutes accepted at a Hybrid meeting of the Council held on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2024**

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**Mayor**