



## MINUTES OF EXTRAORDINARY COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND WELLBEING COMMITTEE

Wednesday September 29th 2021 at 6.30pm via Microsoft Teams

**Present:**

Cllr. I. Williams (Chair)	A. McFetrich (Co-optee)
Cllr. S. Easterbrook (Vice Chair)	Rev. R. Wheeler (Military Chaplain)
Cllr. S Bletsoe (Mayor Ex Efficio)	J. Harris (Military Advisor)
Cllr. T Wood ( Deputy Mayor)	L. Edwards – Town Clerk
Cllr. A Wathan	S. Lewis - Community Engagement and Event Manager
Cllr. F. Bletsoe	D. Elliott – Community Engagement and Events Officer (Minute Taker)
Cllr. R. Thomas	
D. Rees (Youth Representative)	

**Apologies:**

**1. To Receive Apologies for Absence.**

Apologies were received from Cllr. N. Burnett, Cllr. C. Woodman, Cllr. M. Smidman, and M. Howley (Youth Representative)

**2. To Receive any Declarations of Interest (if any) of Members in respect of the business to be transacted.**

Cllr. Easterbrook declared an interest as a town trader as the Saturday event will take place when town centre shops will be open.

**3. To consider planning for Remembrance events 2021**

Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, thanked them for their attendance and asked if staff would give background information regarding events on 11<sup>th</sup>, 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> November 2021.

**Thursday November 11<sup>th</sup> 2021**

Town Clerk informed the committee that she had received notification from a representative of Bridgend Historical Society and Bridgend Civic Trust of an event to be held at the War Memorial on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2021. The Mayor was invited to attend and permission was sought from the Council for a floral tribute to be laid at the War Memorial to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of its unveiling.

Town Clerk clarified that Bridgend Town Council do not organise an event at the War Memorial on armistice day, however, veterans and the public do gather in small numbers.

The Mayor confirmed that he was happy to attend.

Cllr. Wathan requested further information about the flowers to be laid. Town Clerk added that the floral tribute would be made of blue and white flowers and would be slightly smaller than a traditional poppy wreath in size. It was noted that Cllr. Unwin had urged the committee to support the request.

Cllr. F. Bletsoe asked for more information on the significance of the flowers and explained that following a conversation with a member of Bridgend Civic Trust, she had been led to believe that the flowers would be a garland of flowers, which would be placed around the railings of the War Memorial. Chair requested that Town Clerk establishes exactly what the Bridgend Civic Trust plan to lay at the War memorial.

Mayor reminded the committee that the War Memorial is a public place and members of the public are able to lay flowers there as they wish. Cllr. Easterbrook highlighted that Bridgend Civic Trust had done the right thing by asking permission.

Cllr. Wathan stated that the purpose of the War Memorial was to remember servicemen who had died defending their country and all tributes laid were to remember these servicemen. Members noted concern that the floral tribute to be laid on the 11<sup>th</sup> November was to commemorate the structure and not those who lost their lives.

Chair proposed that the Town Clerk request more information about the tribute being laid. The committee agreed to the laying of a wreath or posy of flowers in principle, but not to a garland of flowers. This was seconded by Cllr. Thomas. Cllr Wathan abstained from this decision.

**RESOLVED** – Town Clerk to seek further clarification regarding the colour and size of the floral tribute and explain that a wreath or posy of flowers would be acceptable but a garland of flowers around the railings of the War Memorial would not be acceptable.

Chair asked for more information about what normally happens at the War Memorial on 11<sup>th</sup> November and suggested that it may be appropriate for the Mayor to lay a wreath on behalf of the Town Council on 11<sup>th</sup> November as well as at the official service on 14<sup>th</sup> November. It was agreed that the Mayor would lay a wreath on 11<sup>th</sup> November as well as on 14<sup>th</sup> November.

**RESOLVED** – Town Clerk to ensure two wreaths are purchased for the Mayor to lay a wreath on 11<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> November 2021

Cllr. Bletsoe asked if she should attend on the 11<sup>th</sup> November as consort and the Town Clerk stated that this would be appropriate.

A. McFetrich stated that if any type of service is to be held at the War Memorial on 11<sup>th</sup> November, The Last Post and Reveille would need to be played. The committee discussed ways of playing the said pieces of music. A. McFetrich gave an overview of what happened at the War Memorial on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2020. Town Clerk asked for clarification from the committee if they were asking Bridgend Town Council to arrange an event on 11<sup>th</sup> November.

The Town Clerk gave an overview of the requirements needed to organise an official event and stated that the Town Council had never organised an official event on 11<sup>th</sup> November. Mayor stated that this would be too much work for staff given other work priorities.

Rev. Wheeler mentioned that she had previously worked with Cllr. David White to arrange a service at the War Memorial on armistice day. Town Clerk confirmed that previous events have been unofficial and not a formal events organised by the Town Council.

The committee agreed that Bridgend Town Council will not organise an event at the War Memorial on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2021.

### **Saturday November 13<sup>th</sup> 2021 Children's and Families Service**

Community Engagement and Events Manager referred to the Remembrance Event Management Plan which had previously been circulated to the committee and asked Members to decide what they would like to do should the weather be very inclement.

Chair informed the committee that Compassion Church on Nolton Street had offered their building to hold the service should the weather be not suitable for an outside service at the War Memorial. The Mayor explained that because of Covid, it would not be possible to make a quick decision on the day to move the service inside due to the risk assessments required, however a Covid Risk Assessment had already been undertaken for Compassion Church for the Civic Service planning. Community Engagement and Events Manager explained that the Covid Risk Assessment which had already been done would not cover a children's service due to the different nature of the event and the demographic involved. Facilities Manager stated that Track and Trace for such a situation would be very difficult to carry out.

Chair put forward that an option would be to cancel the service if the weather was very bad and Cllr. Wathan suggested that the decision be made on Friday 12<sup>th</sup> November after viewing a weather forecast.

Rev. Wheeler informed the committee that some older members of the public, who find the Sunday Service too long, attend the Saturday Service and suggested that the service goes ahead whatever the weather unless the conditions are dangerous. Members of the public can then make their own decision whether to attend.

Mayor agreed with this and Chair requested that a statement be put in the publicity for the event that the event will go ahead whatever the weather and to ensure that people attending are suitably dressed.

**RESOLVED** – Bridgend Town Council's press release for Remembrance Events 2021 will include information regarding inclement weather and ask those attending to dress accordingly as the event will go ahead unless the conditions are extreme and dangerous.

Chair asked Rev. Wheeler about whether the Air Cadets would be allowed to attend. Rev Wheeler explained that they were waiting for the authority to do so, however it is likely that a smaller number of air cadets will be able to be present, but without banners.

Cllr Easterbrook asked for clarification about organising events and the difference between the small gathering on 11<sup>th</sup> which wasn't going to be organised by the Town Council and the events on 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> November that were organised by the Town Council. Town Clerk explained that when the Town Council organises an event, they are responsible for all aspects of the event including road closures, informing the relevant organisations e.g. South Wales police, normal Risk assessments, Covid Risk

Assessments, Security and Insurance. Mayor confirmed that the events on 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> November were official events organised by the Town Council.

Cllr. Thomas asked if the Air Cadets would form a guard of honour and Rev. Wheeler confirmed that they would. A. McFetrich informed the committee that there was a new commander for Army Cadets and she had requested that Army cadets be included in the Saturday Service. This was agreed by the committee.

**RESOLVED** – A. McFetrich to inform the Army Cadet Commander that Bridgend Town Council would like representatives from the Army Cadets to take part in the Saturday service.

Rev Wheeler informed the committee that at present cadets were not allowed to march in ranks due to Covid regulations.

Members discussed the Children and Family Parade and noted that the Covid case rate in schools is currently very high. The Community Engagement and Events Manager explained that it is hoped that the Event Safety Advisory Group will provide advice on whether the parade can take place and in what format. The Town Clerk suggested that if a children's parade is not permitted, the committee could consider holding a service at the War Memorial without the parade element. Community Engagement and Events Manager stated that this event would be discussed at the next ESAG meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> October and guidance will be given.

**RESOLVED** – To seek guidance from the Event Safety Advisory Group about a parade taking place before the Children's and Families Service.

#### **Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> November 2021 Remembrance Parade and Service**

Community Engagement and Events Manager referred to the Remembrance Event Management Plan which had previously been circulated to the committee and asked the committee whether Carnegie House should be open to dignitaries before the start of the parade.

Town Clerk informed the committee that she had spoken to the Military Adviser, J. Harries, who was due to join the meeting later, and he advised that Carnegie House remained closed on 14<sup>th</sup> November 2021 due to the ongoing Covid pandemic.

The committee discussed alternative muster points for the dignitaries and it was agreed that they would muster outside Carnegie House and walk to take their place at the War Memorial after the main parade was in place. Chair asked if it could be made clear on the invitations where each dignitary needed to muster as some of them will muster at the main parade step off on Angel Street.

**RESOLVED** – Town Clerk to ensure that information about where each dignitary should muster to be included on the invitation to the Remembrance Service.

Mayor proposed that the time for those mustering outside Carnegie House could be moved from 9.30am to 10am. This was seconded by the Chair.

**RESOLVED** – Community Engagement and Events Manager to amend Event Plan accordingly.

A. McFetrich asked if any organisations who need to collect wreaths on the morning of Sunday 14<sup>th</sup> November could come to Carnegie House to collect them. Town Clerk said that this would be possible.

**RESOLVED** – Town Clerk to ensure that provision is made at Carnegie House for collection of wreaths on the morning of 14<sup>th</sup> November 2021.

Community Engagement and Events Officer referred the committee to the summary of tenders received for supplying the Sound System and additional equipment required on 14<sup>th</sup> November and recommended that the committee accept the tender from EPM Creative. This was not only the most cost-effective quote, but the company could also provide everything that was required and had experience of previous events in the town centre.

Mayor asked if EMP Creative were able to set up on the morning of the event and Community Engagement and Events manager confirmed that they could. Cllr. Wathan proposed that the committee accept the recommendations.

Town Clerk made the committee aware that not all companies that were invited to tender were able to provide everything required, so the quotes were not like for like. The Mayor queried this as there was a lot of further information covered in the quotes but Town Clerk advised that protocol is to compare three quotes that are like for like. Mayor accepted that this had been made clear to them and Cllr. Bletsoe said that three quotes had been sought.

**RESOLVED** – The committee accepted the quote from EPM Creative and the Community Engagement and Events Manager will inform all companies who submitted a quote the outcome of the decision.

Community Engagement and Events Manager referred to the budget that had been prepared by the Responsible Finance Officer. Town Clerk stated that the budget of £7,000 usually covers everything however this year there has already been an additional cost of £186 for the road closure notice and the predicted cost for closing the roads would be £3,000, which the Town Council have not had to pay previously. Town Clerk informed the committee that if the budget goes over the allocated £7,000 Full Council will need to be informed and a request submitted to vire money from another budget. £3,000 was allocated for an exhibition to mark 100 years of the War Memorial however due to various issues this is no longer required. Mayor asked Town Clerk to put an item on the agenda for the next meeting of Full Council to request a virement of funds to cover the increasing cost of Remembrance.

**RESOLVED** – Town Clerk to agenda an item for the next meeting of Full Council to request a virement of funds to cover the increasing cost of Remembrance.

Chair asked why BCBC has stopped managing the road closures. Town Clerk explained that in 2018 and 2019 the closures were managed by South Wales Police and paid for by BCBC as a goodwill gesture but it was made clear that this would stop from 2020. Cllr. Wood asked if BCBC would contribute and Town Clerk replied that BCBC had been asked again this year but they had declined.

Cllr. Easterbrook asked if the BCBC's Town Centre Manager had funds to assist with road closures. A. McFetrich stated that the Town Centre Manager was also responsible for Maesteg and Porthcawl town centres so this would be unlikely and suggested that the parade was rerouted so there was no need for road closures. A. McFetrich and the Town Clerk informed the committee about previous parades and in particular, the length of the parade and how it requires a very long road to form up.

Chair requested That Town Clerk writes to the Leader of BCBC to ask if BCBC would contribute to the costs involved with organising Remembrance making reference to the amount of BCBC dignitaries who attend the parade and service.

**RESOLVED** - Town Clerk to write to the Leader of BCBC to ask for a contribution to the costs involved with organising Remembrance making reference to the amount of BCBC dignitaries who attend the parade and service.

Town Clerk asked A. McFetrich if he would like us to make additional contact with the Bridgend Branch of the Royal British Legion to ensure that no organisation is left out of planning for Remembrance. As Branch Secretary, A. McFetrich confirmed that everything goes via himself so as he is a member of this committee, there is no need to make additional contact.

**RESOLVED** – No additional contact will be made with Bridgend RBL regarding Remembrance 2021.

Town Clerk informed the meeting that we will be making additional provision for cleaning on 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> November and providing hand sanitising stations and asked whether it would be beneficial at this stage to start making contingency plans in case the restrictions around Covid change in the run up to Remembrance weekend. Chair suggested to carry on with current planning and he would call a meeting if things changed in the future.

**RESOLVED** – No contingency plans to be made at this stage but a meeting will be called should restrictions and guidance change in the future.

Cllr. Bletsoe informed the committee that she would prefer to stand with the families at the War memorial and there were no objections to this.

**RESOLVED** – Cllr. Bletsoe to stand with the families during the Remembrance Service on 14<sup>th</sup> November.

Town Clerk raised the issue of what would happen if a key player had to isolate and was unable to attend at the service. J. Harries said that the most important people to consider for replacements were Rev. Wheeler, the Parade Marshall and the Bridgend Town Council organising team. Town Clerk suggested that the Bridgend Town Council staff should not meet for at least a week before Remembrance weekend.

**RESOLVED** – Bridgend Town Council staff should not meet in person for at least a week before 13<sup>th</sup> November 2021.

J. Harries asked whether we would recommend that members of the public wear masks and the Community Engagement and Events Manager stated that this would be included in the press release and all information that would be circulated to the public.

**RESOLVED** – A request that the public wear masks at the Remembrance Service on 14<sup>th</sup> November will be included in the press release issued to inform the media and public about the service.

Cllr. Easterbrook asked how we would manage the 2 m regulation for social distancing and Community Engagement and Events Manager stated that we would follow Welsh Government Guidelines at the time of the event. J. Harries stated that there was no 2-meter social distancing at Porthcawl's Elvis festival and all we could do is the ask the public to remain safe.

Rev. Wheeler asked if it would be possible to erect screens in front of the dais. A. McFetrich informed the committee that he has four screens that could be used.

**RESOLVED** – Town Clerk to notify A. McFetrich if the screens will be required and organise them to be delivered to Carnegie House.

Rev. Wheeler asked if the committee would like her to refer to Covid in her service. The committee discussed that front line workers already have a day dedicated for them and Mayor suggested that the service focuses on the Military. J. Harries suggested that a small mention may be given as many former service personnel have lost their lives whilst working in key worker positions during the pandemic. It was agreed that this could be referred to in Rev. Wheeler’s service. It was also agreed that a reading called ‘All at Sea’ would also be read.

**RESOLVED** – Rev. Wheeler to mention former military personnel whose lives have been lost to covid in the service and include the reading ‘All At Sea’.

Town Clerk requested that the text for the order of service be sent to her so that it can be formatted for the printed copies which will be distributed on the day and asked the committee how many should be printed. The committee discussed whether there was a need to print them out and A. McFetrich enquired if the order of service could be displayed on a screen. Cllr. Bletsoe suggested that the Order of Service is accessed via a QR code and the congregation can access the Order of Service via their phones. Town Clerk confirmed that the choir always requested paper copies as do some older members of the public. Community Engagement and Events Manager suggested that the Order of Service can be made available via the Town Council’s social media channels. It was agreed that the Town Council will print 1,000 copies in house but would also make the Order of Service available online.

**RESOLVED** – Rev. Wheeler to send the text for the Order of Service to Town Clerk. 1,000 copies will be printed and the Order of Service will also be made available online and on social media.

A. McFetrich asked if the Town Council had considered providing an interpreter for those who are hard of hearing. It was noted that Bridgend College or Bridgend Deaf Club could be approached for support with this. Rev. Wheeler highlighted that those who are Nero Diverse or have dyslexia also need to be considered. It was agreed that providing a copy of the Order of Service in digital format will allow people to use technology such as screen readers to follow the service.

Chair asked when the flags should be raised on the War Memorial and A. McFetrich informed the committee that flags, as in previous years: -RAF Ensign, Royal Navy Ensign, Union Jack and Welsh flag, could be flown at full mast from the morning of 11<sup>th</sup> November 2021.

**RESOLVED** – Facilities Manager to ensure the flags are raised by 9am on the morning of 11<sup>th</sup> November 2021.

**Meeting Closed 9.07pm**

Signed .....

Date .....

Chair of Community Engagement & Well-being Committee