



**MINUTES OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND WELLBEING COMMITTEE**  
**Wednesday March 3<sup>rd</sup> 2021 at 6pm via Microsoft Teams**

**Present:**

Cllr. N Burnett (Chair)  
Cllr. S Bletsoe (Mayor)  
Cllr. T Wood ( Deputy Mayor)  
Cllr. A Wathan  
Cllr. S Baldwin  
Cllr. C Woodman  
Cllr. I. Williams

Cllr. A Morelli  
Cllr. S Easterbrook  
L. Edwards – Town Clerk  
S. Lewis - Community Engagement  
and Event Manager  
D. Elliott – Community Engagement  
and Events Officer (Minute Taker)

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

Cllr. Robbie Thomas (work commitments)

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

No declarations of interest were received.

**3. To elect a Chair of Community Engagement and Wellbeing Committee for March – May 2021**

- Cllr. Baldwin nominated Cllr. Burnett and this was seconded by Cllr. Morelli.
- Cllr. Wathan nominated Cllr. Williams.
- Cllr. Williams thanked Cllr. Wathan for the nomination and said he was happy for Cllr. Burnett to continue as Chair and he would like to support her in the role of Deputy Chair.

**RESOLVED:** Cllr. Burnett was elected as Chair of the Community Engagement and Wellbeing Committee for March – May 2021.

**4. To elect a Deputy Chair of Community Engagement and Wellbeing Committee for March – May 2021**

Cllr. Wood nominated Cllr. Williams as Deputy Chair and this was seconded by Cllr. Easterbrook. There were no other nominations.

**RESOLVED:** Cllr. Williams was elected as Deputy Chair of the Community Engagement and Wellbeing Committee for March – May 2021.

Cllr. Burnett welcomed Cllr. Williams as Deputy Chair.

**5. To confirm and sign minutes of the Community Engagement and Well-being Committee held on Wednesday, 25th November 2020.**

- Cllr. Wood highlighted that he was absent from the last meeting but the minutes showed that he declared an interest as a town centre trader.
- It was agreed that this declaration of interest should be removed from the minutes of 25<sup>th</sup> November 2020.

**RESOLVED:** To amend the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday, 25th November 2020 to remove a declaration of interest from Cllr Wood and to confirm the amended minutes as a true and correct record. The minutes will be signed and returned to the office in due course.

**6. To Consider Matters Arising from Community Engagement and Well-being Committee held on Wednesday, 25th November 2020.**

- *Damaged defibrillator – to be included on the agenda for the December meeting of the committee*  
The damaged defibrillator is currently in storage. There was no meeting of the Community Engagement and Wellbeing Committee in December 2020. This item will be included on the agenda for the next meeting in June 2021.

**RESOLVED:** To include an item on the agenda for the June 2020 meeting of the Community Engagement Committee to discuss the relocation of the defibrillator.

- *Community Newsletter*  
An update will be given under Agenda Item 8
- *Phased Reopening of Carnegie House*  
An update will be given under Agenda Item 9
- *Feasibility of a restricted Spring programme for 2021*  
An update will be given under Agenda Item 11a
- *Donation to Bridgend Foodbank*  
It was noted that this matter was discussed at the Full Council meeting in December 2020 where it was agreed that the underspend from the Christmas 2020 budget would be donated to Bridgend Foodbank.
- *100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the War memorial*  
An update was given under Agenda Item 11c

There were no other matters arising.

**7. To receive an end of year budget update for the Community Engagement and Wellbeing Committee.**

- Community Engagement and Events Manager provided committee with a budget spreadsheet detailing expenditure and income to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2021.

- Chair noted that it was good to see that there had been income received from the French and Spanish Classes.
- There were no questions about the budget.

## **8. To receive an update on the Community Newsletter and Survey**

Community Engagement and Events Manager directed the committee to her report. She explained that both the newsletter and survey had gone to print and will be delivered to each residence in the wards from 8<sup>th</sup> March 2021. An electronic version will be e mailed out to all councillors and will be available on the website.

Survey collection boxes have been sourced for installation in the Oldcastle Ward Spar, Newcastle Ward Spar, Morfa Ward shop and the Indoor Market on Cllr. Wood's stall. Surveys are also returnable to Carnegie House. The survey will also be available to complete online via the Bridgend Town Council website.

A print run of 100 Welsh copies have been produced and will be available to the community upon request. Welsh and English versions of the newsletter are available online on the Bridgend Town Council website.

Survey results will be analysed and a report produced in May 2021. The proposed dates for the next editions of the newsletters are July and November 2021.

Chair congratulated the team on all of the hard work that had gone into writing and producing the newsletter and thanked the councillors who had also contributed.

Cllr. Baldwin suggested that the best place for the collection box in Morfa Ward would be the shop in the precinct in Wildmill. It was confirmed that the shop that has agreed to have the collection box is TAHA Stores in the precinct.

Chair requested that copies of the Welsh newsletter were sent to the Welsh Primary School.

**RESOLVED:** Community Engagement and Events Manager to email a copy of the newsletter to all councillors.

**RESOLVED:** Copies of the Welsh Newsletter to be sent to Ysgol Gymraeg Bro Ogwr.

## **9. To discuss a strategy for a phased reopening of Town Council indoor community spaces in line with lifting of Covid-19 restrictions.**

Community Engagement and Events Manager directed the committee to her report, which outlined a phased reopening strategy for discussion as follows:

- A phased reopening of the community spaces could start with smaller classes and small regular room hire groups where numbers could be managed and participants monitored.
- Each group would need to be carefully managed and risk assessed in line with Welsh Government guidelines (i.e. facemasks, rules on social distancing, infection rates etc.).
- Consultation would be required with tutors and hirers to ensure they will agree to a clear reopening strategy.
- Considerations such as how; front of house payments are taken; health and safety messages are delivered and how participant details are taken need to be included within the strategy.
- Increased cleaning and sanitation of communal areas would be essential.

- Room layouts would need to be pre-planned according to social distancing guidelines.
- Entrance and exit routes would need to be planned to allow for social distancing.
- Before the reopening to larger classes and room hire, the strategy would need to be reassessed.
- Exhibitions and events would be the last to be implemented once safe to do so.
- The opening up of community spaces in the new Town Hall will also depend on the progress of works to the community areas.
- The Community Engagement Manager will work with the Facilities Manager to risk assess and plan a safe reopening strategy.

Chair requested that the language classes be the first to meet again in person as they are a small group and paying for their classes.

**RESOLVED:** Spanish and French classes will be the first classes to be invited back to meet when restrictions allow.

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

**CONFIDENTIAL**

**10. To discuss the impact of the pandemic on the Front of House role and discuss work that can be allocated while physical events are not taking place.**

Town Clerk explained that the role most effected by the pandemic was the Arts Centre Front of House role. She explained that the role involved meeting with the public and as there are no classes or events running, the role no longer exists.

Chair asked how the staff member in this role felt about the situation. Community Engagement and Events Manager explained that she is in regular contact with the member of staff and that he is happy and has many alternative skills to offer. He is currently using his 10-15 hours per week, working flexibly, around family commitments, to undertake work on the Carnegie House social media pages.

Chair commented that the Carnegie House's social media activity was exemplary.

Cllr. Baldwin noted that he was happy with this arrangement as long as the member of staff is managed well and given work to do on a daily basis.

Community Engagement and Events Manager informed the committee that Health and Safety measures such as adequate as PPE and screens would have to be put in place for the Front of House member of staff to return to the role when the building re-opens. Members agreed.

**RESOLVED:** That the confidential discussions had concluded and that the public were no longer excluded from the meeting.

## **11. To consider Community Engagement and Well-being Committee projects and priorities for 2021.**

### **A) Spring Programme**

Community Engagement and Events Manager referred to her report and provided the following overview:

- As agreed by the committee a restricted online programme can be run on social media channels. Online classes including Mindfulness, Creative Textiles, French and Spanish will continue.
- A 6 week online printmaking course will run with tutor Claire Hiatt to complete the funding received from the Millennium Stadium Trust Fund.
- The collaboration with the Green Links project will continue and provide free workshops will be provided.
- At the last meeting, it was discussed that workshops may be run flexibly and take place outside, however current guidelines still do not permit this so this has not been planned for the spring.

### **B) Wartime Bridgend**

Community Engagement and Events Manager referred to her report and provide the following overview:

- At the last meeting in November Members discussed the feasibility of holding the event in late August / early September 2021. It was agreed then that a Wartime Bridgend event should be planned for later in the year if restrictions were lifted, with an allocated budget of £20,000.
- Planning for this event normally takes around 6 - 9 months, however due to the pandemic it is anticipated this could take longer due to additional measures that would need to be put in place to minimise risk and limitations as a result of remote working. There may also be additional costs in the respects of managing the event safely.
- The Wartime Bridgend event was discussed at a personnel meeting on Friday 19<sup>th</sup> February and Members felt that due to the uncertainty of the Covid-19 situation and restrictions that may be in place, serious consideration should be given to whether this event can realistically go ahead in 2021. In light of current restrictions, the committee needs to review a decision on whether Wartime Bridgend 2021 takes place and if so to set a date.

Mayor proposed holding the Wartime Bridgend event in September 2021 on the basis that the roadmap in England has stated that the country should be free of social distancing restrictions by 21<sup>st</sup> June 2021. He noted that he would personally like to see the event go ahead for the people of Bridgend.

Chair expressed concern over the 21<sup>st</sup> June date given by England as this was only provisional. She noted that as had already been seen during the pandemic, the situation can change a short notice.

Cllr. Wathan stated that although he would also like to see it go ahead, care must be shown as the Eisteddfod has already been cancelled for August 2021.

Cllr. Wood asked if a decision could be put on hold and reviewed on a monthly basis.

Community Engagement and Events Manager was concerned about the safety of visitors and participants who come from all over the UK to take part.

Cllr. Williams agreed that it was a great event but in these uncertain times, the event should be cancelled.

Cllr. Baldwin asked Community Engagement and Events Manger her professional opinion on whether there was capability to deliver the event safely in the timeframe given, also considering that many employees of BCBC who would normally need to be consulted are currently redeployed in other roles.

Community Engagement and Events Manger stated that in her opinion, given the uncertainty, the team did not have the capacity to deliver a safe event by September 2021. She explained that there would need to be a great deal of liaising with participants, authorities and the community and this is very difficult to do this when it cannot be done in person. She highlighted that Bridgend Town Council have a responsibility to keep people safe and this must be considered when planning a large scale event, but even more so during the pandemic.

The Community Engagement and Events Manger suggested that the team's resource may be better spent working with the community on the opening of the new Town hall and other community engagement initiatives.

Chair understood the Mayor's intentions that it would be good to go ahead with the event but agreed with Community Engagement and Events Manger that it was not feasible to hold the event in 2021.

Cllr. Baldwin clarified that the event would be cancelled for 2021 and not postponed.

Town Clerk will let the Responsible Finance Officer know that the budget allocated for Wartime Bridgend would now not be required in 2021.

Mayor enquired about the Light Festival. Chair informed him that a decision was taken at the last meeting that this would not be going ahead as it is very difficult to do the community outreach required at present and the event was always weather permitting which had caused difficulties in the past.

**RESOLVED:** Wartime Bridgend cancelled for 2021 and that the Town Clerk inform the Responsible Finance Officer that the allocated budget for Wartime Bridgend 2021 is no longer required.

### **C) War Memorial Centenary Anniversary and Remembrance events**

Chair requested an update on plans to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the War Memorial. Community Engagement and Events Manager explained that it had been difficult to plan anything with the current restrictions in place and not knowing whether Wartime Bridgend would take place; in the last meeting it was discussed that the event could be part of Wartime Bridgend.

Community Engagement and Events Manager explained that plans for an exhibition would depend on restrictions being lifted and the phased reopening of the community spaces. There is a possibility that an exhibition could take place in Carnegie House with managed numbers in line with a phased reopening strategy, dependent on Covid-19 restrictions at that time. An exhibition of this sort would be able to be organised quite quickly.

If an actual exhibition is not possible due to restrictions, the anniversary can be marked online or with a smaller scale outside event.

Chair agreed that maybe a small-scale event would be possible with re-enactors and this would be discussed at the next committee meeting.

**RESOLVED:** A decision about an event to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the War Memorial will be made at the next meeting of the Community Engagement and Wellbeing Committee in June 2021.

#### **D) Christmas Events**

Chair noted how fantastic Carnegie House look last Christmas decorated as Elf HQ. She also noted that it was a such a shame that the Band Bus had to be cancelled due to the weather and on the second weekend due to Wales entering the second lockdown. Chair asked for engagement figures for the Elf Trail. Community Engagement and Events Manager said that feedback received about the Elf Trail had been very positive with high numbers taking part, although not all of these entered the Elfie Selfie Competition. She said that it was be easy to replicate something similar this year, as all of the boards used to decorate Carnegie House are reusable.

Chair noted how successful the Christmas events had been with very little time to plan for them.

**RESOLVED:** Community Engagement and Events Manager to plan activities for Christmas 2021 similar to those carried out in 2020.

#### **E) Bridgend Town Council and Carnegie House Website**

Town Clerk reported that from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021 all local government websites must meet new accessibility regulations. She explained that the Town Council websites do not meet the required accessibility standards and that it is not possible to upgrade the websites to meet this deadline. Members were advised that staff are working on a brief and will pursue a tender process for this project as a priority.

Cllr. Baldwin suggested that the money saved from not proceeding with a Wartime Bridgend this year could be allocated to seek external resource to project manage the development of the new website.

Town Clerk responded that it was a good idea to outsource the work but informed the committee that there was a need to identify requirements for the website internally first before the project could be handed over to an external source. It was noted that a larger budget for this purpose would be welcomed.

**RESOLVED:** That the Town Clerk and Community Engagement Team should prioritise a development strategy for the Bridgend Town Council Website.

#### **F) The New Town Hall**

Town Clerk provided an update to the committee:

- An Architect and Contractor are being sought to undertake a large refurbishment project and building work is likely to take 6 months to complete.
- The committee needs to consider a schedule of opening for the community spaces and any priority for user groups.



- The Community Engagement and Events Manager noted that PR and community engagement activities also need to be planned. She highlighted things to consider such as surveys, press releases, open days and public consultations.

Cllr. Baldwin stressed the importance of people understanding what Community Engagement actually means. He suggested that an infographic be created to explain the different forms of community engagement that BTC undertake. He highlighted that community engagement includes public discussions such as the outdoor team talking to people as they go about their daily tasks.

Mayor asked if the Community Engagement and Events Manager could write to all of the user groups, including those from Evergreen Hall, to inform them of developments to Town Council spaces and ask them for their preferred venue for meetings. He also suggested that the Room Hire charges should be put on the agenda for the next meeting. Members agreed.

**RESOLVED:** Community Engagement and Events Manager to write to all user groups of Carnegie House and Evergreen Hall to inform them of developments with the Town Hall and to ask their preference as to where they would like their groups to meet in the future.

**RESOLVED:** Room Hire Charges to be put on the Agenda for the next meeting of the Community Engagement and Wellbeing Committee in June 2021.

Cllr. Williams highlighted a need to engage with disabled members of the community and enquired if someone from this community could be co-opted onto the committee. Chair agreed with this. Town Clerk informed the committee that the decision to co-opt a new member to the committee would need to be discussed at a Full Council meeting and suggested that an agenda item could be put forward for the annual meeting in May 2021. Cllr. Williams agreed with this suggestion.

**RESOLVED:** Town Clerk to agenda an item for the Annual Meeting of Full Council in May 2021 regarding the co-option of a member to the Community Engagement and Wellbeing Committee to represent disabled members of the community.

Chair requested that a list of organisations that had already contacted the Town Council regarding room hire at the Town Hall, be prepared for the next meeting.

**RESOLVED:** Community Engagement and Events Manager to prepare a list of all organisations and individuals who have contacted the Town Council to date requesting room hire.

## **G) Carnegie House Flexible Heritage Space**

Community Engagement and Events Manager presented her views regarding the flexible heritage space at Carnegie House. She suggested that the flexible heritage space should occupy the space on the ground floor for the following reasons:

- With the ground floor front doors open, the public will be able to see things going on and would be more likely to come in.
- Downstairs is more accessible for all wheelchairs.
- It will be easier for Front of House to manage crowds downstairs.
- It will eliminate issues and risk with lifts and stairs.

- Downstairs being open would leave a more private space upstairs for classes.
- Downstairs is already a professionally equipped space for exhibitions with suitable lighting.

She suggested that classes should move to the first floor for the following reasons:

- Minimal change to the structure of the building would be required.
- Classes would benefit from the use of the kitchen and toilets on the same level.
- A storage area could be set aside for things like the printing press and materials in what is now the current office.
- Budget could be spent on equipping the space with suitable chairs and table.
- This space could still be very flexible and could also host workshops and talks relating to the exhibitions being held on the ground floor.

It was noted that the programme of events and heritage space could work cohesively as follows:

- The programme could be more about community engagement and link with projects relating to the exhibitions or other projects are running.
- Heritage space could be programmed into three exhibitions per year:
  - January to March – a local history/museum style exhibition
  - March to June – an exhibition based around the Wartime Bridgend event
  - July to September – a large national touring exhibition
- No exhibitions would be planned from October to December to enable the Council to host events for Remembrance weekend and Christmas.

These changes would mean that no structural work would be required which would save money and enable exhibitions to go ahead as soon as Covid-19 restrictions allow.

It was noted that some room hire and classes could also move to the new Town Hall community rooms.

Town Clerk agreed that these were sensible proposals. She highlighted that the boardroom upstairs could be used for refreshments for room hire and classes without moving urns full of boiling water up and down in the lift.

Mayor supported Community Engagement and Events Manager's proposals, as did Cllr. Wathan.

Chair expressed concern for the larger groups that use the downstairs area and whether they would want to move upstairs or to the Town Hall. Town Clerk assured the committee that the upstairs floor space with the board room used for refreshments is almost the same as what is available on the ground floor.

Cllr. Wathan raised a concern over the damp issue in what is currently the staff offices and stated that this must be rectified before staff or the public utilise this space. Town Clerk confirmed that this is being dealt with.

Cllr. Easterbrook expressed concern. He suggested that the upstairs space at Carnegie is currently the most traditional, heritage style space that the Town Council own and questioned whether the Chamber could stay in this space. Town Clerk informed Cllr. Easterbrook that the decision to move the Chamber to the new Town Hall had already been taken and was part of the criteria of the Business Plan and loan application.

Town Clerk suggested that the areas within Carnegie House are not labelled as either 'arts' or 'heritage' and that the most appropriate space is used for each event as it arises.

Chair noted that Heritage events that the Town Council have put on in recent years have had a very high footfall therefore using the ground floor for this purposed would be sensible. Members agreed that the ground floor of Carnegie House should be used for exhibitions.

Cllr. Baldwin agreed that the space should be flexible without any area being identified for a specific purpose.

**RESOLVED:** That although the Carnegie House building will be used for Arts, Culture and Heritage events, the ground floor and first floor will not be desinaged for a specific use and will be utilised as appropriate to create maximum flexibility.

Town Clerk confirmed the following points before the meeting closed:

- Wartime Bridgend 2021 is cancelled.
- The redevelopment of the Bridgend Town Council Website is a priority.
- Town Clerk will work with the Community Engagement and Events team to plan work regarding the opening of the new Town Hall.
- Work to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the War Memorial can continue but is not a priority.

Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and contributions and closed the meeting.

**Meeting Closed 8.02pm**

Signed .....

Chair of Community Engagement & Well-being Committee

Date .....