



MINUTES OF BRIDGEND TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

Monday 14th December at 6.30 pm conducted remotely via Skype for Business under the Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Meetings) (Wales) Regulations 2020

Present:	Cllr Alan Wathan (Mayor) Cllr Stuart Baldwin Cllr Steven Bletsoe Cllr Ceri Evans Cllr Angela Morelli Cllr D Unwin Cllr Freya Bletsoe	Cllr S Easterbrook Cllr C Webster Cllr N Burnett Cllr L Walters Cllr I Williams Cllr S Charles Cllr C Woodman
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In Attendance: Mrs L Edwards (Town Clerk), Mrs D Jones (Deputy Town Clerk & RFO) & Miss J Brown (Democratic Services Officer).

1. To receive apologies for absence:

Cllr M Voisey, Cllr T Wood, Cllr R Thomas
Absent: Cllr R Marsh, Cllr R Porter

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

- Cllr S Baldwin - Declaration of interest item 7 - BCBC Planning Matters
- Cllr C Webster – Declaration of interest item 7 – BCBC Planning Matters

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

- There were no questions raised and no members of the public present.

4. To receive Town Clerk's Report and Facilities Management Report for November/December 2020 (for information).

- The Town Clerk referred Members to the report, which had been circulated and invited questions.
- It was noted that some office staff have continued to work from home whilst the Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk and Facilities Manager have been working from the building intermittently for meetings, to access information and to use the printing facilities.
- Members were advised a new member of staff joined the team on Monday 30th November in the role of Temporary Facilities Officer on a 3-month contract.
- Members were advised that two members of staff had developed the Covid-19 virus and three other members of staff had to isolate due to close contact. This situation had caused challenges with workload in particular the emptying of dog waste bins. The Town Clerk advised that alternative arrangements were being sought for the emptying of the dog waste bins.

- It was noted that the Carnegie House and Town Hall buildings were treated with industrial fogging on Thursday 10th December. This non-corrosive dry mist disinfectants all surfaces in a room to kill pathogens including COVID-19 and lasts for 4-6 weeks.
- It was noted that the Architect/Contractor brief for the refurbishment work at the Town Hall had been issued and that quotes have been requested by Tuesday 5th January 2021.
- It was noted that a significant amount of work had been undertaken during the month to prepare for the Town Council precept discussions.
- Members were provided with details for an open top bus with Santa and a brass band to travel around the wards on Sunday 13th and Sunday 20th December (weather permitting).
- Members were asked to notify the Town Clerk if they wished to receive a hard copy of the draft Town Centre Master Plan.

5. Personnel Committee:

To consider draft minutes of the Personnel Committee Meeting of 19th November 2020.

- The Chair advised Members that the draft minutes had been circulated and invited questions. There were no questions.
- The Chair thanked staff for their continued commitment throughout the year in very difficult circumstances.

RESOLVED: To receive and note the minutes of the Personnel Committee Meeting of 19th November 2020.

6. Community Engagement & Well-being Committee:

a) To consider draft minutes of the Community Engagement & Well-being Committee Meeting of 25th November 2020.

- The Chair referred Members to the minutes and invited questions. There were no questions.

RESOLVED: To receive and note the minutes of the Community Engagement & Well-being Committee Meeting of 25th November 2020.

b) To consider an item deferred from the Community Engagement and Well-Being Committee meeting regarding a financial donation to Bridgend Foodbank.

- The Chair explained that the allocation of the remaining balance of the Christmas budget, forecast to be £1,645 was debated at the meeting and it was resolved by vote to donate the money to Bridgend Foodbank. She explained that the Town Clerk had advised that the Committee did not have the delegated authority to release the funds and suggested that the matter should be brought to the attention of Full Council for a decision.
- Cllr D Unwin queried if the donation should be given in food rather than cheque form. The Chair replied that she did not know the answer but asked Councillors to approve the decision in principle.
- Cllr S Bletsoe advised Members that his only concern was that residents outside the wards would benefit and questioned if this was appropriate.
- After discussion, Cllr L Walters proposed that Council fully support the Community Engagement & Wellbeing Committee suggestion and donate the sum of £1,645 to the Bridgend Foodbank on the basis that these were funds remaining from the Christmas Budget, which would normally have been allocated for community engagement and wellbeing events that may also benefit visitors to Bridgend outside of the wards. The motion was seconded by Cllr S Baldwin. The Mayor called for a vote. Members unanimously voted in favour of the donation to Bridgend Foodbank.

RESOLVED: That the sum of £1,645 be donated to Bridgend Foodbank.

7. Planning Committee:

To receive an update of the Planning Committee Meeting of 9th December 2020.

Cllr S Baldwin and Cllr C Webster left the meeting for the duration of this agenda item.

- The Chair referred Members to the Bridgend Town Master Plan document. He highlighted the two-month review deadline and proposed if Members wished to discuss the document and submit a view from Bridgend Town Council, it be added to the February 2021 Full Council meeting agenda.
- The Town Clerk advised Members that an official letter concerning the Town Master Plan Consultation had been received and would be included on the agenda of the January 2021 Full Council meeting.
- The Chair referred Members to the Planning Committee Meeting of that day and advised that the minutes would be circulated at the next Full Council meeting.

8. Finance:

1). To consider draft minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting of 1st December 2020.

2). To consider draft minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting of 8th December 2020.

- The Chair referred Councillors to the two sets of minutes and advised that the meetings lasted over 8 hours in order that the budgets be looked at in meticulous detail; he advised that the extra considerations of the new Bridgend Town Hall development had also been considered at length.
- The Chair thanked The Town Clerk, Deputy Clerk/RFO and supporting Staff for their considerable input. The Chair invited questions. There were no questions.

RESOLVED: To receive and note the minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting of 1st December and 8th December 2020.

3). To consider draft budget, general reserves forecast and precept recommendation for 2021-22.

- The Chair of Finance referred members to the Forecast General Reserves spreadsheet.
- He stated that Bridgend Town Council, in the current 2020/21 financial year held 4 months expenditure in reserves and proposed a reduction to 3 months expenditure held in reserves for the 2021/22 financial year and any remaining general reserve balance be allocated to the budget.
- Members agreed to allocate £135,477.95 of general reserves to the budget to reduce the precept requirement for 2021/22.
- The Chair of Finance referred members to the draft 2021/22 budget spreadsheet recommendation from the Finance Committee; he drew Members attention to the proposed increase of 1.95% and advised it would equate to an increase of 2p per adult resident per week for the financial year.
- Members reviewed each budget heading.
- Members debated the effect of the pandemic financially on the community.
- Cllr S Baldwin asked how much general reserve would be required to reduce the proposed precept increase of 1.95% to 0%. The Chair of Finance responded that a further £12,410.31 would be required from the general reserves.
- Cllr S Baldwin proposed that Council absorb the 1.95% proposed increase by allocating a further £12,410.31 from general reserves. Seconded by Cllr N Burnett and Cllr C Webster.
- The Mayor asked that a vote be taken on the proposal from Cllr S Baldwin.
- Members were unanimous in favour of allocating a further £12,410.31 from general reserves in order that there is no increase on the 2021/22 precept from the previous year. The Deputy Town Clerk/RFO updated the spreadsheet to reflect Members decision.

RESOLVED: That the Bridgend Town Council total budget for 2021/22 is £806,699.89 and that the precept requirement for 2021/22 is £637,979.63.

9. To consider a request regarding use of a community based venue to enable victims of domestic abuse to give evidence remotely.

- The Town Clerk referred to an email she had received from BCBC requesting if Bridgend Town Council would be able to provide a suitable venue to enable victims of domestic abuse to give court evidence remotely. The list of criteria included: reception, waiting area, access to kitchen/toilet a soundproof room, broadband, secure email and printer.
- Cllr F Bletsoe enquired if the existing facilities were still in use.
- Members discussed the request and noted there was no reference to a fee; concerns were raised regarding the public use of Bridgend Town Council buildings therefore ensuring privacy would be difficult. Members discussed the facilities and felt it was unreasonable to ask staff not to use the toilet and kitchen whilst session were held.
- The Town Clerk advised that rooms allocated for meetings or room higher, classes and events may have to be cancelled if Council wished to accommodate the request.
- Members discussed the requirement of COVID-19 risk assessments and deep cleaning if the request were to be approved.
- Members discussed the works required in order to facilitate the request such as soundproofing and current staff workload and resource. It was also noted that building works were due to start on the Town Hall property.
- The Mayor proposed that the request be refused at this time in light of the points raised however if Bridgend Town Council are able to facilitate the request in the future further discussion could be made with BCBC. Members agreed.

RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk respond to BCBC to advise that Bridgend Town Council are unable to accommodate their request of a community based venue to enable victims of domestic abuse to give evidence remotely at this time.

10. Consultations:

1. Consultation on draft statutory guidance for principal councils about how they should exercise their performance and governance functions as set out in Part 6 of the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Bill. The consultation runs until 3 February 2021. **Noted by Members**

11. Correspondence:

1. Email from One Voice Wales: Version 4 - WCVA Guidance for Community Centres Reopening in Wales - **NOTED**
2. Email from BCBC Town Centre Manager: Covid-19 Town Centre Footfall Report - **NOTED**
3. Email from BCBC Re: Start of Works - Waterton Roundabout Active Travel Scheme - **NOTED**
4. Letter from Villenave d'Ornon Re: TWINNING PROJECT 2021/2022
 - The Town Clerk reported that no information had been received to date and she would circulate any correspondence when received.
5. Temporary Traffic Order 2020: Cemetery Road - **NOTED**
6. WLGA coronavirus email update 23.11.2020 - **NOTED**
7. Email from OVW Re: Ways in which One Voice Wales membership could access the current Circular Economy fund - **NOTED**
8. Members Survey undertaken by One Voice Wales - **NOTED**
9. Welsh Government Elections Newsletter November 2020 - **NOTED**

10. 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**

Meeting closed 7.16 pm. The Mayor gave his thanks and closed the meeting; he wished everyone to keep well, stay safe and a Happy Christmas.

Signed
Mayor

Date