



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, 6th August 2024**

PRESENT: Clerk & Deputy Clerk

COUNCILLORS

IN PERSON:

C Davies (Mayor)

F Abedalkarim, P Jenkins, C Knight, R Martin,
M Rowlands, G Thomas, R Penhale-Thomas, G Williams,
and I Williams

ONLINE: AR Davies, P Davies, A LeGeyt and L Thomas

APOLOGIES: R Lewis

NO APOLOGIES: 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 Martin declared an interest in any items relating to the Llynfi Valley Rivercare Group.

Cllr M Rowlands declared an interest in any items relating to Llynfi Valley BMX.

Cllr R Penhale-Thomas declared an interest in any items relating to the Friends of Maesteg Welfare park.

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

127. 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.

Clerk advised that contact emails for the 2 Maesteg SW Police Sgt's were listed on the bottom of the crime figures

Maesteg Crime Statistics for July 2024

	Caerau / Nanty	Maesteg East	Maesteg West	Llan	Total in category
Robbery	0	0	0	0	0
Drugs	1	1	0	1	3
Dwelling burglary	0	0	1	0	1
Burglary other	2 (1att)	0	1	0	3
Theft of vehicle	2	0	0	0	2
Theft from vehicle	0	0	0	0	0
All other theft	4	3	6	0	13
Damage	6	2	2	3	13
Violence against The person	17	10 (2)	17	5	49 (2)
Domestic related Occurrences	2	2	6	1	11
All crime total	32	16	27	9	84
ASB total	8	7	5	1	21
Drink Driving	1	0	2	0	3

RESOLVED: to note the information.

128. RECEIVE THE MAYORS REPORT

Mayor Cllr C Davies

13 th July	Llan Rangers Fund Day at Maesteg Welfare Park
25 th July	Opening of outdoor learning space – Maesteg Welfare Park

The Mayor advised that on 13th July, he awoke to water pouring into his kitchen from the ceiling so needed to have this resolved so was unable to attend, although he was able to contact Llan Rangers and advise them of this and will be offering a donation to the club.

RESOLVED: To note the information

129. 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** – 02/07/2024 emailed 03/07/2024
- **Full Council CONFIDENTIAL** – 02/07/2024 emailed 03/07/2024
- **Personnel CONFIDENTIAL** – 11/07/2024 emailed 15/07/2024

The **Confidential Personnel Committee** – 11/07/2024 emailed 15/07/2024 were taken as read and the recommendations were accepted as per *Minute 121b of the confidential minutes dated 2nd July 2024* – Council authorised delegated powers to the personnel committee so that their recommendations can be acted upon immediately on behalf of the Council.

RESOLVED: to note the information and accept the recommendations from the minutes.

MATTERS ARISING

130. MINUTE 82

POLICE MATTERS

03/07/24 Emailed SW Police to ask why the Violence against a person is high again in June 2024.

No response to date

RESOLVED: To note the information

131. MINUTE 84

MINUTES

Policy Committee

03/07/24: Recommendations 1 (a-h), 3 & 4 – all policies uploaded to the website

Projects Committee

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

Clerk emailed Caerau Ward members with the following letter suggestion:

Good afternoon Caerau Ward Members,

Now that Thomas & Thomas are finalising all the necessary paperwork for Blaencaerau Play Area we need to let the Blaencaerau residents know about this. Would you be happy for me to send the following letter:

BLAENCAERAU PLAY AREA

Maesteg Town Council are happy to advise that we have now taken ownership of Blaencaerau Play Area from Valleys to Coast.

Now that this initial ownership has been completed, we will be looking at what improvements can be made. However, a full refurbishment of the play area would not be an option at this stage – but we will be working towards this.

We invite you as a local resident to send us your ideas of what you would like to see as improvements to the play area.

Please can you email or write to us using the above contact details. We would also like the local residents to form a 'Friends of Blaencaerau Play Area' where you can meet quarterly with the Maesteg Town Council Caerau Ward members to discuss improvements.

Where do we need to send the letter? I have had a quick look on Google Maps and have come up with the following initial list:

- 1 – 20 Alexandra Road,*
- 1 – 97 Blaencaerau Estate,*
- 1 – 61 Blaencaerau Road,*
- 1 – 25 Brynglas Terrace*

Are there any other streets that need to be notified? I was thinking we could ask Andrews leaflet delivery to deliver the letters as I think this maybe cheaper than posting letters as 2nd class stamp is £0.85 each, when we had the leaflets delivered in Maesteg Welfare Park for the bus trial it was £45 per 1,000 leaflets delivered.

The following emails received:

- *I am happy with the letter's contents. It makes clear that this is a Maesteg Town Council project as a collective with councillors and staff working together for the community and not a one man show that has been pumped using plagiarised content on social media as of late by certain individuals and their "support" network.*

I would also suggest covering Alexandra Place (essentially part of Alexandra Road), Hamilton Terrace, Railway Terrace and Albert Street. Paul, what are your thoughts?

- *I would suggest we hand deliver letters to all the properties in Blaencaerau area, there are roughly 10 streets we could knock them out in no time.*

One quick question, why does the letter contain the following excerpt 'a full refurbishment of the play area would not be an option at this stage'?

- *I did question this part of the letter myself but assumed this must have been something council had agreed at the start of the progress that I missed somewhere along the line. Is a full refurbishment not on the table for any particular reason?*

Clerk advised:

At the moment MTC have only budgeted £5,000.00 towards the refurbishment of the park.

Looking back at previous minutes – see Minute 270, Full Council 04/10/2023

270. AGENDA ITEM 8 – BLAENCAERAU PLAYAREA

Members were provided with the following:

- *delegates report from full Council meeting 05/09/2023 – unsure if members had chance to read before the meeting, Cllr M Rowlands intends to update members further*
- *Blaencaerau playpark options appraisal from V2C – cost breakdown for new equipment, land value, statutory requirements for maintenance.*

Cllr M Rowlands advised that V2C have come forward with monies and resources to enabled the asset transfer of Blaencaerau playpark to Maesteg Town Council ownership. He outlined that V2C have already confirmed with our solicitors that they will foot the legal costs, will contribute to the refurbishment of the park and offer guidance/contacts on how to maintain the park. To go ahead with proceedings, V2C need a commitment from Maesteg Town Council of £5,000 which would be used in the park's refurbishment.

Cllr Rowlands also advised that Thomas & Thomas require initial paperwork to be signed. It was agreed that the Clerk, Mayor and Chair of Finance would sign the necessary documents and with no official seal the signing would need to be witnessed.

Cllr Rowlands advised that the apparatus included in the documents were mainly wooden which he would be keen to change to metal to discourage vandalism so this would need to be considered by the projects committee when the park is transferred.

A member queried the qualification for members of staff to inspect the parks, he was advised that its likely an external contractor would need to be appointed to inspect the park as required.

Another member asked if we are still seeking a contribution from BCBC, he was advised that Bridgend were happy to find monies previously but this is not confirmed especially with the cut backs going on within the borough so MTC should be prepared to go this alone.

It was asked if the Caerau Invest Local (ILC) fund would be willing to donate to this cause. A member advised that there is interest from the group to do this and talks were underway with all parties involved previously. A member, as current chair of the ILC advised that he would request an agenda item for monies to be given for this refurbishment - but when the asset is in the hands of Maesteg Town Council.

Cllr G Thomas stated that this is a superb project to undertake and it acts as an excellent pilot for the Council and results in us obtaining an asset. He proposed, seconded by Cllr L Thomas, that Maesteg Town Council support the request from Cllr M Rowlands and proceed with the current figure of £5,000 being given from MTC.

RESOLVED:

- *Clerk, Mayor and Chair of Finance to sign documents*
- *Cllr M Rowlands to proceed with the scheme*
- *Move £5,000 into separate budget line for the CAT of Blaencaerau Playarea*

*In the Blaencaerau Play Park Options Appraisal Aug 2023 (see attached) it states:
Joint financial support from BCBC and MTC of up to £5,000 each*

At the moment this equates to £10,000.00 available to refurbish the park (pending further agreement from BCBC for £5,000.00)

Until we have a company quote for refurbishment etc we do not know the overall costs involved in this project, hence why I think its best to be upfront with the residents to say we are working towards it.

With the following responses:

- *Perhaps we can alter the wording slightly to say we are working towards full refurbishment gradually over time as opposed to it not being possible at this stage? I would assume that we would have to set an annual budget line moving forward to maintain this asset now anyway. Have we heard anything regarding BCBCs contribution and are we still looking to approach ILC for potentially some match funding? I can't see why ILC would object to contributing to this at all and the more available in the pot, the better outcome for the children in the short term. Nice idea to hand deliver. Happy to help deliver on my return.*
- *Thanks for drafting the residents letter, agree that the one sentence needs rephrasing though please.*

No problem in hand delivering the letters as Paul mentioned this wouldn't take too long (and saves money to MTC)!

I'm not sure we'd receive much response via email or letter though (but still happy letters be posted to inform the residents of the progress), and would also suggest a consultation with the residents and the children to explore ideas and suggestions. This was part of the plan we discussed in meetings to happen once the transfer was complete. Also V2C stated they were happy to support with the consultation if required.

There is a small community event being hosted by V2C and partners on the 13th August on Blaencaerau Estate, around a new V2C project launch, and V2C are happy for us to have a stall to ask residents and children for their input here, which I think would be a great idea.

In relation to the budget set by MTC, as previously mentioned and also highlighted in the information you provided Sian. There was some confusion at the time around the proposal from V2C (in the document they provided) for a £5,000 contribution from MTC to undertake some temporary works at the PlayPark, which, we were against any works until the transfer was completed. We also wanted the actual cost of a new PlayPark which needed to be costed through quotes further along in the plan which we didn't have at the time to go off (as I stated BCBC had suggested around £50,000 would be required for PlayPark of this size depending on apparatus). Somehow the £5,000 in the document for the temporary proposal has been taken as the cost required for the full refurb, when I stated it would be far greater than this. It will require revisiting when we get quotes to propose and agree the amount required from MTC, and as mentioned there would also need to be a budget line for the annual maintenance costs too moving forward.

Members mentioned that their understanding was that when the park was taken over, some immediate works would be undertaken and then there would be stages of improvement up for debate with the Council.

One member asked if there were funding streams available that the council could potentially apply for, but this was unknown at the time.

A member advised that a £5,000 monetary contribution and contractors, benches, painting fencing, new bins etc. would be provided by V2C. During the initial talks of the transfer of the park, BCBC were to find out what they could allocate through the CAT transfer although the CAT fund is rapidly running out due to larger applications that have been awarded recently. Overall, it is a £50,000 ballpark figure to fully refurbish the park. During the transitional period and letters going to local residents, we will await quotes and tenders for proposed works and Cllr P Davies will take this issue to the CAT steering group to see what can be offered from the CAT fund.

RESOLVED: letter wording to be agreed by Caerau Ward Members and to be delivered by the ward members.

132. **MINUTE 86**

MINUTE 30 - Finance Committee Recommendations

03/07/24 Emailed BCBC for a Cleaning schedule for the Town

04/07/24 **Response received:** The town is litter picked and bins serviced every day starting at 6am Monday to Friday. It is also swept by our road sweeper three times a week.

Is there any particular area of the town where there is an issue?

04/07/24 We responded citing our issues with the cleanliness of the town and requested permission to be granted to undertake power washing etc if we have the correct insurances in place. No response to this as yet.

A member confirmed that BCBC had attended the town centre recently and were seen sorting out the drainage issues within the town centre and that Commercial Street is cleaned at least 3 times per week.

A member asked if we had received word back from BCBC in regard to Maesteg Town Council obtaining the correct insurance to enable us to undertake street cleansing and be indemnified should any damage occur. It was confirmed that no answer had been received yet, but another member was able to advise that today, in BCBC, there was a meeting highlighting such issues and the chief executive of BCBC advised that there is no resource available to enable the unitary authority to hand over services to Town and Community Councils. There is also the addition of 'double taxation' where the Town Council should not double down on the services that people already pay for in their Borough Council tax.

A member requested that BCBC members attempt to push the street cleansing matter as very little would be required from the Borough.

RESOLVED: BCBC members to push issue with officers.

133. MINUTE 87

CHAMBER SOUND UPDATE

09/07/24 Emailed Total Sound to attend the next full council meeting

10/07/24 Response received:

Sorry to hear you're still having issues.

I still believe this is not the Shure System, and your Teams bit is not really in our remit, but saying that I do what you to be happy and working.

I can't do the 6th Aug as I'll be in the field in Hereford for Lakefest, and there's no chance of signal there.

- Are the recordings on the USB recorder inaudible or clear?
- Are you still using an older Laptop?
- Are you still connecting either via the USB hub or Wi-Fi, rather than direct cat5 cable?
- What is the current Wi-Fi Speed upload and download?
- Have you tried teams without recording the meeting?
- Can you try Zoom instead of teams as a trial?

30/07/24: Update from Deputy Clerk emailed to all members:

I went to Swansea yesterday to the Total Sound Solutions office to get some equipment to hopefully sort out our sound issues in the chamber.

For our next full council meeting, we are going to use a personal laptop which has more memory and processing power than the current clerk laptops to see if the issues we have been experiencing is a result of a processing power issue (this was a recommendation from the sound contractor). The current clerk laptops max out their 8GB of ram when connected to the microphone system and having teams open etc. The current clerk laptops run on i5 processors and the personal laptop we are using clocks in on an equivalent Intel Core i9-12900K. – if we are still experiencing sound issues with this setup, then we can eliminate it being a hardware issue.

We are also going to use a direct ethernet cable into the laptop as well, however, with all the USBs and ethernet cables required as a result of running directly into the laptop – we need some additional hardware. Total Sound Solutions had some equipment to give us but they didn't have everything we need to trial this. To save us potentially purchasing the below and it not resulting in an improved sound experience for those online – does anyone have the adapter (below) or something similar we can borrow for the meeting on the 6th August please?

It would need an ethernet and at least 2 usb ports and the connection needs to be usb c. We were advised to use products from Belkin or Anker as they produce quality products, an issue we may potentially have – as advised by our IT company and Total Sound, is that what we have underneath the main table in the chamber is cheap adapters that cannot deal with the data going through them.

We have had our IT company (ITCS), BT Openreach and Solutions in Technology check our internet connections and speeds which routinely come back as more than adequate for what we need. The only factor the Microphone contractor has commented on is the internet connection not being fibre optic but with speeds exceeding 70mb/s it shouldn't hold much relevance.

If we are still having sound issues on the 6th August – the only remaining troubleshooting we can do is use ZOOM, we're avoiding using it this time around as if we check all the other things off our list, it'll save having to purchase another license agreement.

Thank you

https://www.argos.co.uk/product/9605956?istCompanyId=a74d8886-5df9-4baa-b776-166b3bf9111c&istFeedId=30f62ea9-9626-4cac-97c8-9ff3921f8558&istItemId=rtqixmqxm&istBid=t&&cmpid=GS001&_sja=tsid:59157%7Cacid:534-693-8244%7Ccid:20296143496%7Cagid:%7Ctid:%7Ccrd:%7Cnw:x%7Crd:3566648207090477795%7Cdvc:c%7Cdp:%7Cmt:%7Cloc:9189492&utm_source=Google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=20296143496&utm_term=9605956&utm_content=shopping&utm_custom1=&utm_custom2=534-693-8244&GPDP=true&gad_source=1&gclid=CjwKCAjwnqK1BhBvEiwAi7o0XzyJ8_aFsK9_SYnLtr-Wcy7ePxtj-5qLz1ANJN2bEVxN39zAe1uGRoCWFcQAvD_BwE&gclsrc=aw.ds

Members thanked the clerks for troubleshooting the sound issues. The deputy clerk advised that if the sound is too poor following today's setup, then the only alternative would be to use Zoom and see if that resolves the issue.

RESOLVED: to note the information

134. **MINUTE 88**

LIST OF PAYMENTS FOR THE MONTH OF MAY 2024

- 25/07/24 Telephoned Lloyds bank to check the status of the card reader, online banking card and log on details for Cllr L Thomas. They advised that Cllr L Thomas is an authorised signatory for physical documents, however they require an additional form to be completed and signed for online authorising. Form completed and all required signatories have signed the form, form posted to Lloyds – should receive the card reader etc within 2 weeks.
- 31/07/24 Lloyds Bank advised they have approved the Online authorising form. You'll receive your card (if you don't already have one) and reader in the post within 7 days, which you can then use to log in. The card will need to be activated on your first log in.

The clerk advised that the card reader arrived today so we are awaiting the card and pin number now

RESOLVED: to await all necessary equipment.

135. MINUTE 91

PUBLIC TOILET TO REAR OF BUILDING

- 03/07/24 Emailed sanitary waste contractor to proceed with the unit to be removed, cleaned and then replaced.
- 08/07/24 Sanitary waste bin collected, advised replacement should be with us on 15th July.
- 15/07/24 No bin delivered
- 26/07/24 Bin delivered as we were leaving the building
- 29/07/24 Public toilet re-opened

A member asked if the toilet was open now for normal hours going forward. It was advised that the toilet is opened and closed when the market is, this is normally 8am to 6pm.

RESOLVED: to note the information

136. MINUTE 93

MAESTEG GLEEMEN REQUEST

- 03/07/24 Emailed Maesteg Gleemen to advise that they can store their items in the building, however they will not be covered by MTC Insurance
- 04/07/24 Maesteg Gleeman moved the remaining storage materials into the building.

RESOLVED: to note the information

137. MINUTE 94

WARD FUNDS – CAERAU & MAESTEG EAST UPDATE

- 03/07/24 CMO advised that the planter will not fit in the van, Caerau Ward members advised of this
- 03/07/24 Floral display contractor contacted to advise that the planters have arrived
- 12/07/24 Soil and compost ordered for the planter for Caerau
- 16/07/24 Caerau planter installed and planted
- 26/07/24 Maesteg East planters collected and to be installed asap.
- 31/07/24 All 4 planters installed.

Members commented that the publicity on Facebook had been very positive showing full co-operation of ward members.

RESOLVED: to note the information

138. MINUTE 102

MAESTEG CELTIC RFC U13's

31/07/24 Letter to be signed by the Mayor and sent to Maesteg Celtic RFC U13's

RESOLVED: to note the information

139. MINUTE 105

TOURISM EVENT SUPPORT GRANT

A member asked what the progress was of our BCBC members requesting further details in regard to our grant funding being declined previously for the fun run.

BCBC members had no news to share but will chase up and report back next month.

RESOLVED: to await further information from BCBC members.

140. MINUTE 107

SOLAR PANELS FOR COUNCIL OFFICE ROOF

A member requested that the Council seriously consider installing solar panels on the roof. The member was advised that previously we were advised no as the Councils Office building is a grade II* listed building.

Members requested that the Clerks ask the conservation officer again for clarity.

RESOLVED: Clerks to approach the conservation officer.

141. MINUTE 108

REQUEST TO VISIT THE MINER

18/07/24 Emailed NRW to ask if MTC 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.

19/07/24 NRW responded asking to fill in an application form

25/07/24 Completed application form and advised applications will be reviewed within 12 weeks of submission

The deputy clerk advised that he had spoken with NRW in regard to the application and they appear to be supportive of this. They will be sending over official documentation which outlines where a minibus is to park and other do's and don'ts.

RESOLVED: to note the information

142. MINUTE 109

WORKS ON THE BUILDING

03/07/24 Emailed Dawsons Stonemasonry to proceed with quote ref: Q4202f at £2,660.00

25/07/24 Request from BCBC Transforming Towns for an update, Clerk forwarded all invoices paid to date in 2024-25 including the latest valuation 8 from Dawsons Stonemasonry which includes % of each work item completed to date. BCBC advised they will use this information for claim 2 of the grant.

31/07/24 BCBC advised Claim 2 of the grant will be paid 02/08/24

RESOLVED: to note the information

143. MINUTE 111

MAESTEG FOOTPATH 64 (HEARTS OF OAK)

18/07/24 Emailed BCBC ROW section to complete the works needed at this location.

A member stated that we, as a town council have the right to minor works so maybe we should consider sorting this ourselves.

Another member had med NRW on this site years ago and the natural activity of the river has deposited stones and other debris resulting in no place for the water to go during heavy rains and results in flooding.

It was requested that the Council ask BCBC if we can undertake works to alleviate this problem under our rights of way agreement. When we have the answer, the Council will determine their scope of works.

RESOLVED: Clerks to contact BCBC to determine if we can authorise works to be completed on footpath 64

144. MINUTE 114

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY – ROAD CLOSURES

18/07/24 Emailed BCBC to ask BCBC what we can do to close a section of Castle street for a limited amount of time. – no response to date

RESOLVED: to note the information

145. MINUTE 116

MAESTEG CEMETERY

18/07/24 Contacted Cllr R Penhale-Thomas after his meeting at the cemetery with BCBC leader to ask them what maintenance assistance they could determine the Town Council could offer.

19/07/24 Cllr P Davies emailed:

Ross, I notice you have responded and will take the matter up, for the record Mark Bayliss and Phil Beaman or both currently on leave until the 22nd and 24th July respectively, Zac is covering for them at the moment.

Also, there was the issue of the bins in the top cemetery mentioned in the meeting, would that be something we at MTC could consider re: installing a couple of additional bins and servicing them. If MTC were to assist with grass cutting and the bin situation it would make a positive news story for MTC in light of the meeting as we are helping out where we can for the benefit of all the residents of the Llynfi Valley,

I have had further discussions with the Leader of BCBC who assured me that funds would be found to carry out work at the cemetery, including the installation of path/road ways, drainage and to get the water tap working, the drainage being the biggest challenge now that burials have taken place as it makes the installation more complex, not saying it can't be done but an engineering solution may have to be found.

Cllr R Penhale-Thomas advised that he is just awaiting a meeting with all Llynfi Valley BCBC members to discuss the scale of works required and costings etc and then we will put Maesteg Town Councils proposition forward. It was commented that the works are likely to be a significant part of our budget and this is something that the Council will need to be mindful of.

RESOLVED: to note the information

146. MINUTE 117

NOMINATE NEW FINANCE COMMITTEE MEMBER

18/07/24 Committee membership updated on the AGM minutes and website.

RESOLVED: to note the information

147. MINUTE 118

FINANCIAL APPLICATIONS

Letter of thanks received from the following organisation:

- Bronfair Allotments

RESOLVED: to note the information

148. MINUTE 119

DELEGATES REPORTS

18/07/24 Telephoned Maesteg Hospital for permission for the bus to drop off, pick up and turn around on the hospital grounds. Was transferred elsewhere and no one picked up after waiting on hold for 15 minutes.

26/07/24 Telephoned Maesteg Hospital again, was passed around a few people and then onto a message asking to call back later

The deputy clerk advised that we have been unable to get hold of the person needed who is in charge of the property section of the local health boards.

It was noted that maybe BCBC members can ask the Health Board Transformational Change be contacted and also that BCBC Leader is asked to raise the request.

RESOLVED:

- to ask transformational change office if they can raise the request
- BCBC Cllr P Davies to ask BCBC Leader if he can ask at one of his meetings

149. MINUTE 121 – PHOTOGRAPHY TENDER & CMO RECRUITMENT

08/07/24 Emailed the winning photography tender and advised of up-and-coming events. The first being the Mayors Civic Sunday on 22/09/24

A member asked how many applications we had received for the vacancy. He was advised of the number and also advised that the personnel committee will be meeting soon to short list the applications prior to interviews.

RESOLVED: to note the information

150. LIST OF PAYMENTS FOR THE MONTH OF JULY 2024

RESOLVED:

That the tables of **Expenditure (£97,090.85)** **Income (£74,466.74)** during the month of July 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 July 2024 totalling **£10,088.06**
- A copy of the Receipts and Payments Account which includes expenditure against the budget and the budget remaining and an income analysis.

An online authoriser requested that payments are only made once a week, Clerk advised that payments are limited to a couple of times a month and that all authorisers were send an email advising of the payments waiting for authorisation. A member stated that they had sometimes missed these emails, it was **agreed** that payments would be processed on a Wednesday to avoid any missed authorisations.

CMO Summary Report – July 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, 23a, 38, 39, 40,41, 42, 43, 45b, 57, 62, 77, 82 in addition: Pathway behind Christopher Road, Brynmawr.
- Milage at start of month – 58818 at end 59062 (244 total miles)
- Delivered dog waste bags to Office, MAWS, menshed, CDT.
- Motorway run with van to burn off carbon.
- Put out office recycling
- Took delivery of planters and handed off to contractor.
- Delivered medals and trophies for fun run
- Attended fun run
- Moved materials from upstairs office to allow builders access to room walls
- Attended personnel meeting.

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

151. NEWSLETTERS / FLYERS / BRIEFING NOTES/ CONSULTATIONS

Emailed to all Councillors for information:

- Male suicide prevention - And other information
- Welsh Government - New consultation: Draft priorities for Culture 2024-2030
- Age Concern - Listen and Connect, Telephone Listening Service for Lonely and Isolated Older People
- Guide to the 2026 Review / Canllaw i Arolwg 2026
- The Maesteg Town Hall Newsletter: Cinema Edition
- Presentation by Audit Wales to Larger Councils Committee
- Keep Wales Tidy - Apply for a FREE garden pack today for community groups

RESOVLED: to note the information

152. CHRISTMAS PARADE 2024 – TOWN HALL

AWEN have approached us in regard to what they will be running on parade day this year. They are asking if Maesteg Town council wish to use the Town Hall to place a Christmas market as in previous years of local people and traders. They have also

offered use of their atrium that we may wish to use for our ‘performances in the market square’.

Members requested that the clerks determine if there are costs associated with us using the town hall during the Christmas period.

RESOVLED: to check with AWEN Cultural Trust if there are any costs involved.

153. CMO MAINTENANCE REQUESTS:

Lane to rear of 66 Turberville street, Maesteg (between Duke street and Talgarth Street)

01/07/2024: Cllr Martin Hughes emailed –

Further to the above, please find the following exchange of correspondence between a resident of Turberville Street and myself.

Unfortunately, the lane in question is one of a number locally which is not in public ownership, and so has been neglected and left for overgrowth to take its toll over the years.

The resident has asked me to approach Maesteg Town Council on her behalf to request if any practical assistance can be provided to help to clear various sections of the brambles and other overgrowth, and so I know that she would be most grateful if you could take up this request with the Council on her behalf.

Brodawel

18/07/24: Cllr F Abedalkarim emailed –

Walking this morning in Maesteg East Ward , residents of Number 5 Brodawel , the neighbour of Councillor Phil Jenkins , raised a concern regarding overgrowth of the green opposite their home . They contacted BCBC many times and nothing has been done .

I will be very grateful if you can help please.

05/07/24: The concerned resident also complained to BCBC with the following:

I raised a concern online regarding the green area at the front of my property that has not been mowed this year. The grass is currently extremely high making the area appear very unsightly as well as rendering the green area unusable.

Furthermore, previously I have experienced a rodent issue due to the condition of the neighbouring property, and I feel that the current state of the green area may well provide further habitat for the rodents.

In my query, I asked when the grass would be mowed, but am surprised to see that my concern has been marked closed, with no actual remedial action having taken place.

The response indicated that "We will now take the appropriate action" but that doesn't indicate what action and when.

Are you able to provide further clarification on timescales for the grass to be cut.

05/07/24: BCBC replied –

I completely understand your frustration here as there are many areas of the Borough that had yet to receive a cut and we are working through these all now with our contractor, Total Ground Care. I will ask my Parks Team to find out when your grass is scheduled to be cut, as what has happened in this instance, is they have logged your concerns but your area is on the schedule within the next 10 days, so they have just replied that it is being attended too. I think giving you a more specific timescale would have assisted and I will certainly pass these comments onto the team.

Just for context, this year we have participated in the Welsh Government “no mow May” to encourage biodiversity across the Borough, so the number of scheduled grass cuts has decreased. Unfortunately, this has also coincided with a spell of extremely wet weather followed by hot sunny conditions, all of which make ideal growing conditions. So, we now have a situation where the grass has grown much higher than in previous years. We will definitely need to monitor this situation in future years, as whilst we want to encourage biodiversity, we also want our County to look cared for.

19/07/24: The resident replied again as the works remains outstanding –

Thank you for your response of the 5th July, regarding the ongoing situation with the green area to the front of my property being extremely overgrown.

In your response you indicated that the area was on the work programme for mowing, and that the work would be completed within 10 days.

It has now been 14 days (10 working days) and disappointingly I have to advise you that the work has still not been completed, and needless to say the grass has grown even longer.

Can you confirm definitively when the work is going to be completed.

I appreciate that many areas are in a similar position, but the current situation is totally unsatisfactory.

24/07/24: The resident contacted Cllrs F Abedalkarim & M Hughes –

Just wanted to let you know that I've not received any response from BCBC to my previous email, however the good news is that the grass has just been cut.

Many thanks for your support.

30/07/2024 Mill View lane request: Cllr P Jenkins emailed –

Please could you ask to have the lane that is a thoroughfare, in Mill view opposite Number 51 mill view servery overgrown.

Members requested that all referrals go to all ward members where possible and requests should not be acted upon if they come via the BCBC Maesteg East Ward member.

Cllr P Jenkins requested that the following be minuted: Regarding Brodawel, every resident was made aware of the correspondence between myself and BCBC regarding the overgrowth. Further to BCBC finally cutting the overgrowth the same residents have cleared and disposed of the cut grass themselves due to the lack of removal by BCBC.

RESOVLED: CMO to investigate Turberville Street and Mill View lane.

154. BLAENCAERAU ENGAGEMENT/ FUN DAY AUG 13TH

15/07/24: V2C emailed with the following:

We are arranging an engagement/ fun day for Blaencaerau Estate on Tuesday 13th August 10am - 3pm to engage with residents about some exciting green infrastructure plans for the estate. Halo Leisure Maesteg will be attending and arranging games, there'll be an ice cream van etc.

MTC are more than welcome to attend if you want to discuss the park, we will be sending out communication to the residents about this next week.

RESOVLED: Caerau ward members to attend if possible.

155. MAESTEG WEST WARD FUND REQUEST

The original request for the handrail was agreed by Maesteg West Ward members in March 2024 without costings.

Cllr F Abedalkarim has obtained quotes to replace and extend the existing handrail on the stairway next to the old family value building that exists onto Church Street with galvanised, powder coated steel hand railings.

QUOTE 1	QUOTE 2
£3,300	£2,775
No VAT quoted	VAT £555
Total: £3,300	Total: £3,330

It was noted that this is a lot of money to come out from the ward funds. Cllr I Williams **proposed**, seconded by Cllr F Abedalkarim, that this funding come from the Councils reserves under a new budget line. There were no objections to the proposal. It was agreed to proceed with Quote 2 due to VAT being included in the quote. A member

asked if MTC could also approach BCBC to see if this lane can become a certified public ROW and added to the agency agreement to be managed by MTC.

RESOVLED:

- to accept quote 2,
- funds to be made available from reserved
- ask BCBC if the lane can become a public right of way and come under Maesteg Town Councils responsibility.

156. REQUEST FOR EVENT SUPPORT/SPONSORSHIP: LLYNFI VALLEY BMX

Cllr M Rowlands declared an interest in this item, let the room and therefore did not participate in any discussion.

Following on from the success of our South West Regional BMX Race earlier this year, we have now been awarded the end of season BMX finale - the South West BMX Region Championship 2024!

This event will again attract some 500 people, with over 250 riders entering the racing and some 250 spectating, which include local riders, those from around south and north Wales, and coming from all around South West as far down as Cornwall.

In undertaking this prestigious event, we also host the end of season presentation, where all the riders and their families and friends will attend in the evening following the race day to be presented with their awards and celebrate the season.

Not only does the event bring people to the Llynfi Valley for this fantastic sporting weekend, it also brings people into Maesteg Town and the surrounding areas, generating interest, local spend and publicity for the area.

We've been awarded the SW BMX Regional Championships at relatively short notice, with it taking place on Saturday 14th September 2024, but we're determined to ensure we make a big impression and give an amazing event.

We're also working with Beicio Cymru (formerly Welsh Cycling), our governing body, to incorporate the Welsh BMX Championships into this event, which would add another title up for grabs at this race, drawing more interest and entries.

Running the Championship event involves a degree of cost, more so than running the Regional Series round we hosted earlier in the year, and we're seeking some financial support to help with these costs in order to ensure it's a top draw event and we create a memorable experience of the BMX Track and the valley.

The cost of running this event, which is all done by our crew of volunteers, is around £6,000. This includes some larger costs such as; hire of PortaLoos, trophies and medals (for 250 participants), presentation venue and entertainment, track maintenance,

marketing, first aid (paramedic), commissaires, race commentator, fuel, ancillaries, and much more.

We're aware we have gratefully received £500 earlier in the year through the S137 grant towards our Regional Series race. With this being such another grand event for the Club and area, we would like to ask whether Maesteg Town Council would consider the possibility of sponsoring (or donating) towards the Championship event please?

If this opportunity was agreed, in doing so we'd recognise and publicise MTC on our promotional materials, social media posts (pre and post event), announcements at the race day and at the presentation evening.

If you'd like any further information, please let us know.

As per the previous event any Cllr's are welcome to attend, and we'd also like to again invite the Mayor of Maesteg - this time Cllr Christopher Davies to attend if available.

Here's a breakdown of costings for the event as requested:

- PortaLoos x 8 £560
- Track maintenance £650
- First aid £300
- Commissaire x 3 £240
- Race commentator £120
- Fuel £220
- Marketing £250
- Marshalls/volunteers ppe etc £450
- Trophies x 120 £1,800
- Medals/Trophy plates £750
- Presentation venue - hire/dj/decor £1,000 (N.B. on Facebook this is to be held in the High Tide in Porthcawl)
- Ancillaries £250

Total £6,590

Cllr AR Davies **proposed**, seconded by Cllr L Thomas, that the Town Council contribute 50% of the total costings to the event which is likely to bring many new people into the town over the course of a weekend. A member requested that we request invoices/receipts to the value of the donated amount.

RESOLVED: Council to donate £3,295 in support of the event run by Llynfi Valley BMX

157. CLERK MOBILES

The role of the clerk has evolved substantially since the pandemic. As such, staff are currently using personal phones to fulfil the role effectively by:

- ‘Hotspotting’ from personal mobiles when server goes down – which happens fairly often.
- Taking and receiving pictures of issues around the area especially rights of way to report to the relevant parties or for staff information (CMO).
- Organising deliveries from Amazon etc as they deliver outside of office hours mostly so deliveries are to Clerks houses.
- Corresponding with members of the public who send images and text of issues (they do not always have email accounts)
- Calls from contractors, staff and Councillors during and outside of office hours.
- Social media posting and interaction is a daily activity - especially on event days. On the last parade day we collectively took around 500 images on our personal phones which resulted in 20,000 impressions online (standard is roughly 500-2000). During the recent fun run our story and images gained 16,000 impressions.
- Authentication for computer apps
- Working from home assistance including clerks communicating back and forth.
- Security when working on site or showing the public around the Council offices (current handsets do not work from outside the office due to wifi coverage)
- Data security – members of the public forward their personal information to us in the forms of letters, ID etc.
- Bank verification and alerts (adding new payees and payment information).
- Phone calls from marketing and organisations who wish to contact the Council have gained our personal telephone numbers.

Public sector contracts will be between £45 to £55/month depending on 24 or 36 month contracts and will enable us to ‘unplug’ when we leave the office.

Cllr G Thomas **proposed**, seconded by Cllrs R Martin and L Thomas, that mobile phones be provided to the clerks to enable them to do their jobs and to not need to further use their personal phones for Council business.

RESOVLED: Clerks to proceed with sourcing 2 mobile business phones to assist in their roles.

158. SPONSORSHIP OF LOCAL RUGBY CLUB ANNIVERSARIES

Maesteg Town rugby clubs are coming up to important anniversaries, over the next 4 years,

Maesteg Harlequins RFC	1899	125 years this season
Nantyffyllon RFC	1900	125 years next season
Maesteg Celtic RFC	1926	100 years in 2 years

Can I ask the council to consider sponsoring each of the clubs over the next 4 years, potentially a grant of £1000 per club so £4,000 in total over 4 years. Apart from the benefit to the clubs I think it would be really good way of getting more visibility of the town council through program advertising, match day banners or even kit sponsorship.

Cllr G Thomas **proposed**, seconded by Cllr L Thomas that this venture be supported by the Town Council. A member asked if this was open to other groups celebrating such milestones such as the Maesteg Gleemen etc. It was **agreed** that any group can put such an application forward which would be considered outside of normal S137 grant funding.

RESOVLED: to note the information

159. STREET ART – GRAFFITI MURAL

Cllr M Rowlands wished to advised members that the street art on the side of the Blue Pearl restaurant had now been completed and the response has been very positive online.

The artwork celebrates some of the people and places of Maesteg, featuring in no particular order:

- JJ Williams
- Vernon Hartshorn OBE
- Revlon factory
- Maesteg Community Hospital
- Llynfi Iron Works
- War Memorial Soldier
- Emily Talbot
- Maesteg Town Hall
- Railway lines
- Maesteg Town Council
- Christopher Williams
- Collieries - Caerau, Coegnant, St John's, Garth, Oakwood
- Hen Wlad Fy Nhaddau was performed for the first time in Maesteg!

Members wished to quickly proceed with the other proposed art projects whilst public opinion was positive.

RESOVLED: to note the information

160. FINANCIAL APPLICATIONS

1. GARTH SENIOR CITIZENS

Date received: 26/06/2024

Request £500 towards replacing vertical blinds and partial replacement of heating system.

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

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

2. LLYNFI VALLEY RIVERCARE GROUP

Cllr R Martin declared a personal interest in the financial application relating to the Llynfi Rivercare Group and left the meeting, therefore took no part in the discussion of this application.

Date received: 30/07/2024

Request £500 towards health and safety and maintenance equipment to continue their role in cleaning the river.

Last received S137 funding in August 2020, recent bank statement provided.

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

161. DELEGATES REPORTS

1. BICENTENARY MEETING – 09/07/2024 - CLLR G THOMAS

I went to the group meeting on Tuesday 9th July and the main things that came out of it for the council were the following questions:

1. Street food market - they would like to run a street food market as part of the celebrations, MTC have had a proposal from EPM, can we share the proposal so they can understand the costs and offer if they would like to undertake something like this.
2. MTC will be running the keeper of the Colliery run & the Christmas parade 2026 – would we partner those events with the bicentenary, so they are included in the program and advertised / promoted as part of the celebrations.

3. The group and plans are in its infancy, but they would be looking to MTC for some financial support to run events – so can MTC look at next years budget provisions. (I suggest we move that to the finance committee meeting at the end of Q2).
4. The group are looking to create a website to advertise the 200-year celebrations and encourage interest. They have had a price for £2000 to design a web page and host it. Would MTC be open to supporting them by hosting the website on our system and asking ITCS for costs?

Cllr R Martin advised that previously a resident had offered his own domain to the Bicentenary Group

RESOLVED: Cllr G Thomas to check what the bicentenary group need from their website so we can check with ITCS for accurate costings.

2. CLLR G THOMAS ATTENDED OVW ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING **Held at Cowbridge town council office.**

1. Presentation received from LLAIS – the new voice in health care.

The old community health boards have been replaced with this new organisation and now include social care.

They are split into 7 regions across Wales but are now independent of individual health boards.

They offer free independent advice and support to members of the public in respect of complaints against health boards.

2. Chairs address - there are 735 town councils and 83% are members of one voice Wales.

OVW focus and vision is

“To represent the interests of Community and Town Councils; raise awareness and understanding of this primary tier of government; and work collaboratively with our partners to ensure the sector contributes fully to the goal of developing dynamic and sustainable communities in Wales.”

There was lots of discussion over the planning rules and the charters between local councils and the county councils. The Cardiff one was discussed and it has clear provisions for town councils to be involved in development decisions not just informed about them. A big focus was on the funds for local development associated with a major housing schemes, St fagons town council had secured money from the Cardiff borough council to improve the local area on the back of the development rather than the money going back into central funds.

OVW – after discussion with the public service ombudsmen are now offering free finance & governance courses for local town council as part of their main training programs. The training program has been extended with new modules including a nature project management module.

OVW – have issued new guidance (May 21st 2024) on remote meeting guidance... I have not seen this, does the clerk have a copy?

OVW – issued a warning to all councils that Microsoft have removed the support for windows 10 starting 2025 – so all councils need to consider their IT equipment and how it will be upgraded or supported next year.

OVW – shared a letter from Rebecca Evans on the Aerated concrete issue – the clerks should have received this?

OVW – have an awards scheme for innovation in town councils...listening to the description I think we should put forward the bus scheme, it sounds like a really good opportunity to highlight the town councils efforts

RESOLVED: to note the information

3. CLLR P DAVIES ATTENDED ARMED FORCES COVERNANT MEETING IN BCBC

Cllr P Davies provided a verbal report having attended the Armed Forces Covenant meeting earlier today in BCBC. He noted that there were 26 attendees at the meeting.

4. CLLR P JENKINS – TOWN & COMMUNITY COUNCIL FORUM

Cllr P Jenkins provided a verbal report advising that BCBC will be organizing a summit to discuss how T&CC will operate and take on some roles from BCBC.

162. STAKEHOLDER MEETING REPORT

The deputy clerk attended the stakeholder workshop which was conducted by Grasshopper who are in charge of creating our business action plan.

Members were provided with a copy of the stakeholder report which was attended by:

- Awen Cultural Trust
- BAVO
- Noddfa Youth and Community Project
- Maesteg Town Council
- Grasshopper

Key Takeaways and Recommendations

1. Improving awareness of what MTC is doing would be significantly beneficial, including to both BAVO and AWEN
2. A potential solution for digital inclusion and advertising could be an electronic advertising apparatus in the Town Centre, potentially on MTC premises

3. Identifying and putting in place a framework for early engagement with organisations such as BAVO and Awen (among others) may be helpful; BAVO would welcome more permanent relationships with the Council
4. A regular forum between MTC and local stakeholders could be beneficial
5. Increased focus on community transport initiatives would be helpful
6. Helping address loneliness and befriending, potentially through supporting volunteering
7. Helping the community in partnership between organisations and MTC
8. Inclusivity was highlighted as a central concern and some issues could be resolved through providing hard copies of event calendars and ensuring events are free to attend

Actions and follow up

1. Display poster in Maesteg Library detailing what MTC currently does
2. Get in touch with BAVO

RESOLVED: Members wished to await the conclusion of the business action plan before committing to any recommendations.

163. 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/24/340/FUL

Applicant: Mr J Pearce

Location: 18 Upper Street, Maesteg, CF34 9DU

Proposal: Ground Floor and first floor extensions to rear of property

Ask for: Julie Earp

Ref: P/24/216/FUL

Applicant: Ms H Lewis

Location: Land at rear of 13 Salisbury Road Maesteg CF34 9EG

Proposal: Retention of dwelling as built

Ask for: Dion Douglas

Ref: P/24/364/OUT

Applicant: Mr K Shakespeare

Location: Land adjacent to Penlan Bungalow Picton Place Nantyffyllon Maesteg CF34 0HS

Proposal: Outline planning for 1no. detached dwelling
Ask for: Lee Evans

Members wished to **issue a comment on the below** application and would request that 2 retail units be considered.

Ref: P/24/323/FUL
Applicant: Walters Environmental Limited
Location: 145 Commercial Street, Maesteg, CF34 9DW
Proposal: Redevelopment of the site comprising 1 retail unit and 1 bedroom flat on the ground floor and 2 flats above
Ask for: Steven Jenkins

164. 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’

166. RESOLVED: THAT THE COUNCIL COME OUT OF COMMITTEE

**Minutes emailed to all Councillors to Read on 9th August 2024
Read and accepted at a remote meeting of the Council held on 3rd September 2024**

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Mayor