



## MINUTES OF BRIDGEND TOWN COUNCIL MEETING ANNUAL MEETING

Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2020, 6pm via video conferencing

<b>Present:</b>	Cllr Alan Wathan (Mayor) Cllr Stuart Baldwin Cllr Steven Bletsoe Cllr N Burnett Cllr Steven Easterbrook Cllr Ceri Evans Cllr M Voisey Cllr Freya Bletsoe	Cllr David Unwin Cllr T Wood Cllr C Webster Cllr I Williams Cllr C Woodman Cllr R Thomas Cllr A Morelli
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**In Attendance:** Mrs L Edwards (Town Clerk), Mrs D Jones (Deputy Town Clerk & RFO), Ms J Brown (Democratic Services Officer), Mrs Dawn Elliott (Arts Project Officer/Technical Support)

The Mayor welcomed Councillors to the first remote meeting under the new regulations and gave guidance on how the meeting would proceed.

### 1. **Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Meetings) (Wales) Regulations 2020:**

The Town Clerk informed Councillors that the meeting would be conducted remotely under the Coronavirus Act 2020.

### 2. Election of Mayor

#### **a) To consider options and make a decision regarding the election of a new Mayor for 2020/2021**

- Cllr F Bletsoe asked for clarification on all four options put forward to Members via email. The Town Clerk clarified each option.
- Cllr M Voisey noted for Members that due to the current situation, both The Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk/RFO were working excessive hours. Cllr M Voisey therefore proposed for ease of continuity and pressure on staff at this critical time, that Council consider that the current Mayor retain his role with the condition that The Deputy Mayor would become Mayor Elect.
- Cllr D Unwin asked if both the current Mayor and Deputy Mayor would be happy to continue. The Mayor and Deputy Mayor confirmed that they were both prepared to fulfil the wishes of Council.
- Cllr C Webster asked the Town Clerk for further clarification on the effects of the staff work load. The Town Clerk informed Members that a change of Mayor would impact the financial procedures such as bank signatories and payment approval procedures and would impact committees as Cllr A Wathan currently sits on all committees as ex-officio.
- The Mayor called for a vote to be taken in order to make a decision regarding the election of a new Mayor for 2020/2021. This was unanimously supported by Members.

- Members were asked to vote for one option.

Option A

To appoint a new Mayor and/or Deputy Mayor at the Annual Meeting on 22nd June

Option B

To defer appointment of Mayor and/or Deputy Mayor and review the situation later in the year

Option C

To not appoint a new Mayor and/or Deputy Mayor for 2020/21 and for the existing Mayor and Deputy Mayor to continue in office until the Annual meeting in May 2021

Option D

To appoint a Mayor Elect and Deputy Mayor Elect at the meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> June for them to take up office later in the year.

The Vote was recorded verbally as follows:

Name of Councillor	Option A	Option B	Option C	Option D
Cllr S Baldwin		B		
Cllr F Bletsoe				D
Cllr S Bletsoe				D
Cllr N Burnett		B		
Cllr S Charles				
Cllr S Easterbrook				D
Cllr C Evans				D
Cllr R Marsh				
Cllr A Morelli		B		
Cllr R Porter				
Cllr R Thomas		B		
Cllr D Unwin				D
Cllr M Voisey			C	
Cllr L Walters				
Cllr A Wathan (Mayor)				D
Cllr C Webster		B		
Cllr I Williams				D
Cllr T Wood				D
Cllr C Woodman				D
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>9</b>

**RESOLVED:** That the current Mayor and Deputy Mayor remain in office until the autumn/winter.

- b) To receive nominations for and elect a Town Mayor of Bridgend Town Council for 2020/2021 and to receive the Town Mayor's Acceptance of Office.

- Cllr I Williams nominated Cllr S Bletsoe as Mayor of Bridgend Town Council for 2020/2021; this was seconded by Cllr D Unwin.
- Cllr S Baldwin sought clarity in relation to the current situation and the deferred signing of the Mayor's Acceptance of Office.
- Town Clerk advised that Members can agree to have a Mayor Elect in place until the formal signing of the Mayor's Acceptance of Office later in the year. She explained that the current Mayor would remain in Office until the form is signed by the Mayor Elect; she added that there could not be a continuation of the role for a year from the date of signing of the form and that at the May 2021 Annual meeting there must be an election of Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

**RESOLVED:** That Cllr S Bletsoe be appointed Mayor Elect in the Autumn/Winter of 2020 and remain in office until the Annual Meeting of May 2021.

### 3. To receive nominations for and elect a Deputy Town Mayor of Bridgend Town Council for 2020/2021

- Nominations were received and seconded for Cllr T Wood and Cllr R Thomas. The Mayor called for a vote which was recorded verbally as follows:

Name of Councillor	Nomination 1 – Cllr R Thomas	Nomination 2 – Cllr T Wood
Cllr S Baldwin	Cllr R Thomas	
Cllr F Bletsoe		Cllr T Wood
Cllr S Bletsoe		Cllr T Wood
Cllr N Burnett	Cllr R Thomas	
Cllr S Charles		
Cllr S Easterbrook		Cllr T Wood
Cllr C Evans		Cllr T Wood
Cllr R Marsh		
Cllr A Morelli	Cllr R Thomas	
Cllr R Porter		
Cllr R Thomas	Cllr R Thomas	
Cllr D Unwin		Cllr T Wood
Cllr M Voisey	Cllr R Thomas	
Cllr L Walters		
Cllr A Wathan (Mayor)		Cllr T Wood
<b>Cllr C Webster</b>	<b>Abstained</b>	
Cllr I Williams		Cllr T Wood
Cllr T Wood		Cllr T Wood
Cllr C Woodman		Cllr T Wood
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>9</b>

**RESOLVED:** That Cllr T Wood be appointed Deputy Mayor Elect in the Autumn/Winter of 2020 and remain in office until the Annual Meeting of May 2021.

### 4. To receive apologies for absence:

Apologies: Cllr L Walters, Cllr R Marsh

Unable to connect via video: Cllr S Charles, Cllr R Porter

**5. To receive Members' Declarations of Interest in respect of the business to be transacted:**

- Cllr N Burnett – Prejudicial interest in item 17 BCBC Planning Matters.
- Cllr M Voisey - Prejudicial interest in item 17 BCBC Planning Matters.
- Cllr T Wood - Prejudicial interest in item 17 BCBC Planning Matters.
- Cllr S Easterbrook - Prejudicial interest in item 17 BCBC Planning Matters.
- Cllr C Webster - Prejudicial interest in item 17 BCBC Planning Matters.

**6. To confirm and sign minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on Monday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2020**

**RESOLVED:** The Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> March 2020 were confirmed as a true record and duly signed.

**7. Appointment of committees**

**To appoint members to existing committees for 2020/2021 subject to any amendments to committees approved under the review of Standing Orders for 2020/2021**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| a. Finance Committee                           | [6 Town Councillors plus Ex-officio]  |
| b. Planning Committee                          | [6 Town Councillors plus Ex-officio]  |
| c. Personnel Committee                         | [6 Town Councillors plus Ex-officio]  |
| d. Regeneration Advisory Committee             | [6 Town Councillors plus Ex-officio]  |
| e. Community Engagement & Well-being Committee | [9 Town Councillors plus Ex-officio and up to 7 co-optees; up to four co-optees for Carnegie House Art Centre, up to two youth co-optees for well-being and one co-optee for military matters (Military Advisor)] |

- The Mayor reminded Members that any Member wishing to speak should not use the side bar but raise their hand.
- The Town Clerk advised Council that Cllr R Marsh had stood down from the Finance and Personnel Committees.
- Cllr S Bletsoe queried the position of Ex-officio. The Town Clerk informed Members that they could either defer, change all committees, or appoint to vacancies.
- After discussion, Cllr D Unwin proposed that Members appoint to vacancies. Cllr S Baldwin agreed for simplicity that all committee changes should be deferred.

**RESOLVED:** To defer the appointment of committees other than existing vacancies.

- Cllr D Unwin proposed that Cllr Tim wood be elected to Finance Committee and that Cllr S Easterbrook be elected to Personnel Committee.

**RESOLVED:** that Cllr Tim wood be elected to Finance Committee and that Cllr S Easterbrook be elected to Personnel Committee.

**8. Representation of Outside Bodies**

**RESOLVED:** That all current representations to outside bodies remain

**9. To consider co-opting up to two Youth Members drawn from the local community within the boundary of the Bridgend Town Council wards.**

- The Town Clerk reported that she had received an expression of interest from a Member of the Public and that she could reveal not personal details to Members.

**RESOLVED:** That this item be deferred.

**10. To confirm Outside Representatives for Allotments for 2020/2021**

**RESOLVED:** That the current representatives remain.

**11. To authorise the signatories for the Council's banking arrangements for 2020/2021**

**RESOLVED:** That the current signatories remain.

**12. To appoint an independent internal Auditor for 2020/2021**

- Chair of finance proposed that Council remain with current Auditors for 2020/21.

**RESOLVED:** It was agreed that the Internal Auditor would continue as in previous years: Mr Mark Evans, Ridgewood Associates.

**13. To note the Council's Insurer for 2020/2021**

- Cllr M Voisey queried if this contract went out to tender. The Town Clerk and RFO confirmed that this was the case.

**RESOLVED:** It was agreed that the Council's Insurer would continue as in previous years: W.P.S Insurance Ltd.

**14. Review of the Council's and/or staff subscriptions to other bodies**

**RESOLVED:** To accept the following current subscriptions

- a) One Voice Wales
- b) Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk: Society of Local Council Clerks
- c) National Allotment Society

## **15. Town Clerks report:**

### **1. To report for information staffing arrangements during COVID-19**

- The Town Clerk reported that since lockdown all staff had been working from home. One new laptop had been purchased with a view to purchase four more.
- The Outdoor Team had initially worked part time hours due to childcare issues but were now working full time. Health and Safety measures in line with Covid 19 policy had been implemented in Carnegie House, allowing some staff to work in the office.

### **2. To receive an update regarding the Ty'r Ardd Additional Premises project**

- The Town Clerk informed Members that the Project Manager had been reappointed for Ty'r Ardd.
- The Town Clerk reported that significant progress had been made and that Whittinghams had been appointed for a fee of £300. The sale would be concluded in September with The Mayor and Town Clerk as signatories. The Town Clerk informed Members that the solicitors had advised that there would be a cost of approximately £15,000 for stamp duty which was not included in the budget. Cllr D Unwin proposed that the cost be discussed in the next Project Working Group Meeting.
- After a meeting on site The Town Clerk reported to Members that further consideration was needed regarding planning access and that she would like to call a meeting of the Project Working Group to discuss.

**RESOLVED:** That the cost of stamp duty and planning access be discussed in the next Project Working Group Meeting which The Town Clerk would arrange.

- The Town Clerk informed Members that The General Registrar would complete an inspection of BCBC premises in July, and subject to approval (which would take 4 – 6 weeks), the BCBC Registrar would relocate.
- The Town Clerk proposed to Council that as Evergreen Hall Members were unlikely to be utilising Ty'r Ardd in the near future due to Covid-19, that the setting up of the staff offices be a priority. Cllr S Baldwin accepted the Town Clerks proposal.

**RESOLVED:** That the setting up of staff accommodation for Ty'r Ardd be a priority.

## **16. Notice of Audit 2019/20 - To approve the Annual Accounts for 2019-20 and Annual Governance Statement for 2019-20 and sign the Annual Return for the Year Ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020**

- RFO reported that she had prepared all audit reports, documentation and Annual Return for internal audit. RFO informed Council that the Internal Auditor had confirmed that all matters arising from the previous financial year had been addressed and that the 2019/20 Audit had been carried out to an 'exceptionally high standard'. RFO reported that the Internal Auditor had signed the Annual Return.
- RFO advised that she had reviewed insurance cover, as recommended by the Internal Auditor, and that that the cover be increased to £630,000 incurring a monthly payment of £16.80.

**RESOLVED:** That insurance cover be increased as recommended by the Internal Auditor.

- Mayor referred members to the Annual Return for the Year Ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 and read the Annual Governance Statement; Members recorded verbally as follows:

Name of Councillor	Agreed YES	Agreed NO
Cllr S Baldwin	YES	
Cllr F Bletsoe	YES	
Cllr S Bletsoe	YES	
Cllr N Burnett	YES	
Cllr S Charles		
Cllr S Easterbrook	YES	
Cllr C Evans	YES	
Cllr R Marsh		
Cllr A Morelli	YES	
Cllr R Porter		
Cllr R Thomas	YES	
Cllr D Unwin	YES	
Cllr M Voisey	YES	
Cllr L Walters		
Cllr A Wathan (Mayor)	YES	
Cllr C Webster	YES	
Cllr I Williams	YES	
Cllr T Wood	YES	
Cllr C Woodman	YES	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>15</b>	

**RESOLVED:** To approve the Annual Accounts and Annual Governance Statement for 2019/20. The Annual Return for the Year Ended 31<sup>st</sup> March 2020 was signed by the RFO and Mayor.

**17. Planning: To note decisions of planning committee agreed via email correspondence for April, May and June 2020**

- Chair of Planning reported that planning meetings had been conducted via email, and that no contentious issues had arisen. Cllr S Baldwin requested that Council note that as a BCBC Councillor he did not participate.
- Chair of Planning thanked the Committee for their assistance.

**18. Personnel: To receive an update from the Chair of Personnel Committee regarding a remote Personnel Committee meeting on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> June 2020**

- Cllr D Unwin proposed that in the absence of The Chair of Planning, The Town Clerk should provide Members with an update.

***Member of staff Mrs Dawn Elliott left the meeting.***

- The Town Clerk advised Council that two capability procedures were in progress and that both had been instigated before lockdown. The Town Clerk reported that both procedures had been extremely time consuming. A large amount of documentation was carried out for one staff

member who subsequently called in sick. The other Member of Staff was made an offer which they did not accept. After commencing capability procedure the member of staff asked if Council would reconsider the offer. The Town Clerk advised Members that there was no financial impact to Council and that she had checked the position with One Voice Wales and was now awaiting a response from Chair of Personnel.

- The Town Clerk reiterated that both she and the RFO had worked a considerable amount of extra hours. The Personnel Committee agreed that The Town Clerk and RFO would continue to work flexibly and take time off in summer recess. The Mayor thanked the Town Clerk and RFO for their diligence and assistance.

**19. Finance: To receive an update from the Chair of Personnel Committee regarding a remote Finance Committee meeting on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> June 2020**

- Cllr D Unwin proposed that in the absence of The Chair of Planning, The Town Clerk should provide Members with an update.
- The Town Clerk informed Members that to assist with home working, the Personnel Committee had authorised the purchase of four laptops. Finance and Personnel had also agreed to investigate the cost of Wi-Fi for staff.
- Cllr R Thomas proposed a vote of thanks to The Town Clerk and RFO for their outstanding work and support during the lockdown period.

***Mrs Dawn Elliott re-joined the meeting***

**20. Committee Engagement, Well-being and Events:**

**a) To consider an update from the Community Engagement and Events Manager re: the delivery of online engagement activities during lockdown and proposals for online activities through July and August 2020.**

- The Town Clerk referred Members to a report prepared by the Community Engagement and Events Manager and highlighted that the online videos had proven popular with the public. Mindfulness received the most engagements while the language class uptake was minimal due to the nature of the course; it was noted that learnings would be carried forward.
- The Community Engagement and Events Manager recommended that the autumn programme be continued online, and proposed that it include mindfulness, the annual exhibition and videos for children to be prepared and presented by the front of house staff; it was reported that the Who is Bridgend Project would also continue. The Town Clerk spoke of the move to online activities in light of the pandemic and credited the Community Engagement and Events team for their work.

**b) To consider the Carnegie House Arts Centre Autumn/Winter programme and the possibility of planning an online programme**

- Cllr N Burnett congratulated the Community Engagement and Events Manager and her Team for the excellent high quality and continuity of online content, and noted that The Who is Bridgend Project had been accepted into the St Fagans National Welsh Museum Archive, which was an incredible achievement. Cllr N Burnett stated that due to the uncertainty of the near future she supported the Community Engagement and Events Manager proposal that an online only Autumn programme be planned and executed and that the Community Engagement and Events team work on research and planning for a post COVID programme, a plan for community engagement moving forward and the move to Ty'r Ardd. Members agreed.



**c) To consider contingency planning for commemorating Remembrance day 2020**

- Cllr D Unwin proposed that Members adopt a 'wait and see' approach. After a lengthy discussion the Town Clerk advised Members that she had consulted with the Military Advisor, who had advised being led by legality and that the budget for security would be prohibitive.
- Cllr S Baldwin proposed that Council be led by the Military Advisor. The Mayor sought approval from Members for The Town Clerk to take forward.

**RESOLVED:** That The Town Clerk take forward contingency planning options for Remembrance Day 2020 for consideration at a future meeting.

**d) To consider contingency planning for Christmas activities 2020**

**RESOLVED:** To be considered at next meeting

**e) To consider the installation of Christmas lights 2020**

**RESOLVED:** To be considered at next meeting

**21. Facilities and Health & Safety: To consider Health and Safety planning for using Carnegie House for Council meetings and staff working with social distancing measures in place.**

- The Town Clerk reported that Cllr S Charles had offered his services and advised on Health and Safety Planning for Carnegie House and that she would be seeking his advice regarding the risk assessment. The Town Clerk suggested that Council may need to recruit a Facilities Manager on a 6 month contract.

**RESOLVED:** That the Town Clerk recruit a Facilities Manager on a 6 month contract.

- Cllr S Baldwin noted that Cllr S Charles had saved the taxpayer sum of over £500. Cllr N Burnett suggested that it was inappropriate to single out any individual.

**22. To consider a date for a meeting to consider the following items:**

**a. To Review Standing Orders for 2020/2021**

**b. To review and approve delegation arrangements to committees, staff and other local authorities**

**c. To review and approve the terms of reference for committees**

**d. To review the appointment of committee's subject to any amendments to committees approved under the review of Standing Orders for 2020/2021**

**e. To appoint any new committees as necessary further to the review of Standing Orders for 2020/21**

**f. To review and approve the Council's Financial Governance policies for 2020/21:**

**a) Financial Regulations**

**b) Risk Assessment**

**c) Internal Control**

**d) Investment Strategy**

**g. To review fixed assets register for 2020/21**

**h. To review the Councils policies, procedures and practices in respect of its obligations under freedom of information and data protection legislation:**

- a) Publication Scheme**
- b) Social Media and Electronic Communication Policy**
- c) Data Security Breach Policy & Reporting Form**
- d) Document Retention and Disposal Policy**
- e) Removable Media Policy**
- f) Information Data Protection Policy**
- g) Subject Access Request Form**

**i. To review the Council's policy for dealing with the press/media**

- Cllr D Unwin proposed that with the current pressure of work on staff, that Council defer if possible. The Town Clerk advised that Council's Financial Governance policies for 2020/21 would need to be reviewed and changes noted.

**RESOLVED:** That a review of the Council's Financial Governance policies for 2020/21: Financial Regulations, Risk Assessment, Internal Control and Investment Strategy be reviewed at the next Full Council meeting.

- Mayor proposed that the remaining policies be reviewed in 2021/22 Mayoral Year.

**RESOLVED:** That the remaining items be reviewed in 2021/22 Mayoral Year.

**23. To discuss and agree a timetable of future Council and if necessary committee meetings for 2020**

- Cllr D Unwin suggested that committee meetings be kept to a minimum, and proposed that Chairs could liaise with the Town Clerk if required.
- The Town Clerk clarified that meeting under the current legislation should be for 'essential items only'. Members discussed and agreed that the current delegated authority continue.
- Cllr D Unwin proposed that Council await guidance from the Clerk as to the suitability of future meeting dates considering staff annual leave through August, and upon receipt of further legislation guidance from Welsh Government.

**RESOLVED:** That delegated powers remain in place and that the Clerk advise Council of suitable future meeting dates.

**The Mayor thanked attendees for their patience during the remote meeting and asked that any feedback is submitted to the Clerk**

Meeting closed at 8.05 pm.

Signed .....  
Mayor

Date .....