Draft Unapproved Minutes of the Special Full Council Meeting 7th May 2025.

Present In Person: Councillors H Llewellyn; R Carrol; P Collins; Y Price; C Andrews; J Davies; J Maccarthy; R Price
Present Online: Councillors S Hamer-Thomas; C Bissex-Foster
Also Present: Mrs H Williams (Town Clerk); Mr T Oliver (Deputy Clerk)
Meeting Chairperson: Councillor H Llewellyn (Mayor)

1. To receive Apologies for Absence
   Apologies were received from Councillors J Bissex (unwell); D Ingram-Jones (Royal Garden Party) M Ingram-Jones (Royal Garden Party)

2. To receive Declaration of Interests or dispensations on any item(s) on this Agenda, if appropriate.
   No interest declared

3. Press and Public Participation Session.
   No public participation

4. To receive, review and approve the Bargoed Town Council Accounts 2024-25.

   The Clerk presented Bargoed Town Council's accounts for the financial year 2024–2025 and provided an overview of how the Scribe Accounts system generates financial reports. It was noted that the Council is carrying forward a slightly higher balance than usual, primarily due to funds held in reserves for ongoing projects or pending invoices. This year's accounts have been categorised for greater clarity. The Clerk drew members' attention to the significant investment in services and initiatives for young people, as reflected in both the accounts and the approved budget. The Clerk also presented the Annual Return, which is available for public inspection during the designated period. Members were asked whether they were satisfied with the user-friendly format of the financial information provided. It was unanimously agreed that the format—presented via Excel spreadsheet rather than the Scribe system—was clear and accessible.

5. To receive a report from the Internal Auditor for the 2024-25 financial year and note its contents.

   The Clerk presented the Internal Auditor's report for the 2024–2025 financial year. It was noted that the report included no recommendations, and the auditor's findings identified no weaknesses in the Council's financial procedures or governance. Members duly noted the contents of the report.

6. To consider the statements and complete the Annual Return for 2024-25.

   The Mayor read through the statements, and members completed the Annual Return in collaboration with the Clerk. Members discussed the importance of community consultation. The Clerk noted that the Council is nearing completion of a 10-year strategic plan and highlighted the surveys that have been distributed to local groups as part of this engagement process. It was unanimously resolved to approve the Annual Return. Members instructed the Mayor and the Clerk/RFO to sign the document accordingly.

7. To confirm the list of full council meeting dates for the 2025-26 financial year.

   The Clerk presented the proposed schedule of Full Council meeting dates for the 2025–2026

financial year. Members reviewed and approved the schedule and agreed that the confirmed dates should be published on the Council's website.

8.   To approve the publication of the Annual Report for 2024-25 financial year.

The Clerk reviewed the Annual Report with members, drawing attention to the Town Council's mission statement. At this point in the meeting, Cllr. R. Price left. The Clerk explained that 57% of the Council's expenditure had been allocated to community activities. It was also noted that reserves had been carried forward, with several projects still awaiting completion. Members were informed about the inclusion of the Councillor Attendance Register and the Training Register, both of which are available for public viewing. Members noted the significant amount of good work the Council had initiated in the community during the 2024–2025 financial year. They congratulated the officers on their efforts and unanimously approved the publication of the Annual Report.

9.   To receive a verbal update from the clerk regarding election of Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

The Clerk informed members that one expression of interest had been received for the position of Mayor and one for Deputy Mayor. As a result, no ballots would be required.
It was noted that Cllr. Llewellyn will be stepping down as Mayor on Sunday, 25th May.

10.   To confirm the specification for internal audit, receive the quotation for the internal audit fee and appoint an internal auditor for the 2025-26 financial year.

Members received a quotation of £550 from Mr. M. Fisher to undertake the internal audit for the 2025–2026 financial year. It was resolved to approve the quotation. The internal audit specification was reviewed, amended, and approved for use. Notably, the reference to Section 137 expenditure was removed, as the Council now operates under the General Power of Competence (GPoC). At this point in the meeting, Cllr. R. Price returned. The Clerk provided an explanation of the segregation of duties within the Council's payment process. It was also noted that references to the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales would be updated to reflect the transfer of its functions to the Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru (DBCC). Members were informed that the Council would continue to use a receipts and payments accounting system, with conversion applied as necessary for reporting purposes. Cllr. S Hamer-Thomas left the meeting at this stage. A query was raised regarding whether declarations of interest against minutes should be included in the audit remit. Members agreed, and the Clerk confirmed this would be added. It was resolved to appoint Mr. M. Fisher as the Internal Auditor for the 2025–2026 financial year.

11.   To review and update Members register of Interests.

Members reviewed and updated their entries in the Register of Interests as required.

The Mayor thanked Members and Officers for their attendance and contributions and formally closed the meeting at 19:19.