



MINUTES OF BRIDGEND TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

Monday 15th February 2021 at 6.30 pm conducted remotely via Skype for Business under the Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Meetings) (Wales) Regulations 2020

Present:	Cllr Steven Bletsoe (Mayor) Cllr A Wathan Cllr T Wood Cllr N Burnett Cllr S Easterbrook Cllr C Evans Cllr A Morelli	Cllr R Thomas Cllr D Unwin Cllr L Walters Cllr I Williams Cllr C Woodman Cllr S Baldwin
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In Attendance: Mrs L Edwards (Town Clerk), Mrs D Jones (Deputy Town Clerk & RFO) Miss J Brown (Democratic Services Officer), Mr B Burns (Town Hall Project Manager), Ms Sara Green (Consultant for Just Solutions Ltd) and members of the public.

Pre-Meeting Business:

- The Mayor invited Ms Sara Green from Just Solutions Consultants to speak at the meeting regarding the BCBC consultation for Newbridge Fields.
- The Mayor informed Members that Ms Green was providing information on the current status and future of the project and that there would not be an opportunity to make any decisions at this point.
- Ms Green provided an overview of the project and Councillors welcomed the opportunity to ask questions.
- The Mayor thanked Ms Green, adding that he hoped for a productive project to benefit Bridgend.
- Members did not have any objection to The Town Hall Working group liaising with Ms Green in the first instance in order to move forward with research for the project.
- Ms Green left the meeting at 7.10 pm.

1. To Receive Apologies for Absence

- Cllr M Voisey, Cllr C Webster, Cllr F Bletsoe
- Absent: Cllr S Charles

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

- Cllr S Baldwin – Declaration of interest item 15 – BCBC Planning Matters

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

- The Mayor welcomed Members of The Public to the meeting and advised that some agenda items may be commercially sensitive in which case he would ask them to withdraw.

- There were no questions from members of the public.

4. To Confirm and Sign Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 25th January 2021

RESOLVED: That a correction be made to page 103 and that Cllr C Woodman not Cllr C Webster was appointed to the Community Engagement and Well-Being Committee. The Mayor corrected the original document in situ. The Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 25th January 2021 were confirmed as a true record and approved.

5. To Consider Matters Arising from the Town Council Meeting on 25th January 2021

- There were no matters arising from the Town Council Meeting on 24th January 2021

6. To note for information Mayoral Announcements and Engagements:

Mayor's Engagements:

- Tuesday 2nd February 2021 – Attended the funeral of former Town Mayor Keith Vivian. The Mayor affirmed that it had been an honour for him and his Consort to attend. Cllr D Unwin and Cllr C Webster were also in attendance. The family of Mr Vivian asked that their thanks to the Council be conveyed.
- The Mayor drew Members attention to the opportunity to take up training that was available via The Town Clerk.

7. To formally declare two casual vacancies; one in the Oldcastle ward and one in the Morfa ward

- The Town Clerk confirmed that at the last meeting (January 2021) Rebecca Porter (Oldcastle ward) and Roger Marsh (Morfa ward) had not attended a Council meeting for six months and therefore under Section 85 (1) of the Local Government Act 1972 they cease to be a member of the authority. The Town Clerk informed Councillors that due to a change in BCBC legislation the vacancies needed to be formally declared before she could proceed.

RESOLVED: That due to non-attendance The Mayor declared that there were Councillor vacancies in the Oldcastle and Newcastle wards. The Town Clerk confirmed that she would now advertise the vacancies.

8. To discuss the appointment of Members to vacancies in BTC committees

1. Planning Committee x 1 Vacancy
2. Personnel Committee x 1 Vacancy

- There were no nominations for the above vacancies on Planning and Personnel Committees respectively.

RESOLVED: To defer this agenda item to the next full Council meeting.

9. Representation on Outside Bodies:

- a) To appoint one Councillor and one Deputy as representatives for One Voice Wales for 2020/2021
 - There were no nominations for the representatives for One Voice Wales 2020/2021

RESOLVED: To defer this agenda item to the March full Council meeting.

10. To receive Town Clerk's Report and Facilities Management Report since last meeting (for information)

The Town Clerk gave an overview of her report, providing details of the work undertaken by Bridgend Town Council staff and information for Councillors attention for the period 26th January – 10th February 2021.

Council Work Priorities

Since the last Town Council meeting The Town Clerk confirmed that following priorities have been completed:

- A new SLA with BCBC for the provision of on-going ICT services for BTC staff has been negotiated and written details will be provided to the Finance Committee at their next meeting for consideration.
- A Town Hall Working Group Meeting was held and notes have been circulated for information.
- The allotment tenancy agreements for 2020/21 and newsletter have been issued.
- The Town Hall contractor brief was re-issued with a deadline of 19th February.
- Contractors have undertaken work at Carnegie House to inspect the guttering regarding the damp issue and Openreach have installed new fast fibre broadband to the building (free of charge).
- The Town Council Community Newsletter and survey have been written, designed and are ready for Town Council comments/approval.
- Town Clerk completed the survey HM Land Registry Survey 'Town and Community Council Land Ownership survey' on behalf of the Council.
- The Town Council used its social media channels to support Holocaust Memorial Day, Children's Mental Health Week and LGBT+ History Awareness Month with a series of posts providing links to relevant organisations and signposting places where people can get support.

Printing Facilities:

The Town Clerk informed Council about issues with the printing facilities at Carnegie House and advised that a quote had been sought for new printing facilities and maintenance contract. The quote will be presented to the Finance Committee at their next meeting for consideration.

Youth Member Vacancies

The Town Clerk advised Members that the consideration of Youth Member applications would now be included on the agenda for the March Town Council meeting.

Councillor Vacancies in Oldcastle and Morfa wards

- The Town Clerk advised that at the January meeting it was reported that two Councillors had not attended any meetings for a period of 6 months from 22 June to 22 December and had not requested formal approval from the Council for their absence. Under Section 85 (1) of the Local Government Act 1972 these Councillors cease to be Councillors.
- The Electoral Office has since advised that the Town Council must declare the two casual vacancies by a resolution of Council before the vacancies can be advertised. Members were advised that this matter was included on the agenda for discussion.

Upcoming Events

The Town Clerk informed Members that she was working with the Mayor to make arrangements to acknowledge significant days, anniversaries and events throughout the year through Council social media pages. These included International Women's Day on 8th March, The Queen's 95th Birthday, HRH Prince Philip's 100th Birthday and the anniversary of HMS Urge.

The Town Clerk advised Members that the 27th April marks the anniversary of the day that HMS Urge left Malta on her final mission. She reported that the Democratic Services Officer has liaised with the Family Group who are in support of the lowering of the flags at the War Memorial and the placing of a wreath at the War Memorial by the Town Mayor. The Families conveyed that they were grateful and honoured that HMS Urge will be remembered.

Facilities Management Monthly Report

- The Town Clerk referred Members to the Facilities Management report and gave a short overview for the benefit of Members of the public present.
- It was noted that the team have been working on compliance matters for the Carnegie House and Town Hall buildings including fire safety, general waste and recycling contracts, Covid-19 deep clean and guttering. An issue identified with mortar jointing at the top of the side elevation of Carnegie House will need further investigation.
- A series of maintenance works has been carried out by the Outdoor Maintenance Team at the Town Hall property and it was noted that there are currently no known rough sleepers in the vicinity of the site.
- It was noted that Allotment Tenancy Agreements have been sent out for the year from 1st April 2020 with many tenants paying by bank transfer. The allotment waiting list has been updated to include each applicants ward and a standard response has been prepared to ensure each applicant is advised of the residency requirements.
- The report detailed a decrease in the use of the bins at Newbridge Fields following reports of illness experienced by dogs using the fields. BCBC's dog welfare officer is investigating further. The Town Council team are aware and are ensuring the continued frequent cleansing of the bins.
- Work on a complete schedule of all Town Council assets is nearing completion. The aim of this schedule is to ensure all relevant information is included to create a clear record of ownership and management responsibilities, to inform maintenance schedules and for financial purposes.
- Members were very pleased with the range of work conducted by the Outdoor Team within the wards. The Town Clerk advised that she would post photographs of the maintenance work carried out on social media.
- There were no questions; Members thanked the team for all their efforts, particularly in the Morfa ward and outside Tesco.

11. Planning: To consider draft minutes of the Planning Committee meeting on 8th February 2021

Cllr S Baldwin declared an interest in planning matters and left the meeting for the duration of discussion of agenda item 11. Planning.

- The Chair of Planning presented the minutes to Members and invited questions. There were no questions.

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

Cllr S Baldwin re-joined the meeting

12. Finance: To receive a balance of accounts and payments since last meeting

- The RFO gave a brief overview of accounts and payments up to and including the 9th Feb 2021.

RESOLVED: Accounts paid, read and approved by Members.

13. Town Hall Project:

- 1. To receive notes from a meeting of the Town Hall Working Group on Friday 5th February 2021**
 - 2. To consider responses to the architect brief for the refurbishment of the Town Hall premises and appoint an architect for this project**
 - 3. To consider submitting an application for grant funding to the BCBC Town and Community Council fund for a Town Hall project/s**
- The Mayor sought advice from the Town Clerk in relation to the commercial sensitivity of the agenda item. The Town Clerk confirmed that names of contractors and quotes for agenda item 13 are commercially sensitive.
 - Cllr S Baldwin proposed that the Agenda Item be deferred to the end of the meeting.
 - The Mayor agreed and informed Members of the public that they would need to leave the meeting at this point.

RESOLVED: To defer agenda item 13 to the end of the meeting.

14. Community Engagement Initiatives

- 1. To review and approve the design and content of the first BTC Community Newsletter**
- Cllr R Thomas noted that the design and content looked good and thanked all involved.
 - Cllr D Unwin queried the blank back page. The Town Clerk explained that the newsletter would be printed as one page per A4 and that there would be no blank pages.
 - The Mayor advised Members that any corrections would need to be made before approval was given for printing.
 - Cllr C Evans and Cllr R Thomas advised the Town Clerk of a change of contact details. The Town Clerk confirmed that she would forward the details to the Community Engagement Team who had already picked up and amended minor issues. The Town Clerk advised that the project had taken a huge amount of work and reiterated that any amendments could not be made after approval was given for printing.
 - The Mayor thanked the staff for all the work involved.

RESOLVED: That the BTC Community Newsletter design and content be approved and printed.

- 2. To review and approve the design and content of the BTC Community Survey**
- The Town Clerk explained that a printed copy of the draft survey has been sent to Cllr D Unwin and should be with him shortly.
 - The Town Clerk advised Members that the survey would be printed in A5 format and inserted into each newsletter. A digital copy will also be available on the Town Council website.
 - Cllr T Wood asked for confirmation on how the survey would be returned. The Town Clerk advised that there would be an online facility as well as post boxes placed in all wards for hard copies. Cllr T Wood confirmed that he would be happy to accommodate a post box in the indoor market.
 - The Mayor thanked Cllr T Wood and encouraged Councillors to promote the survey and encourage feedback.

RESOLVED: That the design and content of the Community Survey be approved and printed and that an additional post box be situated in Bridgend Indoor Market.

15. Town Twinning: To consider a letter from Villenave d'Ornon regarding Town Twinning Projects 2021-2026

- The Mayor advised Councillors that he had spoken with the Chairman of the Bridgend Twinning Association and noted that their next meeting would take place on the 25th February where the matter would be discussed. The Mayor confirmed that he would attend and feedback.
- The Mayor invited comments from Councillors regarding the planned projects.
- Cllr S Baldwin asked for confirmation that the only involvement Council had was in a civic capacity.
- The Mayor confirmed that BTC would only be involved in a civic capacity as per the agreed constitution of the Bridgend Town Twinning Association.

16. Consultations

1. Ombudsman Consultation – New draft Guidance Code of Conduct. The documents can be viewed online at <https://www.ombudsman.wales/blog/2021/02/03/consultation-new-draft-guidance-on-the-code-of-conduct-for-members-of-county-and-community-town-councils/>
Deadline for responses 28 February 2021. **NOTED**

17. Correspondence:

1. Email from One Voice Wales re: Connecting with your local community - A Communications Guide for Welsh Community & Town Councillors and their Clerks - **NOTED**
2. Email from We are Tempo re: Turning Time into Credits for Volunteers with Tempo - **NOTED**
3. Email from BCBC re: Census 2021 - **NOTED**
4. Email from One Voice Wales re: WLGA coronavirus email update 29.01.2021 - **NOTED**
5. Letter from Porthcawl COVID 19 Strategy Group re: Computers for children and Older People
 - Cllr D Unwin agreed that this was an important issue, however questioned how confident Members could be about the information being correct within the Bridgend area. Cllr D Unwin confirmed that all Brynteg pupils have received assistance. Cllr N Burnett confirmed that Penybont pupils had received assistance. Members were not aware of a demand for computers within the BTC wards.

RESOLVED: To note contents of letter as matters outside of the BTC boundary.

6. Email from One Voice Wales re: Welsh Government Fixed Term and Secondment Opportunities Higher Executive Officers Recruitment Campaign - **NOTED**
7. Email from One Voice Wales re: Welsh Government - Keep Wales Safe Campaign - **NOTED**
8. Email from Wales Probation Service re: Community payback service
 - Cllr D Unwin commented that a similar email was received in October 2020, which was passed to the Facilities Manager for information. The Town Clerk confirmed that the last email required any work to be specific to the crime committed however, this email advised that general work could be carried out. Members supported engaging with the Wales Probation Service to arrange works within the BTC wards as part of the Community payback service. Cllr D Unwin proposed that the email be directed to the Facilities Manager for her consideration and recommendation.

RESOLVED: That the email from Wales Probation Service re: Community payback service be passed to the Facilities Manager for her consideration and recommendation.

18. Town and Community Forum

- a) **To consider items for inclusion on the Town and Community Council Forum agenda.**
No items were suggested.
- b) **To consider feedback from meetings of the Town and Community Council Forum.**
To identify proposals for inclusion on the TCC Charter Action Plan which would aid the development of the Charter
- Cllr D Unwin informed Councillors that he had attended a meeting of the forum that day and would like to bring Members attention to two main issues:
 - a. That the consultation questionnaire had now been discussed more widely. However although responses were not as good as in previous years with a return of 50/60% a comprehensive report could still be compiled.
 - b. That the Town Centre Master Plan consultation date for comments was the 1st March 2021. Cllr D Unwin confirmed that the Master Plan was a 10-year project, covering 23 'phases' of differing timescales. He advised Members to await the priority of what the phases are before making comment and that it was unlikely that any work would commence for 12 months due to financial constraints.

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

- The Mayor thanked Members of the Public for their attendance and asked them to leave the meeting with the exception of the Town Hall Project Manager.

CONFIDENTIAL

13. Town Hall Project

1. To receive notes from a meeting of the Town Hall Working Group on Friday 5th February 2021

- The Mayor welcomed the Town Hall Project Manager, Mr Bob Burns to the meeting and confirmed that Members had received the relevant notes from the Town Hall Working Group Meeting held on the 2nd February 2021.
- The notes of the Town Hall Working Group meeting on Friday 5th February 2021 were noted by Members.
- The Deputy Town Clerk/RFO confirmed that she would monitor meeting attendees in order to comply with confidentiality.

2. To consider responses to the architect brief for the refurbishment of the Town Hall premises and appoint an architect for this project

- Cllr A Morelli queried the Working Group recommendation of K-Architects and suggested that PJ Lee Architects appear to be more well-known locally. The Town Clerk informed Members that the suggestion was not a conclusive recommendation. She explained that Members are not predetermined and are willing to discuss this matter before Council makes a decision.
- The Mayor invited the Project Manager to give his professional opinion. The Project Manager informed Councillors that all quotes had been carefully evaluated against the brief and criteria such as experience in public sector, time scales and add on costs. He noted that the PJ Lee Architect quote did not take into account any add on costs that may occur.
- Cllr S Baldwin queried if Chapel Row Architects had been approached. The Town Clerk confirmed that Chapel Row Architects had advised that they are no longer a Ltd company. Records show that the company was dissolved in 2018 and although the business is still operating without Ltd status, there is very little information about the company in recent years. For this reason, the company was not invited to submit a quote.
- Mr B Burns added that as Project Manager he had weighed up the principles of the 8 projects contained in the brief, paying particular attention to the interdependency of each project which may change the brief and outcome.
- The Town Clerk advised that the brief was sent out to Architects and Contractors (some of whom are also able to undertake the design element of the project), with a deadline of 19th February 2021 as agreed by Members.
- The Town Clerk informed Councillors that some projects may be eligible for grant funding.
- The Town Clerk advised caution in the appointment of a contractor or architect who may want to split projects into lower value contracts to negate Financial Regulations as this would not be acceptable and will be challenged by auditors.
- Cllr A Wathan suggested that because of time constraints it would be advisable to establish a time line for contractors.
- It was noted that grant funding could not be sought without detailed plans and costings.
- The Project Manager advised that the flooring for community rooms would be an example of an independent project that could be eligible for grant funding.
- Cllr D Unwin proposed that K- Architects should be engaged for the design work for the refurbishment of the Town Hall premises subject to the receipt of any other quotes received by Contractors by the 19th February.

RESOLVED: That the contract for the refurbishment of the Town Hall be awarded to K-Architects subject to the receipt of any other quotes received by Contractors by the 19th February. It was noted that if any additional quotes are received the decision will need to be reviewed.

- The Project Manager referred to the Pedestrian Access project and explained that he had researched a BCBC Planning matter known as 'Permitted Development'. The Project Manager believed that there was a strong case for pursuing this route for the pedestrian access project and asked Councillors if they were prepared for him to open a dialogue with the BCBC Planning and Highways departments to this effect.

RESOLVED: That Council accepts the recommendation of the Project Manager and that a meeting should be arranged with officers from the BCBC Planning and Highways Department as soon as possible.

3. To consider submitting an application for grant funding to the BCBC Town and Community Council fund for a Town Hall project

- The Town Clerk updated Councillors on grant funding and a draft application, which had been circulated.
- The Project Manager advised that two projects could be immediately considered:
 - To replace the flooring in the community rooms
 - To install a new archway, gate and railings around the community garden
- The Project Manager advised Members that although two quotes were generally required per application that one quote with a covering letter would be acceptable.
- The Town Clerk confirmed that other quotes had been sought and that applications required match funding.

RESOLVED: That the Town Clerk and the Project Manager prepare applications for the BCBC Town and Community Council Grant Fund for the two projects.

The Mayor thanked all Councillors and Staff for their attendance.

Meeting closed 8.45 pm

Signed
Mayor

Date