**C Y N G O R T R E F C A E R F F I L I**

C A E R P H I L L Y T O W N C O U N C I L

**CLERC Y TREF: MAER Y TREF:**

**TOWN CLERK: TOWN MAYOR:**

**P G Davy Cllr M Prew**

13th October 2025

An **Ordinary Meeting** of the **Caerphilly Town Council** will be held on **Monday 20 October 2025** at 6.30 pm **by Multi Location**

Any Member requiring further information on any item should contact me before the Meeting.

Phil Davy

Town Clerk

Prior to the start of the meeting there will be a presentation from Llamau

**A G E N D A**

1. To note Members’ attendance and to receive any apologies for absence.

2. Declarations of Interest in any item.

3. To receive and if thought fit to confirm the Minutes of the Ordinary Council Meeting

held on 15th September 2025. . .

4. Matters arising from the Minutes if not covered by the Agenda.

5. **COMMUNITY SAFETY MATTERS**

6. **TOWN MAYOR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

7. **ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS**

**Address: The Twyn Community Centre The Twyn Caerphilly CF83 IJL**

**Telephone: Caerphilly 07950 935822**

 **E-mail: caerphillytowncouncil@outlook.com**

 **Office hours: By Appointment Monday to Friday**

8. **TOWN CLERK’S REPORTS**

 8.1 Q2 - Budget Monitoring 2025-26 Financial Year

 8.2 Flag flying

 8.3 DBCC – Draft Annual Remuneration Report 2026-27

 8.4 External Audit Report 2024-25 Financial Year

8.5 Update on actions to support the role, governance and accountability of the Community & Town Council Sector

 9. **PLANNING MATTERS**

10. **PAYMENTS AND FINANCIAL MATTERS**

 10.1 List of Payments

 10.2 Bank Account Balances

 10.3 Applications for Financial Assistance

11. **CORRESPONDENCE**

12. **MEMBERS REQUESTS FOR FUTURE REPORTS**

The meeting will be held in accordance with Section 47 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021 by multi location.

Any member of the public or media wishing to attend this meeting by remote access should contact the Town Clerk at:

caerphillytowncouncil@outlook.com

All documentation about and relating to this and any other Town Council meeting undertaken by hybrid format or fully by remote access will be made available on the Town Council website:

[www.caerphillytowncouncil.co.uk](http://www.caerphillytowncouncil.co.uk)

**C Y N G O R T R E F C A E R F F I L I**

**C A E R F F I L I T O W N C O U N C I L**

**CLERC Y TREF: MAER Y TREF:**

**TOWN CLERK: TOWN MAYOR:**

**P G Davy Cllr M Prew**

**MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY MEETING OF THE CAERPHILLY TOWN COUNCIL HELD BY MULTI LOCATION ON 15TH SEPTEMBER 2025**

**Present:**

Councillors M Downes, C Elsbury, J Fussell, J Grenfell, S Kent, C Lewis, A Broughton Pettit, J Pettit, D Roberts

**Apologies:**

Councillors M Prew, P Reed, P J Bevan

**In Attendance:**

L Gibbs, E Morgan, Gwent Police

P G Davy, Town Clerk

In the absence of the Mayor the meeting was chaired by the Deputy Mayor, Councillor D Roberts.

44 **MINUTES OF THE ORDINARY TOWN COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 21st JULY 2025**

Minutes of the Ordinary Town Council meeting held on 21st July 2025 were received, confirmed, and signed by the Deputy Mayor.

45 **MATTERS ARISING**

Minute 42.2 Twinning Caerphilly Town and Dymer, Ukraine.

The Twinning Association had responded that it would be unable to get involved in another twinning arrangement. It was agreed that the Mayor could sign a friendship letter on behalf of the Town Council and the representatives of Dymer be advised to make direct contact with the Twinning Association and CCBC.

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Minute 42.4

Arising from the decision to relocate Megaday outside the Town Council area and to an indoor location, further information had been requested on the costs of the 2025 event. A breakdown of costs had been provided covering venue hire, sound and lighting, first aid, security and insurance totalling £3450. It was agreed to provide sponsorship of £800 which related to the venue hire. It was further agreed that continuation of funding this event in future years would be dependent on its location.

46 **COMMUNITY SAFETY MATTERS**

A written report had been received from Gwent Police which highlighted:

* Operation Footfall to tackle crime and ASB with focus on the town centre
* ASB referrals for a number of youths causing nuisance at the derelict buildings in Pentrebane Street
* Targeted patrols of Caerphilly Mountain layby, Castle View Lake, Gallagher Retail Park, and Churchill Park
* Reports of ebikes in Morgan Jones Park
* Various community engagement events including use of the gamer van

Members raised:

* Incidents of off road bikes at the Cenotaph and in Cardiff Road
* Request for information on burglaries
* Vehicle misuse of car parks, handbrake turns and fast acceleration
* Enforcement of road closure at Twyn School arrival and leaving times

47 **TOWN MAYOR’S ANNOUNCEMENTS**

In the Mayor’s absence no announcements were reported.

48 **ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS**

Town Centre Audit July 2025

There was no formal consultation process with the Town Council and Members would need to raise any matters directly with the CCBC Town Centre Management Team. It was noted that bollards would be installed to prevent vehicles parking on the pavement outside the Library, but Members were disappointed that other areas where parking on the pavement was a persistent problem had not been included in the audit.

Other issues:

* + Commercial bins being left on the pavement
	+ Late night noise complaint from residents about Rositas
	+ Any project proposals submitted to Town Clerk for use of CIL money would be referred to the CIL Working Group

49 **TOWN CLERK’S REPORTS**

1 Local Government Pay Award 2025/26

The National Joint Council for Local Government (NJC) has reached agreement on rates

of pay applicable from 1 April 2025 covering the period 1 April 2025 to 31 March 2026. The new pay rates are based on an increase of 3.2% on each spinal column point (SCP). Provision had been made in the budget for a 3% increase equating to £706.70 (pro rata). The pay agreement will therefore require an additional £47.15 virement to salaries to meet the full costs in 2025/26.

It was resolved:

To implement the local government pay agreement effective from 1 April 2025 as agreed by the NJC (back pay to be paid in October 2025) and including the virement of the necessary additional monies to the salaries budget.

The Town Clerk declared an interest and offered no advice on the matter.

2 Caerphilly Town Centre Summer Floral Displays

The report outlined the circumstances leading to the early removal of the majority of the pedestrian rail planters due to highway / pedestrian safety concerns raised by CCBC Highways. In addition 4 hanging baskets had been lost due to the removal of corroded lamp posts and 5 baskets had been removed at the former Caerphilly Visitor Centre (Rositas). Options were outlined for the future of the floral displays.

It was resolved:

1 To confirm the action taken by the Town Clerk to instruct the removal of 44 pedestrian rail planters as requested by CCBC Highways.

2 To continue the floral displays scheme based on option 1 in the report subject to consideration of alternative locations for some or all of the displaced rail planters. Once the revised schedule of displays is finalised the Town Council’s contractor be invited to provide a cost for the summer of 2026.

50 **PLANNING MATTERS**

A list of all planning applications received since the last Town Council in July 2025 was included on the agenda as confirmation of consultation by the Local Planning Authority. The applications are circulated as soon as received from CCBC on an individual basis and it is for Members to identify any matters they wish to raise before the expiry of the 21 day consultation period.

Councillor J Fussell declared an interest as a member of the CCBC Planning Committee.

51 **PAYMENTS AND FINANCIAL MATTERS**

1 List of payments were noted and approved.

2 Bank account balances were noted.

3 Applications for financial assistance

 Climate Action Caerffili

A grant of £240 was awarded. Expenditure authorised under the Local Government Act 1972 section 137.

52 **CORRESPONDENCE**

There were no items of correspondence.

53 **MEMBER REQUESTS FOR FUTURE REPORTS**

Cadw had been invited to attend the meeting but were unable to provide a representative. Cadw had extended an invitation for the Town Council to visit the Castle as this would be a better way to explain the work and progress. Date of visit to be notified in due course.

There was a request to include an item on the next agenda on flag flying at the flagpoles on the Cenotaph island.

The meeting closed at 7.40 pm.

**Agenda Item 8.1**

**Report to Town Council 20th October 2025**

**Q2 Budget Monitoring 2025/26 Financial Year**

Comparison of actual expenditure to annual estimates for the period 1st April 2025 to

30th September 2025

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Main Budget Heads** | **Q2 Actual £** | **Annual Estimate £** |
| Mayor’s Allowance | 450.00 | 900.00 |
| Members Allowances | 2288.00 | 2500.00 |
| Training | 0 | 1000.00 |
| Staff Costs | 12779.96 | 25865.00 |
| Travelling Expenses | 0 | 200.00 |
| Audit Fees | 230.00 | 1800.00 |
| Insurance | 1067.44 | 1500.00 |
| Office Costs | 3145.82 | 11450.00 |
| Sponsored Events | 9388.25 | 19000.00 |
| Floodlighting St Martins Church | 0 | 400.00 |
| Fireworks Display | 0 | 20000.00 |
| Fireworks Charity Donation | 0 | 4000.00 |
| Floral Displays | 0 | 17500.00 |
| Christmas Lights | 481.12 | 6000.00 |
| Lantern Parade/Switch on Event | 0 | 15000.00 |
| Financial Assistance  | 1940.00 | 6000.00 |
| Sports Scheme | 5000.00 | 5000.00 |
| Newsletter | 1300.00 | 900.00 |
| Elections | 0 | 0 |
| Miscellaneous | 1005.00 | 1000.00 |
| VAT | 357.43 | Included above |
| CIL Projects | 0 | 0 |
| **TOTAL** | 39433.02 | 140015.00 |

  **£**

Budget 140,015.00

Actual expenditure to 30.09.25 39,433.02

28% of original estimate

Members to note the report

**Agenda Item 8.2**

**Report to Town Council 20 October 2025**

**Flag Flying Update**

At the Town Council meeting in November 2024 the following calendar of flag flying days were agreed:

All year round Cymru flag

1 March St David’s Day

June Pride Flags

28 June Armed Forces Day

16 September Owain Glyndwr

November Remembrance Sunday

December Llewellyn Day

A sum of £1000 was vired from savings in the 2024/25 budget to “Miscellaneous” to enable new flags to be purchased where required. A sum of £444 was spent in July 2024 on replacement flags and following the report in November 2024 a further sum of £588 was spent in January 2025 in relation to the agreed flag flying days.

The 4 flagpoles on the Cenotaph island are owned by CCBC. There is an informal arrangement and Councillor J Grenfell has taken responsibility for flying the flags on the respective days. Due to the weather the condition of the flags deteriorate over time and further replacements may be necessary in due course. Councillor Grenfell will update the meeting on the condition of the flags and a Freedom of Information request.

Phil Davy

Town Clerk

**Agenda Item 8.3**

**Report to Town Council 20 October 2025**

**Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru – Draft Annual Remuneration Report 2026-27**

The DBCC has published the draft report setting the determinations on pay, expenses, and benefits for local authorities, including community and town councils, in 2026-27. The DBCC mandates payments to community and town councils for the extra costs of working from home.

Determination 6/2026

The optional financial loss compensation for CTC members in increased to:

* Up to £67-45 for each period not exceeding 4 hours
* Up to £134-90 for each period exceeding 4 hours but not exceeding 24 hours

All other payments to members of CTCs are unchanged. The mandatory extra costs payment is £156 for all members, and for office consumables £52 or full reimbursement for members. The Town Council has opted to pay £52 consolidated in one payment with the £156. The policy on Town Councillor allowances was approved in March 2025.

Cost of care or personal assistance remains mandatory, but no claims have been made and currently is not budgeted. Payments to the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Attendance Allowance, Financial Loss, Travel and Subsistence are all optional. The Town Council has previously resolved not to pay the optional allowances apart from the Mayor’s Allowance, and any out of county borough travel.

The report is for information.

Phil Davy

Town Clerk

**Agenda Item 8.4**

**Report to Town Council 20 October 2025**

**External Audit Report 2024-25 Financial Year**

The external audit of the Annual Return for the year ending 31 March 2025 has been completed by Audit Wales. Members will recall this was a Full Audit requiring the submission of extensive documentation. The Auditor General for Wales has issued an unqualified audit opinion.

“On the basis of my audit, in my opinion no matters have come to my attention to give cause for concern that, in any material respect, the information reported in this Annual Return:

* has not been prepared in accordance with proper practices;
* that relevant legislative and regulatory requirements have not been met;
* is not consistent with the Council’s governance arrangements; and
* that the Council does not have proper arrangements in place to secure economy, efficiency, and effectiveness in its use of resources.”

However, the council’s attention has been drawn to a number of matters and recommendations made that do not affect the audit opinion which should be addressed by the council.

**Standing Orders**

*“Council’s standing orders are not in accordance with One Voice Wales model standing orders and financial regulations.*

*We recommend that the Council ensure that their standing orders are in line with One Voice Wales model standing orders”*

The Town Council is not a member of One Voice Wales having rejected membership on a number of occasions due to the cost involved. There would therefore be a copyright issue unless the council decides to join the organisation. Practically the documents cannot be accessed without log in credentials to the One Voice Wales website.

Model documents by their nature are generic capturing as widely as possible all situations across all authorities. To be of benefit model documents need to be customised to fit the actual circumstances and working practices of the council.

The Town Council financial regulations were comprehensively revised and updated and adopted in September 2023. The standing orders which deal with procedural matters are very much simplified as there are no committees and all decisions are made by the council.

Town and community councils generally publish standing orders and financial regulations on their websites, so comparative exercises are possible.

**Council did not record the total precept amount within their minutes**

*“The Council did not include the agreed total precept amount within the minutes, only the Band D equivalent.*

*We recommend that the Council include the total precept amount within their minutes”*

The budget estimates for the financial year 2024-25 were approved by the council in November 2023. The estimated precept for year was included in the tables attached to the report. The extract of the relevant minute reads:

“To approve the budget estimates for 2024-25 as set out in the tables attached to the report” (Minute 71.2 CTC 20.11.23)

It seems a somewhat pedantic recommendation when the budget report including total estimated precept is in the public domain as part of the report published on the website.

Note the precept has to be an estimated figure at the time of the budget report in November as the Council Tax Base notification from CCBC for the following financial year is not received until December.

It would be straightforward to highlight the total precept in the minutes approving the budget estimates. But this would be an estimate pending receipt of the Council Tax Base. The alternative and, or, addition would be a report to the January meeting of the council confirming the Council Tax Base and the actual total precept receipt in the next financial year. This would allow a minute to be recorded with the total amount to be received by the council. There can be a variance from the estimate although it is usually minor. For 2024-25 it was £14.76 lower than the estimate of £97500.

**Tax payable on the Mayor’s allowance**

*“The Chair (Mayor) received an allowance for 2024-25 financial year which was greater than £156. As this exceeds the HMRC allowed payment of £156, it is subject to PAYE. No PAYE deductions were made by the Council.*

*We recommend that the Council applies PAYE to members allowances in excess of the HMRC allowable sum of £156.”*

Councillors are not employees, but allowances paid to elected members are taxable as employment income and should be paid through the council’s payroll with tax being collected through the PAYE system. The Mayor would have to be entered into the payroll system and the allowance of £900 paid monthly direct to the Mayor’s bank account. The Mayor would need to provide personal details required for the payroll system.

A possible alternative is for reimbursement of expenses on receipt of a claim form submitted quarterly or half yearly paid directly to the Mayor’s bank account up to a maximum of £900. Eligible items could only be those that meet the criteria of an allowable expense on a tax return. Alternatively the Mayor could seek a dispensation notice from the tax office on the basis that the allowance paid by the council would be fully matched by an expenses reduction with the result no tax liability arises to avoid unnecessary administration where no tax will be due. But this may be difficult to justify with a rounded allowance sum.

An additional person can be added to the payroll without increasing the monthly invoice cost from Sage for the payroll software licence. Additional administration will fall to the Town Clerk. The Mayor will have to decide how he wishes to proceed dependent on his personal circumstances.

**Annual Governance Statement (AGS)**

*“The Council has answered No to question 1 on its AGS.*

*We recommend that the Council make the required changes to be able to answer Yes to this question in the future”*

The question posed in the AGS asks:

“In consultation with the community, we have developed a vision and purpose for the Council and used this vision to inform the Council’s plans, budget and activities”

To evidence this the council has to be able to show it has consulted with the community and focussed its activities to meet the community’s need.

In the Annual Return the following explanation was provided as to the No response.

“The principal council, Caerphilly County Borough Council, is leading and consulting the community on the Caerphilly Town Placemaking Plan. The principal council is also preparing a replacement Local Development Plan which involves community consultation at key stages. The Town Council owns no land or buildings, and delivers no direct services, and there are no proposals to do so. Community consultation is therefore considered to have little purpose at the present time and may well be confusing to the public given the actions of the principal council in taking forward the vision for Caerphilly Town”

The explanation appears to have been ignored. It is notoriously difficult to achieve effective community engagement without committing significant resources. It is only 18 months to next council election. A vision and purpose is best developed at the beginning of a new administration rather than close to the end of an outgoing one.

The council has a precept income of around £97000 per annum, employs 0.7FTE and with no land or buildings has very limited scope as to what can be undertaken in respect of meeting community needs.

General advice issued by Audit Wales is:
“We are unlikely to issue a qualified opinion where a council makes a negative assertion in the Annual Governance Statement. This is because the council makes a correct disclosure. In such circumstances we draw the reader’s attention to the negative response as an “Other Matter””

This is exactly what Audit Wales have done.

Members can note the recommendation but in light of the explanation included within the AGS to reaffirm the view that it would be counter productive to undertake community consultation with so much that is current with CCBC consultation on development proposals and service changes.

A copy of the Certified Annual Return together with the full text of the Auditor General’s report and opinion is separately circulated with the agenda papers.

The Notice of Conclusion of Audit and Right to Inspect has been published on the website and noticeboard together with a copy of the Certified Annual Return and Audit Opinion.

Recommendations

1 The Town Council approves and accepts the Certified Annual Return

2 The Town Council

1. revisits previous decisions and becomes a member of One voice Wales to legitimately access the model standing orders and financial regulations which subject to appropriate customisation could then be adopted; or
2. reviews the current standing orders by reference to those adopted by other town councils and considers any amendments that may be necessary. As the financial regulations were comprehensively revised and adopted by the Town Council in September 2023 no further review is considered necessary at this time.

3 In drafting the minutes relating to the budget report in November each year to highlight the estimated total precept figure, and report on the actual in the following January following receipt of the Council Tax Base from CCBC

4 The Mayor’s annual allowance be paid through the payroll with tax being collected through the PAYE system subject to the Mayor providing all necessary personal information to be entered onto the payroll

5 Note that Audit Wales has drawn attention to the negative assertion to Q1 on the AGS but for the reasons outlined in the report that no further action is taken at this time.

Phil Davy

Town Clerk

**Agenda Item 8.5**

**Report to Town Council 20 October 2025**

**Update on actions to support the role, governance, and accountability of the community and town council sector**

The Cabinet Secretary for Housing and Local Government accepted all 11 recommendations from the Local Government and Housing Committee inquiry into the role, governance and accountability of the community and town council sector.

There will be a phased approach to acting on the recommendations. Priority will be given to addressing standards of behaviour and local resolutions to disputes. It is also expected that mandatory code of conduct training will be introduced, and options are being considered.

In 2026 work will commence to explore a new bespoke audit system for community and town councils. Changes to the audit system are likely to require new legislation. It is not anticipated that this will make much progress ahead of the Senedd elections.

The update made in a written statement from Jayne Bryant, Cabinet Secretary published on 1 October 2025 can be viewed on the Welsh Government website.

The report is for information.

Phil Davy

Town Clerk

**Agenda Item 9**

**Report to Town Council 20 October 2025**

**Planning Matters**

This is a list of all planning applications received since the last Town Council meeting in September 2025. The applications were circulated to members as soon as received from CCBC. They are included on the agenda as confirmation of consultation by the Local Planning Authority. No further discussion is required as in most cases the deadline for response has already passed. (Note exception is the pre application consultation relating to Nantycalch Farm). Where representations have been made on any planning application they are noted.

**25/0590/TPO 9 Redbrook Court, St Martins Road, Caerphilly CF83 1ED**

T1 Oak Pollard at previous topping points approximately 8 metres above ground level and a 3 metre radial spread from main stem

**25/0593/HH 21 Half Acre Court, Caerphilly CF83 3 SU**

Erect railings to front of property

**25/0635/HH 20 Lon Hafren, Watford, Caerphilly CF83 1NR**

Erect single storey wrap around extension to side and rear of existing dwellinghouse

**25/0636/HH 20 Lon Hafren, Watford, Caerphilly CF83 21NR**

Erect two storey extension to side and single storey extension to rear of existing domestic dwellinghouse

**25/0650/FULL Caerphilly Community Centre, Watford Road, Watford, Caerphilly**

Erect a standalone hobby shop to the rear of the existing community centre

**25/0641/HH 49 Heol y Felin, Caerphilly CF83 1AU**

Construct first floor extension over existing rear extension and construct new rear single storey extension with lantern

Pre application consultation

Nantycalch Farm, Warren Drive, Caerphilly CF83 1HS

Proposed demolition of existing farm buildings and redevelopment of the site to deliver 100% affordable housing scheme together with associated access road, landscaping and amenity space.

Councillor A Broughton Pettit has requested that the Town Council object to the proposed development. The closing date for representations is the 23 October 2025

**Agenda Item 10.1**

**Report to Town Council 20th October 2025**

**List of Payments**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Cheque No** | **Payee** | **In Respect of** | **Amount £** |
| Internet | BT | Broadband Service | 45.44 |
| Direct Debit | Sage (UK) Ltd | Payroll Software | 13.20 |
| Internet | CCBC | Summer Sports Scheme | 5000.00 |
| Internet | HMRC | Income Tax & NI | 848.36 |
| Internet | Admin Assistant | Salary September | 392.25 |
| Internet | Town Clerk | Salary September | 871.38 |
| 304278 | M Prew | Q2 Mayor’s Allowance | 225.00 |
| 304279 | Climate Action Caerphilly | Grant | 240.00 |
| Direct Debit | NEST | Pension September | 35.73 |
| Internet | CCBC | Caerphilly Cheese Sponsorship | 1750.00 |
| Internet | Digital Systems UK Ltd | Printing | 58.73 |

It is recommended that Members note and approve the payments.

**Agenda Item 10.2**

**Report to Town Council 20th October 2025**

**Bank Account Balances**

Bank account balances as at 1st October 2025

                                                                 £

Charity and Community Bank Account                         111,762.60

Corporate Instant Deposit (operational reserves)              51,631.61

Corporate Instant Deposit (restricted reserves)                 25,395.86

Members to note the information