



CABINET SITTING AS TRUSTEES OF BLACKWOOD MINERS' INSTITUTE

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, TREDOMEN
ON WEDNESDAY 17TH OCTOBER 2018 AT 11.05 A.M.**

PRESENT

Councillor D.V. Poole – Chair

Councillors:

C. Cuss (Social Care and Wellbeing), N. George (Neighbourhood Services), C. Gordon (Corporate Services), B. A. Jones (Finance, Performance and Governance), P. Marsden (Education and Achievement), S. Morgan (Economy, Infrastructure and Sustainability), L. Phipps (Homes and Places) and E. Stenner (Environment and Public Protection).

Together with:

C. Harry (Interim Chief Executive), R. Edmunds (Corporate Director - Education and Corporate Services), M. S. Williams (Interim Corporate Director - Communities), D. Street (Corporate Director – Social Services and Housing).

Also in attendance:

P. Hudson (Marketing and Events Manager), TG. Ballisat (Theatre and Arts Service Manager) and A. Dredge (Committee Services Officer).

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies for absence received.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received at the commencement or during the course of the meeting.

3. CABINET AS TRUSTEES OF BLACKWOOD MINERS' INSTITUTE MINUTES – 11TH JULY 2018.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 11th July 2018 (minute nos. 1 - 5) be approved and signed as a correct record.

4. BLACKWOOD MINERS' INSTITUTE PROGRESS REPORT

The report advised Cabinet as Trustees of the Blackwood Miners' Institute (BMI) on the progress of the operational activities for the financial year 2018/2019. Blackwood Miners' Institute was conveyed as a charitable trust to Islwyn Borough Council, (and subsequently to Caerphilly County Borough Council) and was registered as a charity on 13th November 1990. The local authority,

acting as sole corporate trustee has a legal duty to operate the charity in accordance with the governing document and has a legal obligation to account for the charity's finances in accordance with the Charity Act 2011.

At its meeting held on the 11th July 2018, Cabinet as Trustees agreed that the frequency of meetings would be increased and held on a quarterly basis. This will allow an opportunity for Officers to update the Trustees on a number of operational activities and proposals intended to improve the sustainability of Blackwood Miners Institute as a venue. The report provided details in relation to the points raised at the last meeting.

Cabinet were advised that as part of the Council's ongoing Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) there is pressure to continue to reduce the annual subsidy that the Authority provides to BMI and staff are working towards identifying how this can be achieved. The Arts Council of Wales has included BMI as part of its Portfolio of Revenue Funded Organisations since 2016/17. This provides an annual grant of £129,375 to allow the development of an artistic programme in areas of challenge such as 'drama, dance and non-commercial music' and to support local artist opportunities through co-production work.

Officers provided an update in respect of the new ticket system which is due to be launched in January 2019. Online ticket sales form a low percentage in terms of BMI's overall ticket sales and the upgrade is necessary in order to increase the percentage of bookings undertaken online. This will allow the potential for efficiency savings from the current box office arrangements. The IT Department are currently updating the website that will incorporate the new ticketing system. In terms of the bar area, the Officer advised that a meeting was recently held with the Conservation Officer, the Development Control Manager and the Building Control Team Leader to consider a number of options in relation to improving the customer experience in and around the bar area. This also included improving signage at the front of the building and the internal improvements that were agreed and are set out in paragraph 4.4. in the report.

Members were advised that the Development Control Manager is considering the advertising and promotion options suggested at the last meeting of the BMI. Some of which require advertisement consent and a licence from the highway authority and the setting of the listed building would have to be considered. Advertisement on hoardings around new housing development to be erected adjacent to BMI is being investigated with the developers.

Officers provided an overview of the forthcoming events being held at Blackwood Miners' Institute that include live boxing, 'Public Service Broadcasting' (sold out), the 'Dreamboys', 'Cosi fan Tutte', 'Classic Rock Show' and a number of shows that aim to maximise the secondary spend from near capacity audiences. It was noted that consideration is being given to 2020 and the bi-Centenary of Blackwood's formation as a town and what part BMI can play in any future celebrations.

The Chair thanked the Officers for the report and advised that this would be the Theatre and Arts Service Manager's last meeting, as he is leaving the Authority and wished him every success in his future endeavours.

Following consideration and discussion, it was moved and seconded that the recommendation in the report be approved. By a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that for the reasons contained in the Officer's report, Cabinet as Trustees of Blackwood Miners' Institute noted the information set out in the report.

The meeting closed at 11.20 am.

CHAIR