



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, 2nd July 2024**

PRESENT: Clerk & Deputy Clerk

COUNCILLORS

IN PERSON:

G Thomas (Deputy Mayor)

P Jenkins, A Le Geyt, R Martin, M Rowlands,
R Penhale-Thomas, G Williams, and I Williams

ONLINE:

AR Davies, C Davies, P Davies, C Knight, R Lewis, and
L Thomas,

APOLOGIES:

F Abedalkarim, R Collins

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.

Cllr R Penhale-Thomas declared a prejudicial interest in any matters that may relate to Maesteg Welfare Park.

Cllr I Williams declared an interest in items relating to Maesteg Celtic RFC

Cllr C Knight declared a prejudicial interest in an S137 application from Bronfair Allotments

Cllr P Davies declared an interest in agenda item 10 as a cabinet member for the local authority whose remit this comes under.

Cllr G Williams declared an interest in any items that may relate to Caerau Men Shed and Maesteg Gleemen

82. POLICE MATTERS

Apologies were received from South Wales Police as they were dealing with Police matters, however, the following crime figures were provided prior to the meeting.

Maesteg Crime Statistics for July 2024

	Caerau / Nanty	Maesteg East	Maesteg West	Llan	Total in category
Robbery	0	0	0	0	0
Drugs	2	0	1	0	3
Dwelling burglary	0	0	1	0	1
Burglary other	4 (1 att)	2	1	0	7
Theft of vehicle	0	0	0	0	0
Theft from vehicle	0	1	2	0	3
All other theft	5	4	7	0	16
Damage	4	1	3	1	9
Violence against The person	20 (2)	10 (3)	12 (2)	4	46 (7)
Domestic related Occurrences	7	1	6	1	15
All crime total	35	18	27	5	85
ASB total	7	3	2	1	13
Drink Driving	0	0	0	0	0

A member asked if there was an update on the question asked last month which was;
why the ‘violence against the person’ is so high.

RESOLVED: to chase SWP and ask why the ‘violence against the person’ is so high.

83. RECEIVE THE MAYORS REPORT

Mayor Cllr C Davies

6 th June	D-Day 80th anniversary – laid wreath at Maesteg War memorial
6 th June	60th Wedding anniversary
6 th June	D-Day 80th Anniversary church service
21 st June	90th birthday

Deputy Mayor Cllr G Thomas

6 th June	Llan Middle CC – beacon event for D-Day 80th anniversary
30 th June	Keeper of the Colliery fun run & family fun day

RESOLVED: To note the information

84. 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** – 04/06/2024 emailed 05/06/2024
- **Full Council CONFIDENTIAL** – 04/06/2024 emailed 05/06/2024
- **Extraordinary Meeting** – 18/06/2024 emailed 18/06/2024

The **Policy Committee** – 18/06/2024 emailed 19/06/2024 were taken as read and the following recommendations were accepted:

- 1) Members read and agreed to recommend adopting the below model policies from OVW
 - a) Alcohol, Drugs and Substance Misuse Policy
 - b) Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy
 - c) Model Complaints Policy
 - d) Model local resolution protocol
 - e) Control of Substances Hazardous to Health Policy
 - f) Dignity at Work Policy
 - g) Scheme of Delegation Policy
 - h) Social Media Policy
- 2) The Welsh Language Policy is investigated further
- 3) The WARD Fund Policy is adopted
- 4) The Training Policy is adopted

A member asked if the Council has a whistleblowers policy as there is reference to one in another policy. They were advised that this is on the list for the policy committee

The **Projects Committee** – 19/06/2024 emailed 21/06/2024 were taken as read and the following recommendations were accepted:

Cllr R Penhale-Thomas declared a prejudicial interest in recommendation 1 of the projects committee as vice chair of the friends of Maesteg welfare park and left the room so took no part in the discussion.

1. Ringfence £50,000 to aid the centenary celebrations of Maesteg Welfare Park (£20,000 x2 years of Maesteg festival funding +additional £10,000)

A member wished to keep the additional £10k funding for community groups that may need help performing in the Town Hall and mentioned that £50k is a lot of monies to allocate one organisation. The member was advised that Awen and the community groups will have their own start up vision, and we are not aware of it yet so cannot offer support or know if it will be needed. The member was also informed that it would be £50k ringfenced for the friends but this would be subject to them bringing costed projects to the Council for agreement. The recommendation was agreed to.

2. Pursue a cat transfer of the land outside of B&M where the previous toilet was. with hopes to place a brick-and-mortar WC.
3. Complete a listed building consent application for CCTV in the chamber as soon as practical
4. Bridge Street plan to be placed onto the next projects committee agenda.
5. Clerks to investigate a suitable noticeboard replacement for outside of the Council offices – preferably a digital one.

6. Projects committee to have a site visit with the graffiti artist to determine the positioning of the tree and discuss options on how to incorporate it for the end terrace 'Welcome to Maesteg' mural.
7. Purchase and erect banners around Blaencaerau playpark when the CAT transfer is complete to promote that Maesteg Town Council now operate the park.
8. Approach local residents surrounding Blaencaerau playpark to become part of the 'friends of Blaencaerau park.'
9. Complete a Land Registry search for the landowner of the land at the spit fire crash site.
10. Try and ascertain the personal information about the pilot who crashed.
11. Ask our agent, A Davies Architects, for advice on refurbishing the council chamber

The following recommendation was not accepted currently as the new technology in the chamber is not working correctly so we would need to fix this issue before installing anymore technology.

12. Clerks to investigate installing new monitors behind the Mayors seat in the chamber and a '360 degree' camera.

RESOLVED: to note the information and accept the recommendations from the minutes with exception to recommendation 12 from the projects committee meeting.

MATTERS ARISING

85. MINUTE 28

POLICE MATTERS

05/06/24 Emailed SW Police Sgts to ask why the 'violence against the person' figures are so high

RESOLVED: To note the information

86. MINUTE 30

MINUTES - Finance Committee Recommendations

1. To reclaim Q4 VAT. **05/06/24** Completed the Q4 VAT reclaim

2. MTC write to OVW for clarity on the legal power and duty to cleanse the public highway = **05/06/24** Emailed OVW

Response: We have attached a copy of NALCS legal topic note on the control of litter. Section 40 of the NALC guidance states: -

Some local councils provide street cleaning and similar services. They may lawfully do so as agents of a district council in accordance with section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972 or, in the absence of an agency arrangement, under section 137 of the LGA 1972. Before starting to provide such services, a local council should consult with the district council so as to achieve (if possible) a proper sharing of responsibilities.

If the council take on services based on an agency agreement it would be incumbent on the Town Council to prepare a risk assessment which would include assessing their insurance cover in the light of the new service, it would be providing.

Response forwarded to all members including the quotes received in September Full Council meeting Minute 226 – see below

MINUTE 226

POWER WASHING COMMERCIAL STREET AND TALBOT STREET

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

Quote 1	Quote 2
£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.

A member advised that one business had recently jet washed the outside of their business, and it was notably cleaner.

A member asked if we could obtain information on an insurance policy that would cover us if we are able to undertake street cleansing which members agreed. It was also

asked if the Clerks could contact BCBC and ask what the cleaning schedule for the town is, as currently the town looks unclean.

RESOLVED:

- Contact BCBC for a Cleaning schedule for the Town
- Obtain quotes for insurance liability if MTC decide to undertake street cleansing

87. MINUTE 34

CHAMBER SOUND UPDATE

05/06/24 Emailed online members from the meeting to advise of the sound quality.

Response Cllr AR Davies - Can honestly say I have never experienced issues like this before using Teams other than since the new system was installed. So perhaps their system isn't compatible as they claim? I'm on daily Teams meetings in work and never had what I can only describe as the old-fashioned Skype dial tone beeping in the background persistently. But agree, worth giving it a go so we can say we have done good diligence and explored all avenues suggested. Appreciate your time and effort going into getting this resolved.

Response Cllr P Davies The sound was hit and miss for me, some members were clear, Cllr Gavin Thomas for example, the Mayor was extremely muffled, especially when the mic was too far away, over all the sound was poor. I am no tech expert so have no suggestions as to what the problem may be.

Environment / ROW Committee meeting 11/06/24

Cllr P Davies & R Lewis online – the sound was better when members talked directly into the microphones and not to the side or above the microphones.

Members who attended the meeting online commented on the poor sound quality once again and asked what the next stages are. The Deputy clerk advised that the issue is when the contractor attends the offices – the sound then works, however, when we setup for a Council meeting then the sound quality goes bad again. The contractor has advised to move away from Teams and to use Zoom and that could fix the issue, the alternative is to have them out once more to complete more troubleshooting. Members wanted to note that if there is no resolution then legal action would be considered.

RESOLVED:

- invite the contractor to attend an online meeting to resolve the issue
- if no resolution, contact a solicitor to see what legal position MTC are in as the system is not fit for purpose

88. MINUTE 39

LIST OF PAYMENTS FOR THE MONTH OF MAY 2024

05/06/24 Competed online application to add Cllr L Thomas as an authorised signatory, awaiting all the online banking card, card reader and log on details.

The chair of finance advised that his authorisation card is due to expire soon so would need to be replaced.

RESOLVED:

- Contact Lloyds Bank to check the status of the card reader, online banking card and log on details for Cllr L Thomas
- Contact Lloyds Bank to check if cards are sent out automatically when cards expire.

89. MINUTE 41

COMMUNITY COUNCIL AWARDS

13/06/24 Contacted the Working Group (Cllrs M Rowlands, P Jenkins, G Williams, C Davies) for availability for a meeting – forwarded them all the information received from Pyle Community Council

RESOLVED: To note the information

90. MINUTE 48

STREET MARKET 2024 CONSULTATION - MAESTEG TOWN COUNCIL

05/06/24 Emailed BCBC Town Centre manager to advise Members thought that the green top event would bring more trade into the town so this would be an excellent idea to support. The Clerk is recommended to check details of the grotto and performances and identify workarounds with the green top events, if required.

RESOLVED: To note the information

91. MINUTE 49

PORTABLE TOILETS - MARKET SQUARE & LLYNFI RD CAR PARK

06/06/24 Re-opened public toilet to the rear of the building for a 30-day trial period.

20/06/24 the cleaner entered the toilet to find that someone had defecated on the floor. Upon further investigation, it was found that the bin for hand towels was full of alcohol cans and the sanitary waste bin had also been defecated in. The toilet has been closed a result until the sanitary waste bin can be cleaned/replaced.

Contacted the sanitary waste contractor who had the following to say:

'Good afternoon,

I have spoken with our service provider and unfortunately the only solution is for the unit to be removed, cleaned and then replaced. This comes at a one-off cost of £200.00. Please let me know if you would like to proceed’.

Cllr L Thomas **proposed**, seconded by Cllr G Thomas, that we proceed otherwise toilet cannot be used

RESOLVED: advise sanitary waste disposal company to proceed with the unit to be removed, cleaned and then replaced.

**92. MINUTE 51
LIFT UPDATE**

07/06/24: Emailed OTIS to advise that the door will not open from ground level

10/06/24: OTIS came and made the necessary repairs.

13/06/24: There is an alarm going off in the lift that doesn't stop when in use – have emailed OTIS again

14/06/24: OTIS came and made the necessary changes, the alarm was the door arrival alarm and not a safety alarm.

RESOLVED: To note the information

**93. MINUTE 53
MAESTEG GLEEMEN REQUEST**

07/06/24 Emailed insurance company to ask for Clerk to check if there are any exclusions with insurance company to determine if storing of other organisations materials would void our insurance if a fire or other incident was to occur.

Response 02/07/24: Your policy will not cover third party items permanently stored in your property unless you have legal liability. This is often established through ownership or contract

07/06/24 Invited BCBC Conservation Officer to meet with Council

RESOLVED: advise Maesteg Gleemen that they can store their property in the Council offices, but this would be at their own risk.

**94. MINUTE 54
COUNCIL EVENTS: CAMERA**

11/06/24 Tender for photographer has been sent to local photographers and added to Facebook page and Website. Please see agenda item 14 for discussion.

RESOLVED: To note the information

**95. MINUTE 55
TO DISCUSS ANNUAL REPORT 2023-24**

05/06/24 Annual Report published onto Website:
<https://maestegcouncil.org/financial-responsibilities/>

RESOLVED: To note the information

96. MINUTE 57
TO DISCUSS STANDARDS COMMITTEE - OBSERVATIONS AT TCCS

09/06/24 Name cards produced

09/06/24 Lanyards purchased

13/06/24 Clerk forwarded to all members the Observation sheet that is available on BCBC website:

<https://democratic.bridgend.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=133&MID=4613&LLL=0#AI16621>

RESOLVED: To note the information

97. MINUTE 59
TO DISCUSS MEMBER ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS IN 2023-24

05/06/24 Member attendance figures published onto the website:

<https://maestegcouncil.org/meetings-minutes/minutes-2023-24/>

RESOLVED: To note the information

98. MINUTE 60
FINANCIAL APPLICATIONS

Letter of thanks received from the following organisations:

- Plasnewydd Primary School
- Maesteg Comprehensive School
- Ogwr Schools Judo
- Maesteg Cricket Club – Junior Section

RESOLVED: To note the information

99. LIST OF PAYMENTS FOR THE MONTH OF JULY 2024

RESOLVED:

That the tables of **Expenditure (£50,109.56) Income (£66,764.01)** during the month of May 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.

The Clerk advised that BCBC had taken the payments were to be challenged due to unexpected amounts provided in the invoices. The Chair of Finance advised that this appears to be a regular occurrence from BCBC so we should cancel the direct debit if this continues to happen so that we can challenge invoices prior to paying.

Members were also provided with:

- list of payments to be made in July 2024 totalling **£42,846.93**
- A copy of the Receipts and Payments Account which includes expenditure against the budget and the budget remaining and an income analysis.
- Q1 VAT – agreed to reclaim the Q1 VAT

CMO Summary Report – June 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
- Twice weekly bin emptying on the cycle track.
- Daily emptying bins in car park
- Inspect and, where necessary, cut back overgrowth or clear debris:
Fp. 6, 15, 20, 23a, 27, 37a, 38, 39, 44, 45b, 46, 47, 48, 57, 62, 64, 74, 77, 82 in addition: Woodlands Terrace, footpath around cemetery, Nanty Primary and Bridge Street.
- Milage at start of month – 58591 at end 58767 (176 total miles)
- Delivered dog waste bags to Office, library and Maws.
- Motorway run with van to burn off carbon.
- Put out office recycling
- Took Van for MOT and Service
- Collected fuel for tools in BGS Tondu
- Fixed lights in office kitchen

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.

CORRESPONDENCE

100. NEWSLETTERS / FLYERS / BRIEFING NOTES/ CONSULTATIONS

Emailed to all Councillors for information:

- TV Wales: Ogmores Constituency - Filming request
- SW Fire & Rescue - Safer Together - Have Your Say 2024 survey

- OVW Response to environmental principles governance and biodiversity targets consultation
- OVW JUNE, JULY, AUGUST & SEPTEMBER TRAINING DATES
- Community Foundation Wales Meet the Funder Event
- Refugee Week - The Experience of a Refugee and People Seeking Asylum.
- ITCS: Quarterly Report
- Welsh Blood Service - National Blood Donor Week – added to Facebook
- OVW – Multi Location Meetings Guidance
- Maesteg Comprehensive School - Expressive Arts Exhibition poster
- OVW - Launch event video on You Tube - Biodiversity Resources
- Cwm Taf Morgannwg Public Service Board (PSB) Climate Change Risk Assessment
- BCBC - Engagement Session - Llynfi Valley Active Travel Routes

RESOLVED: To note the information

101. **REFERRALS**

- **31/05/24:** Resident on Church Street has painted white lines and placed NO Parking signs in front of their house

Response 06/06/24: Thank you for your enquiry, as discussed with the Inspector the graffiti and signage are to be removed.

- 03/06/24: in Maesteg Cemetery - whilst visiting her husband's grave, BCBC operatives are digging up other areas for new graves and have placed a massive metal container on top of other graves whilst the work is being done. Resident was very distressed at seeing this as it could have easily been placed on top of her husband's grave. Resident spoke to an operative there who advised that BCBC Policy is that when digging new graves the earth has to be placed next to the grave, resident stated that they wouldn't have put the metal container on top of graves with headstones, to which the operative said that no they wouldn't have but would then need to do the work by hand. Resident complains that this is disrespectful to all residents whose loved ones are in graves with no headstones (her husband only has a cross and no headstone at his request).

Response 07/06/24: BCBC burials department have forwarded the complaint to different department - as the management of grounds maintenance/grave digging operations in cemeteries is managed by the Green Spaces and Cemeteries operational team

RESOLVED: To note the information

102. **MAESTEG CELTIC RFC U13's**

Cllr I Williams declared an interest in this item as a member of the club.

Just wondered if you could bring to the council's attention, MTC and BCBC, the success achieved by Maesteg Celtic under 13's this 2023/24 season:

- 2023/24 Season UNDEFEATED.
- District Cup winners.
- Big Devon Bash Tour champions.
- Ospreys regional cup winners.

It was **agreed** to send Maesteg Celtic RFC U13's a letter of congratulations from the Deputy Mayor in the absence of the Mayor.

RESOLVED: to send Maesteg Celtic RFC U13's a letter of congratulations

103. NANTYFFYLLON WARD FUND

2 x 3-tier flower planters on the green space on High Street – all 3 ward members have agreed to this. BCBC have agreed in principle as long as they are 450mm back from footways or carriageway. They cannot be placed in vision splays at the junctions. We will need some details on how they are to be installed/serviced/maintained. Permission will also need to be given from the adjacent property owners.

07/06/24 letters posted to residents 104 – 111 High Street.

Responses:

13/06/24	<p>We live at xxx high street and have no objections to the planters as long as they are maintained adequately.</p> <p>As for the position: anywhere that would stop non-residents parking on the green or outside our homes.</p> <p>I would love to make the street residents only with provision for visitors. Residents regularly struggle to park near our homes due to others parking there for days.</p>
14/06/24	<p>At the moment I don't think this is a good idea due to the issue that the street has with parking.</p> <p>Due to the lack of parking on the street cars regularly park on the grass. If planters are put on the grass it will just make the parking more of a problem.</p> <p>Due to the houses opposite and there are houses across the river having lack of parking, the parking ends up being along our little road. Even then there is not enough space and it over flows onto the grass.</p> <p>The parking is worse when any of the houses have any visitors or if BT vans come around to look in the exchange box, which is a regular occurrence.</p>

	<p>I have a garage that I cannot use as it is regularly blocked by cars and vans. I also have a disabled child that struggles with walking that I have to regularly carry to and from the car. As you can understand this is difficult to do if I have to park down the street due to no parking.</p> <p>My suggestion is to turn half the grass into parking with diagonal drive-in bays and keep the other half of it (the side closest to the main road) as grass and then put two planters onto this. I do think the planters would be a good edition, but the parking should be addressed first.</p>
20/06/24	I think this would be a very good idea
25/06/24	Dear Sir, Thank you for your undated letter regarding planters at the above address. Please answer the following questions – Size? How many? What positions? Why?
26/06/24	I wish to confirm that I have no objection to the installation of 2x planters on the green area opposite my property. I think it is a great idea and look forward to seeing them in situ.

Nantyffyllon Ward members have also advised that maybe a change of location to Station Terrace Nantyffyllon might be an option, however clerks have received a photograph of the area but not an exact location on a map – as residents will also have to be consulted.

A member mentioned the works completed many years ago for updating parking facilities in some streets and asked if this was an option for this area. The member was advised that from recent queries it was found that this work would be far too expensive and there are so many areas that need this its unlikely the town council could deliver a fair resolution for everyone.

Other members queried the following other Ward Fund projects to be completed by the Town Council:

- Graffiti murals – Graffiti artist has been contacted and is due to start in the next few weeks weather dependent
- Planter for Caerau – advised that the planters arrived today (02/07/24) and arrangements for delivering to Caerau, Maesteg East and West will be arranged this week. The soil for this planter will be ordered this week

RESOLVED:

- To await location details for Nantyffyllon Ward fund request – letters to be sent to residents.
- Planter for Caerau to be delivered to Caerau Market Garden (CMG)
- Soil to be ordered for the planter for CMG

104. PRE-ELECTION PERIOD TIMETABLE OF ACTIONS

Clerk had noticed that a post on Facebook Pencoed Town Council has stopped all meetings until after the General Election.

I read the guidance to be that as long as a meeting is non-political then we can carry on with committee and council meetings?

We have a few meetings arranged:

- ROW/Environment committee – our Community Maintenance Officer is retiring and Council want us to go to tender for a ROW contractor
- Policy Committee – to look at Town Council policies
- Projects Committee – to look at current and future projects
- Full Council Meeting – T&CC not political

I can't see why we wouldn't hold any of these as T&CC's are non-political. I do see why the County Borough Councils have ceased meetings as they are politically lead.

Please can you advise,

Response: The pre-election period is a period of heightened sensitivity, and councils need to be careful to avoid any allegations or contravention of the pre-election rules. The object of the pre-election period is to avoid publicity that would influence voter behaviour.

As, a general rule, the normal and scheduled operational business of the council will continue throughout the election period uninterrupted.

RESOLVED: To note the information

105. TOURISM EVENTS SUPPORT FUND GRANT

There was an issue with MTC application in relation to one of your intended suppliers for the Keepers Colliers Run which was flagged up at the grants panel and it has taken some time to internal advice in relation to that supplier. Unfortunately, the advice I have received is that we are unable to proceed with your application. If you would like to meet on Teams in relation to this, my manager and I would be happy to do so.

Deputy Clerk met with BCBC who advised grant funding has been declined based on a 'flagged issue' with our supplier were flagged up by their finance department when doing the checks for the grant and they were then advised not to proceed with granting our funding request. I asked for further details given that EPM have been running events with BCBC for nearly 10 years and are ongoing with the running of events for us and BCBC, however, I was told that they could not provide any further details.

Deputy Clerk spoke with EPM who was caught completely unawares and has contacted BCBC. Apparently, the concern was with one officer who had an issue with EPM when an employability event was run by them and apparently EPM scratched some tables.

There was a back and forth and EPM collected a sample of tables to check and there were scratches but no checks had taken place before or after the event so the scratches could be from anyone. EPM was told that staff in Bridgend leisure centre check the tables on their way in and out.

The tables are in EPM possession, but this ordeal is news to him and he is in a back and forth with BCBC officers at the moment to get to the bottom of it as he has never heard anything in regards to this since the event took place, he has even confirmed with BCBC that he would be happy to replace the tables or have the current ones redone.

Members requested that we ask our BCBC members to query the full reasoning behind the declining of the grant.

RESOLVED: BCBC members to query the full reasoning behind the declining of the grant.

106. TOWN TWINNING

I would like to ask our excellent councillors, if the discussion of our beautiful town concerning Town Twinning has ever arisen. With so many grade 2 listed building in our town: 23 to be exact.

We have many groups and organisations I feel that could benefit from us having the Town twinned with another. We have a beautiful valley with walk's up and around Llangynwyd village.

The spirit of the woodland (except when the scramblers are there). Is second to none in Wales. Our Mayor Cllr Chris Davies is involved with helping the Ukrainian people coming to the town. If I am not mistaken the mayoress Leida is from Estonia.

I feel that this topic is worth a conversation. As we have so much to offer.

It was noted that twinning does come with its own pitfalls and can encourage infighting amongst members in regard to who should travel to the towns and represent the town council etc. As it poses no immediate value to Maesteg, members decided to decline looking into town twinning.

RESOLVED: To note the information

107. SOLAR PANELS: COUNCIL OFFICES

N.B. As Cllr F Abedalkarim not present in the meeting it was agreed to postpone discussion on this item until Cllr F Abedalkarim is in attendance.

RESOLVED: to be discussed when Cllr F Abedalkarim is present

108. REQUEST TO VISIT THE MINER

I would like to take my wife to see the miner, she is unable to walk as she has COPD and uses oxygen. I notice whilst walking up there that a MTC has access to the track. Is it possible to get authorisation to use this track so I can take my wife in our car.

Response provided to the resident: Our maintenance officer does have access to the routes including the road up to the miner, however, this is by special permission only and we are subject to strict requirements. They only grant permission based on the need for him to maintain certain rights of way and empty the bins along the cycle path.

There has been interest from people previously who wanted to gain access and we have just advised them to approach National Resources Wales. I do not believe anyone has had personal permission given, but I believe there was a little bus trip up to see it very recently - I am not sure who this was run by though unfortunately.

If you have no luck, we are hoping that by the end of the year, there will be a new mining memorial sculpture in Maesteg Welfare Park which has much better access.

Cllr G Thomas **proposed**, seconded by Cllr M Rowlands, that we contact NRW and ask them if we can use our access to the NRW site to supervise visits in a vehicle for those less abled who would like to see the ‘keeper of the colliery’ on an ad-hoc basis.

RESOLVED: we contact NRW and ask them if we can use our access to the NRW site to supervise visits in a vehicle for those less abled who would like to see the ‘keeper of the colliery’ on an ad-hoc basis.

109. WORKS ON THE BUILDING

Members queried what works are currently being done on the building?

The works to the rear of the of the front parapet carried out last summer have cured the main leaks internally but not all of the water penetration in the front wall. We are now going to install an additional lead tray in the front parapet to complete the work. The scaffold should be in place for 4 weeks to complete the works.

Further to the taking down part of the high-level parapet wall on the front elevation, the old leadwork was found to be in a very poor condition as suspected, as you can see from the photographs attached the old lead was so brittle in places near to the joints of the cast concrete below, which is why there was still water penetrating the internal rooms and running through the joints below the cornice, we have temporarily propped up the copings to allow the new leadwork to be installed this week, let me know if you would like a site meeting to catch up on all of the works we have carried out. (photos supplied within email sent to all members).

Additional quote for redecoration and re-sealing of the front elevation windows received from Dawsons Stonemasonry Q4202f = £2,660.00

RESOLVED: Members agreed to quote ref: Q4202f at £2,660.00

110. 6 MONTH RULE

BCBC Electoral advised that Councillor A James, Caerau Ward Member has not attended or communicated with Maesteg Town Council since 18th December 2023 and

has surpassed the 6-month rule. – Notice of vacancy placed onto noticeboard inside building, website and Facebook page as per Electoral advice.

RESOLVED: To note the information

111. MAESTEG FOOTPATH 64

Please see the plan attached, it states that Footpath 64 which leads from Station Terrace, across the river footbridge and onto the Hearts of Oak Cottages is not adopted by BCBC, would this be one of our maintainable footpaths?

There are drainage works required along both sides of this footpath that would require a machine to complete, photograph attached,

MTC advised: we maintain rights of way on behalf of BCBC. There is also a cycle path installed which is presume was BCBC albeit it has been there a number of years so would suggest it is local authority owned?

I understand that our previous contractor, has been trying to ask BCBC for a number of years to dredge the drains and river since he lives in one of the many houses that floods during heavy rainfall. He has even approached our Assembly Member and the previous MP and had zero results with the usual costings and priorities cited.

It was agreed to contact BCBC ROW section to complete the works needed at this location.

RESOLVED: contact BCBC ROW section to complete the works needed at this location.

112. EMPLOYER RECOGNITION SCHEME BRONZE AWARD CERTIFICATE

Maesteg Town Council has received the bronze award from the Defence Employer Recognition Scheme (ERS).

We would like to thank you for your statement of intent to support defence personnel. The ERS recognises commitment and support from UK employers for defence personnel. The scheme comprises bronze, silver and gold awards for employers who support those who serve or have served in the Armed Forces, and their families.

You will shortly be able to view the listing of your organisation as a bronze award holder on the ERS website via the following link:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/defence-employer-recognition-scheme/defence-employer-recognition-scheme#bronze-award>

RESOLVED: To note the information

113. CHRISTMAS PARADE

A post on Facebook has been published to advise that applications are open for the Christmas Parade.

To date a few groups/organisations have applied.

We have received a telephone call from Maesteg Santa to see if MTC would like him to be part of the parade.

RESOLVED: To note the information

114. REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY – ROAD CLOSURES

Quote for road closures as per 2023 = £1,726.40

Clerk did ask about extending the road closure to include a section of Castle Street (outside ASDA and Poundland), however, the company advised that BCBC would need to set all traffic lights to red and then they could use temporary traffic lights, without BCBC setting the lights to red this cannot be done as a rolling / temporary road closure.

Members **agreed** to ask BCBC what we can do to close a section of Castle street for a limited amount of time.

RESOLVED: to ask BCBC what we can do to close a section of Castle street for a limited amount of time.

115. CLLR P JENKINS REGENERATION PROPOSAL

Following the extraordinary meeting with Grasshopper it was agreed to look at the below proposal in a full council meeting.

Education
Health Wellbeing
Transport
Commercial Opportunities

Introduction

Education – our old schools are located in residential areas, over years increasingly have problems with access & egress, safety and good neighbour problems. To this end I propose a new all singing/dancing primary school located adjacent to the existing comprehensive school, to be taught in both Welsh and English medium, this would provide a lifelong learning facility all on one site, alleviating traffic congestion in our present schools locations.

Sale of old school sites to bring revenue to the education department and provide new homes in residential streets.

Now Plasnewydd site should have a new bus station – running north to south vice versa on main artery. This would improve bus times, due to hold ups and present location of bus station. The bus station now being free will serve to allow market traders to visit, will allow events providers easy access, increase visitor footfall – benefit town hall for parking during evening events.

To rear of Plasnewydd site and new bus station a new swimming pool should be erected within a stones throw of free car park. Hence stopping the heavy congestion and severe annoyance to residents because of its location. It would also benefit the school children in so much as not having to walk from Castle Street to the pool and back – ideally new school should house new pool as per the vision 24 years ago, again another failed opportunity.

Please note should a school have a public pool, then a considerable area rear of bus station would be vacant and offer various commercial and sporting opportunities/

Fellow Cllrs, consultants. I request you to view these ideas with an open and visionary mind. (I understand the heartfelt feelings for our old schools that have served our valley with education. Social values for over a century and applaud that too but a need to modernise is of utmost importance. If done sympathetically and maintain the importance of belonging).

Many thanks for your time

A member asked - being outside of the town councils remit, what would you like the Council to do? Cllr Jenkins responded, asking members to consider and then submit their support to BCBC regeneration department. A member commented on the old BCBC regeneration plan was to have a large primary school next to the existing comprehensive on Ffordd Dysgu so would be curious to know what happened to this plan. Members agreed to complete the BCBC regeneration consultation.

RESOLVED: members to complete the regeneration consultation with BCBC online.

116. CLLR JENKINS REQUEST FOR AGENDA ITEM - MAESTEG CEMETERY

Cllr P Davies declared an interest in this item so took no part in its discussion.

Following an email from Cllr R Penhale-Thomas to Caerau, Maesteg East, Maesteg West & Llangynwyd BCBC Members, Cllr P Jenkins has requested the following:

Email from Cllr R Penhale-Thomas:

You'll be well versed with the long-standing issues at the top section of Maesteg Cemetery, in particular drainage, accessibility, access to water, litter etc. Constituents have raised these issues over the years, increasingly so in recent times as further burials take place - it would be kind to say that there has been 'limited progress'.

I have been encouraged to hold a public meeting for those with an interest in the top section specifically. I've thought long and hard about it, given the sensitivity - but considering the number of regular and distressing complaints I receive (and undoubtedly, you too) I believe it's the right thing to do. I am keen to extend the invitation to you all as local elected members so that we can listen to constituents' views. Paul - I'd like to extend an invitation to you specifically as the Cabinet Member under whose portfolio this falls.

I don't intend for this to be an exercise in 'bashing the council' per se, but there does need to be a frank exchange of views as to how there has been so little movement in improving conditions there in spite of the many pledges - you'll have seen my previous correspondence with Councillor Spanswick in his former role as Cabinet Member.

Depending on the wishes of those present at the meeting, they may want to establish a representative group to influence and engage with the council going forward.

I'm making plans with Maesteg 7777 RFC for Tuesday 16 July, 6:30 to 8:00pm. I'll keep you in the loop and will circulate some details on social media shortly too.

Cllr P Jenkins email:

Thank you great idea, perhaps in the meantime if again we could gain an indication based upon actual costings, the running costs of this particular cemetery, for example income expenditure, to include possible CAT TRANSFER. You are aware some years ago I obtained all relevant information from GILFACH COUNCIL who maintain and run their community council, we to as a council could give good thought to a similar system and run this ourselves. This would need deep thought, costings and the need for sustainability, our valley residents require at the very least a decent cemetery, this in itself is a REAL WORTHY PROJECT FOR THE TOWN COUNCIL IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THE LOCAL AUTHORITY TO CONSIDER AND PROGRESS AS THIS TYPE OF SCHEME IS WELL WITHIN THE POWERS OF T C COUNCILS.

Cllr Jenkins email:

Dear clerk please would you put on the agenda the email I have sent to council in response to the everlasting complaints and state of the cemetery, this is to test the proposal again of a cat project on the worthiest of schemes for the community as a WHOLE and within our powers. I stress this is a proposal in principle only and dependent upon the REAL CO OPERATION OF BCBC

Deputy Clerk has advised Cllr Jenkins:

Prior to us taking this to the projects committee, you would need to obtain accurate costings to see if the Town Council are able to keep the cemetery to the required standard. Also, it won't be too long before that area needs expanding and do we have the means of expanding that from our already limited funds and experience of that type of work?

Not to mention the staff training and record keeping that would need to take place to ensure it is run properly. In addition, the office workload is already at its limit, there would need to be a staffing consideration for this to go ahead either additional hours or persons.

If you want to ask BCBC for the full figures and a reference to the day to day managing of that part of the cemetery - that would be helpful to fully consider the proposal. However, for those Town & Community Councils that manage cemeteries, a large percentage of the precepts are used on maintaining them.

Cllr Jenkins responded: This is not the case please put on agenda so council can say if in principle they wished to consider taking forward. I have requested that council also discuss the costing ideas for projects as this has no clear policy on what is or is not a project, these are not a litter bin, a bench a small handrail etc or something simple or mundane, I would politely insist that this idea for a future capital expenditure be discussed along with the ill thought out costing scenario

Email sent to all T&CC within BCBC:

We were hoping to ask for information of those whose Councils run and maintain cemeteries and mainly what costs and legalities you incur as well as the day-to-day office work required for them.

One of our Councillors wishes to take over one that is currently under the remit of BCBC. But our day to day and budget is already stretched.

Responses:

Brackla CC	I can't help on this – we don't oversee any cemeteries in Brackla
Coity Higher CC	I'm afraid we don't run or maintain any cemeteries.
Garw Valley CC	Thanks for your email but we don't run or maintain any cemeteries.
Merthyr Mawr CC	are not responsible for any cemeteries.
Pencoed TC	We do not run the cemetery in Pencoed. It is still with BCBC. (we were asked if we would be interested in taking it over some years ago, but following questions posed to BCBC they were unable to provide suitable answers)
Ynysawdre CC	we don't have a cemetery but I'm replying so you can note that

The Chair opened the floor to Cllr Jenkins who explained that he would like support from the Council to consider a CAT transfer of the cemetery to come under the remit of Maesteg Town Council.

A member stated that this would be opening a can of worms as this Council does not have the expertise to support the proper functioning of the cemetery. Another member stated that we do not know the operating costs of the cemetery either. The deputy clerk advised that no Town Councils in Bridgend County appear to operate their own cemeteries, however, Barry Town Council spend nearly half of their precept on operating their cemetery and that was an annual cost of £550,000 last year.

Cllr P Jenkins **proposed**, seconded by Cllr I Williams, that we write to BCBC and ask them the running costs of the cemetery. Some members disagreed on the basis that there is no appetite from this Town Council to take over the cemetery, so this serves no purpose - the following vote took place to support obtaining costings:

The following vote ensued:

CLLR	FOR/AGAINST	CLLR	FOR/AGAINST
GT	FOR	IW	FOR
PJ	FOR	ALG	FOR
MR	FOR	GW	FOR
RM	AGAINST	RPT	AGAINST
LT	AGAINST	CK	AGAINST
CD	AGAINST	PD	ABSTAIN
ARD	AGAINST	RL	AGAINST

The vote results in 6 for the proposal and 7 against – the Town Council will not ask BCBC for the costings for running the cemetery.

Cllr P Jenkins then requested members to consider the second part of his proposal whereby he **proposed**, seconded by Cllrs R Penhale-Thomas and I Williams to write to BCBC and offer our assistance in the grass cutting aspect of the cemetery.

Members did ask to what extent Cllr Jenkins believes the Town Council can assist in the maintenance of the cemetery and he answered, stating that we could assist in providing more frequent cuts to stop the cemetery getting into untidy realms.

RESOLVED: Clerks to write to BCBC and ask them what maintenance assistance they could determine the Town Council could offer them in terms of maintenance of the cemetery.

117. NOMINATE NEW FINANCE COMMITTEE MEMBER

Following the resignation of Cllr F Abedalkarim from the Finance committee, there is now a vacancy on the Finance Committee that needs to be filled.

Current members: G Thomas (Chair), C Davies, P Davies, C Knight, A LeGeyt and L Thomas.

Nominations:

Cllr R Lewis was nominated, however he declined due to ongoing health issues.

Cllr R Martin was nominated and accepted the position.

RESOLVED: Cllr R Martin added to the Finance Committee

118. FINANCIAL APPLICATIONS

Cllr C Knight declared an interest in the below financial application and left the meeting whilst the application was discussed.

1. BRONFAIR ALLOTMENTS

Date received: 18/06/2024

Request £500 towards purchasing a heavy duty polytunnel for the community growing section.

Last received S137 funding in April 2023, recent bank statement provided.

RESOLVED: Council to donate the sum of £500.00 under Section 137 of the Local Government Act (as amended).

119. DELEGATES REPORTS

BUS SUB COMMITTEE MEETING 07/06/2024

The Bus subcommittee (Cllrs F Abedalkarim, P Jenkins, R Martin and R Penhale-Thomas) met with Forge Travel on Friday 7th June 2024.

Members welcomed Forge Travel and were provided with the below information:

Q1 Tuesdays and Fridays 9am – 3pm

Members were provided with the following bus usage figures:

Month	Date	no.of passengers	No. of journeys in month	total passengers in month	average no. of passengers
Feb	27/02	23	1	23	23
Mar	01/03	16	9	207	23
	05/03	25			
	08/03	24			
	12/03	23			
	15/03	26			
	19/03	25			
	22/03	18			
	26/03	26			
	29/03	24			
Apr	02/04	18	9	222	25
	05/04	12			
	09/04	27			
	12/04	31			
	16/04	29			
	19/04	26			

	23/04	27			
	26/04	26			
	30/04	26			
May	03/05	21	9	191	21
	07/05	28			
	10/05	21			
	14/05/	21			
	17/05	17			
	21/05	22			
	24/05	19			
	28/05	21			
	31/05	21			

Members were happy with the usage and agreed that the service is running better than anticipated and that 3 months was not long enough to give an overall view of the service. It was noted that the quieter days were days when the weather was good.

Comments made to Council

14/03/2024 –a phone 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.

Forge Travel advised that the above had already been implemented and was no longer an issue.

17/05/2024 - feedback from residents of Maesteg park... care of the red cow!
Everyone was really grateful for the service, and they had only complements for the driver. Many commented that it was a big help not just for pensioners but also for residents with small children who have to push buggies etc up the hill.

Some possible improvements to consider with the bus company.

- The current route means the bus goes to Oakwood 3 times in an hour, it goes down Butlers Hill turns right into Oakwood and then repeats the journey which means people have to go via oakwood both ways but also because the close proximity of the times there is not anyone getting on most times. This means most people get off at the bottom of Butlers Hill and walk rather than wait for the bus to go the long way around. Could the bus turn right and stop outside peacocks ? or even Aldi? This route would save time and could then possibly extend the route to Tesco?

Forge Travel advised that the route could be tweaked slightly by going from Cynwyd Sant across Salisbury Road, down Neath Road and then drop off only on Commercial Street outside Weatherspoons (members were reminded that the bus is not allowed to collect on commercial routes). It was also agreed to decrease the number of times to Oakwood to 2 times an hour.

- One for a possible referral... The bus driver is complaining about the house on the end of Greenways – the hedge is overgrown and makes his access really hard without scratching the bus... It sounds like it may be a call to V2C to fix it?

Forge Travel reiterated that the hedge on Greenways does impact visual splay at the junction difficult and requested if a referral to BCBC Highways / V2C could be made.

Members then discussed what changes could be made to the current service a number of suggestions were made including:

- Adding a stop at Maesteg Hospital

Forge Travel advised we would need permission from the hospital to drive onto the grounds, up the ramp, drop off / pick up turn around and then down Neath Road, this shouldn't defer from the timetable too much and could be advertised on the bus, social media etc.

- Request to add Maesteg East – from town to Crown Rise, Cemetery, Turberville Estate and then to Oakwood.

Members agreed with the sentiment, but the trial is for Maesteg Park, and any additional routes would need to be agreed in full Council.

- Request to add Caerau Park and Maesteg East

Members agreed with the sentiment, but the trial is for Maesteg Park, and any additional routes would need to be agreed in full Council.

Forge Travel advised that if the days were extended from 8am to 4pm then this may help to include one or two extra stops e.g. the cemetery / Turberville Estate, however, to include Caerau Park would require a 50% change to the timetable and current users would have a reduced service. Maybe an alternative would be to add a separate day just for Caerau? Members advised that this needs to be a full Council decision. Council could also ask Transport for Wales if they would reinstate the Caerau rail replacement bus?

Forge Travel also advised that in the future the route could be registered and that a nominal fee could be charged and that concessionary bus passes could generate some income towards the route as the majority of current users do have bus passes, it was also noted that school children who have parents on benefits are also eligible for bus passes for school (MTC could reclaim this fee from Welsh Government). Members

discussed this and advised that this is something that may be looked at towards the end of the trial period.

Actions / Changes to be made

- Route to go from Cynwyd Sant, across Salisbury Avenue, down Neath Road and to drop off outside Wetherspoons on Commercial Street before going to Oakwood Estate.
- Clerk to enquire with Maesteg Hospital for permission for the bus to drop off, pick up and turn around on the hospital grounds. If permission is given then the new drop off / pick up is advertised on the bus, on social media and Council website
- Next meeting to be held middle of September – Forge Travel to bring costings for a route for Caerau Park to town (maybe on an additional day), and timetable / costings to include Maesteg East that could be discussed and then taken to October full Council for discussion.

Members stated that the original resolution for the bus service was for it to run on a trial basis for 18 months to determine if the Town Council could operate it and we would also have the figures to review to see if the trial has been a success. The trial period would also give the Council time to work on any feedback so that we could expand a fully working and efficient service if Council decide to upon the conclusion of the 18-month trial.

RESOLVED: The bus trial is to continue as was originally intended and no expansion to the service will currently take place outside of the proposed Maesteg Hospital drop off. The committee were granted permission to approach the local health board to ask if the bus is able to access and turn around on the hospital grounds – not the car park just off Neath Road.

120. 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’

122. RESOLVED: THAT THE COUNCIL COME OUT OF COMMITTEE

123. PLANNING

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

Members **had no objections** the following applications:

Ref: P/24/182/FUL

Applicant: A&S Develop Limited
Location: 171 Caerau Road Caerau Maesteg CF34 0PD
Proposal: Renovate derelict terrace house/post office into 2no. residential houses
Ask for: Dion Douglas
Ref: P/24/316/FUL
Applicant: Mrs N Casey
Location: 1 Pen Yr Ysgol Maesteg CF34 9NS
Proposal: Demolition of existing conservatory to front elevation and rebuild in single storey cavity wall with flat roof and lantern over
Ask for: Julie Earp

PLANNING APPEAL DECISION

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990

Appeal Reference: 2010

Related Application Number: P/22/700/FUL

Proposal: Change of use and conversion of the existing barn to a single residential property

Site: Land off Dyffryn Madoc Maesteg CF34 0BQ

Appeal by: M Waldron

PEDW reference: CAS-03313-V4X5J4

I am writing to inform you that an appeal has been made to Planning & Environment Decisions Wales (PEDW) in respect of the above application. The appeal follows the refusal of planning permission by this Council. The appeal is to be decided on the basis of an exchange of written statements by the parties, and a site visit by an Inspector from PEDW.

You can follow the process of an appeal from the submission of an appeal to the decision by searching for the above PEDW reference at <https://planningcasework.service.gov.wales/>

Any comments you submitted to us during the application stage will be forwarded to PEDW and to the Appellant and will be considered by the Inspector when deciding the appeal. If you wish to modify your earlier comments in any way, please use the enclosed form and send to PEDW, Cathays Park, Cardiff CF10 3NQ by 4 July 2024, quoting their reference CAS-03313-V4X5J4. Any representations submitted after the deadline will not normally be considered. Please indicate on your comments form if you would like a copy of the appeal decision letter, which will be sent to you by PEDW. If you would like to submit your comments electronically please email them to pedw.casework@gov.wales and including the above PEDW reference.

**Minutes emailed to all Councillors to Read on 3rd July 2024
Read and accepted at a remote meeting of the Council held on 6th August 2024**

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Mayor