



Extra Ordinary Minutes of Full Town Council held on 21 July 2026 at 6:30pm at Caldicot
Town Council in Caldicot Town Council Building, Sandy Lane Np26 4NA

Present: Cllr IR Shillabeer – Mayor
Cllr P Strong – Deputy Mayor
Cllr M Mitchell – Assistant Deputy Mayor
Cllr B Barrett
Cllr J Harris (on zoom)
Cllr RJ Higginson
Cllr C Jones
Cllr A McIntyre
Cllr G McIntyre
Cllr M Peters
Cllr Owen
Cllr Rowberry

Also present: Alice Vaughan Locum Town Clerk

Members of the Public x 6 at CTC and x 7 online

1 Welcome

Confirmation of hybrid participation and reminder about the recording policy.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2 Apologies for Absence

RESOLVED to receive apologies for absence from Cllr Cochrane (joined meeting 6:58pm) Cllr Mayo and Cllr Lewis

3 Declarations of Interest - None

4. Public Question Time and Participation

Resident on zoom asked whether ongoing governance concerns were genuinely new or simply revisiting old, independently audited issues. Sought clarity on specific issues and how the Council would move forward rather than remaining in past problems.

Question asked for accountability for failures (including call for immediate action, SMART action plans

Resident stated that Senior Staff not only accountable but ends with the Council.

Request for open publication of all reviews/actions on the Council website for transparency.

Question on possibly disbanding all committees for total transparency - response: impracticality due to meeting length/complexity.

Issues Relating to the Allotments and Public Facilities

New (now working) taps installed at allotments – allotment holders are happy that all taps are fully functioning.

Background: Audit Wales identified governance failures and made recommendations. Councillor Barrett's complaint (seconded by Councillor Harris) triggered this extraordinary meeting, seeking to address items beyond the scope of audits.

Some items raised are ongoing and not just "historic". Not all failures identified by Audit Wales; certain issues were omitted by external/internal auditors. Council aim: resolve as many as possible by year-end or January 2027. Ongoing internal audit and annual return processes are identifying further failures. Recognition of need for an action plan, regular reviews. Repeated concern over insufficient follow-through on audit recommendations.

Councillors will keep raising issues until properly addressed. A written plan and improved transparency desired by councillors and public alike.

5.Concerns over the Governance of Caldicot Council

Members consider complaints submitted by Councillor Barrett and Councillor James Harris

Complaint 1 - Failure to comply with Standing Order 4 d vi and vii

Council notes the concern, confirms that the matter has been reviewed and approved at FTC (P&R) meeting 14.07.26 agenda item 14.

Complaint 2 – Failure to comply with Standing Order 5 b

Council said the dates were long established, but this can easily be resolved at the next Annual meeting. Standing orders to be followed.

Complaint 3 – Failure to comply with Standing Order 9b

Councils acknowledge the concerns - resolution only within agenda items and no options from public sessions.

Complaint 4 – Failure to comply with Standing Order 12 f

Council acknowledges the concerns raised and puts it down to staffing issues, Personnel committee will investigate the missing meeting of 13 May 2026. Going forward all draft minutes will be published within the required timeframe.

Complaint 5 – Failure to comply with Standing Order 13 b

Council have implemented a group Code of Conduct training – date to be confirmed. Training plan was approved at FTC P & R 14 July 20206.

Complaint 6 - Failure to comply with Standing Order 24 a

This has since been resolved and County Councillors are being invited to all FTC meetings and attendance will be noted on Minutes

Complaint 7 – Failure to comply with Financial Regulations 4.3 and 4.7

Council agreed that they can't change what happened in the past, but going forward there will be FTC Finance meeting just for Budget/Precept.

Complaint 8 – Failure to comply with Financial Regulations 6.10 & 7.8

Clerk confirmed that it is normal practice to have schedule of payments on each meeting for approval or retrospective approval. Going forward from September will be on each agenda/ minutes.

Complaint 9 – Failure to comply with statutory financial requirements

Confirmed that budgets are not currently on website, annual return 24-25 and 25-26 are now on website. Going forward all statutory requirements will be published.

Verification of when and how budgets are approved lacking; strong agreement new process must be watertight for 26/27 and evidenced in minutes and website.

Complaint 10 – Unauthorised spending and breach of the terms of reference

Confirmed that terms of reference have not been approved from AM, draft will be on next meeting. Cllr Mitchell confirmed that the previous Clerk had under financial regulations 6.9 ii delegated authority to recruit locum RFO – under £2000

Complaint 11 - breach of the terms of reference (finance committee)

No finance committee meetings has taken place since 17 December 2024, Finance committee has been disbanded and is currently within Full Town Council meetings.

Complaint 12 – Special responsibility payment concerns.

Payments to members are currently being looked into for 25/26 – will be on FTC in September.

Complaint 13 – Absent declarations of interests

This has been looked into by the Ombudsman and there is no further action to be taken.

Complaint 14 – Failure to maintain an accurate and current register of members interests

Council recognises that an up-to-date declaration of interest has not been published on the website. Work is currently in progress to rectify.

Complaint 15 – inaccuracies and lack of information in the training plan.

Training plan was approved at the FTC (P& R) 14 July 2026. Training log will be updated with all Councillors/ staff training records.

Complaint 16 – Inability to respond appropriately to Freedom of Information requests

Council noted that they were one day late in replying to one FOI request due to staffing issues. Cllr Barrett noted that his second FOI has not been responded to. Council to respond to his request. Confirmed that we currently do not have any others outstanding.

Complaint 17 – Outdated policies and procedures

Currently policies are being reviewed and will be on future meetings for approval. All policies need to be reviewed annually at the AM each year. Website outdated, clunky, and missing required documentation (registers, minutes, budgets, policies). Council agree that it is more important to get the website updated - once updated Council can look at the appearance of website.

Complaint 18 – No evidence of legionella risk assessment or testing

Legionella company appointed at last FTC (P& R) to carry out risk assessment.

Complaint 19 – Absence of a dog policy or risk assessment

Dog policy on FTC on the 29.07.26 to approve – risk assessment to follow.

Complaint 20 – Absence of proper of proper contracts

On last FTC (P& R) agenda item 19 – 2 contracts were extended temporally until tender process will take place. Full list of all contractors and SLA need to be produced for future meetings.

Complaint 21 – Reduced accessibility for older and disabled allotment holders

Health and Safety committee to go to allotments and identify risks and make assessments. Taps now have been resolved.

Complaint 22 – Unfair and improper terms within the allotment tenancy agreement.

Tenancy agreement viewed as outdated, Clause on “disablement” flagged as potentially discriminatory; agreement to review language and overall terms (currently 64)—allotment working group tasked to review

Complaint 23 – Lack of evidence of inspection of the King George V Field play park

The Playpark is being inspected weekly by a competent person and logged. Monthly and annual inspections by ROSPA are also being completed.

Tree inspection needs to be followed up - need to improve records and transparency, especially for insurance/legal protection

Complaint 24 – King George V Playing field trustee governance failures

Last Trustees' meetings in Dec 2025. Needs to be done annually.

Access: Vehicular access gates remain locked following prior unauthorised encampment; plan to install a secure bollard will be on future meeting. Public pedestrian access acknowledged as difficult, especially for disabled users.

Noted need improvements for front wall and entrance Committee agreed to maintain heritage features -crests.

Complaint 25 – Failure to prepare and publish annual reports

Council recognise that no annual reports have been done for past few years - 2025/2026 a shorter report will be compiled and 2026/2027 will be published as per obligations.

Complaint 26 – Failure to follow the finance and governance toolkit

Going forward this will be followed.

Complaint 27 – Failure to adequately address internal audit findings

Council to make sure going forward all audit findings are addressed and actions.

Complaint 28 – Cancellation of a council meeting without identified legal authority

Mayor Shillabeer confirmed that he took the decision to cancel the meeting on the June 2026, due to staff shortages and a member of staff was in distress – the wellbeing of the staff member was his priority. He apologises for cancelling the meeting. Mayor Shillaber was asked would he do the same again – and he confirmed yes. Councillors confirmed that they didn't need a member of staff to do the meeting and that a councillor could have minuted it.

Complaint 29 – Appointment of Locum Clerk without evidenced authority approval or financial disclosure.

Councillors asked if personnel Committee could be moved into FTC for transparency and that all members have all details etc as staff work for 'The Council'

Details to be given to Councillors in exempt / confidential part of meetings.

Clerk added that also Council need to do a Section 6 report Biodiversity report – due December 2025.

6.Planning the Way Forward

Members discussed a plan for moving the council forward, including priorities, required checklists etc

Strong call from Cllr Barrett and others for a written, prioritised plan to address all ongoing and statutory deficiencies, combining all known remedial actions (audit, internal reviews, policy updates, FOI processes, inclusion, physical improvements)

Utilising Specialist Support: More proactive reference to One Voice Wales or similar bodies for templates/ support.

Recognition that current office cover is overstretched; practical steps to pause or adjust committee work considered (balanced against governance and capacity).

Governance Toolkit: Intent to adhere more strictly; both for audit purposes and good practice.

To be noted - VAT Update

It was noted that, during investigations into the outstanding VAT reclaim, it had been identified that the HMRC VAT account remains registered in the name of a former Clerk, who is now Councillor Gail McIntyre.

Councillor McIntyre requested that the minutes record that she has no involvement in the administration or operation of the Council's VAT account and that the account remaining in her name is an historical administrative matter.

The Clerk advised that arrangements will be made to contact HMRC to update the VAT registration details and remove the former Clerk's name from the account. Once the registration details have been amended, the Council will proceed with submitting the outstanding VAT reclaim.

Meeting ended at 9:00 pm

Signed **Date**

Mayor/Chair

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