

Special Meeting with members of the Town Council and Mr. Alun Davies, AM accompanied by Ms. Bernadette xxxx held on Wednesday, 23 October 2019 at 7.20pm in the Council Chamber, Orchard Street, Brynmawr.

Present:- Councillors Mrs. O.M. Swales (Chair).
B.M. Sutton, J.M. Sutton, M.I. Morgan,
G.D. Jones, T.S. Hughes, W.K. Hodgins, R.J. Hill,
D. Lyn Elias.

Apologies:- Mrs. D. Brown, H.J. Swales, Mrs. J. Boyd, N. Boyd.

The Chair welcomed Mr. Alun Davies AM and Ms. Bernadette xxxx and invited him to open the meeting.

Mr. Davies said he is trying to focus on delivery work into the Borough but with government measures to reduce public expenditure it is a fight to keep things as they are.

Mr. Davies went on to discuss the road works economic development stating it is the biggest project in Wales and we need this development to improve Bleanau Gwent like how the M4 improved Bridgend.

The Chair opened the discussion to members of the Town Council.

A member informed the meeting that he had heard from other sources that a private investor is interested in the Circuit of Wales site. Mr. Davies said that there are potential private investors coming forward but nothing has been agreed as yet and explained that he had spent seven years of his life on the C.O.W development, but, did oppose of placing a Casino on the site.

A member expressed his anger on the closure of Nantyglo Leisure Centre and School. Mr. Davies said he also opposed to the decision to close these facilities.

A member said it is sad to see young people losing aspiration because they have been promised so much. Edwina Hart, Business Minister and the Enterprise Zone have created only two hundred jobs to this day. The member also expressed that Coleg Gwent, Ebbw Vale Learning Zone are not teaching level 3 courses and students are having to travel to Crosskeys College.

Mr. Davies informed members that the T.V.R Car Manufacturing Factory when up and running will provide many jobs in this area and also the Aston Martin project will open opportunities for the young people. We cannot provide efficient office spaces in order to attract businesses to this area. A member said there are plenty of factories and buildings not being utilised that would be ideal for creating office space.

A member stated that Council have presented ideas of what they would like to see in this area on the new LDP and hopefully we will see changes in this area and see some economic development in the future.

Members expressed their concerns on the Health Service and the transformation programme of local hospitals.

Mr. Davies informed the meeting that the new Grange Hospital will provide high quality and specialised treatment and care and stated that it will be the centre of excellence. Mr. Davies explained that Nevil Hall Hospital will not be down graded it will have a different role in care. Members was informed that there is difficulty in filling posts mostly due to the facilities they have to work. Mr. Davies said that we assume the Health Service is always going to be there for us and said that we all have a role to play and that is a responsibility to look after ourselves and not to take the NHS for granted.

A member expressed concerns about transport links to the Grange Hospital from this area which at this present moment it takes three bus changes to get there. Mr. Davies totally agreed that buses are more important than trains from this area and explained that he is in discussions at the Assembly with Vaughan Gething regarding this matter.

The Chair then thanked the AM for attending the meeting and asked if he would be willing to attend a similar meeting in the future to wish he agreed.