



MINUTES OF BRIDGEND TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

Meeting Details:

Date: Monday 16th May 2022

Time: 7pm

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 L Edwards (Town Clerk), Mrs D Jones (Deputy Town Clerk & RFO) & Mrs S Lewis (Community Engagement & Events Manager), Ms J Brown (Democratic Services Officer)

In Attendance:

Cllr Steven Bletsoe - In Person

Cllr Freya Bletsoe (Deputy Mayor) - In Person

Cllr Michelle Blundell-Humphreys - In Person

Cllr Nathan Deere – In Person

Cllr Steven Easterbrook – In Person

Cllr Dominic Evans – In Person

Cllr Allison Felton – Remote

Cllr Chris Harding – In Person

Cllr Barry Johnston – In Person

Cllr Ann Lloyd – In person

Cllr Angela Morelli – Remote

Cllr Ian Spiller – Remote

Cllr Fran Sullivan – In Person

Cllr David Unwin – In Person

Cllr Alan Wathan – In Person

Cllr Clair Webster – In Person

Cllr Ian Williams – In Person

Cllr Tim Wood (Mayor) – In Person

Plus: Members of the public (Remote)

- The Mayor requested that Agenda item 9 be brought forward to be discussed after Agenda item 5. Councillors agreed.

1. To Receive Apologies for Absence

- None

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

- Cllr S Easterbrook declared a personal interest as a town trader.
- The Mayor declared a personal interest as a town trader and in any discussions relating to BCBC as a BCBC Councillor.
- Cllr S Bletsoe declared a personal interest in any discussions in relation to BCBC as a BCBC Councillor.
- Cllr A Morelli declared a personal interest in any discussion in relation to Heronsbridge School.
- Cllr I Williams declared a personal interest in Agenda item 15 (3) correspondence and in any discussions in relation to BCBC as a BCBC Councillor.

- Cllr A Wathan declared a personal interest in any discussions in relation to BCBC as a BCBC Councillor.
- Cllr I Spiller declared a personal interest in a any discussions in relation to BCBC as a BCBC Councillor.

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

- There were no questions from Members of the public.

4. To consider matters arising from the minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 19th April 2022

- The Town Clerk referred Members to page 279 (Heronsbridge School) and advised that she would be circulating a link to the consultation event directly after the meeting.
- The Mayor advised that any matters arising from page 280, in relation to confidential matters and would need to be discussed in confidence under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, and the public and representatives of the press be excluded from the meeting during the consideration this agenda item.
- There were no other matters arising.

5. To note for information Mayoral Announcements and Engagements:

- Mayor and Mayoress:
10th May – Visit to the Friends of the Royal Navy Submarine Museum in Gosport for the HMS Urge Families Group event.

9. To consider a report from Mayor, Cllr S Bletsoe, regarding HMS Urge visit to Malta in April 2022

- Cllr S Bletsoe availed Members of his report on his visit to Malta in April 2022 to commemorate HMS Urge.
- The Mayor noted that Mr Francis Dickinson was present via video link and cordially welcomed him to the meeting. The Mayor stated that it would be an honour to hear an update on the HMS Urge Visit from Mr Dickinson on behalf of the families.
- Mr Francis Dickinson thanked the Mayor for his invitation to speak, and in addition stated that it was a privilege and pleasure. Mr Dickinson referred to the long history between HMS Urge and Bridgend and expressed his delight and thanks for the strengthening of these connections. Mr Dickinson once again thanked Bridgend Town Council for their participation and all their support on behalf of The Families Group, not just in Malta but in Gosport, and added that Former Mayor Cllr Steven Bletsoe and his Consort Cllr Freya Bletsoe were excellent ambassadors for Bridgend.
- The Mayor thanked Mr Dickinson for his kind words.
- Councillor S Bletsoe also thanked Mr Dickinson and the families for their kind words which were very much appreciated.
- Cllr S Bletsoe referred to his circulated report and proposed that Members Consider the following proposals:

1. That In light of Professor Gambin's offer to present his presentation in Bridgend, that Bridgend Town Council extend an invitation to Professor Timmy Gambin, Platon Alexiadis and Francis Dickinson to present the HMS Urge presentation through its Carnegie House Arts programme and to pass this matter to the Community Engagement & Wellbeing Committee to administer.

RESOLVED: That the Community Engagement & Wellbeing Manager extend an invitation to Professor Timmy Gambin, Platon Alexiadis and Francis Dickinson to present the HMS Urge presentation through its Carnegie House Arts programme.

2. That Bridgend Council extend an invitation to families of servicemen who died in service on HMS Urge to join the town for its annual Remembrance Service and to march with Councillors to mark the march that their relatives were due to undertake.

RESOLVED: That Bridgend Town Council extend an invitation to families of servicemen who died in service on HMS Urge to join the town for its annual Remembrance Service and to march with Councillors to mark the march that their relatives were due to undertake.

3. That as it has been resolved that Bridgend Town Council will install a memorial within the grounds of the new Town Hall to mark those who served on HMS Urge. It is therefore proposed that Bridgend Town Council receive the details of the company who created the memorial in Fort St Elmo to seek continuity of design of the memorial for the one to be installed in Bridgend Town Hall.

RESOLVED: That Bridgend Town Council receive the details of the company who created the memorial in Fort St Elmo to seek continuity of design of the memorial for the one to be installed in Bridgend Town Hall.

4. Cllr S Bletsoe advised Councillors that during numerous conversations over the week with James McGuire, Chief of Staff at Royal Navy and James Perks CBE, Commodore Submarine Service, both stated that if Bridgend Town Council would like serving submariners to attend the Remembrance Service in Bridgend town to mark 80 years of the sinking of HMS Urge, then they would both personally authorise and organise this to happen. Cllr S Bletsoe therefore proposed that Bridgend Town Council request the attendance of serving HM Submariners for the Remembrance Service to mark 80 years of the sinking of HMS Urge.

RESOLVED: That Bridgend Town Council request the attendance of serving HM Submariners for the 2022 Remembrance Service to mark 80 years of the sinking of HMS Urge.

5. Cllr S Bletsoe advised Members that during the reception after the unveiling of the HMS Urge memorial, a current serving submariner approached him to state that he was “blown away” by the relationship that he had witnessed between Urge and the people of Bridgend. He suggested that he would love to see Bridgend take the opportunity to adopt a current submarine and that he felt that he would see that as a fitting legacy of the relationship 80 years ago. An immediate discussion with Commodore Jim Perks informed me that this kind of relationship is still “possible” and that any application from the people of Bridgend should be addressed to him personally by the Town Council. Cllr S Bletsoe therefore proposed that Bridgend Town Council authorises Councillor S Bletsoe to conduct research into the process of Bridgend Town Council adopting a current serving HM Submarine which will detail all costs and obligations that this would place on the council.

RESOLVED: That Bridgend Town Council authorise Councillor S Bletsoe to conduct research into the process of Bridgend Town Council adopting a current serving HM Submarine which will detail all costs and obligations that this would place on the council.

6. Cllr S Bletsoe advised that The University of Malta has created a limited-edition presentation of HMS Urge to commemorate the find and to mark the occasion and therefore proposed that Bridgend Town Council consider the purchase of the limited edition print of HMS Urge on behalf

of the people of Bridgend to mark the bond between the town and the crew at a cost of 100 Euros.

RESOLVED: that Bridgend Town Council purchase one limited edition print of HMS Urge on behalf of the people of Bridgend to mark the bond between the town and the crew at a cost of 100 Euros.

- Cllr D Unwin congratulated Cllr S Bletsoe on his excellent report and in addition proposed that an information board be sited near the HMS Urge Mural on the river wall.
- Cllr D Unwin also proposed that a permanent marble plaque dedicated to HMS Urge should be commissioned for the War memorial.
- Cllr F Bletsoe queried if the words on the Memorial plaque placed on the HMS Urge could be replicated.
- The Town Clerk highlighted that the Council does not have budget allocated for these decisions and asked Council to provide for clarification of budget allocation. It was proposed that expenditure is allocated either from the Parades/Memorial Budget or contingency budget. Staff resource was not considered.
- Cllr C Harding enquired if this work amounted to a new project; Cllr A Wathan responded that it was an on-going project.
- The Mayor thanked Mr Dickinson for attending the meeting.

6. To receive Town Clerk's Report since last meeting (for information)

The Town Clerk drew Member's attention to priorities, workload and urgent matters as follows:

Resource

The Town Clerk advised that during the month significant resource has been allocated to the audit, preparations for the elections/new Council and for the Annual and Ordinary Town Council meetings in May. In addition to this staff had responded to six Freedom of Information requests.

Unfortunately, a number of staff have experienced ill health during the month, however progress is being made on the Town Hall and Website projects and the backlog of Facilities work.

Elections

The Town Clerk notified Councillors that one of the successful candidates for the Morfa ward in the recent Town and Community Council elections will not be taking up the seat at Bridgend Town Council this term. The Town Clerk added that she would liaise with the Electoral Office and provide further details in due course.

Audit

The Town Clerk reported that The Deputy Clerk/RFO has been extremely busy preparing all of the year end reports, annual accounting statements and the annual governance statement in preparation for the internal and external audit for financial year 2021-2022. The documentation will be delivered to the internal auditor next week and the annual return will be presented to the Council for consideration and approval by 30th June 2022.

The Town Clerk advised Council that further to the issuing of the agenda she had received the 2020-21 audit outcome; she reported that Bridgend Town Council received an unqualified audit with no comments or report and that notice of the audit opinion had been published as required. The Town Clerk and Members thanked the Deputy Town Clerk/RFO.

Building Compliance & Re-opening of Carnegie House to the public

The Town Clerk advised that the Fire and Legionella Risk assessments had been carried out for Carnegie House. In addition, there is work arising from the reports from the external company, however this will now be reviewed and reported to the next Facilities Committee. The Facilities Manager is currently arranging PAT of electrical equipment and emergency lighting tests before the end of May. Subject to a review of the work to be undertaken and the level of acceptable risk by Council, it is hoped that the building will be ready to open to the public within the next 4-6 weeks.

Website

The Town Clerk advised that work has continued to populate and test the new Bridgend Town Council website. Some staff training has been undertaken and further training for additional staff members will be arranged shortly. It is likely that the website will be ready to go live by mid-June.

Training

The Town Clerk strongly advised that all councillors are encouraged to undertake Code of Conduct training. The Town Clerk requested that Members please notify the staff of available dates so that a place can be booked. She added that training opportunities on other topics will be offered to Councillors over the next few months. The Town Clerk invited questions.

- Cllr I Williams asked for clarification on the cost of a by election.
- Cllr Unwin suggested that from past by elections the costs could be approximately £5,000.
- Cllr F Bletsoe wished to forward her congratulations to the Community Engagement Events and Manager and Team for the very hard work put into the new website.

7. Finance

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

RESOLVED: Accounts paid, read, and approved by Members.

2. Councillor Remuneration

- Cllr D Unwin queried page 29 in relation to payments to members of local authorities and asked the Town Clerk to clarify. The Town Clerk advised that she had sought advice from One Voice Wales who confirmed that the wording had changed but the response required further clarification. The Town Clerk advised Councillors that the RFO would contact the Remuneration Panel for guidance.

a) To receive Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Annual Report 2022 and confirm payment date for Basic Pay/Individual Remuneration for 2022/23

- The RFO provided an update on the report and sought a decision from Council on when payment should be made.
- Cllr D Unwin referred to page 29 of the report which stated that 'Councillors could turn down all or part of any payment that they are entitled to, but they must do this by writing to the Clerk of the Council'.
- Following discussion Members agreed that payments should be made in June 2022.

RESOLVED: That the RFO provide Councillors with the Bridgend Town Council, Councillor Remuneration form and that payment is made in June 2022.

b) To review Senior Role Remuneration payments, agree number of Committee Chair payments and confirm payment date for 2022/23

- The RFO referred Members to the IRPW Annual Report and advised that Bridgend Town Council falls within Group 1 of the legislation therefore a payment of £500 is mandatory for 1 member and optional for up to 7. She clarified that a councillor can only have one payment of £500 regardless of how many senior roles they hold within their Council.
- Cllr S Bletsoe proposed that payment to all 6 Chairs of Committee be reinstated, and payment made in June 2022.
- Cllr Harding provided an alternative view that Bridgend Town Council only pay the one mandatory senior payment.
- As Cllr S Bletsoe had already made a proposal on this matter, Council was asked to vote on the proposal made. Members were asked to vote on whether payment to all 6 Chairs of Committee be reinstated, and payment made in June 2022. The result of the vote is recorded in the table below:

Councillors Name	In Favour	Not in Favour	Abstained
Steven Bletsoe	In Favour		
Freya Bletsoe	In favour		
Michelle Blundell-Humphreys	In Favour		
Nathan Deere	In favour		
Steven Easterbrook	In favour		
Dominic Evans	In favour		
Allison Felton			Abstain
Chris Harding		Not in Favour	
Barry Johnston	In Favour		
Ann Lloyd	In Favour		
Angela Morelli		Not in Favour	
Ian Spiller			Abstain
Francesca Sullivan	In favour		
David Unwin			Abstain
Alan Wathan	In favour		
Clair Webster	In favour		
Ian Williams	In favour		
Tim Wood	In favour		

Those In favour	14
Those Not In favour	2
Abstained	3

RESOLVED: That a senior role payment of £500 be paid to 6 Bridgend Town Council Committee Chairs as set out in the guidance from the Individual Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRPW).

c) To review Mayor payment and confirm payment date for 2022/23

d) To review Deputy Mayor payment and confirm payment date for 2022/23

- Cllr T Wood declared a prejudicial interest and did not participate in discussion of agenda item 7.2c.
- Agenda items 7.2c and 7.2d were discussed together. It was agreed that the matter be deferred to the June Council meeting in order that the RFO seek clarification from the IRPW in relation to payments for members of Principle Councils.

8. Planning

To agree a date for the next Planning Committee meeting on Monday 23rd May 2022 at 11.30am

RESOLVED: That the next Planning Committee meeting would take place on Monday 23rd May 2022 at 11.30am.

10. Town Hall

1. To receive an update from the Town Clerk regarding the tender process and timescales for appointing a contractor

- The Town Clerk advised Councillors that a more detailed update on the history of The Town Hall project had been previously circulated.
- The Town Clerk reported that the invitation to tender was issued on 5th April 2022 along with 39 supporting technical drawings and reports. The deadline for the receipt of tenders was midday on Friday 6th May 2022. The Town Clerk informed Members that only 3 companies acknowledged the invitation to tender, and all responded to request an extension to the deadline due to difficulties obtaining costs from suppliers. Advice was sought from One Voice Wales and the deadline was extended to midday on Friday 13th May 2022. All 7 companies were informed of this extension to the tender submission deadline.
- The Town Clerk requested that Council nominate a Member to open the tender envelopes in the presence of the Clerk.

RESOLVED: That Chair of Finance, Cllr D Unwin witness the opening of the tender envelopes.

The Mayor called for a two-minute recess before the next agenda item.

The meeting resumed at 7:59 pm.

2. To consider the appointment of a Project Manager for the construction works

- The Town Clerk informed Councillors that a quote of £2,600 had been received from the architect based on the work required as detailed in the quote.
- The Town Clerk advised Members that she had checked the financial regulations and given that quotes have been difficult to obtain throughout the project on that basis Council accepted the

quote.

RESOLVED: That The Town Clerk engage the services of the architect for the appointment of Project Manager for the Construction works for a fee of £2,600.

11. Welsh Language Scheme

To consider a communication from the Welsh Language Commissioner regarding the new blue plaque in the Rhiw Shopping centre and consider the introduction of a Welsh Language Scheme. (Deferred from April meeting)

- For the benefit of new Councillors, The Town Clerk explained that at County Council level, the Welsh Language Scheme was mandatory and at Town Council level the scheme was optional due to resource and budget constraints within the sector.
- The Town Clerk asked for guidance from Council and enquired if Members would like staff to undertake research into adopting a Welsh Language Scheme.
- Cllr A Felton advised that she was in favour of finding out more and proposed that staff undertake the required research.
- Cllr D Unwin advised that Council were not ignoring the Welsh Language and had spent £2,500 on translation fees in previous years and in addition, the Bridgend Town Council newsletter is printed in Welsh. Cllr D Unwin stated that he was not against looking at this new project in the future (although there were implications regarding staffing which would need to be addressed by the Personnel Committee as a new and additional project).
- Cllr F Bletsoe echoed what Cllr A Felton said and added that the number of Welsh speakers was growing in the Bridgend area.
- Members discussed resource and current staff workload and agreed that the matter be deferred for 6 months due to current workload; Cllr F Bletsoe also requested that the matter be referred to the Regeneration Committee in relation to bi-lingual Blue Plaques.

RESOLVED: That the introduction of a Welsh Language Scheme be deferred for 6 months and referred to the Regeneration Committee in relation to bi-lingual Blue Plaques.

12. To consider staffing arrangements and feedback from the Town Twinning Association regarding the Town Twinning Civic Dinner

- The Town Clerk advised Members that in previous years two members of staff were on duty at Town Twinning Dinners.
- Cllr F Bletsoe queried the reason for staff to be present.
- The Town Clerk advised that staff organise all aspects of a Civic Function to required and agreed deadlines and also ensure that proper procedures, legislation and protocols are followed as well as generally supporting Councillors and Civic guests.
- Cllr D Unwin asked if the Democratic Services Officer could attend.
- Cllr A Wathan proposed that up to two staff Members be allocated at the discretion of The Town Clerk to attend and support the Civic Dinner with the inclusion of a meal.

RESOLVED: That up to two staff Members be allocated at the discretion of The Town Clerk to attend and support The Civic Dinner.

13. To receive an update from the Town Clerk regarding the addition of a name Bridgend War Memorial

- The Town Clerk referred to the War Memorial report which had been previously circulated and asked Members to consider the options proposed within the report.

- Further to discussion of where the addition of a name should be placed, Cllr D Unwin proposed the installation of a new small bronze plaque at the bottom of the memorial. The Town Clerk advised she would seek quotes to be presented at a future finance committee meeting.

RESOLVED: That Council purchase a new small bronze plaque to be progressed through the finance committee.

- Cllr D Unwin referred to the refurbishment work as advised by BCBC Conservation Officer and due to the scale of the project proposed it be deferred to the next financial year.

14. Consultations:

a. Heronsbridge School

The Local Authority is commencing a consultation process for the above proposal. Copies of the consultation papers are available on the BCBC website via the following link:

<https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/my-council/equalities-and-engagement/consultations/current-consultations>

The consultation period will run from 04/04/2022 to 18/05/2022.

Bridgend Town Council is invited to attend a remote consultation session with BCBC on Tuesday 17 May 3:30pm to 4:30pm

- The Town Clerk reminded Members that the end of this consultation period was the next day, 12th May and that she would resend the link following the meeting.

15. Correspondence:

a. Enquiry from a resident of Newcastle Hill re Planters at the bottom of Newcastle Hill

- Cllr D Unwin extended his thanks and proposed that Council welcome and accept the offer of planting at the bottom of Newcastle Hill; he proposed that Bridgend Town Council pay the costs of the plants. He also proposed that a quote be sought for the planting of all welcome to town planters located at the 5 entrances into the Town.
- Cllr F Bletsoe proposed that that the enquiry also be passed to the Regeneration Committee in order to seek a quote for the red telephone box project.

b. Enquiry from tenant of Jubilee Allotment Site re: The Queen's Jubilee Event on Friday 3rd June

- The Town Clerk reported that she had spoken to the Facilities Manager who gave a health and safety overview of the risk and considerations for Member in relation to the request, particularly the attendance of non-tenants, the rules within Council agreements, alcohol and how music may impact on the surrounding area.
- After discussion Cllr I Spiller proposed that the event should take place on condition that the appropriate public liability insurance is provided by the Jubilee Allotment Site.

RESOLVED: That the event can take place on condition that the appropriate insurance is provided by the Jubilee Allotment Site.

c. Enquiry from a teacher at Oldcastle Primary School re: Year 5 visit to Council Chamber May – July 2022

- Cllr D Unwin suggested that a visit be postponed until after the Chamber is refurbished. Cllr A Morelli advised that by postponing year 5's would have moved on through the curriculum and that it was important they attend during the above period from both a democracy and curriculum point of view.

- The Town Clerk advised that Council had received school visits to the chamber in the past and that The Mayor and Councillors available had guided the children through a debating session which was well received.
- After discussion Council agreed to issue an invitation to Oldcastle Primary School re: Year 5 visit to Council Chamber May – July 2022.

RESOVED: That the Town Clerk issue an invitation to Oldcastle Primary School, Year 5 to visit the Council Chamber between May – July 2022.

16. Town and Community Forum

- a) To consider items for inclusion on the Town and Community Council Forum agenda - NOTED
- b) To consider feedback from meetings of the Town and Community Council Forum - NOTED
- c) To identify proposals for inclusion on the TCC Charter Action Plan which would aid the development of the Charter - NOTED

Meeting closed: 8.49 pm

Signed

Date

Mayor