



MINUTES OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND WELLBEING COMMITTEE
Wednesday February 2022 at 6.30pm Hybrid Meeting using Microsoft Teams

Present:

Cllr. I. Williams (Chair)	L. Edwards – Deputy Town Clerk
Cllr. S. Easterbrook (Vice Chair)	/ Responsible Finance Officer
Cllr. S. Bletsoe (Mayor Ex Efficio)	S. Lewis - Community
Cllr. T Wood (Deputy Mayor)	Engagement and Event Manager
Cllr. A. Wathan	D. Elliott – Community
Cllr. F. Bletsoe	Engagement and Events Officer
A. McFetrich (Co-optee)	(Minute Taker)

Absent:

Cllr. C. Woodman
Cllr. C. Evans
J. Harris (Military Advisor)
M. Howley (Youth Representative)

In attendance at Carnegie House: Cllr S Bletsoe (Mayor), Cllr. Easterbrook, Cllr. Wood, Cllr. F Bletsoe and Cllr. Wathan along with Town Clerk and Community Engagement and Events Manager. All others attended remotely.

Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, including guests Simon Ellis and Nia Wyn Evans from Hugh James Solicitors.

1. To Receive Apologies for Absence.

Apologies were received from Cllr. M Smidman, Cllr. R. Thomas, Cllr. N. Burnett and D. Rees (Youth Representative)

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

There were no declarations of interest.

3. To confirm and sign minutes of the Community Engagement and Well-being Committee Meeting held on 27th October 2021.

The minutes of the meeting of 27th October 2021 were confirmed as a true and accurate record.

4. To consider matters arising from the Community Engagement and Well-being Committee Meeting held on 27th October 2021.

All matters were resolved from this meeting and there were no matters arising.

5. To receive an update on Christmas 2021 and consider planning for Christmas 2022.

Community Engagement and Events Manger referred members to her report and stated that a full update was given by the Town Clerk in January's Full Town Council meeting which covered:

- The Brass Band Bus with Santa
- Reindeer Trail and Elf HQ
- Reindeer Trail Competition

Community Engagement and Events Manger informed the committee that the Town Council has received fantastic feedback about the Christmas events from residents and town traders.

In order to plan for Christmas 2022 with the budget allocated of £5,000 at precept, Community Engagement and Events Manger asked the committee to confirm if they wished to proceed with booking the following for 2022:

- The Santa's grotto with Bridgend Lions at Carnegie House
- The Brass Band Bus with Santa
- A trail around the town
- An associated competition
- An alternative activity or event

Chair opened the meeting to debate. Cllr. A. Wathan formerly thanked the staff for organising a superb event. Mayor stated that the Brass Band Bus was a great success and suggested that Council should go ahead and book for 2022 with the option of making the event bigger.

Cllr. F. Bletsoe suggested that the event could be made bigger by having floats following the bus. Cllr Tim Wood referred to community interest in a carnival and referred to the success of the Porthcawl carnival. Members briefly discussed carnival type floats. The Town Clerk requested clarification if the Committee were discussing a summer carnival or a winter carnival with the Brass Band Bus. Members clarified that they were disussing floats to follow the Brass Band Bus.

The Community Engagement and Events Manger explained that that this would involve a lot more work for staff and highlighted that the route is meticulously planned to enable the double decker bus to turn around in the wards. If large floats were following the bus, this may cause logistical difficulties and may require road closures.

Cllr. S. Easterbrook highlighted that if more organisations joined the event on floats this would require more Risk Assessments. Cllr. A. Wathan suggested that the event is improved in stages and asked the Community Engagement and Events Manger to consider just having one vehicle

following the bus for 2022. Community Engagement and Events Manger agreed to look at costs, workload and logistics for this to happen.

RESOLVED: Community Engagement and Events Manger to look at costs, workload and logistics to include one float to follow the Brass band Bus in December 2022.

RESOLVED: Community Engagement and Events Officer to book the Brass Band Bus for December 2022.

6. To Consider a motion from Cllr. T. Wood.

“That BTC lay a wreath at the War Memorial for HMS Urge on the 27th April 2022, the anniversary of when it was lost with all lives on board.”

Chair referred to the date of the loss of HMS Urge and reminded members that 27th April 2022 falls within the pre-election period. Chair asked if the committee could discuss commemorating the 40th Anniversary of the Falklands Conflict. The Town Clerk highlighted that this is not included on the agenda for discuss and therefore it is not be possible to discuss it at this meeting. It was suggested that Cllr Wood put in a motion for this item to be discussed at the February Full Council meeting.

Mr A. McFetrich informed the committee that the national commemorations would take place on the 14th June which marks the end of the Falklands conflict.

Cllr. Wood expressed his view to members that it was important to lay a wreath at Bridgend’s War memorial to commemorate the loss of HMS Urge and suggested that this should be replicated every year. The Mayor supported this and reiterated that pre-election rules must be followed this year and no publicity must be generated from this action by councillors or the Town Council. This was seconded by Cllr. A. Wathan.

Mr. A. McFetrich informed members that BCBC are planning an event this year to mark the anniversary of HMS Urge and he had been approached by them in his capacity as Secretary of the Bridgend Branch of the Royal British Legion. He explained that The Royal Navy had been approached for involvement in this event, which will include a flag raising ceremony at the Civic Offices, a Royal Marine Bugler to play The Last Post and Reveille and a service. Chair raised the question as to why BCBC suddenly wished to be involved in events concerning HMS Urge.

Town Clerk provided background information and explained that the original HMS Urge plaque was presented to Bridgend Urban District Council and Mr. Francis Dickinson, grandson of the Captain of HMS Urge, had originally been invited to Bridgend to attend an event coordinated by BCBC. She explained that Bridgend Town Council had only become involved in HMS Urge events in recent years.

Mr. A. McFetrich suggested that BCBC and Bridgend Town Council work together for the HMS Urge commemoration on 27th April 2022. The Chair agreed this was a sensible idea but highlighted that no BCBC Councillors had attended the HMS Urge wreath laying at the War Memorial last year.

Cllr. T. Wood queried if a joint service is organised, whether it will be held at the Bridgend War Memorial. Mayor asked Mr. A. McFetrich for advice on protocol for flag raising and wreath laying. Mr. A. McFetrich highlighted protocol for flag raising and informed the committee that if the Town Council proceed with an event at the War Memorial, wreath laying would be a better option than a flag raising ceremony. He suggested that he and the Town Clerk could discuss how to progress a joint service with BCBC.

Chair wished to clarify whether the laying of a wreath should become an annual event and Mr. A. McFetrich asked why one event is any more important than other military events or anniversaries.

Cllr. S. Easterbrook highlighted that the 80th anniversary is an important anniversary and referred to the fact that the Mayor and Mayoress are going to attend commemorations in Malta to represent the residents of Bridgend. He noted that he hoped that the BCBC HMS Urge event would not be used for political gain in the pre-election period.

Town Clerk explained the pre-election period for the benefit of members of the public at the meeting. She explained that it is the period of time in the run up to an election where there are restrictions on Council communications and PR and that photographs of candidates in the election should not be published by the Council. Chair asked what would happen if a member of the public published a photo and Town Clerk explained that the restrictions apply to the Council and staff not to members of the public. Cllr. A. Wathan wished it to be placed on record that he would be attending the commemorations on 27th April 2022 as an ex-member of the Royal Navy not as a Councillor and Cllr. S. Easterbrook stated that he would attend as a resident of Bridgend.

Cllr. A. Wathan, speaking as Chair of Personnel Committee, stated that he does not want this event to create additional work for Bridgend Town Council staff. Chair asked if there were any objections to Bridgend Town Council's proposed wreath laying becoming part of the BCBC event. There were no objections. The timings of the wreath laying were discussed and it was resolved that Town Clerk should liaise with BCBC and the HMS Urge families and consider the timings in Malta and report back.

Mr. A. McFetrich made a comment about the Mayor and consort's visit to Malta that Cllr F Bletsoe felt was inappropriate. Cllr F Bletsoe requested that the Mayor ask Mr McFetrich to retract the comment and apologise. Mr McFetrich retracted the comment and apologised.

RESOLVED: Chair to submit a motion to Full Council to consider a commemoration for the 40th Anniversary of the Falklands Conflict.

RESOLVED: Mr. A. McFetrich to meet with Town Clerk to discuss working in collaboration with BCBC to commemorate the loss of HMS Urge on 27th April 2022.

RESOLVED: Town Clerk to liaise with the families of HMS Urge and look at the schedule of timings in Malta and report back regarding the timing for a wreath laying event in Bridgend.

7. To receive an update on Wartime Bridgend event planning and consider any correspondence in relation to event planning.

Community Engagement and Events Manager referred the committee to her report and stated that a full update was given by the Town Clerk in January's Full Town Council meeting.

Following the approval of the date of the 16th July 2022 and the details of the attractions presented at Full Council, Community Engagement and Events Manager confirmed that all the main attractions have been booked and all participants from previous years contacted, many of whom have already confirmed their attendance. The date has been publicly announced on social media pages and a press release was issued and published on Wales Online and in the Glamorgan Gazette on Wednesday 2nd February. BCBC have been contacted regarding event notification and licences.

Community Engagement and Events Manager asked Simon Ellis and Nia Wyn Evans from Hugh James Solicitors how they would like to be involved and Simon Ellis stated that they would be guided by Community Engagement and Events Manager as to the best way to become involved. It was agreed that a meeting would be arranged between representatives of Hugh James Solicitors and the Community Engagement and Events Manager and more information would be sent to them via e mail.

Chair reiterated that Wartime Bridgend is a great event organised by an excellent team and he was delighted that Hugh James wished to collaborate with Bridgend Town Council for the event.

RESOLVED: Community Engagement and Events Manager to arrange a meeting with Simon Ellis and Nia Wyn Evans. Nia Wyn Evans to send Community Engagement and Events Manager an e mail with an e mail address for Simon Ellis.

Simon Ellis and Nia Wyn Evans left the meeting.

8. To receive an update on the 80th Anniversary of the Battle of Britain exhibition and consider an official opening at the Wartime Bridgend event.

Community Engagement and Events Manager informed members that the exhibition has been booked to arrive the week before Wartime Bridgend event and will remain for the week after. The plan is to launch the exhibition at Wartime Bridgend inside Carnegie House and then keep the exhibition open the following week to enable schools and community groups to visit.

Community Engagement and Events Manager has discussed a launch with Sq. Leader John Dunn, who has confirmed that Air Officer Wales is available to formally open the exhibition with a speech with the Mayor and other dignitaries in attendance. Community Engagement and Events Manager proposed a launch at 11am on Saturday 16th July to coincide with the opening of Wartime Bridgend as this would provide an opportunity for dignitaries and the Air Officer Wales to visit the event after the launch.

Cllr. A. Wathan enquired if the launch event would be inside Carnegie House or outside. Community Engagement and Events Manager confirmed that it would be a seated event inside Carnegie House.

Cllr. F. Bletsoe suggested that there is a Welsh Speaker at the launch as the exhibition is bilingual. Community Engagement and Events Manager will ask Sq. Leader John Dunn if he is a Welsh speaker. Cllr. S. Easterbrook moved that there is a British Sign Language interpreter at the event. Cllr. F. Bletsoe suggested that a local influencer from Morfa Ward should be contacted who can use British Sign Language. The committee discussed filming the launch or streaming it live on social media. Cllr. A. Wathan said that this was a good idea but there would not be enough staff available to do this as well as work at Wartime Bridgend. Community Engagement and Events Manager informed members that any councillor who would like to help at the Wartime Bridgend event would be most welcome. Chair said he would support Community Engagement and Events Manager in however she wished to launch the exhibition.

RESOLVED: Community Engagement and Events Manager to contact Sq. Leader John Dunn to confirm if he is a Welsh Speaker.

RESOLVED: Cllr. F. Bletsoe to contact the British Sign Language Social Media influencer to see if she would be available to attend the Launch of the Battle of Britain Exhibition.

9. To agree and sign off the BTC Community Newsletter for March 2022 ready for print.

Community Engagement and Events Manager referred the committee to the proof of Edition 4 March 2022 of the Newsletter which had been circulated prior to the meeting and thanked Community Engagement and Events Officer for preparing the newsletter.

Members were informed that the newsletter will be distributed to the wards from 1st March 2022 which is three weeks before the pre-election period starts and the next newsletter will be produced for July 2022.

There were no amendments to be made and Cllr. S. Easterbrook thanked the Community Engagement Team for producing an excellent newsletter. Chair moved that this could be sent to print.

RESOLVED: Community Engagement and Events Officer to proceed with the printing and distribution of Edition 4 March 2022 Community Newsletter.

10. To discuss an item deferred from the December Town Council meeting:

To consider an Email from Dr Tracy Evans re: Swansea University Heritage Pilgrimage Project

Community Engagement and Events Manager informed members that this project has been cancelled and confirmation was received from Dr. Tracy Evans on 3rd February 2022. She thanked Full Council for noting it to be discussed.

11. To consider correspondence in relation to the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and make a decision on events (if any) to be organised by Bridgend Town Council.

Cllr. S. Easterbrook and Cllr. T. Wood declared interests as town traders for this item.

Community Engagement and Events Manager referred to her report which had highlighted options that the committee may like to consider.

Street Parties and 'The Big Jubilee Lunch'

Guidance states – 'street parties should be encouraged, and you can play an important role in supporting residents who want to organise parties for their neighbours. For example, relaxing road closure rules to enable street parties to take place as easily as possible will be important. Updated street parties' guidance on how to organise a street party can be found here'.

- The Town Council do not have the power to relax road closures, however we could point our residents to the guidance on social media/ notice boards as to how to organise their own.

The Big Jubilee Lunch – 2 to 5 June 2022

Guidance states – 'The Big Jubilee Lunch encourages communities to come together, celebrate their connections and get to know each other a little bit better and will bring the Jubilee celebrations into the heart of every community. More details can be found here.'

- The Town Council do not have the resource to organise these, however guidance could be shared on social media to encourage communities to organise their own.

Beacon Lighting

Guidance states – 'In keeping with the long tradition of celebrating Royal Jubilees, Weddings and Coronations, councils are encouraged to light beacons across the UK in the evening of 2 June 2022. Should you wish to take part, more information can be found in the specific Beacons website which can be found here.'

Considerations for the committee for a Beacon Lighting Event:

- The beacon needs maintenance and repair before it can be lit
- Attendance of the Fire Service is essential – An email has been sent enquiring if this is possible.
- Access for The Fire Service to Newcastle Hill required – cars could not be parked as normal (traffic management needed)
- Consultation with the residents needed as the event will be late at night and cause disruption in an enclosed residential area.
- Over hanging trees and vegetation would need to be cut back from around the beacon area which is currently overgrown, permissions would be required and a contractor hired
- Security – a serious security threat occurred last time there was an event at this location and security and police presents would be essential.

- Lack of lighting around the beacon – lighting and security needed
- Infrastructure – We would need to source infrastructure to eliminate risk such as barriers and cordoned off areas and a contractor would need to be sought.
- Planning and logistics for the event would need to begin now and this would impact on staff workload.
- Timings of the event would need to be considered as staff would be required to work until around midnight on a bank holiday.

Platinum Jubilee Events/projects organised by Local Authority-owned civic amenities

Guidance states- ‘Libraries, museums, leisure centres, heritage sites etc are welcome to host their own individual events and projects to mark the Platinum Jubilee. For example, this could include exhibitions, concerts or special talks.’

- Town Council could link with creative groups in Carnegie House to do something for the Jubilee.

National Lottery Funding

Guidance states- ‘More than £22 million of National Lottery funding is being made available to help communities across the country come together to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee.’

- Town Council could share this information to encourage community groups to plan Jubilee events.

The Queen’s Green Canopy

Guidance States – ‘Everyone from individuals to community groups, villages, cities, counties, schools and corporations are encouraged to plant a tree for the Jubilee. The initiative runs from October 2021, when the tree planting season began, through to the end of the Jubilee year in 2022.’

- Town Council may wish to plant a tree at the New Town Hall.

The committee discussed lighting the beacon at the top of Newcastle Hill but concluded that the beacon is not located in an area which is conducive to receiving crowds safely. In addition, there would be an increased fire risk as the trees surrounding the beacon would be in full foliage and possibly very dry.

Cllr. F. Bletsoe suggested that Bridgend Town Council contacts CADW as they may be able to project a light into the sky from inside the Newcastle Castle grounds and may even have the resources to support this.

Cllr. T. Wood asked if the beacon could be moved and Cllr. A. Wathan agreed that it was not in a suitable place. Cllr. S. Easterbrook moved that we move on from a beacon in future and use something electrical. This was supported by Cllr. F. Bletsoe and Cllr. A. Wathan but Chair highlighted that generators would be required. Cllr F. Bletsoe suggested that power could be run from streetlights. The committee discussed alternate forms of light including lasers. Mr. A. McFetrich brought it to members attention that Bridgend lies in the flight path to Cardiff

International Airport and St Athan and it would be unlikely that the Civil Aviation Authority would grant permission for strong lasers or lights to be shone into the sky.

Town Clerk informed members that the event was very close to Wartime Bridgend and limited resource would be available to co-ordinate this.

Community Engagement and Events Manager referred the committee to a proposal she had received from EPM Marketing outlining events and costs for activities in the town centre on the Jubilee weekend. Mayor asked if there was a budget for Jubilee events and if there was, would three quotes be required before selecting an external company to provide their services. Mayor also moved that we only use an external company if it would mean no additional work for Town Council Staff.

Town Clerk highlighted that the Council have not allocated a budget for Jubilee events. She added that financial regulations stipulate that three quotes should be sought for Council expenditure. She also referred to a similar situation where the Council had been approached by an individual to provide funding for toilets in the Indoor Market. The Town Clerk explained that the Council can make a payment to an individual company without competitive quotes in certain circumstances and would also need to consider if this should be treated as Section 137 payment. The Town Clerk reminded Members that when spending public funds they need to ensure that the spend is in the public interest and offers value for money.

Chair believed the proposal from EPM was vague and expensive. Cllr. S. Easterbrook suggested that there may not be many people in the town centre that weekend as it is a bank holiday and if the Town Council does not have the budget, we should move progress to discuss other ideas.

Cllr A. Wathan suggested that the Mayor could raise a toast online as they did for VE Day in 2020. Cllr. F. Bletsoe moved that a tree should be planted, possibly an oak tree, as this would have longevity and considerations must be given to residents who are not Royalists and who would not want precept being spent on Jubilee events.

Community Engagement and Events Manager agreed with this proposal as it could be done at any time this year to fit in with staff workload. Mayor seconded this proposal and requested that Community Engagement and Events Manager looked at the guidelines for Platinum Jubilee tree planting and report back to the committee.

RESOLVED: Community Engagement and Events Manager to research the guidelines for Platinum Jubilee tree planting and report back to the committee.

12. To discuss how the Town Council can mark Armed Forces Day on Saturday 25th June 2022.

Community Engagement and Events Manager informed the committee that there was limited staff resource to plan and carry out an event due to the closeness to the Wartime Bridgend event, however councillors may wish to consider the following options:

- Laying of a wreath
- Online recognition of the day
- Alternative suggestions

Mayor moved that the flags should be raised on the War Memorial to celebrate Armed Forces Day and possible a speech be recorded which could be published on Bridgend Town Council's social media channels.

Mr. A. McFetrich re-iterated that the purpose of Armed Forces Day was to thank serving and retired military personnel and their families and to celebrate the work of the Armed Forces. Wreath laying was not appropriate in this instance.

Cllr. S. Easterbrook moved that Bridgend Town Council should replicate what occurred last year which was to raise the flags on the War Memorial at the start of Armed Forces Week.

RESOLVED: Bridgend Town Council will raise the flags on the War Memorial at the start of Armed Forces Week.

13. To consider the reopening of Carnegie House for classes and community room hire.

Community Engagement and Events Manager informed members that the following needs to be completed before Carnegie House can reopen for classes and room hire:

- Fire risk assessment
- Covid/venue risk assessments
- Smoke detectors serviced
- Lift maintenance check
- Front of House recruitment

Community Engagement and Events Manager stated that herself and the Community Engagement and Events Officer were very much looking forward to returning to the building to work once it was deemed safe to do so.

Town Clerk informed the committee that the items on the list were in progress however the Website Project and Wartime Bridgend were taking priority at present.

Chair agreed that the checks would be completed in due course and this item would be left in obedience to be discussed at Full Council.

Mayor agreed that Carnegie House should reopen as and when it was deemed safe and all regulatory checks had been completed.

RESOLVED: Chair to request an item on Full Council Agenda to discuss the reopening when all checks had been completed.

Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting.

Meeting Closed 8.35pm

Signed

Date

Chair of Community Engagement & Well-being Committee