

CALDICOT TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of Extra Ordinary Full Town Council Meeting held at 18:30 p.m. on Tuesday, 14th January 2025 at the Caldicot Town Council Building, Sandy Lane, Caldicot NP26 4NA

Present: Cllr M Mitchell – (Chair)
Cllr F Rowberry – (Deputy Chair)
Cllr W Conniff
Cllr A Easson
Cllr RJ Higginson (arrived at 18:52 p.m.)
Cllr A Mayo
Cllr G Owen
Cllr IR Shillabeer
Cllr P Strong

Also present: M Tredwin – Town Clerk
L Wallington – Administrator
Member of the Public x1

171/2024-25 Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

172/2024-25 Apologies for Absence

RESOLVED to receive apologies of absence from Cllr J Bond, Cllr R Grumbach, Cllr R Wilsher, Cllr J Woodfield.

173/2024-25 Declarations of Interest

Cllr A Easson declared a personal non-prejudicial interest relating to Item 6) Planning, as a member of the Monmouthshire County Council Planning Committee.

Cllr A Mayo declared a personal prejudicial interest relating to Item 6) Planning, as an individual residing in close proximity to one of the planning applications.

174/2024-25 Public Question Time and Participation

There were no questions received from members of the public.

175/2024-25 Minutes

RESOLVED to approve the following minutes / notes and the recommendations contained therein:

- i) Minutes of Full Town Council Meeting held on 27th November 2024
Proposed by Cllr IR Shillabeer, seconded by Cllr G Owen.
- ii) Minutes of Planning and Resources Committee Meeting held on 10th December 2024
Members approved the minutes as the meeting was an Extra Ordinary Full Town Council meeting incorporating Planning and Resources.
Proposed by Cllr W Conniff, seconded by Cllr G Owen.
- iii) Minutes of Extra Ordinary Full Town Council Meeting held on 17th December 2024
Proposed by Cllr IR Shillabeer, seconded by Cllr G Owen.

RESOLVED to note the following minutes / notes and the recommendations contained therein, subject to the following amendments:

iv) Minutes of Finance Committee Meeting held on 18th December 2024

Amendment: To amend *"Members were informed that although Monmouthshire County Council manages Birbeck Park..."* to include *"Members were informed that Monmouthshire County Council do not manage Birbeck Park. Members acknowledged the park is held on a peppercorn lease from MCC and MCC perform safety checks as with other parks in the locality."*

176/2024-25 Planning

i) Planning Applications for Consideration:

- **DM/2024/01502:** Single storey rear extension and roof conversion to form new room. 91 Newport Road, Caldicot, NP26 4BS

Members **RESOLVED** to **recommend** support to approve the application **DM/2024/01502**.

Proposed by Cllr M Mitchell, seconded by Cllr F Rowberry.

- **DM/2024/01199:** Change of use from funeral directors at ground floor and first floor flat to a 6 bedroom, 6 person house in multiple occupation (C4 Use). 90 Newport Road, Caldicot

Cllr A Mayo declared a personal prejudicial interest and remained in the meeting to provide information to Members. Cllr A Mayo did not participate in the vote.

Members considered the concerns regarding rear access and parking. Members were informed that there would be no rear access for residents of 90 Newport Road if the neighbouring property is parked on their land.

Members expressed concerns regarding the maintenance of the drainage systems and overload on the existing sewage system.

Members were informed that Monmouthshire County Council Planning Committee scheduled a site visit on 13th January 2025, informing that Caldicot Town Councillors should be present at 11:40am. Five Caldicot Town Councillors arrived at the site location at 11:30am and the site visit had almost concluded. Members were informed from those Members who attended the site visit that their opinions were not considered and left at the end of the site visit feeling they had been treated unprofessionally.

Members were informed that the office did not receive the consultee letter until 13th December 2024.

Members also considered the number of allocated parking spaces for the number of bedrooms within the property and expressed concern that it does not meet the requirements.

Members **RESOLVED** to **recommend** support of the **refusal** of application **DM/2024/01199**, and to write to Monmouthshire County Council asking for the application to be deferred to the next MCC Planning Committee meeting, stating the concerns outlined herein.

Proposed by Cllr G Owen, seconded by Cllr F Rowberry.

- **DM/2024/01505:** Single storey extension to the front of semi detached house for shower room including WHB and WC. 8 Ash Grove, Caldicot, NP26 4NG

Members **RESOLVED** to recommend support of the **approval** of application **DM/2024/01505**.

Proposed by Cllr F Rowberry, seconded by Cllr G Owen.

- **DM/2025/00010:** Proposed rear extension and re-build garage. 90 Chepstow Road, Caldicot, NP26 4HZ

Members **RESOLVED** to recommend support of the **approval** of application **DM/2025/00010**.

Proposed by Cllr F Rowberry, seconded by Cllr G Owen.

ii) **MCC Approved Planning Applications:**

Members **RESOLVED** to note the following approved planning applications:

- **DM/2024/01180:** Single Storey Side extension. 4 Oakley Close, Caldicot, NP26 4DZ
- **DM/2024/01279:** Construction of side facing dormer. 119 Castle Lea, Caldicot, NP26 4PL

177/2024-25 To Approve the Budget

Members were informed that projects are not decided or finalised, the inclusion of projects is only for allocation of monies to organise projects. Members acknowledged that provisions for projects need to be created to enable Caldicot Town Council to improve and enhance Caldicot over time.

Members considered the recommendation of Budget Proposal Option Four following the Finance Committee Meeting held on 18th December 2024. Members were informed that Budget Proposal Option Four is as follows:

- Precept: £491,830
- Overall Precept Increase: £39,940
- Percentage Overall Increase: 8.84%
- Residents Increase: 8.76%
- Monthly Increase: £0.79
- Weekly Increase: £0.18

Members **RESOLVED** to approve a Precept of £491,830.00 for the Financial Year 2025-2026. Proposed by Cllr W Conniff, seconded by Cllr G Owen. Eight Members voted for, one abstained.

Members considered the recommendations of the new Charging Policy for 2025-2026, following the Finance Committee Meeting held on 18th December 2024. Members were informed that the recommendations are as follows:

- **Town Council Building**
 - To allow free room hire to volunteer and charity groups.
 - To charge room hire to community groups that receive financial assistance.
 - To allow at the discretion of the Officers if room hire is charged per hour or per set booking.
 - To charge £15.00 for community groups and £30.00 for business organisations.
- **Dewstow Cemetery**
 - To increase Opening New Double Grave by £100.00, Opening New Triple Grave by £200.00, and to increase all charges by 10.00%.

- Sandy Lane, Oakley Way and KGVPF Allotments
 - o To increase all charges by 10.00% for 2026-27.

Members **RESOLVED** to approve the Charging Policy for the Financial Year 2025-2026.
Proposed by Cllr W Conniff, seconded by Cllr A Easson.

Members thanked Officers for their work.

178/2024-25 Date of Next Meeting

Members **RESOLVED** to note the date of the next meeting of Full Town Council is scheduled to be held on 29th January 2025.

Members **RESOLVED** to note the date of the next meeting of Planning and Resources Committee is scheduled to be held on 11th February 2025.

Members **RESOLVED** to note the date of the next meeting of Finance Committee is scheduled to be held on 19th February 2025.

Meeting ended at 19:45 p.m.

Signed Date

Town Mayor

CALDICOT TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of Allotments Working Group held at 10:00 a.m. on Friday 10th January at the Caldicot Town Council Building, Sandy Lane, Caldicot NP26 4NA

Present: Cllr F Rowberry – (Chair)
Cllr M Mitchell – (Deputy Chair)
Cllr W Conniff
Cllr J Woodfield

Also present: L Wallington – Administrator
J Spencer - Sandy Lane Allotment Representative

A20/2024-25 Welcome

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

A21/2024-25 Apologies for Absence

RESOLVED to receive apologies of absence from Cllr J Bond.

A22/2024-25 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest received.

A23/2024-25 Public Question Time and Participation

There were no members of the public in attendance.

A24/2024-25 Minutes

RESOLVED to approve the following minutes / notes and the recommendations contained therein:

- i) Minutes of Allotments Working Group Meeting held on Friday 13th September 2024

RESOLVED to note the following minutes were not submitted:

- ii) Minutes of adjourned Allotments Working Group Meeting held on Friday 11th October 2024

A25/2024-25 Allotment Update

Members were informed regarding the recent allotment inspection conducted on Monday 6th January 2025.

- i) KGVPF Allotments
There were no representatives from KGVPF Allotments in attendance.
- ii) Oakley Way Allotments
There were no representatives from Oakley Way Allotments in attendance.
- iii) Sandy Lane Allotments
 - Members acknowledged the concern raised regarding the area next to the entrance gates. Members were informed that an assortment of items are being discarded causing the area to become unsightly. Members were notified that an inspection was carried, and the discarded items were identified as belonging to members of the public as well as allotment holders. Members noted that the discarding of items may be due to the unrestricted access of the allotment site. Members were informed that the area will not be rented out as an allotment plot due to the ground being unviable. Members noted that the Office is awaiting a quotation for the clearance and levelling of the area.

Members requested that Sandy Lane allotment plot holders monitor the area once cleared for any discarded items and remain vigilant as to who may have discarded the items.

Members **RESOLVED** to request to Full Town Council that a letter is to be sent out to Sandy Lane allotment plot holders, referencing the Allotment Tenancy Agreement in relation to the disposal of waste.

Proposed by Cllr F Rowberry, seconded by Cllr M Mitchell.

Members **RESOLVED** to request to Full Town Council that the area is cleared and levelled.

Proposed by Cllr F Rowberry, seconded by Cllr M Mitchell.

- Members acknowledged the concern raised regarding the padlock. Members were informed that a key interest form was completed by each allotment holder and a unanimous decision was not reached, therefore a padlock would not be implemented. Members acknowledged that the majority of the allotment holders would like a padlock. Members were advised that a padlock cannot be placed without consent from allotment plot holders as this would deny access to allotment plot holders, and to do so would be unlawful by reason of the contract in place between the Town Council and allotment plot holder.

Members **RESOLVED** to request to Full Town Council to contact those individuals that did not wish to have a padlock implemented and enquire as to the reasoning. Members **RESOLVED** to request to Full Town Council to give delegated powers to Officers to supply keys, at the Officer's discretion, to those individuals that refused the implementation of a padlock.

Proposed by Cllr M Mitchell, seconded by Cllr J Woodfield.

- Members acknowledged the concern raised regarding unkept allotment plots. Members were informed of the outcome of the recent inspection and that certain plots are awaiting clearance. Members were notified that the inspectors took the weather conditions, time of year and dormancy status into consideration when performing the inspections.

Members **RESOLVED** to request to Full Town Council to contact the allotment representative in advance of inspections to enable the allotment representative to provide information on specific matters to assess.

Proposed by Cllr M Mitchell, seconded by Cllr F Rowberry.

A26/2024-25 Date of Next Meeting

Members **RESOLVED** to schedule the next meeting of the Allotments Working Group to be held on Friday 2nd May 2025.

Members **RESOLVED** to nominate Cllr F Rowberry as the Sandy Lane Allotment Councillor Representative and Cllr J Woodfield as the Oakley Way Allotment Councillor Representative.

Meeting ended at 10:55 a.m.

Signed Date

Chair

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT TO CALDICOT TOWN COUNCIL

JANUARY 2025

ROAD SAFETY

I was able to present a petition to Full Council regarding residents concerns about the Zebra Crossing at the Cross in Caldicot. I asked for a response to the concerns raised in the petition to be discussed at the next Place Scrutiny Committee. This will be on the agenda for 6th February at 10 am. Already certain changes are being reviewed. Cllr Easson has raised concerns about the lighting in this area and this is being investigated by MCC officers.

MCC COUNCIL MEETINGS

At Full Council on the 12 December 2024 the following were agreed

Monmouthshire County Council to become a Deforestation Free Champion and signed the Deforestation Free Champions Charter.

The Council also adopted the Charter for Families Bereaved through Public Tragedy.

During the meeting Cllr Easson asked a question regarding the footpath closure at the Neddern Brook asking for an update on the closure and asking when the problem regarding its closure would be resolved.

At People scrutiny meeting on 25th November 2024 the meeting discussed the criteria for Blue Badges and its implementation across Monmouthshire.

ON 21st January 2025 the meeting discussed the Review of Homeseach Policy and how it relates to 'Housing Need' in Monmouthshire. A number of amendments have been made to the criteria (for example relating to the Armed Forces Covenant). There are currently 3700 on the housing register and 2,000 in 'Housing Need'.

At the Full Council Meeting held on 23rd Jan 2025 Council agreed The Council Tax Reduction scheme for 205/26. Which allow for reductions in Council Tax for individuals on low incomes, single occupants etc.

MCC BUDGET 2025/26

Consultation on the draft budget began on January 23 and closes at midnight on February 22. Residents are encouraged to give their views. Full details can be found on the home page of the MCC website. The key points are:

Council tax is projected to increase by 7.8%. This is necessitated mainly by increased demand for adult social care and for looking after vulnerable children. There will be a 10.7% increase in spending on education and 10.6% in social care. There will also be an extra £2 million for highway improvements.

20 MPH SPEED LIMITS

Sevenside councillors have been invited to a meeting with Officers to discuss possible changes to 20 MPH limits. No changes are being proposed in Caldicot.

AGE FRIENDLY COMMUNITY

In my role as Older person's champion I met with Catherine Fookes MP and Rhian Bowen-Davies (The older person's commissioner for Wales).

We discussed issues affecting older people in Monmouthshire including waiting times for assessments for social care , access to health services. The commissioner and her team are keen to work with MCC to become an Age Friendly County and I look forward to working with MCC and Officers from her team to achieve this status for Monmouthshire.

I have also been successful in getting a pedestrian gate installed in the Country Park to allow access from the Greenway to the B4245.

Jackie Strong 27.1.2025

Monmouthshire County Councillor

Cross Ward



PLISMONA CYMDOGAETH – Y NEWYDDION DIWEDDARAF NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING UPDATE

Monmouthshire South Monthly Update

December 2024



WARD NAME

Caldicot

Crime in Caldicot in Nov/Dec 2024

† Crime Category	# of Crimes	%
Total	62	100%
Violence Without Injury	19	31%
Criminal Damage & Arson	8	13%
Public Order Offences	8	13%
Violence With Injury	8	13%
All Other Theft	6	10%
Drug Offences	2	3%
Misc Crimes Against Society	2	3%
Other Sexual Offences	2	3%
Residential Burglary	2	3%
Shoplifting	2	3%
Possession Of Weapons	1	2%
Robbery	1	2%

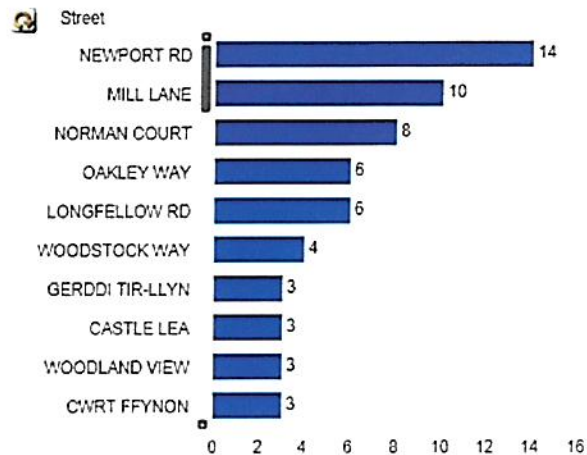
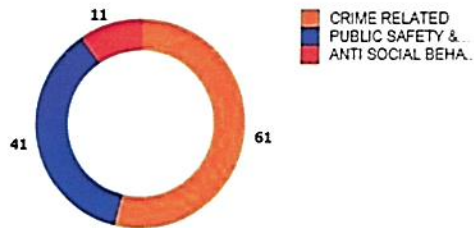
Top Crime Categories

For November/December 24 Caldicot, as you can see Violence with injury is top of the list accounting for a third of the crime in the area.



PLISMONA CYMDOGAETH – Y NEWYDDION DIWEDDARAF NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING UPDATE

Incidents by Category



As you can see from the above chart to show the incidents that we deal with throughout the month.

We have been dealing with a lot of vehicles with no insurance and no tax over the few months, we have also run speeding operations throughout the area and educating road users about the speed in the area. On the 22/11/24 speed Operation took place on Newport Road with South Wales Fire Service over a 3-hour period only 8 people stopped for doing speeds between 26-30mph, this is a significant drop from previous operations.

On 13/12/24 we conducted a joint operation with trading standards, the operation was focus on selling vapes to youths and shoplifting. The NPT used 7 cadets who tried to purchase vapes from various shops in Caldicot. We also used the cadets to shoplift, with consent, from Asda and Aldi on the town centre. In the Space of 40 minutes, they stole over £1000's worth of goods from both stores. The focus of this evening was to highlight a few weaknesses in the stores and allows us to work together to make the stores harder to steal from.



PLISMONA CYMDOGAETH – Y NEWYDDION DIWEDDARAF NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING UPDATE



From All of us in Caldicot NPT have a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Surgeries

20th January 2025 – Asda

Report completed by Michael Martin CO164

Monmouthshire South Neighbourhood POLICING TEAM

Social media



@gwent.pnn.police.uk

Committee: FULL COUNCIL

Date: 29 January 2025

Title: Internal Auditors Report

Purpose of Report

Members to receive the Internal Auditors Report and to note the Chief Executive Officer's responses.

Recommendation:

Members are asked to formally note the Internal Auditor's interim audit report and resolve to approve the CEO's responses for 2024-2025.

Background:

1. The Internal Audit is an important part of the council's governance and managerial framework and, as such, it is important that the Town Clerk takes responsibility for any observations and recommendations arising from the internal auditor's visits.
2. It was Resolved at the 8 October Extra Ordinary Meeting of the Full Council that IAC would be appointed as the Town Councils Auditor.

***RESOLVED** to appoint IAC Audit & Consultancy Ltd on a three-year contract, subject to a positive review after twelve months. Proposed by Cllr A Easson and seconded by Cllr J Woodfield*

3. In his proposal to the council Mr Rose estimated that he would need two days per year to carry out his audit, which would include a visit after year end to conclude the arrangements in respect of the year end. He visited the offices on the 16 December 2024, where he completed his mid-year checks.
4. The internal auditor's remit is to establish there is proper book-keeping, risk management arrangements, bank reconciliation and year end procedures, and controls are in place for payments, budgets, income, petty cash and assets as well as checks on governance.

Report:

5. As a result of the mid-year visit to the Council on the 16 December 2024, Mr Rose has provided a covering letter detailing the total number of tests that were carried out and the outcome of these tests. This has been attached to this report (**Appendix 9A**).

6. The outcome of his visit can be summarised as follows;
 - i. Positive response 44
 - ii. Negative response 13
 - iii. Not applicable 12
 - iv. **Total tests** 69
7. Members can see the areas that have been tested and the outcomes for each area within a more detailed report from this Mr Rose. In this he has made a total of 18 observations (**Appendix 9B**)
8. In the "Interim Internal Audit Observations" report provide by Mr Rose (**Appendix 9C**), the observations were categorised as following;
 - i. 10 - medium priority
 - ii. 6 – High priority
 - iii. 1 – Non - Compliance
9. Clearly a "Non-Compliance" observation is a serious matter that should not be allowed to happen again. The issue lay with the fact that in the Annual Governance Return that was agreed by Town Council and sent to the External Auditors the council had not been made aware that the Charity Commission Accounts had not been submitted.
10. This meant that when all the councillors agreed the Annual Return, Box 9 "Trust Funds" was ticked as being factual when in fact it was not True. The council had agreed that it "Has met all of its responsibilities where it is a sole managing trustee of a local trust or trusts."
11. As a result of these observations, responses have been provided indicating the actions that need to be taken or have already been taken to rectify these areas.

Proposed Resolution

12. Members are asked to formally note the Internal Auditor's interim audit report and resolve to approve the CEO's responses for 2024-2025.

Mark Tredwin
Town clerk
January 2025



Mark Tredwin
Town Clerk
Caldicot Town Council
Council Office,
Sandy Lane,
Caldicot,
NP26 4NA

30th December 2024

Dear Mark,

Interim Audit Cover Letter

An audit was carried out by Kevin Rose on Monday 16 December 2024. This was the interim internal audit, part of the annual internal audit coverage of the Council. Prior to the audit a 'Pre-Audit' was carried out remotely which tested items which are required to be published on the Councils website.

The audit was undertaken using the standard IAC Audit Checklist, that we use for all Local Councils, which has 180 items. A total of 69 items were tested during this audit, including items that were examined and tested as part of the pre-audit process. The balance of 111 items will be checked during the Year End audit.

The following 'Internal Control Objectives' of the Annual Internal Audit Report (part of the AGAR) were checked and confirmed as being Not Applicable to your Council for this financial year.

-Petty cash (Box 6)

Areas subject to audit were;

Of the 57 applicable items tested a Positive response was obtained in respect of 44 tests. There were 13 Negative responses identified and 18 Observations were made, details of which are set out in the attached Interim Internal Audit Observations.

Summary of tests undertaken during this audit

Positive response	44
Negative response	13
Not Applicable to your Council	12
Total tests carried out	<u>69</u>

Unfortunately there was 1 Non-Compliance identified during the audit and the Council should consider this in detail as it will result in a Negative response on the Annual Internal Audit Report. The non-compliance identified relates to the failure to submit the required Return to the Charities Commission.

One matter that I would particularly like to draw to the Council's attention is the review of Risk. It is a requirement of the Annual Governance Statement and Annual Internal Audit report to confirm that a review of Risk has been carried out during the financial year. As at the date of the Interim audit this has not yet been done. The Council must ensure that such a review is conducted and formally recorded in the Minutes prior to the end of the financial year.

I would like to express my thanks for the assistance and hospitality provided to me during my audit.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Rose'.

Kevin Rose ACMA
Director

Interim audit summary Caldicot Town Council

(shaded Internal Control Objectives are not applicable to your Council)



Interim Audit Date 16/12/2024

Internal Control Objective	N/A	Tested	Positive	Negative	Observations	Non Compliance
Box 1 Appropriate books of account have been properly kept throughout the year.		5	4	1	2	
Box 2 Financial regulations have been met, payments were supported by invoices, expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.	1	25	17	8	10	
Box 3 The body assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.		3	2	1	1	
Box 4 The annual precept/levy/resource demand requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process, progress against the budget was regularly monitored, and reserves were appropriate.	2	7	7	0	1	
Box 5 Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked, and VAT was appropriately accounted for		9	9	0	1	
Box 6 Petty cash payments were properly supported by receipts, expenditure was approved and VAT appropriately accounted for.	9	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Box 7 Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with minuted approvals, and PAYE and NI requirements were properly applied.		0	0	0	0	
Box 8 Asset and investment registers were complete, accurate, and properly maintained.		0	0	0	0	
Box 9 Periodic and year-end bank account reconciliations were properly carried out.		4	3	1	1	
Box 10 Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis (receipts and payments/income and expenditure), agreed with the cashbook, were supported by an adequate audit trail from underlying records, and where appropriate, debtors and creditors were properly recorded.		1	1	0	0	
Box 11 Trust funds (including charitable trusts). The Council/Board/ Committee has met its responsibilities as a trustee.		3	1	2	2	YES
Totals	12	57	44	13	18	1

Caldicot Town Council Financial Year 2024-25

Interim Internal Audit Observations



IAC Audit and Consultancy Ltd

Audit date: 16/12/2024

1 Appropriate books of account have been properly kept throughout the year.

No.	Audit Test	Response	Observation	Recommendation	Priority	Comments
1	Are accounting entries correct with few correcting entries?	Yes	It was noted that expenditure code 1000/3 Salaries, contains expenditure relating to invoices received for Locum Clerk Services and accommodation costs.	Council to review the non-salary costs posted to nominal code 1000/3 and ensure that only salary costs are posted to this code (this is important as Box 4 costs in the Accounting Statements should only include the salary costs of employed members of staff.	Medium	This was brought to the RFO's attention and had already been addressed in recent months. Additionally the ongoing training that is taking place will help to ensure this does not happen.
2	Accounting system opening balances agree to prior year Annual Return	No	There is a difference of £217 on Box 3 Other income and Debtors between the prior year Annual Return and the brought forward balances - this appears to relate to a Mayors Charity transaction which has now been deleted.	Council to review the accounting system opening balances and agree them to the prior years Accounting Statements	Medium	This has been noted and is in the process of being rectified.

2 Financial regulations have been met, payments were supported by invoices, expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for.

No.	Audit Test	Response	Observation	Recommendation	Priority	Comments
1	Are the regulations the current version of the Model Regulations?	No	The Financial Regulations in use are not the latest version of the NALC Model Financial Regulations.	Council to review and update its Financial Regulations.	Medium	As members are aware this is in hand and will be rectified in the coming meetings and before the next Governance year.
2	Have the Financial Regulations been subject to regular review in accordance with paragraph 1.14 of The Practitioners Guide 2023?	No	It is understood that the Town Clerk is in the process of reviewing the latest OVW Model Financial Regulations prior to their consideration and adoption by the Town Council.	See above	Medium	As members are aware this is in hand and will be rectified in the coming meetings and before the next Governance year.

3	Is Clerk CILCA qualified?	No	The Clerk is not CILCA qualified.	The Council should consider whether the Clerk should be CILCA qualified.	Medium	He is working on this and it is to be completed by the end of March. This may not happen.
4	Has the Council formally Minuted confirmation of bank signatory arrangements?	No	From a review of records it was not possible to verify when the Council reviewed and confirmed the bank signatory arrangements.	Council to formally review and, if appropriate, approve the bank signatory arrangements.	Medium	This will be brought to the Finance meeting in February along with additional measures that are required to ensure that the ability of council to act in accordance with its legal responsibilities is maintained.
5	Do electronic bank payments require two authorisers for ALL Council bank accounts? (are user sign-ons unique?)	No	It is understood that the Coop bank account permits payment on a sole authoriser basis, and that previously payments on other bank accounts had also been permitted on a sole authorised basis.	Council to review and update the signing arrangements on the its bank accounts and ensure that these are in accordance with Financial Regulations (see requirements of Section 6 of Financial Regulations)..	High	This was identified in September and has now been rectified for the main Coop bank. The Unity Bank and what was the Mayors Charity account however need to be set up appropriately.
6	Have payments been approved as required under Council Financial Regulations?	No	Payments have not been approved as required under the Councils Financial Regulations. In particular Financial Regulation 5.2 requires that; "A detailed list of all payments shall be disclosed within or as an attachment to the minutes of the meeting at which payment was authorised." It is also not clear that the Council has complied with Financial Regulation 5.5.	The Council to note the requirements of its Financial Regulations in respect to the approval of payments. The Council to review its compliance with Financial Regulations 5.2 and 5.5.	High	Financial Regs 5.2 and 5.5 relate to the transfer and payment of funds. Payments have been tightened up in recent months along with the frequency that they are routinely brought to Council. Future Financial Regulations will detail how payments will be carried out so that the Council's obligations to pay suppliers within two weeks is met.
7	Is the tender threshold set at £25,000 consistent with the Public Contract Regulations and OVW Model Financial Regulations?	Yes	It was noted that the Councils Standing Order 18 refers to a tender limit of £25,000, however the Councils Financial Regulation 11.1 refers to a limit of £20,000	The Council to review and clarify what the tender threshold is. The Council should ensure that the threshold stated in Financial Regulations and Standing Orders is consistent.	Medium	This will be corrected so that tender limits are £25,000 exc VAT which is the specified amount under the Public Contract Regulations.

8	Have Grants awarded been appropriately considered by Council and approved?	No	<p>It was noted that the Council approved a grant (for grants) to Caldicot Events Committee (Meeting of Grants Committee 20th March 2024) however payments in respect of these approved grants have been made to a private company EVENTS ML Ltd. It is unclear why approved grants have been made to a limited company and how this arrangement was approved.</p>	<p>Council to formally review the grants made and confirm that they were in accordance with Council approvals. In future Council to ensure that all grants awarded are formally approved and that this approval is recorded in Minutes.</p> <p>In particular the Council should consider how the Council should in future approve payments made under grant approvals.</p>	Medium	<p>There have already been discussions around the way in Grants have been made in the past. This has now been dealt with in respect of a new Grants Policy and Procedure that is being applied for any new applications</p> <p>A number of grants in the past have been made in an incorrect manner and where this has taken place we will look to replace the grants with an SLA for services rendered.</p>
9	Are Powers under which grants are made clearly specified in Council Minutes?	No	<p>The Council does not formally record the Powers under which grants are awarded in Minutes.</p>	<p>The Council to ensure that the appropriate Power under which grants are made is recorded in the Minutes of the meeting in which the grants are approved.</p>	Medium	<p>This will be addressed going forwards.</p>
10	Large value payments (over £5,000 / £10,000) can be traced to original supporting document and have been properly authorised.	Yes	<p>It is not clear that VAT has been correctly accounted for on the payments on nominal code 2290 - it was noted that the first payment on 24/04/2024 was against a VAT invoice. Three subsequent payments have been made with no VAT invoice provided.</p> <p>Payment reference (and invoice for April) are Events ML Ltd, a company incorporated in December 2023.</p>	<p>The Council to review the transactions on nominal 2290 and ensure that VAT has been correctly accounted for on these transactions.</p>	High	<p>The RFO is looking into this in order to ensure any owed VAT is claimed back.</p>

3 The body assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these.

No.	Audit Test	Response	Observation	Recommendation	Priority	Comments
1	The Council, as a body, has undertaken a formal review of risk (this cannot be delegated to sub-committee) - Interim Audit	No	As at the date of the Interim Audit the Council had not formally Minuted a review of Risk	The review of Risk is a key requirement of both the Annual Governance Statement and the Annual Internal Audit Report. The Council MUST ensure that it Minutes a formal review of Risk prior to the end of the financial year.	Advisory	This will be brought to either the February or March Full Council meeting

4 The annual precept/levy/resource demand requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process, progress against the budget was regularly monitored, and reserves were appropriate.

No.	Audit Test	Response	Observation	Recommendation	Priority	Comments
1	The Council formally set a budget	Yes	It was noted that the budget was considered at a meeting of the 'Estimates Committee' on 14th Minutes 2023. Minutes of that meeting make repeated reference to 'Town Council'. It appears that, in fact, the 'Estimate Committee' is a meeting of Town Council.	The Council to note that Minutes do not record when the Budget for the year was approved. The Council to ensure that, in future, approval of the budget is formally recorded in the Minutes of the meeting at which it was approved.	High	This has been addressed and carried out correctly.

5 Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked, and VAT was appropriately accounted for

No.	Audit Test	Response	Observation	Recommendation	Priority	Comments
1	Has the Investment Strategy been published on the Councils website?	Yes	The version of the Investment Strategy on the website is dated 2021.	Council to ensure that its Investment Strategy is published on its website in accordance with statutory guidance.	Medium	This is in hand and will be addressed ready for March's Full Council Meeting.

9 Periodic and year-end bank account reconciliations were properly carried out.

No.	Audit Test	Response	Observation	Recommendation	Priority	Comments
1	There are no unexplained balancing entries in any reconciliation (Interim)	No	There are unexplained balancing entries in the bank reconciliation. There are three unexplained items, dated July 2024, on the Co-Op Instant Access Account appearing on the October bank reconciliation.	The Council to review the outstanding items on the bank reconciliation and clarify why they are outstanding. If necessary the Council should ensure that appropriate correcting entries are made to clear any items that appear on the reconciliation in error.	High	The RFO is aware of this and will be addressing the issue before the end of February.

11 Trust funds (including charitable trusts). The Council/Board/ Committee has met its responsibilities as a trustee.

No.	Audit Test	Response	Observation	Recommendation	Priority	Comments
1	Trust assets are recorded as assets of the Trust, and NOT as assets of the Council	No	<p>The Council is the sole managing Trustee of the Kings George's Recreation Ground - it is understood that part of this land is occupied by a Bowls Club. It is not clear that there is a formal lease agreement in place for this.</p> <p>It is also unclear what the status is of land in terms of its occupation by the football club .</p>	<p>The Council should review the arrangements at the King Georges Field, in particular the occupation of the land by the various sports clubs.</p> <p>The Council should also ensure that any assets located on the Kings Georges Field are recorded as assets of the charity and not as assets of the Council.</p>	High	There are many aspects of the KGVPF that give rise to concerns. How the asset is registered will be corrected and recorded correctly.
2	The Council has submitted necessary Charities Commission returns	No	The Council has not submitted necessary Charities Commission returns	The Council MUST ensure that it promptly submits the required Charities Commission returns.	Non Compliance	The return for last year has now been carried out and the return for the year before also done. However, members should be aware that this may lead to an issue with the external audit for 2023-24.

Caldicot Placemaking Plan Meeting

Notes of Meeting – 15th January at 1pm Caldicot Town Council Offices

Attendees:

Cllr Maxine Mitchell – Chair
Cllr Jackie Strong
Cllr Peter Strong
Cllr Frank Rowberry – D.Chair

Daniel Fordham, MCC
Sadie Beer, MCC
Mark Tredwin, CTC Clerk
Cllr Paul Griffiths

1. Introductions & Apologies – Cllr Maxine Mitchell

Cllr Maria Stevens
Cllr Jill Bond
Cllr Tony Easson

Cllr John Woodfield
Cllr Gaynor Owen
Cllr Rachel Grumbach

2. Notes of Last Meeting

DF apologised for the delay in circulating the notes of the last meeting. Members were given ten minutes at the start of the meeting to read through the notes.

- Notes agreed by all group members

3. Agree Terms of Reference (Draft attached) – Daniel Fordham

DF ran through main points of the Terms of Reference

- PS noted that he currently attends the steering group as an observer. CTC will consider whether to include him as one of their nominated representatives.
- Terms of Reference agreed by the group

4. Placemaking Plan Consultancy Brief (Draft attached) – Daniel Fordham

DF gave a brief overview of the consultancy brief.

- Members will be given time following the meeting to read and consider the brief and come back to DF with comments.
- MT – need to ensure that we are using the most recent data available and not outdated info.
- JS – there have been a lot of new homes built since the last census was produced meaning a lot of new Caldicot residents since then.
- PS – also need to consider future data, which is likely to be more difficult.
- DF – we will ensure the consultants are using the most up to date information available.
- PG – need to make sure residents feel like they are part of the journey from the start and not just told what is happening
- FR – Need to think about who we are aiming the consultation at
- JS – Need to ensure that residents know that something will be happening as a result of the development of the plan and that their participation in consultation has value.

- DF – need to ensure as early as possible that stakeholders are involved and kept involved right the way through the process so that they feel part of the journey as well as helping to feed engagement into the community. We will ensure that any feedback received is fed back to the public as part of the report of consultation report. It is also important that we manage expectations with regards to what is practical.
- MM – Should members engage with stakeholders first. DF – we would expect Members to help us engage with stakeholders and we will consult them on the placemaking plan before moving on to public consultation.
- PG – need to ensure that the plan reaches beyond the well-established stakeholders who are already likely to be engaged through existing mechanisms. Need to try and involve younger groups. DF – we can point out in the brief that consultants need to include engagement particularly with younger residents and new arrivals to Caldicot to gain fresh ideas.
- FR – quick wins will be essential to getting Caldicot residents on board as they feel unheard from other consultation processes over the years. Residents will raise issues about ongoing town centre management issues (eg pigeons) – need to ensure we can respond to these.
- DF – potential for innovative consultation/engagement processes; this could include using implementation of early quick wins as engagement mechanism.
- PG – brief must make clear that consultants are expected to bring their own ideas and expertise to the plan, particularly in relation to developing projects, rather than simply reflecting back ideas from stakeholders. ***ACTION DF to include in brief.**
- DF – we need to ensure that the public are aware CTC & MCC are working in partnership, and members are able to act as ambassadors for the process and the plan to convey the message that this is a positive thing for Caldicot
- DF – asked members what potential quick win project ideas they have;
- MM - flower beds in the town centre
- MT- Pedestrian crossing by KGVPF is in CTC plans and MMC are already looking at the possibility
- JS - crossing between Asda/together works.
- DF these are likely to be a longer timescale to deliver but could be included in the plan
- DF – will make a start on a list of projects and then share with the group to add/agree. ***ACTION Deadline of 31st January. Members need to provide feedback on the brief to DF by this date.**

5. Tendering and Appointment of Consultants

- PG – could we use other frameworks other than sell2wales to bring in consultants from further afield possibly with different ideas. DF – it is possible to advertise on other portals.
- DF - agree final brief in February, DF suggests at the next meeting. Hoping to have WG confirmation on the funding in March. Brief to go out for tender end of March, with deadline for applications end of April and look to interview mid-May with appointment hopefully by the end of May.

- DF – suggest that steering group nominate a subgroup of 3-4 members to lead on selection process and be part of interview panel. Agreed that this would be discussed further/subgroup members agreed at next meeting. ***ACTION SB to add to the agenda**
- DF – suggests MCC (MT) officers review/score all applications received shortlisting it to around 3-4 applicants for the steering group subgroup to then review/score. Group in agreement with this process.
- PG – suggests interviews would be a beneficial part of the process. ***ACTION DF to include in brief as part of the process.**

6. AOB

No Issues raised

7. Date of next meeting

19th February at 10am - Caldicot Town Council Offices

Committee: FULL COUNCIL

Date: 29 January 2025

Title: To consider the Citizens Advice request for funding.

Purpose of Report

This item was requested to be carried over from November's Full Council Meeting

Recommendation:

Members **RESOLVE** to approve the requested £12,000 from budget be paid to Citizens Advice

REPORT:

1. At the November meeting members requested that Citizens Advice provide more detailed figures for how many people had used the Citizens Advice service. These figures were to include statistics that showed the numbers originating from within the Caldicot town boundary.
2. The figures were provided to the clerk and have been attached to this report for your consideration.
3. It is for members to agree to pay the Budgeted figure that Citizens Advice are expecting to receive for this year's work. Funding has been allocated in next year's budget but this should be conditional upon the successful completion of an SLA being drawn up.
4. This SLA will have key performance indicators and outcomes attached to it.

Recommendation

5. Members **RESOLVE** to approve the requested £12,000 from budget be paid to Citizens Advice
6. Members are free to suggest alterations to the proposed resolution or to come up with one of their own.

Mark Tredwin
Town clerk
January 2025



Monmouthshire County Citizens Advice

Cyngor ar Bopeth
Sir Fynwy

Gwasanaeth Cwbl Achrededig sy'n cynnwys
adolygu gan gymheiriad
Fully Accredited Service with peer review



darparu gwybodaeth a chyngor o safon i bobl Cymru
a hynny mewn modd sy'n gyson
providing a consistent approach to quality information
and advice for the people of Wales

Caldicot Town Council Information Report November 2024

Caldicot residents assisted via face to face, email and telephone support

In the last 12 months, 1st December 2023 to 30th November 2024 we assisted:

Summary	2023	2024	%
Total Clients	363	395	+8.16%
Issues	1452	1696	+13.3%
Activities	1555	1999	+24.9%
Casework	519	593	+13.3%
Clients by Ward	2023	2024	
Severn	100	107	+6%
Dewstow	88	88	+0%
West End	76	83	+8.08%
Caldicot Cross	58	69	+17.3%
Caldicot Castle	41	48	+15%
Total	363	395	+8.16%
Total F2F Footfall	443	475	+9.25%

Telephone Advice: 03444 77 20 20

Company Limited by Guarantee - Registered Number 6532431: Registered Charity Number 1125068

Authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority FRN: 617672

Registered Offices:

19a & b Cross Street
Abergavenny
NP7 5EW
Tel: 01873 856466

5a Church Road
Caldicot
NP26 4BP
Tel: 01291 422119

The Gate House
High Street
Chepstow NP16 5LH
Tel: 01291 622185

23a Whitecross Street
Monmouth
NP25 3BY
Tel: 01600 773297

Caldicot residents that received advice and obtained additional funding					
	2023		2024		%
Financial Gain	Clients	Amounts	Clients	Amounts	
Income Gain	98	£331097	87	£368,277	+10.63%
Reimbursements	8	£8711	31	£11,899	+30.93
Debt Written Off	2	£37893	4	£63,882	+51%
Other	24	£41293	16	£31,709	-26%
Total	132	£418,994	138	£475,767	+12.6%

Caldicot Overall Running Costs

	2023-2024	**YTD 2024- 2025 - to Oct '24
Expense excluding Salaries		
Governance	812	0
Office -		
Printing/Stationery/IT/Telephone&Comms	41,492	21,472
Premises- rent/rates/heating/maintenance	36,539	26,428
Staff & Volunteer-Training/Subsistence	8,881	3661
TOTAL for all 4 offices	87,723	51,562
Expense per office - split by 4 - inc VAT	21931	12890
Salaries (for Caldicot core staff but excludes project worker salaries) includes CEO, ASM, Ops Mngr	39,323	24,350
TOTALS for Caldicot	61254	37240

**** Note the YTD is up to end of October
so the winter fuel costs have not yet
been received and we have outstanding
invoices for repairs and now are due to
purchase new IT support and costs have
increased by 16%**

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Breakdown of some of the Caldicot costs included in the above

Rent	452	339
Rates	653	479
Heating		
British Gas	4620	2512
EON	1259	680
TOTAL inc VAT	6984	4010

End of Report

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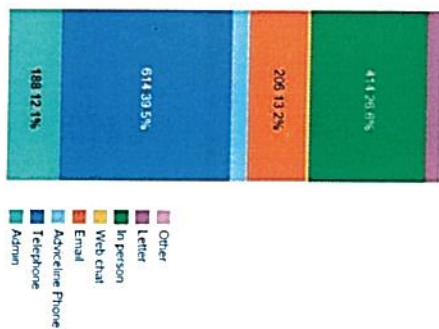
Key Statistics

01/12/2022 30/11/2023

Summary

Clients	363
Quick client contacts	
Issues	1,452
Activities	1,555
Cases	519
Outcomes	
Income gain	£331,097
Re-entrustments services, loans	£8,711
Debts written off	£37,893
Other	£41,293

Channel



Issues

Issues	Clients
Benefits & tax credits	453
Benefits Universal Credit	164
Charitable Support & Food Ban	58
Consumer goods & services	12
Debt	140
Education	161
Employment	1
Financial services & capability	52
GVA & Hate Crime	135
Health & community care	6
Housing	7
Immigration & asylum	52
Legal	6
Other	29
Relationships & family	17
Tax	14
Travel & transport	54
Utilities & communications	15
Grand Total	1,452

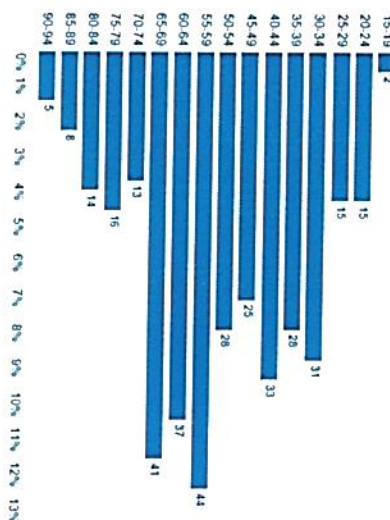
Top benefit issues

21 Personal independence Payment	151
28 General Benefit Entitlement	73
01 Initial claim	61
99 Other benefits issues	48
19 Employment Support Allowance	46
04 Limited capability for work element	35
08 Calculation of income, earnings &...	35
23 Council tax reduction	29
15 Disability Living Allowance	20
17 Attendance Allowance	16

Top debt issues

60 Debt Assessment	29
04 Fuel debts	23
99 Other Debt	19
09 Council tax arrears	11
13 Credit, store & charge card debts	8
49 Debt Relief Order	7
16 Water supply & sewerage debts	7
07 Rent arrears - housing associations	7
30 Mobile phone debt	7
11 Maintenance & child maintenance	5

Age



Gender



Disability / Long-term health



Ethnicity



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Key Statistics

01/12/2023 20/11/2024

CITIZENS
ADVICE

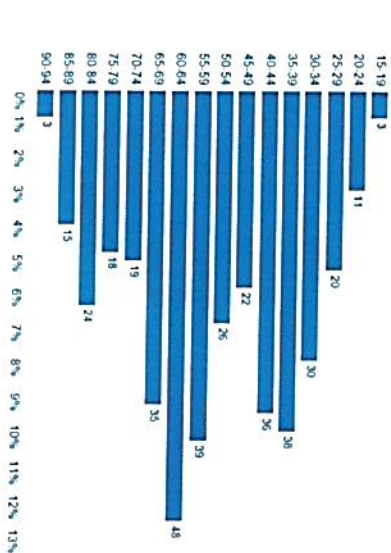
Summary

Clients	395
Quick client contacts	
Issues	1,696
Activities	1,999
Cases	583
Outcomes	
Income gain	£368,277
Re-imbursements, services, loans	£11,899
Debts written off	£63,882
Repayments rescheduled	£617
Other	£31,709

Issues

Issues	Clients
Benefits & tax credits	423
Benefits Universal Credit	147
Charitable Support & Food Bank	64
Consumer goods & services	144
Debt	298
Education	2
Employment	65
Financial services & capability	153
GVA & Hate Crime	15
Health & community care	30
Housing	74
Immigration & asylum	4
Legal	2
Other	28
Relationships & family	23
Tax	74
Travel & transport	32
Utilities & communications	12
Grand Total	1,696

Age



Gender



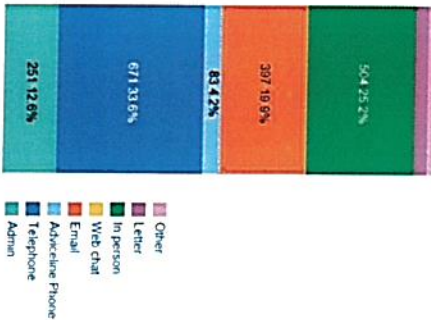
Disability / Long-term health



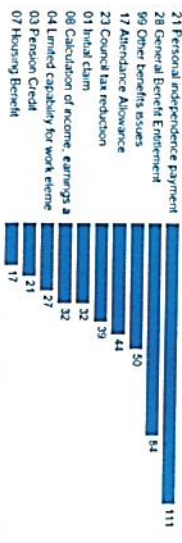
Ethnicity



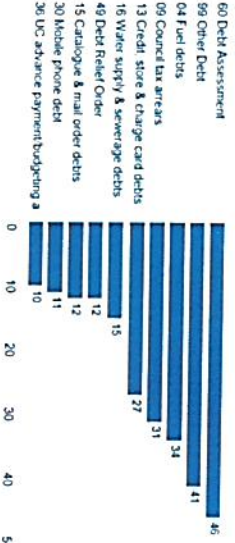
Channel



Top benefit issues



Top debt issues



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Committee: FULL COUNCIL

Date: 28 January 2025

Title: Grant Application from the Friends of Caldicot Library

Purpose of Report

Members to consider a grant application from the Friends of Caldicot Library

Recommendation:

Members **Resolve** that the Friends of Caldicot Library should receive a grant of £187.90 using the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 s.19

Report:

1. During the period that the council was moving back into the regular Town Council offices, a grant was submitted to the council for consideration at a future meeting. Unfortunately, in all the moving the application was misplaced and has just been brought back to our attention.
2. The grant request was from the Friends of Caldicot Library and the actual application has been attached to this report. **(Appendix 12A)**. They are requesting that the town council assist them with purchasing newspapers for the library that would not otherwise be provided.
3. As the provision of newspapers is not part of the statutory provision that MCC have to provide for libraries, the Town Council is able to provide funding without it being an example of double taxation. We have the power to provide his type of grant under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 s.19.
4. Currently we have funds of £7,270 available in Budget heading 3010. If members approve the grant this will leave a balance of £5,370 available for other groups to apply for.

Proposed Resolution

5. Members **Resolve** that the Friends of Caldicot Library should receive a grant of £187.90 using the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 s.19.
6. Members are free to suggest alterations to the proposed resolution or to produce one of their own.

Mark Tredwin
Town clerk
January 2025



4. After Receipt of the Grant

- Following successful application, an official receipt (i.e. on headed paper) must be provided. This must be followed by financial statement and receipts in relation to the project.
- Please note that the Council may recover any donation awarded if the operation for which the donation is awarded ceases or the event does not take place. In this instance a statement of monies used must be provided, together with receipts. Surplus grant must then be returned to Caldicot Town Council.

A. APPLICANT DETAILS	
Name of organisation	Friends of Caldicot Library
Contact Name	[REDACTED]
Address (of organisation)	[REDACTED]
Tel No.	[REDACTED]
E-mail Address	[REDACTED]
Post Code	[REDACTED]
What are the aims and purposes of your organisation? *	
Is the organisation a registered charity? YES/NO (please delete)	
If YES, what is the registration number? N/A	
* To support the work and activities of Caldicot Library; to increase awareness of activities taking place in the library	
B. FINANCE FOR THE PROJECT	
Amount you are requesting from Caldicot Town Council	£ 187.90
What will be the total cost of the project?	£ 237.90
How will the project be funded in total?	£50 From Friends of Library existing funds
Have you ever received a grant from Caldicot Town Council?	YES/NO
Please provide details:	
£300 towards newspaper subscriptions 2023/24.	
C. DETAILS OF PROJECT	
Title of project	Library newspapers
Description of project	To provide a daily copy of 'The' newspaper in Caldicot Library
Who will benefit from the project?	Potentially anybody who uses, or wishes to use, Caldicot Library
Approximately how many of those who will benefit are residents of Caldicot?	Probably 75%.