



MINUTES OF BRIDGEND TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

Meeting Details:

Date: Monday 15th November 2021

Time: 6.30 pm

Location: Meeting held remotely via video conference under Local Government and Elections Act (Wales) 2021

Chairperson: The Mayor, Cllr Steven Bletsoe

Staff: Mrs L Edwards (Town Clerk), Mrs D Jones (Deputy Town Clerk & RFO), Miss J Brown (Democratic Services Officer) and Mrs Sharlene Lewis

In Attendance:

Cllr Alan Wathan – PRESENT

Cllr Ian Williams –PRESENT

Cllr Steven Bletsoe (Mayor) – PRESENT

Cllr Steven Easterbrook – PRESENT

Cllr Stuart Baldwin – PRESENT

Cllr Martin Smidman - PRESENT

Cllr Lyn Walters - PRESENT

Cllr David Unwin – PRESENT

Cllr S Charles - PRESENT

Cllr Tim Wood – PRESENT

Cllr M Voisey - PRESENT

Cllr C Evans - PRESENT

Youth Representatives:

Dafydd Rees – PRESENT

- The Mayor welcomed members of the public to the meeting and explained that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public, Youth Representatives, and representatives of the press would be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of agenda item 20 as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.
- The Mayor welcomed Councillors to the meeting.

1. To Receive Apologies for Absence

- Cllr Nicole Burnett, Cllr R Thomas, Cllr F Bletsoe, Cllr M Blundell-Humphries, Cllr A Morelli
- Youth Representative – Megan Howley
- **Absent:** Cllr Chris Woodman, Cllr Carolyn Webster

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

- There were no declarations of interest.

3. To receive questions or comments from Members of the Public (Standing Order 3(e) refers)

- There were no questions from Members of the Public.

4. To receive questions or comments from the BTC Youth Representatives

- Youth Member Dafydd Rees extended his thanks to Council for organising Remembrance Weekend and commented that it was nice to finally meet everyone in person.
- The Mayor thanked Dafydd Rees for his contribution and added that he was very proud of the input received from the Youth Members.

5. To Confirm and Sign Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 18th October 2021

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 18th October 2021 be confirmed as a true record and duly signed.

6. To consider matters arising from the minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 18th October 2021

- The Mayor reminded Councillors that any matters arising on confidential pink papers would need to be discussed in confidence under agenda item 20.

7. To note for information Mayoral Announcements and Engagements

- Wednesday 20th October - Presented an 80th Birthday Cake to Mr David Dobbs at the Wyndham Arms Hotel
- Saturday 30th October - Attended the Launch of RBL Poppy Appeal in the Rhiw
- Thursday 4th November - Presentation to Jean Gorick who completed 40 years as a volunteer in support of the Annual Poppy Appeal
- Thursday 4th November - Accompanied RBL Secretary to meet The Queens Dragoon Guards selling Poppies at Tesco
- Saturday 6th November - Brynteg School Panto Street Performance in Dunraven Place
- Thursday 11th November - Armistice Day at the War Memorial
- Saturday 13th November - Children and Family Remembrance Parade and Service
- Saturday 13th November - Friends of Heronsbridge School Car Treasure Hunt
- Sunday 14th November - Remembrance Sunday Parade and Service

- The Mayor added that on the 11th November he had been honoured to place a poppy wreath on the first train to London Paddington from Bridgend. He explained that 'Poppies to Paddington' was created by The Veterans Charity with support from GWR, helping communities to ensure our fallen heroes are remembered despite the restrictions in place around Covid-19. The Mayor thanked Mr Alistair McFetrich of the RBL for his assistance.
- The Mayor announced that he spoke on behalf of all Councillors to congratulate The Town Clerk and staff, who did The Council proud with a very well received Remembrance Weekend. The Mayor also passed on the remarks of Her Majesty's Deputy Lord Lieutenant who as a former High Sheriff had attended numerous parades and declared the Bridgend Remembrance service and parade 'the best she had ever attended'.
- The Town Clerk thanked The Mayor and informed Members that it was a team effort and that thanks had been extended to all staff.
- The Mayor announced that further information regarding Remembrance Sunday would be discussed in confidence and included under agenda item 20.

8. To receive Town Clerk's Report since last meeting (for information)

- The Town Clerk referred to her detailed report which had been circulated to Members, and gave a short verbal report for the benefit of members of the public present.

Remembrance Events 2021

- The Town Clerk referred to the significant amount of work across the BTC team to co-ordinate the Children and Family Remembrance Parade and Service on Saturday 13th November and the Remembrance Sunday Parade and Service on 14th November.

It was noted that on 11th November, to mark Armistice Day, the BTC Mayor laid a wreath at the War Memorial on behalf of the residents of Bridgend and Deputy Mayor, Cllr Tim Wood, laid a wreath for those who served on HMS Urge. A wreath was also laid to mark the 100th Anniversary of the unveiling of the War Memorial and The Last Post was played by RBL Secretary Alistair McFetrich.

The Town Clerk thanked all involved during a very busy period, particularly Reverend Rachel Wheeler, the BTC Military Advisor John Harris, RBL Secretary Alistair McFetrich, the BCBC Town Centre Manager and BCBC Highways Department and partners such as South Wales Police and Bridgend Fire Station.

Christmas

- The Town Clerk outlined plans for Christmas activities which include the exterior of Carnegie House being transformed into a Christmas Elf HQ and a Reindeer Trail around Bridgend town centre. The reindeer trail will involve clues on a map available from town centre shops and the indoor market and the public will be encouraged to post selfies with the reindeer to the Carnegie House Facebook page with the hashtag #bridgendreindertrail for a chance to win a goodie bag. The competition will run from 27th November – 18th December.
- On Saturday 11th December the Town Council will also be providing a Brass Band Bus with Santa and traditional Christmas music from the RAF St Athan Voluntary Band. The bus will follow a route around all three BTC wards and a separate open top car has been arranged for the Wildmill area. In the event of inclement weather, if the bus is unable to travel on Saturday 11th, provision has been made for the event to take place at the same times on Saturday 12th December. The Town Clerk advised that details would be advertised across social media channels and requested that Members help promote it within their networks.

Christmas activities with BCBC

- The Town Clerk reported that the Community Engagement Team are assisting the Town Centre Manager to promote local businesses via digital apps and a Christmas website where traders can post offers, vouchers, discount codes etc.
- It was noted that due to the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, there will not be a large public event for the Christmas light switch in Bridgend town centre. Instead, the Christmas lights switch-on will be filmed and broadcast via social media. The filming is being co-ordinated by BCBC as part of their digital Christmas campaign but will include the BTC Mayor being filmed next to the Christmas tree, providing a Christmas message to residents.
- The Town Clerk explained that BCBC have been advised not to encourage a large gathering in one area. For this reason, a walk-through trail of Christmas-themed zones throughout the town centre would be provided in a safe and controlled way. The Christmas zones will feature live music, a snowstorm, a Santa selfie sleigh, street entertainment and the chance to meet Santa's reindeers. Access to this event will be free of charge but to control numbers, access will be limited, and the public must pre-book tickets ahead of the event. Full details will be released on how to obtain tickets later this month.

New Town Council Website

The Town Clerk advised that a remote meeting was held with the appointed contractor on 25th October. The staff are working on the provision of website content, the website build will start in mid-January and the new website should be ready to launch in Spring 2022.

BTC Newsletter - 3 rd. Edition

The Town Clerk Informed Members that the next Town Council newsletter has been prepared and is ready to be sent to print and distributed throughout the wards.

Town Hall Project

The Town Clerk Informed Members that as discussed at last month's meeting, the initial Cost Plan submitted was beyond Council's budget and therefore a priority of work is being developed so that work can be phased over several financial years. It is anticipated that a revised Cost Plan will be available on Thursday 18th November.

The Town Clerk advised that a Working Group meeting would be called to review the revised Cost Plan and an Extra ordinary full Council meeting may be required to agree the budget for the works so that the tender for a contractor can be finalised and advertised. The timescales for completion would become clearer after this point.

Planning for the 2022/23 Budget

The Town Clerk reported that many of the Town Council committees have met this month to discuss projects for next financial year and prepare a budget request for the Town Council precept discussion in December. She explained that due to unforeseen circumstances the next Finance Committee meeting, scheduled for Tuesday 30th November will be pushed back to Tuesday 7th December and an additional Personnel Committee meeting will be required to discuss a staffing matter and staff training budget for 2022/23.

Upcoming meetings:

The Town Clerk cordially reminded Councillors of the following meetings:

Extraordinary Full Council (Town Hall Project)	Date TBC (if required)
Personnel Committee	Friday 3rd December
Planning Committee	Monday 6th December
Finance Committee	Tuesday 7th December
Full Council meeting (PRECEPT)	Monday 13th December

The Town Clerk added that she was meeting with the BTC Insurance Provider reference flood cover. The Town Clerk invited questions. There were no questions.

9. Finance

1. To receive a balance of accounts and payments since last meeting

- The Chair presented the balance of accounts and asked Members if they had any questions. There were no questions.

RESOLVED: Accounts paid, read, and approved by Members.

2. To consider the draft minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on 19th October 2021.

- The Chair presented the minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on the 19th October 2021 and added that the matter of the Town Hall Budget would be discussed during agenda item 13. The Chair invited questions. There were no questions.

RESOLVED: To receive and note the minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on 19th October 2021.

10. Facilities

1. To consider the draft minutes of the Facilities Committee meeting held on 21st October 2021

The Chair presented draft minutes of the Facilities meeting held on the 21st October 2021 and the draft minutes of the Facilities meeting held on the 3rd November 2021 (item 10.4 refers), which were related to budget only. The Chair invited Questions. There were no questions.

RESOLVED: To receive and note the minutes of the Facilities Committee Meeting held on 21st October 2021

RESOLVED: To receive and note the minutes of the Facilities Committee Meeting held on 3rd November 2021.

2. To consider a formal appeal from the tenant on plot 12 Dunraven Allotment Site regarding a decision to allow a request for a beehive on plot 13A Dunraven Allotment site, due to a severe allergy to bee stings.

- The Town Clerk advised Councillors that the request to site a beehive on plot 13A had been withdrawn, however suggested that on principle Members should discuss the appeal.
- The Mayor invited questions.
- Members considered the information contained within the appeal and discussed a beekeeping policy.
- Cllr D Unwin advised that a lengthy discussion was held when the decision was previously made and suggested that although the concern of individuals should be noted, it was also essential to promote the positive effects of pollination and adhere to policy.
- Cllr M Voisey agreed with Cllr D Unwin and queried if an alternative location could be found to site a beehive in future.
- Cllr L Walters noted that Council could build on the additional information and the policy, and also suggested that prospective beekeepers should be asked to provide confirmation that they have had training etc.
- Youth Member highlighted that bee keeping training is mandatory according to the National Allotment Society Website.
- Cllr M Smidman noted that this was an important point and presented a significant risk to council.
- The Town Clerk advised that she could raise the matter at her meeting with the Insurers.
- Cllr S Baldwin proposed that a letter be sent to the tenant on Plot A Dunraven Allotment Site confirming that their appeal was not successful at the time of enquiry and that Council would be conducting further revision of the beekeeping policy.

RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk reply to tenant on Plot A Dunraven Allotment Site confirming that their appeal was not successful at the time of enquiry and that Council would be conducting further revision of the beekeeping policy.

- The Town Clerk suggested to Council that the matter be passed to the Facilities Committee for further discussion. The Chair of the Facilities Committee agreed.

3. To consider a motion from Cllr Stuart Baldwin and Cllr Steven Bletsoe to determine a way forward regarding Facilities workload, priorities/expectations, and outsourcing:

“This Council believes that to eliminate the backlog of priorities centred around the operation and tasks of the Facilities Management activity that external support should be sourced. This should be on a temporary basis until such time that internal resources allow for routine activity to be delivered without external support. In order to support this motion this Council also believes that new projects should be limited, and a table of priorities agreed for six months following the engagement of the external support. This position can then be reviewed after four months from the start of the external support.”

- Cllr S Baldwin added that the proposed motion had been discussed in full by the Facilities Committee, who agreed that the motion should be brought to a full council meeting.
- The Mayor confirmed that all key aspects of employing contractors had been discussed.
- Cllr L Walters supported the motion.
- Cllr M Smidman queried the financial implications for Council. The Town Clerk clarified that no funds would be allocated until Council agreed to consider the motion in principle, and if the motion is agreed, costed plans and quotes would be sought.

RESOLVED: That in principle, Council accept the motion to source external support to help address a backlog of work for the Facilities Team. This is will be on a temporary basis until such time that internal resources allow for routine activity to be delivered without external support and costed plans and quotes should be compiled by the Facilities Manager for the sourcing of the external support.

4. To consider the draft minutes of the Facilities Committee meeting held on 3rd November 2021

- **NOTED – resolved under agenda item 10.1**

11. Community Engagement and Wellbeing Committee

a. To consider the draft minutes of the Community Engagement and Wellbeing Committee meeting held on 27th October 2021

- The Chair presented the minutes to Council and invited questions.
- Cllr D Unwin highlighted inaccuracies in the minutes and advised that:
Item 10 date of 27th November should be amended to the 26th November.
Item 10 EMP Creative should be amended to EPM Creative.
- The amendments were noted by the Town Clerk and the minutes will be duly amended.
- Cllr L Walters referred to Item 2 and queried whether the declarations of interest made by Councillors were personal or prejudicial.
- Cllrs S Easterbrook and T Wood confirmed that their interest was of a personal nature as Town Traders, and that they would note this in future.
- The Town Clerk explained that prior to remote meetings, a Declarations of Interest form was usually filled out prior to the meeting in the Council Chamber.
- The Mayor queried if it was possible to fill out a form prior to the meeting?
- Cllr S Baldwin confirmed that BCBC used the same form for declarations in person or online.
- The Mayor suggested that moving forward he and The Town Clerk revise the declaration of interest form.

RESOLVED: To receive and note the minutes of the Community Engagement and Wellbeing Committee Meeting held on 27th October 2021

b. To consider allocating budget for additional Christmas festivities/entertainment in Wyndham Street on Saturday 27th November 2021 and review options and costs provided by the event provider.

- The Chair referred to the breakdown of costs which had been previously circulated and commented that in the light of a lack of activities for Children this year due to Covid-19 he would be grateful for Members support.
- The Mayor asked The Chair to confirm the budget available. The Chair confirmed that £3000 was available.
- After a short discussion The Chair asked the Community Engagement and Events Manager for clarification regarding advertising. Due to technical difficulties, the Town Clerk replied on behalf of the Community Engagement and Events Manager to explain that the proposed activities are to add to an existing event and that BTC will be working in collaboration with BCBC to promote the event therefore can ensure that it is clear that BTC have are providing the budget for the additional activities.
- Cllr Voisey suggested an alternative option to donate funds to the local food bank.
- The Mayor reminded Members that in 2019 a donation was made to the foodbank and thanked Cllr M Voisey for his valid suggestion.
- After discussion Cllr S Baldwin suggested that the motion be accepted providing the snow machine is included as one of the more valued aspects of the entertainment.
- Cllr A Wathan supported the motion and added that Christmas Entertainment is for children from all walks of life.
- Cllr S Baldwin proposed that the budget of £3000 be allocated for additional Christmas festivities/entertainment in Wyndham Street on Saturday 27th November 2021.
- It was suggested that authority is delegated to staff to make an informed decision based on the availability of items to be discussed at the BCBC Christmas meeting to be held tomorrow.
- There were no objections.

RESOLVED: That a budget of £3000 be allocated for additional Christmas festivities and entertainment in Wyndham Street on Saturday 27th November 2021 and that authority be delegated to BTC staff to make an informed decision based on availability of items to be discussed at a BCBC Christmas planning meeting to be held on 16th November 2021.

Cllr M Voisey declared an interest and left the meeting for agenda item 12

12. Planning:

To consider the draft minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 8th November 2021

- The Chair presented the minutes to the meeting and asked if there were any questions. There were no questions.

RESOLVED: To receive and note the minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on 8th November 2021.

Cllr M Voisey rejoined the meeting

13. Town Hall

To receive an update from the Town Clerk and Town Hall Working Group regarding the status of the Town Hall refurbishment project and the draft cost plan.

- The Mayor invited The Town Clerk to provide an update. The Town Clerk advised that the Quantity Surveyor could not provide the revised cost plan until Friday 19th November 2021, therefore a Working Group meeting would be called after this date to discuss priorities and following this an Extraordinary Town Council meeting may be necessary to move progress.

14. To consider a motion from Cllr Ian Williams:

Title of Motion: Recording of Council Meetings

“For Bridgend Town Council to record all meetings through the Microsoft Teams application for public transparency”

- Cllr I Williams expanded on his motion and confirmed that committee meetings were included.
- The Town Clerk explained that BTC uses the BCBC IT network which includes using their Microsoft Teams application to facilitate remote meetings, and at present the option to record meetings is not available.
- The Mayor suggested that Council should find out if this is possible. He also highlighted that a new council policy regarding the recording of meetings would need to be written.
- Cllr S Baldwin verified that legality must be in place and highlighted that currently BCBC do not have the equipment to facilitate hybrid meetings.
- Members discussed alternative options and after a lengthy discussion, the Town Clerk advised that Councillors should return to the wording of the original motion.
- It was noted that Council minutes are currently recorded manually and are an accurate record. It was suggested that at this point the recording of meetings is not a priority.
- Cllr I Williams thanked members for their views and proposed to withdraw his motion , revise the wording of the motion and present the amended motion in the New Year.

15. To consider a motion from Cllr Freya Bletsoe:

Title of Motion: The designation and use of gardens at Bridgend Town Hall

“For Bridgend Town Council to designate the grounds of Bridgend Town Hall as being for public access, enjoyment and use. For these grounds to be managed and maintained by a volunteer group in conjunction with Bridgend Town Council in line with our Future Generations and Wellbeing obligations and Bridgend Town Council adopted environmental policy.”

- The Mayor proposed that in the absence of Cllr Freya Bletsoe, Cllr T Wood take the matter forward. The Town Clerk advised that the name of the proposer could not be changed.
- The Mayor clarified that Cllr T Wood was explaining the proposal as he was also involved in environmental projects.
- After a positive discussion and agreement on the suggestion, Members supported leaving this project in abeyance for a year until The Town Hall is established.
- Cllr T Wood thanked Members for their views and proposed that the motion is withdrawn for discussion at a later date.

16. To review the new Model Local Resolution Protocol for Community and Town Councils 2021

- The Mayor asked the Town Clerk to speak on this agenda item.
- The Town Clerk provided an overview and invited Members to consider and discuss the agenda item and consider if Council should adopt the new Model Local Resolution Protocol for Community and Town Councils. She asked Members if they had any questions. There were no questions.
- Cllr D Unwin asked if The Town Clerk was happy with the new model. The Town Clerk explained that the purpose of the new model appears to be aimed at reducing the number

of Member on Member complaints to the Public Services Ombudsman. The Town Clerk highlighted that the new Local Resolution Protocol appears to put the onus on Council to try to resolve local issues. The Town Clerk explained that under the new protocol she and the Chair of Council would be required to arrange and facilitate meetings to address and resolve issues between Members.

- After discussion between Members regarding the resource required to facilitate this protocol, the Town Clerk explained that it is part of her to duty to provide information to the Ombudsman and this does take time. It was noted that the new concept is not to increase workload, but it is a different type of work.
- After discussion Cllr S Baldwin queried if Council would be at risk? The Town Clerk advised that as the government were encouraging the new protocol she did not think so.
- Members felt that this protocol needs further consideration.

RESOLVED: That the new Model Local Resolution Protocol for Community and Town Councils 2021 should be discussed at a later date.

17. Consultations:

1. Draft Review Report and Draft Replacement Local Development Plan Delivery Agreement Consultation

- NOTED– courtesy letter and no input required.

18. Correspondence: Email from One Voice Wales re: Section 47 Multi-location Meetings Survey

- The Town Clerk advised that there had been conflicting information in the new legislation and that concerns had been raised by several Clerks.
- The Town Clerk reported that she had already submitted her concerns to One Voice Wales, and noted that Bridgend Town Council have some equipment at Carnegie House but no equipment at The Town Hall.
- The Mayor invited Councillors to complete the survey and noted that the link was included in the email which had been circulated to Members.

19. Town and Community Forum

- a) To consider items for inclusion on the Town and Community Council Forum agenda - NOTED
- b) To consider feedback from meetings of the Town and Community Council Forum - NOTED
- c) To identify proposals for inclusion on the TCC Charter Action Plan which would aid the development of the Charter – NOTED

The Mayor thanked Members of the Public for attending.

RESOLVED: That under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public and representatives of the press be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of agenda item 20 as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

Members of the public, BTC Youth Representatives and members of staff (except the Town Clerk, RFO and Democratic Services Officer) left the meeting.

20: Personnel

This page is intentionally blank

Meeting closed: 8.50 pm

Signed

Date

Mayor