



MINUTES OF BRIDGEND TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

Meeting Details:

Date: Monday 17th October 2022

Time: 6.30 pm

The meeting was held as a hybrid meeting both at Carnegie House and remotely via Microsoft Teams for Business under the Local Government and Elections Act (Wales) 2021.

Chairperson: The Mayor, Cllr Tim Wood

Staff: Mrs D Jones (Deputy Town Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer), Mrs L Edwards (Town Clerk), Ms J Brown (Democratic Services Officer - Remote), Mrs D Elliott (Community Engagement and Events Manager)

In attendance – Mayors Chaplain, Mavis Martin

In Attendance:

Cllr Tim Wood (Mayor) – In Person

Cllr Steven Bletsoe – In Person

Cllr Freya Bletsoe – In Person

Cllr Ann Lloyd – In Person

Cllr Michelle Blundell-Humphreys - In Person

Cllr Ian Spiller – Remote

Cllr Nathan Deere – Remote

Cllr Steven Easterbrook – In Person

Cllr David Unwin – In Person

Cllr Clair Webster – In Person

Cllr I Williams - Remote

Cllr Alan Wathan – In Person

Cllr Barry Johnston – Remote

Cllr Chris Harding - Remote

Cllr Darren Brown – In Person

Cllr Alison Felton - Remote

1. To Receive Apologies for Absence

- Cllr A Morelli, Cllr D Evans & Cllr B Johnston

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

- Cllr A Wathan declared an interest in any discussions relating to BCBC as a BCBC Councillor
- Cllr F Bletsoe declared an interest in agenda item 11 and in any discussions relating BCBC as a BCBC Councillor
- Cllr S Easterbrook declared a personal interest personal as a Bridgend Town Trader in matters pertaining to Town Centre business and any discussions relating to BCBC as a BCBC Councillor
- Cllr T Wood declared a personal interest as a Bridgend Town Trader in matters pertaining to Town Centre business and any discussions relating to BCBC as a BCBC Councillor

- Cllr I Spiller declared an interest in any discussions relating to BCBC as a BCBC Councillor
- Cllr I Williams declared an interest in any discussions relating to BCBC as a BCBC Councillor
- Cllr N Deere declared an interest in agenda item 15 as an employee of Halo Leisure.

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

- There were no questions

4. To confirm and sign minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on Monday 25th July 2022

- Page 308 – Cllr S Bletsoe highlighted that the name on the record of vote should read ‘Mr R Thomas’ not ‘Mr R Morgan’. It was agreed that the minutes would be amended accordingly.

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 25th July 2022 be amended to correct the errors highlighted, and that they be confirmed as a true record and duly signed.

5. To consider matters arising from minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on Monday 25th July 2022

- Page 307, agenda item 5, Cllr Unwin enquired about progress regarding the Hedgehogs R Us Highway Project. The Deputy Town Clerk explained that she had passed this to a member of staff to place the order.
- Page 311, agenda item 12b, Cllr Unwin enquired if there was any progress with the damp situation. The Deputy Town Clerk explained that a grant had been approved in principle and that the Facilities Team are working on progressing this work as soon as possible.
- Page 313, agenda item 18, Cllr Unwin asked if staff could request information on the outturn for the Summer Play Scheme from BCBC. This was agreed by Members.

RESOLVED: To write to BCBC to request the outturn figures for the Summer Play Scheme.

- Page 313, agenda item 17, Cllr Spiller noted that Laleston Community Council have resolved to write to BCBC with Merthyr Mawr Community Council and Bridgend Town Council to ask that an urgent review of highway safety on the A48 between Ewenny and Broadlands roundabouts be considered, outside the LDP if necessary. Cllr Unwin enquired if Laleston Community Council could write on behalf of all three councils. This was agreed by Cllr Spiller.

6. To note for information Mayoral Announcements and Engagements:

- The Mayor made an announcement regarding his Civic Service
- The Mayor advised that he had been delighted to present a local resident with an award for 40 years of selling poppies for the Royal British Legion and that he had attended a concert of Bridgend Male Voice Choir.

7. Planning

1. To receive draft minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 23rd September 2022

- The Chair presented the minutes to Council and asked Members if they had any questions. There were no questions.

RESOLVED: To receive and note the minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on 23rd September 2022.

2. To receive draft minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 10th October 2022

- The Chair presented the minutes to Council and asked Members if they had any questions. There were no questions.

RESOLVED: To receive and note the minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on 10th October 2022.

Cllr F Bletsoe enquired if there had been a planning application for Jubilee Crescent. Chair of Planning Committee responded that there had not been a planning application for Jubilee Crescent. It was suggested that if Cllr F Bletsoe provide the details to the Clerk or Deputy Town Clerk, staff can make enquires with BCBC.

8. Community Engagement & Wellbeing

1. To receive update regarding the planning for Remembrance Events 2022

- It was noted that the sound system and equipment is booked, invitations are currently being issued and arrangements for the HMS Urge families are being planned by Councillors.

2. To receive an update regarding plans for Christmas 2022 and consider costs for additional entertainment for the Brass Band Bus

- Members were provided with an update on plans for Christmas activities and marketing.
- The Acting Community Engagement and Events Manager explained that she had sought costs for a new Christmas scene for the railings outside Carnegie House and additional entertainment for the Brass Band Bus.
- Members discussed the materials used for the Christmas scene on the railings outside Carnegie House. It was noted that the materials need to be stronger to ensure it does not break and can be reused again next year.
- Acting Community Engagement and Events Manager informed members that two performing circus elves were available at a cost of £500. They would jump on and off the Brass Band Bus and entertain the residents who had gathered to watch. Members agreed that this would be good additional entertainment to enhance the Brass Band Bus and requested that the elves be booked.

RESOLVED: Community Engagement and Events Manager to book the two elves for the Brass Band Bus on 10th December 2022.

RESOLVED: To approve a budget of up to £2,000 for a new Christmas scene for the railings of Carnegie house that should be made of strong material so that it can be re-used.

- The Mayor referred to a Christmas Light Switch on in Bridgend Town Centre.
- Cllr F Bletsoe highlighted that there is also Christmas lights switch on at Westward Community Centre on 4th December.
- It was noted that there is a new management board in place at Wildmill Community Centre and they may be interested in arranging a Christmas Light switch on in future.
- Cllr S Bletsoe & Cllr D Brown made a declaration on this matter.

9. Facilities

1. To consider hire of storage container to be sited within the grounds of the Town Hall

- The Town Clerk advised that she has sourced costs to hire or purchase a storage container for the Town Hall, however the cost is dependent on the size of the container. It was suggested that the container could be obtained in liaison with the Chair of Finance.
- Cllr I Spiller highlighted that there is currently a disturbance to residents in this area and the sooner that this matter can be resolved, the better.
- It was agreed that delegated authority be granted to staff to arrange bailiffs, a storage container and boulders for the grounds of the Town Hall, in liaison with the Chair of Finance and Chair of Facilities Committee.
- Cllr S Bletsoe spoke of a duty of care to residents and staff and advised that three separate requests had been submitted to BCBC to ask them to allow BTC representatives and The Mayor to a BCBC meeting to discuss this matter. He advised that BCBC had refused to allow BTC representatives to the meeting and suggested that given the scale of the problem, BTC may wish to write to BCBC as a corporate body.
- Cllr Unwin enquired which BCBC Officer had blocked the attendance at the meeting and suggested that BTC could contact the Chief Executive directly. This was agreed by members.
- The Town Clerk asked if Cllr S Bletsoe could provide the wording for the letter regarding the BCBC meeting requests.

RESOLVED: That delegated authority be granted to staff to arrange bailiffs, a storage container and boulders for the ground of the Town Hall, in liaison with the Chair of Finance and Chair of Facilities Committee.

RESOLVED: To send a letter to the BCBC Chief Executive regarding repeated requests for BTC to be included in a meeting regarding rough sleepers.

7.10pm - It was noted that the minute taker was not on the remote meeting. The Mayor requested a ten minute recess.

10. Finance

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

- Noted

11. Regeneration

1. To receive draft minutes of the Regeneration Committee meeting held on 14th June 2022 (deferred from September meeting)

- The Deputy Town Clerk/RFO advised Councillors that further to the September meeting she had sought legal advice on this matter. She explained that any discussion regarding the accuracy of the minutes should be discussed by the Regeneration Committee at their next meeting, which is to be held on the 24th October 2022.
- The Deputy Town Clerk/RFO advised that any changes proposed should be sent to her in writing and that she would then include them with papers for the meeting.
- The Chair of the Regeneration committee agreed to submit his comments to the Deputy Town Clerk in writing.

12. Town Hall Project

1. To receive Town Hall Refurbishment Project update

- The Deputy Town Clerk/RFO explained that further to the appointment of the contractor for the CCTV at the Town Hall, if BTC manage the contract, the Council would need to wait

for Manning Construction to finish work on site before the CCTV installation can commence. She explained that alternatively, Manning Construction could be appointed to manage the contractor carrying out the installation of the CCTV.

- The Deputy Clerk explained that if Manning Construction project manages the installation, they take the risk and as the cables need to be chased through walls, this could be done in conjunction with other work. She asked how the Council would like to proceed.
- Cllr David Unwin proposed that Manning Construction be appointed.

RESOLVED: Recommended that Manning Construction be appointed to arrange the installation of the CCTV system at the Town Hall.

- The Deputy Town Clerk/RFO reported that the contractors had identified that the Town Hall has no electrical isolation switch. Members were advised that electrical works could not be carried out without an isolation switch and that quotes were being sought to rectify the situation as soon as possible.
- The Deputy Town Clerk/RFO advised Members that she had met with BCBC in relation to the installation of the IT network and Wi-Fi at the Town Hall. She reported a one-off cost with BT of £4,737.57 for the installation, plus an annual line rental cost of approximately £1,500. The Deputy Town Clerk/RFO explained that the estimated installation time is 9 months, however as an interim solution, the Council could purchase a portable Wi-Fi system.

RESOLVED: To approve the cost and proceed with the BT installation and for the Deputy Town Clerk/RFO to investigate an interim Wi-Fi solution.

- Council thanked the Deputy Clerk/RFO for all her work on this.

Cllr I Williams advised that the sound quality of the remote link was poor

2. To receive update and discuss Room Names & Signage

- Cllr Unwin proposed the following names for the three community rooms:
 - Oldcastle, Newcastle & Morfa
 - Elizabethan, Dunraven & Ogmores
- After discussion amongst Members, Cllr D Unwin proposed that Members send further proposals they may have for room names to the Town Clerk and defer this agenda item for discussion at the November Town Council meeting.
- The Deputy Town Clerk/RFO highlighted that the signage will be bilingual and in braille.

RESOLVED: That Members send proposals for room names to the Town Clerk and deferred this agenda item to the November Town Council meeting.

13. To consider item deferred from September Town Council Meeting:

Recording of Council Meetings

To consider a Motion from Cllr F Bletsoe that:

'I propose that this council move towards better equality for all residents with digitally accessible recordings of our meetings that constituents can access at a time that is convenient

for them.

Proposed Resolution: That this Town council henceforth record and upload to YouTube/social media all council, committee and working group meetings. This is to allow for full democratic transparency as per the Nolan Regulations and Accessibility for all under the Equalities Act, as well as for educational purposes under the Wellbeing and Future Generations Act.'

- Cllr F Bletsoe proposed an amendment to her motion to delete the words 'working group'. This was seconded.
- Cllr F Bletsoe presented her motion, adding that it would assist note taking and could help streamline the minuting process. She explained that the motion would make meetings more accessible to residents at different times, as well as to school groups who may like to learn more about the democratic process. Cllr F Bletsoe added that the motion would encourage transparency, reaching a wider audience and comply with Equalities and Wellbeing of Future Generations Act.
- Cllr S Bletsoe explained the recording and broadcastings of BCBC meetings and suggested that a transcript of the meeting could assist with the minutes. He referred to a delay with recent Council minutes and highlighted that this could benefit staff.
- Cllr I Spiller was in favour of the motion, echoing Cllr Bletsoe's remarks about the benefits. He agreed with the comments about the democratic process and therefore supported the motion.
- The Chair of Personnel Committee, Cllr A Wathan, stated that he was not against the motion, but enquired how much the proposed motion would impact staff.
- Cllr A Felton agreed with Cllr A Wathan and added that she would like to know how staff felt before continuing. She explained that although no one would dispute transparency, Council should consider capacity.
- Cllr A Lloyd queried if the staff should be consulted.
- Cllr S Bletsoe advised that he had taken advice from the BCBC Monitoring Officer, and that as Officers, staff are already in the public domain. Cllr S Bletsoe added that Council could also be mindful of any specific personal issues and could offer support.
- Cllr Harding expressed concern that the staff had not been asked to comment and that he felt they were being ignored.
- The Chair of Personnel Committee, Cllr A Wathan, declared that he was affronted by Cllr Harding's remarks, and that the wellbeing of staff was at the forefront of his concerns. Cllr A Wathan requested that Cllr C Harding be dismissed from the meeting.
- A heated debate took place and Cllr Harding was asked to apologise for his remark.
- Cllr Harding responded that until the Council looks after the interests of staff, he stood by his comments.
- After further discussion by Members, The Deputy Town Clerk/RFO requested to speak and advised Members that BCBC use an external company to broadcast their meetings. She added that the BTC Employment Solicitor had provided advice to Council on this proposal which had been included in Section b of the Notice of Motion Form.
- The Town Clerk provided the Chair of Personnel Committee with a hard copy of the Notice of Motion Form and he read out sections of the legal advice from Howells Solicitor to Members.
- The Deputy Town Clerk/RFO advised Council to carefully consider the legal advice.
- Members were asked to consider the following:
 - That new contracts would need to be drawn up for all staff and staff consent obtained for the recording and broadcasting of staff.

- That the current technology for remote meetings including the Owl System and facility to record and upload videos, will need to be looked at and that staff will require additional training.
- That Staff would still need to take and prepare the minutes, which are not verbatim.
- Cllr I Spiller proposed an amendment to the motion:
‘That Council henceforth record and upload to YouTube/social media, all Council meetings subject to the renegotiation of staff contracts’.
- Cllr C Harding seconded the amendment. Cllr F Bletsoe agreed to the amendment.
- Cllr A Felton disagreed with the motion and expressed that she felt staff were being railroaded. She urged Council to speak to the staff.
- The Mayor asked the Town Clerk to clarify the amended motion and asked that a vote be taken.

Proposed Amended Resolution: That this Town council henceforth record and upload to YouTube/social media all council and committee meetings. This is to allow for full democratic transparency as per the Nolan Regulations and Accessibility for all under the Equalities Act, as well as for educational purposes under the Wellbeing and Future Generations Act. subject to the renegotiation of staff contracts.

RESOLVED: That a vote be taken to determine if the motion be accepted.

- The Town Clerk advised Councillors to verbally vote either ‘In Favour’, ‘Not In Favour’ or ‘Abstain’. The Result was recorded as follows:

NAME OF COUNCILLOR	AGREE	DISAGREE	ABSTAIN
Cllr F Bletsoe	X		
Cllr S Bletsoe	X		
Cllr M Blundell-Humphreys	X		
Cllr N Deere	X		
Cllr S Easterbrook	X		
Cllr C Webster	X		
Cllr A Felton		X	
Cllr C Harding	X		
Cllr B Johnston (left meeting)			
Cllr A Lloyd	X		
Cllr I Spiller	X		
Cllr D Unwin			X
Cllr A Wathan			X
Cllr D Brown	X		
Cllr I Williams (no sound)			
Cllr T Wood (Mayor)	X		

- The Mayor declared the result of the vote as:

In Favour	11
Abstentions	2
Not in favour	1

RESOLVED: To record and upload to YouTube/social media all council and committee meetings. This is to allow for full democratic transparency as per the Nolan Regulations and

Accessibility for all under the Equalities Act, as well as for educational purposes under the Wellbeing and Future Generations Act. subject to the renegotiation of staff contracts.

- A member of staff advised that she had recently been registered as disabled and expressed concern regarding this decision.
- Cllr F Bletsoe requested a timeframe for this to be implemented.
- Chair of Personnel Committee advised that further legal advice would be required regarding the renegotiation of staff contracts.

RESOLVED: That the motion and decision be referred to the Personnel Committee to seek further legal advice.

14. Cllr. Martyn Jones, the new Armed Forces Champion for Bridgend would like to invite a representative from Bridgend Town Council to the first Armed Forces Covenant Forum for Bridgend of 2022. The forum will be held in person on Friday 25th November at 11am until 1pm and will take place in Bridgend Civic Centre.

- a) **To consider the appointment of a BTC representative for the Bridgend Armed Forces Covenant Forum**

RESOLVED: That Cllr A Wathan be appointed as the BTC representative for the Bridgend Armed Forces Covenant Forum

15. To discuss antisocial behaviour surrounding Bridgend Bowls Hall (Cllr T Wood)

- The Mayor reported that residents were at their wits end with the antisocial behaviour situation at the Bowls Hall Car Park and that he had been reporting the situation to Police since 2020. Residents were now reporting nightly disturbance, and although the police attended, they seemed to appear at the wrong times. The Mayor suggested that a lockable gate at the exit would solve the problem.
- Councillors were also aware of the problems and unanimously agreed.
- Cllr S Bletsoe highlighted that although it is not within the direct remit of BTC, the Council could request action on behalf of local residents.
- Cllr A Wathan proposed that a letter be written to the Police Divisional Commander.
- Cllr D Unwin proposed that a letter be also sent to The Chief Executive of BCBC and offered to provide wording for this.

Cllr C Harding and Cllr I Spiller left the Meeting at 8.48pm

16. To consider the BTC Statutory Training Plan in line with Local Government and Elections Act 2021, Section 67

- The Town Clerk highlighted that the Council have a statutory duty to prepare and approve a Training Plan by 5th November 2022. The Town Clerk referred to the report and a draft Training Plan she had prepared in accordance with Section 67 of the 2021 Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act, which had been previously circulated to Councillors.
- Members reviewed and discussed the draft Training Plan.
- Cllr A Wathan proposed that items that included a timescale for completion of 6 months should be reduced to 2 months. This was agreed by Members.
- Cllr S Bletsoe enquired whether skills acquired in the workplace or at other Councils would be taken into account. The Town Clerk explained that a skills audit will be required.

- The Town Clerk added that the Town Council does not currently have a specific Councillor Training Budget for 2022-23, however there is a Members Expenses budget of £1,000 and that a specific budget for Councillor training should be considered for 2023-24.
- After a short discussion Councillors agreed to accept the BTC Training Plan and allocate a budget accordingly.

RESOLVED: To approve the Bridgend Town Council Training Plan 2022-23 subject to the amendment of timescales for completion being reduced from 6 months to 2 months.

The Mayor's Chaplain left the Meeting

17. Personnel (In Confidence)

- 1. To consider draft minutes of the Personnel Committee meeting held on 23rd September 2022**
- 2. To receive an update on staff sickness absence**

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 17 as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

- Chair of Personnel Committee, Cllr A Wathan provided an update to Council regarding agenda item 16.
- Discussions took place in confidence.

RESOLVED: That The Democratic Services Officer and the Community Engagement and Events Manager remain to take minutes and advise respectively.

RESOLVED: To receive and note the minutes of the Personnel Committee Meeting held on 23rd September 2022

Meeting closed at 9.08 pm.

Signed

Date

Mayor