***Special Meeting with Mr. David Watkins, Community Services Manager and Ms. Helen Cunningham, Deputy Leader, BGCBC.***

***Wednesday, 30 April 2025 at 6.00pm. in the Council Chamber, Brynmawr.***

***Present: - Councillors W.K. Hodgins (Chair).***

 ***Mrs. O.M. Swales***

 ***Mrs. S. Morgan***

 ***R.J. Hill***

 ***J.M. Gardner***

 ***R.M. Hillier***

 ***G. Nutt***

***Town Clerk/RFO: - Miss. N.J. Williams.***

***Apologies: - Mrs. D. Brown.***

The Chair welcomed both guests to the meeting and reminded members that the focus of the meeting is to discuss the cleanliness of Brynmawr Town and what services are being received.

Ms. Cunningham informed members that she is the Cabinet Member for Environment and Street Scene. Ms. Cunningham give a rundown of what services Brynmawr Town is receiving:

* Litter picker – daily.
* Road sweeper – 2-3 times per week
* Summer Grass Cutting (Between April – September) – Monthly possibly 6 cuts per year (contracted out to private company).
* Cemeteries Grass Cutting – every 4 weeks.
* Weed Spraying – twice yearly first in May, second in July.
* Pressure Washing is undertaken as and when necessary and when funding has been identified normally through grant aid.

Mr. Watkins stated that Schedules might get knocked back if staff is needed in another area.

The pavements in town are litter picked only as it would be impossible for the sweeper to fit on pavements and the shops would have to close while they are cleansed. It would have to be very exceptional circumstances for the pavements to be deep cleansed such as if they got covered in mud due to flooding.

Ms. Cunningham informed members that there is available funding for a gum cleansing project and will know if Blaenau Gwent has been approved for funding in June.

A member asked is BGCBC contracting the same grass cutting company as last year.

Mr. Watkins informed the member that they are the same contractors as last year as BG are in a three-year contract with the company, so they are tied for one more season. Due to all the complaints last year regarding the grass cutting around town and the cemetery new methods have been put in place which will hopefully rectify some of the issues. Mr. Watkins said that there is a procedure to follow regarding grass cutting which results in some areas having to be left for wilding.

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A member expressed her concerns regarding five-foot nettles, weeds etc. surrounding foot paths which in her opinion is unsightly and could be dangerous.

Ms. Cunningham informed the member there is a Green Team that will be maintaining areas such as bike paths/footpaths/subway etc. in future.

With regards to the Asda site, it is down to the developers/owners to maintain the weeding/cleansing etc. BGCBC will pass on complaints received on the My Council App to the developers regarding the said areas.

A member said that the hedge around the Crawshay House site is hanging over the road preventing people from being able to walk on pavement and the owner ignores all complaints.

Mr. Watkins said that if there is a safety issue the Highway Authority will contact the owner asking him to cut the hedge. If he ignores the letter which results in the Highway Authority having to get the hedge cut, they will then charge him for the service.

A member said that a litter bin is needed at the bottom of Greenland Road, Brynmawr.

Mr. Watkins said there is a litter bin policy that needs to be abided by and states where a bin should be erected. If a bin is being under utilised in one area it could be placed somewhere else.

A member said that the contractors used to cleanse the Market Square are going to return to re-cleanse the area.

Mr. Watkins informed the members that all the car parks in Brynmawr Town are cleansed by the Street Cleaning Team, litter picked daily and swept the same time as other areas. A member said the entrance to the car park on King Street, Beaufort Street and Worcester Street by the old Post Office is in an unacceptable state.

A member said that the wall on the one side of the entrance to car park off King Street is deteriorating and could be dangerous.

Mr. Watkins said it is extremely difficult to give car parks a deep clean due to cars parked there 24/7 but, agreed that it is no excuse and will investigate the situation.

Members are in the opinion that the entrance between the car park and Beaufort Street is owned by the Rotary Club and asked who would be responsible for the cleansing of the area. Ms. Cunningham and Mr. Watkins agreed to check who is in ownership of the said area and will ask the owners to tidy up the area.

A member said the area by the Bridgend Pub (entrance into Brynmawr) is looking shabby. Ms. Cunningham said some areas are never going to look pristine but, hopefully the long-term Council will take a different approach and be more community based.

A member said that if the Town Council had the funding they could organise duties such as street cleansing, CCTV etc.

At present the BGCBC are looking how to spend the capital from the Welsh Government which is going to be split between 22 Authorities.

A member said the Brynmawr Welfare Park needs money spent on it. The member informed the meeting that there are currently two swings missing, more play equipment is needed and the baby part needs tidying up and repainting. Some children do not have the opportunity to go on holidays and all they have is what’s available in their area.

Mr. Watkins informed members that all the equipment is inspected regularly, and a new Playground Fitter have been appointed. Play equipment is expensive but, if some

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of the capital money from the WG was invested it could make a small difference and agreed to investigate the missing swings.

Ms. Cunningham said it’s difficult because as a Local Authority funding cannot be accessed for play equipment etc. but could ask the Football Club to apply for funding.

Mr. Watkins informed members that the Bowls Club has folded resulting in the green being handed back to BGCBC who are not in a financial position to maintain the Bowling Green.

Members expressed their disappointment of the Bowling Green having to go out for a Community Asset Transfer and said they would like it to remain as a Bowling Green.

Mr. Watkins said that unfortunately local Bowls Clubs are struggling in other areas and do not want to come to Brynmawr

A member asked would it be possible for Brynmawr to have a sign erected welcoming careful drivers. Mr. Watkins said forward an email with request and he will pass it on to the relevant Officers.

Members thanked both guests for attending the meeting and guests agreed that they would be happy to attend further meetings in the future.

Meeting closed at 19.40