



## MINUTES OF BRIDGEND TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

### Meeting Details:

Date: Monday 24<sup>th</sup> January 2022

Time: 6.30 pm

Location: Meeting held remotely via video conference under Local Government and Elections Act (Wales) 2021

Chairperson: The Mayor, Cllr Steven Bletsoe

Staff: Mrs L Edwards (Town Clerk), Mrs D Jones (Deputy Town Clerk & RFO), Miss J Brown (Democratic Services Officer) and Mrs Sharlene Lewis (Community Engagement and Events Manager)

### In Attendance:

Cllr Alan Wathan – PRESENT

Cllr Ian Williams –PRESENT

Cllr Steven Bletsoe (Mayor) – PRESENT

Cllr Steven Easterbrook – PRESENT

Cllr Martin Smidman – PRESENT

Cllr Chris Woodman – PRESENT

Cllr M Voisey – PRESENT

Cllr David Unwin – PRESENT

Cllr Freya Bletsoe - PRESENT

Cllr Tim Wood – PRESENT

Cllr N Burnett - PRESENT

Cllr S Baldwin – PRESENT

Cllr A Morelli - PRESENT

Cllr L Walters - PRESENT

### Youth Representatives:

Dafydd Rees – PRESENT

The Mayor welcomed members of the Public and Councillors to the meeting and explained that under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public, Youth Representatives, and representatives of the press would be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of agenda item 21 as publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest due to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.

### 1. To Receive Apologies for Absence

- Cllr C Evans, Cllr R Thomas, Cllr C Webster
- Youth Representative – Megan Howley

**Absent:** Cllr S Charles, Cllr M Blundell-Humphreys

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

- The Mayor declared a prejudicial interest in agenda item 15 and advised that he would be not be taking part in this agenda item which would be Chaired by The Deputy Mayor.
- The Mayor advised that a declaration of interest could be made at any time during the meeting.

**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 receive questions or comments from the BTC Youth Representatives**

- The Mayor requested that this agenda item be deferred to allow the Youth Representatives to attend.
- The Town Clerk reported that some Councillors were experiencing technical issues joining the remote meeting and requested a recess of 5 minutes to allow Councillors to connect.
- The Mayor brought forward agenda item 7.

**7. To note for information Mayoral Announcements and Engagements**

- To note for information Mayoral Announcements and Engagements:
- Thursday 16th December – Coychurch Crematorium Carol Service (Event Cancelled)
- Thursday 16th December – Town Hall – Planting of a Cherry Tree in support of The Sakura Cherry Tree Project to celebrate Japan's relationship with the UK
- Friday 24th December – Compassion Church Christmas Eve Service

**5. To Confirm and Sign Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2022**

**RESOLVED:** That the minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2022 be confirmed as a true record and duly signed.

**6. To consider matters arising from the minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> December 2022.**

- The Mayor reminded Councillors that any matters arising on confidential pink papers would need to be discussed in confidence under agenda item 21.
- Pages 222 – 225. Cllr A Wathan requested permission to submit an urgent enquiry to the HR solicitor using the service provided under the monthly retainer for HR advice. He noted that he could not provide further details as it was a confidential matter.
- The Town Clerk advised Members that although the Council pay a monthly fee for HR advice, if advice requested falls outside of the retainer, any additional advice is subject to an hourly rate.
- Cllr L Walters suggested that an hourly budget be considered and approved which could help expediate any urgent matters.
- Cllr D Unwin agreed with Cllr L Walters and proposed that any extra hours needed could be at the discretion of the Town Clerk.
- Cllr L Walters proposed that a budget of 10 hours to cover urgent HR advice required on top of the monthly retainer be approved to be administered by The Town Clerk in Councils best interest.

**RESOLVED:** That a budget of 10 hours be set to cover any additional urgent HR advice required on top of the monthly retainer.

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

- The Mayor thanked The Town Clerk for her report which was informative and positive and which had been circulated to Members.
- The Town Clerk drew Members attention to priority and ongoing tasks as follows:

**Staff Resource**

The Town Clerk advised that from the 26<sup>th</sup> December 2021 Welsh Government updated their Covid-19 restrictions to Alert level 2 and reintroduced 2 metre social distancing requirements in offices

and all public premises, face coverings to be worn in all indoor public places and a legal requirement to 'work from home if you can'.

Prior to this, staff had been working in the office at Carnegie House on a rota basis, however as most staff can carry out the majority of work from home, the rota to work in the office during January has been temporarily suspended. Some staff have been accessing the office to pick up mail and print papers for Council meetings etc. but this has been kept to a minimum. The social distancing signs and hand sanitiser station in Carnegie House are all still in place. The legal requirement to 'work from home if you can' changes from a legal duty to guidance from 28<sup>th</sup> January 2022 and staff will be consulted on resuming the rota after this date.

The Town Clerk further advised that the volume of work required to manage the Council's projects, services, resources and assets and to facilitate Council meetings is still very high and unfortunately there was still a staff shortage.

### **Town Hall Alarm**

The Town Clerk reported an ongoing issue with the security alarm at the Town Hall and that a number of actions had been taken to try to resolve it. The Town Clerk explained to Members that she had met an engineer onsite four times in the past three weeks and that the sensor triggering the alarm has been identified, the room affected has been cleared to reduce the possibility of false triggers, the sensor and cabling from the sensor to the alarm panel has been completely replaced and the zone for the sensor has been switched. In addition a 'soak test' was set up to test the system over a period of 7 days however the test identified an ongoing issue in the zone. The room that the sensor is located in has a Perspex roof and it is possible that movement on the roof (such as wildlife or leaves) is triggering the sensor. As a temporary measure, the Maintenance Team have covered the perspex roof from the inside.

The Town Clerk reported that the soak test had identified that the alarm had been triggered twice in the past week. The Town Clerk explained that that a new CCTV system was installed at The Town Hall last week and recordings have already been checked to ensure that the alarm is not being triggered by people in the grounds of the property. The Town Clerk explained that the problematic sensor has now been taken off the system to prevent false alarm activations. She reassured Council that the alarm in that area will still be activated if the door sensor or sensors in the Chamber room are activated. She noted that she will continue to monitor the issue.

- Cllr A Wathan queried whether the whole alarm system needed to be replaced.
- The Town Clerk highlighted that the alarm system is old and Council may need to consider replacing it in the future.
- Cllr M Voisey queried if the call out fee for the engineer was part of a maintenance contract for the alarm. The Town Clerk confirmed that the maintenance contract had expired and that there was a call out fee.
- After a short discussion it was suggested that the matter should be referred to the Facilities Committee for discussion regarding a new maintenance contract and/or replacing the alarm system.

**RESOLVED:** To include an agenda item for the next Facilities Committee to discuss arrangements for a new maintenance contract for the security alarm at the Town Hall and/or replacing the alarm system.

### **Allotments**

The Town Clerk advised Members that she was aware that some Councillors have been contacted directly by members of the public reference perceived vacant plots. The Town Clerk confirmed that

the 'allotment grace period' had been suspended and that regular inspections have now restarted. The Town Clerk provided a brief overview of the current position as follows:

- That there was one vacant plot at GWA and one whole plot at Waunscil which were in the process of being offered out to the next people on the waiting list.
- That there was one very badly overgrown vacant plot at GWA which a number of people had been offered and refused, however the FM Team were continuing to offer it out in the order of the waiting list. The Town Clerk further explained that it takes some time to send out an offer, for people to respond etc.  
The Town Clerk suggested that due to the administration time of offering the plot continually, Council may need to consider seeking a quote from a clearance company to clear it if it cannot be let in its current condition.
- That there were no outstanding notices to quit.
- That at the last inspection on 20th October 2021 there were a number of plots that needed to be monitored. At this point none of the plots were noted as being in an excessively poor condition (that were not already vacant), and that quite a few of these had recently been let to new tenants who have been given some time to work the plot.
- That the majority of the clearance work appears to have been undertaken, therefore another inspection will be carried out later this month. If the plots have not been brought up to an acceptable standard, then notices to quit will be served.
- That some rent payments for allotment plots are still outstanding. If the payments are not made these plots will be declared vacant and offered out to the next people on the list (the Town Clerk clarified that there may be the tenants who haven't completed the winter clearance because they don't want the plots anymore but haven't informed us).

The Town Clerk reminded Members that prior to the pandemic the potential waiting time on the Allotment waiting list was approximately three years, however as all the sites are fully occupied, this is dependent on when people decide to give up a plot or if a tenant does not comply with the terms of the lease and a notice to quit has to be issued. Unfortunately, due to the impact of the pandemic, Council decided not to pursue non-cultivation of allotments as a priority, so plots were not becoming available very frequently.

- Cllr M Voisey queried if the cost of a contractor to clear the badly overgrown plot at GWA could be investigated, or if Council would consider offering the plot rent free for a nominated period.
- The Town Clerk advised that the matter could be put on the next available agenda for the Facilities Committee.

**RESOLVED:** That the matter of the overgrown plot at GWA be considered by the Facilities Committee on the 24th March 2022.

### **Christmas 2021**

The Town Clerk reported that feedback from local residents and town traders about the BTC Christmas events has been fantastic. The winner of the Reindeer Trail competition was from the Oldcastle Ward and was delighted with the goodie bag prize. The Brass Band Bus was also a great success, and it was wonderful that Bridgend Town Council was able to provide something safe and memorable during the on-going pandemic.

### **New Online Courses for Jan 2022**

The Town Clerk advised Members that new courses were now being offered online for January 2022, these include French, Spanish, Italian and Managing Anxiety. All the courses will be conducted via zoom with Carnegie House Tutors. The events are all promoted on the Carnegie House Facebook page and The Town Clerk asked Councillors if they would also promote through

their own media channels. In addition, an online printing course s with tutor Claire Hiatt would start in February 2022. (The course is funded by the Millennium Stadium Trust Grant previously received.).

### **Wartime Bridgend**

The Town Clerk advised that planning for the next Wartime Bridgend event had begun. Unfortunately, many of the attractions had already been booked for June 2022, therefore the Community Engagement & Events Manager had prepared a detailed report for members consideration under agenda item 13 and would be seeking urgent decisions so that plans can progress. The Town Clerk referred to the reports which had been previously circulated for Members consideration under agenda item 13:

1. Wartime Bridgend Research Report – this report has all the details for Council to make a decision on a date for this year and details of large attractions for Councils approval to book.
2. War and Peace Catalogue – this catalogue details all of their attractions and has information and pictures on the attractions selected in the report
3. Review/Report of the 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Battle of Britain Exhibition – this has information and images and includes details of where the exhibition has been to date.
4. Projected Budget for Wartime Bridgend 2022 – The budget sets out what is proposed and will be a working document throughout the event planning. Funding and sponsorship will also be sort for the event.

### **New Website Project**

The Town Clerk reported that sections of the new website had been divided up between staff to review, update existing content, create new written content and source imagery. The information would then be uploaded to a digital vault for use by the web developers and staff who will work closely with the company over the next few months to review, approve and test the pages as the site is developed. The Town Clerk informed Members that the website would be ready to launch in Spring 2022.

### **Newsletter**

The Town Clerk informed Councillors that The Community Engagement Team were currently working on content for the next BTC Newsletter and a draft of the content would be circulated to the committee in the coming weeks. The Town Clerk asked Members to note that the Newsletter will be distributed before the pre-election period begins at the end of March 2022.

- Cllr L Walters suggested that all Councillors send in content for the newsletter so that no accusations of bias could be made.

### **Blue Plaque unveilings**

The Town Clerk advised Councillors that plans were underway to install and unveil the Tudor Market Charter plaque outside the Indoor Market in the Rhiw Shopping Centre. All permissions have been granted and the staff will be arranging a Covid-19 Event Risk Assessment. The proposed date for the event is 26th February and attendance will be by formal invitation.

- The DSO informed the meeting that the date of the event had now been confirmed for Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2022.

### **Civic Service Plans**

The Town Clerk informed Councillors that it was proposed that the Mayor's Civic Service takes place at Hermon Chapel on Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> March 2022. An updated a Covid-19 Event Risk Assessment

will need to be conducted in the coming weeks and arrangements will need to be made to issue the formal invitations and arrange the Order of Service.

### Upcoming meetings

Members were advised that:

1. A draft calendar of Council and Committee meetings for 2022 was included under agenda item 17 for consideration and approval.
  2. The next meeting of the Town and Community Council Forum would be the 7<sup>th</sup> of February 2022. There is a standing agenda item at this meeting (agenda item 20) for Members to consider agenda items to be discussed in this forum. The Town Clerk reminded Members that in order to use this meeting to full advantage, to please suggest agenda items important to the Town Council so that they can be discussed at this forum.
  3. The next meeting of the Bridgend Town Centre ASB Management meeting would take place remotely on 10<sup>th</sup> February 2022 10am – 11.30am
- Youth Representative Dafydd Rees apologised to The Mayor for his late arrival and enquired if he may have an update on the security of the Town Hall regarding two youths who were seen on the roof on the 27<sup>th</sup> of September 2021.
  - The Town Clerk clarified that the two youths had ripped off some felting and lead from the roof and had subsequently been caught by the police.
  - Cllr I Williams informed Members that Youth Representative Megan Howley had obtained her masters degree and had conveyed that she was now available to attend meetings.

## **9. Planning**

**To consider draft minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2022.**

- The Chair informed The Town Clerk that date of the meeting was incorrect and confirmed that the meeting took place on the 17<sup>th</sup> of January 2022.
- The Chair presented the minutes to Council and asked Members if they had any questions. There were no questions.

**RESOLVED:** To receive and note the minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2022.

## **10. Town Hall**

**To receive an update from the Town Clerk and/or Town Hall Working Group regarding the status of the Town Hall refurbishment project and issuing of a tender document to seek quotes from contractors**

- The Town Clerk referred to the original refurbishment document plan which had been circulated to Councillors and Staff for comment. The Town Clerk advised Councillors that the comments had been collated from the architect and that these were noted in blue. The Town Clerk asked Council to review the information and the revised sketch layout in order to progress the tender documents.
- The Mayor thanked The Town Clerk for a comprehensive document and queried the cost of any changes. The Town Clerk advised that updated costs had not been provided.
- The Mayor invited Members to discuss the document and make decisions required systematically as follows:

### The Main Entrance Doors

- Cllr D Unwin suggested that as the Town Clerk and staff would be dealing with the doors on a daily basis, The Town Clerk be asked for her point of view and any comments. The Town Clerk advised that the sliding doors would restrict access for large events and bringing large items into the building. The Town Clerk suggested that the Community Engagement and Events Manager may also have a view on this. The Community Engagement and Events Manager was invited to speak and advised Members that double doors would allow for the access of large displays and exhibits, as well as allowing the public easier access to events that could also accommodate social distancing if required in the future.
- Members discussed motion sensors for automatic door opening however it was felt that these could be falsely triggered by movement in the garden.
- Cllr M Voisey proposed that push pads be used with double swings doors so that doors could be automatically opened on request. Cllr A Wathan agreed with Cllr M Voisey, adding that when a contractor is appointed more options may be available.

**RESOLVED:** That Double Doors with automatic push pads be the preferred option for the Town Hall main entrance subject to final discussion with the appointed contractor.

### Reception area – to include a glass screen so that the Community Engagement Team can see staff approaching the desk

- The Town Clerk advised Councillors that the Community Engagement Team had studied the reception area in detail and the Community Engagement and Events Manager was invited to comment. The Community Engagement and Events Manager referred to the notes circulated and advised that as a member of staff would not be permanently situated at the reception desk, a glass window would enable the team to see approaching visitors from their office .
- Cllr M Voisey suggested that frosted glass may be used so that the computer screen may not be seen by the public, preserving confidentiality.
- The Mayor proposed that The Town Clerk enquire if frosted glass would be an option.

**RESOLVED:** That the reception area design include a glass screen as per the revised architect plans and that frosted glass be used if possible.

### To include a bell/intercom at reception to alert staff in the further offices if someone is waiting to be seen

**RESOLVED:** To include a bell/intercom as per architect drawing 21-105-T-12

### To review and approve the revised sketch layout in order to approve tender documents

- The Town Clerk elaborated on the layouts and thanked Councillors and staff for their feedback.

**RESOLVED:** That Council have reviewed and approved the sketch layouts and that the tender document can be progressed by The Town Clerk subject to the amendments agreed at the meeting.

- Cllr D Unwin queried what the timescale would be. The Town Clerk confirmed that documentation could now be completed for mechanical and electoral contractors and that Council would be in a position to review the tender documents in early March.

## 11. To consider costs for Flood insurance and Cyber Insurance for the Town Council

- The Mayor thanked The Town Clerk for the previously circulated documentation on Flood Insurance and asked if The Town Clerk had anything to add. The Town Clerk referred Councillors to the fact that the premium depends on the amount of financial insurance that Council want, and the depth of water that Council will accept.
- Cllr S Baldwin queried if Council had any records of when the Town Hall was last flooded. The Town Clerk clarified that as far as she was aware there was no record of flooding.
- Cllr M Voisey suggested that Natural Resources Wales and BCBC be approached to seek advice on estimating risk and also raised the point that office furniture could be on legs, minimising damage.
- The Mayor advised Councillors to consider the balancing of costs.
- After a lengthy discussion Cllr D Unwin proposed that the minimum amount of flood cover be agreed as that there was no evidence to support that the area had been flooded. Cllr S Baldwin suggested that Council allow him to clarify and carry out a check with BCBC on flood plains.
- The Mayor proposed deferment of the decision in order to receive information from Cllr S Baldwin at the next meeting.
  
- The Mayor noted to Council that information on insurance for Cyber Attack risk had been previously circulated and invited The Town Clerk to advise.
- The Town Clerk reported that there had been an increased level of bogus emails which were getting increasingly hard to identify. The Town Clerk advised members that as far as banking was concerned there were strict internal controls in place which provided another layer of security. The Town Clerk invited the RFO to comment. The RFO agreed with The Town Clerk and added that although staff were vigilant the cover would give Council a level of cover specific to needs.
- Cllr F Bletsoe proposed that the insurance cover be put in place as cyber attacks were on the increase with government outlets being specific targets.
- Cllr D Unwin proposed that the Cyber Insurance cover be accepted.
- The Town Clerk advised Council that Members would need to agree with the Insurance Company statement of fact. (which had been previously circulated). The Town Clerk read out the statement and confirmed that it was true and correct. The RFO also confirmed that the statement of fact was true and correct.
- The Town Clerk asked Members if they had any concerns.
- Cllr F Bletsoe asked for clarification that paragraph one of the statement referred to all staff : *Can you confirm that the proposer(s), or any partner, or any director, or any officer, have: a) never been declared bankrupt or disqualified from being a company director b) no outstanding County Court Judgement(s) or Sheriff Court Decree(s) c) never been officers of a company that has been declared insolvent, or had a receiver or liquidator appointed, or entered into arrangements with creditors in accordance with the Insolvency Act 1986 d) never been convicted of or charged with a criminal offence, other than a conviction spent under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 e) never had any insurance proposal declined, renewal refused, had any special or increased terms applied or had insurance cancelled or avoided by Underwriter*
- The Town Clerk advised that not all the officers had access to the financial system and that there were strict internal controls in place for the staff who had access.
- The Mayor proposed that the Town Clerk check the wording of the paragraph. The Town Clerk advised that she was happy to seek individual confirmation from all staff reference the wording of the paragraph.

**RESOLVED:** That subject to The Town Clerk checking the wording of the paragraph stated, and

seeking individual confirmation from all staff reference the wording of the paragraph, that the Statement of Fact be accepted by Council.

## **12. Finance**

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

- The Chair of Finance Committee presented the balance of accounts and asked Members if they had any questions. There were no questions.

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

### **2. To approve Bridgend Sports RFC Grant Aid donation further to receipt of additional information**

- The RFO confirmed that the grant had been approved, but that after reviewing her notes and the minutes she advised that the total amount required to install a defibrillator was £1,258 however the just giving page had contributed £655. Therefore, the amount of the grant needed was £603 and less than Council had agreed.
- The Chair of Finance proposed that the balance to be paid was £603.

**RESOLVED:** That the RFO issue a payment of £603 to the Bridgend Sports RFC.

## **13. Community Engagement & Events**

### **To receive an update from the Community Engagement & Events Manager regarding Wartime Bridgend 2022 and decide on an event date so that the main attractions can be booked**

- The Mayor thanked the CEEM for her excellent report which had been previously circulated and invited her to provide any supplementary information.
- The CEEM advised Members that the budget shown in the report was projected and not final.
- The CEEM drew Councillors attention to the suggested dates, advising that the 16<sup>th</sup> July would be preferable, allowed more scope for booking bigger attractions, had no clashes with other events, and would coincide with the availability of the high profile 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Battle of Britain touring exhibition.
- After a short discussion Cllr I Williams thanked the CEE Team for their exceptional work and proposed that Wartime Bridgend be held on the 16<sup>th</sup> July 2022.

**RESOLVED:** That Wartime Bridgend 2022 be held on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> July 2022.

## **14. Regeneration Committee**

### **1. To approve the siting and fittings of 3 Community Notice Boards in order to obtain updated quotes**

- The Chair of the Regeneration Committee thanked the DSO and FO for their work and referred Members to the maps which had been previously circulated.
- The Town Clerk advised that the locations had all be agreed previously.
- After a short discussion Council agreed that all fittings should be freestanding with legs and that an updated quote should be obtained and planning and highways permission be sought from BCBC.

**RESOLVED:** That Council agree that the fittings of 3 Community Notice Boards should all be freestanding with legs in order to obtain updated quotes

## **2. To review and approve the design proofs of 3 Blue Plaques**

- The Chair of the Regeneration Committee referred to the circulated design proofs of the blue plaques for 2022.

**RESOLVED:** That the circulated design proofs for 3 Blue Plaques be approved for production.

## **15. HMS URGE Events**

*The Mayor, Cllr S Bletsoe and Mayoress, Cllr F Bletsoe declared a prejudicial interest and left the meeting for the duration of agenda item 15.*

*Agenda item 15, HMS URGE Events, was Chaired by the Deputy Mayor, Cllr T Wood.*

### **1. To consider an invitation from Heritage Malta to invite members of Bridgend Town Council to the HMS URGE commemoration ceremonies in Malta in the last week of April 2022 (COVID permitting)**

- The Deputy Mayor referred Members to the report from the Town Clerk and invited comments and questions.
- Cllr D Unwin stated that in his view, Bridgend Town Council must participate and questioned who should attend. He noted that he was happy with representatives from all parties going or just the Mayor and Mayoress.
- Cllr S Baldwin referred to Purdah and sought legal clarification. The Town Clerk confirmed that the pre-election period starts on the 29th March 2022 and as detailed in the report circulated to Members, she had sought advice from One Voice Wales, the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) and the Monitoring Officer at BCBC. She explained that because it is a significant event and the date of the event is not controlled by the Town Council, Council should consider cross party representation and attendees should not use the event in any publicity for the election.
- Cllr I Williams referenced the money raised by the people of Bridgend for HMS URGE and stated that it is imperative that representatives from the Council are sent. He added that it would be an insult if representatives were not sent to the event to remember those who lost their lives.
- Cllr M Voisey agreed with Cllr I Williams that Council must send representatives to honour those who paid the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom. He was in agreement that the invitation should be extended to all parties and referenced the expense. Cllr M Voisey stated that he would not take the opportunity as a Conservative Councillor to attend.
- Cllr M Voisey proposed that Council fund the travel arrangements for the Mayor and Mayoress to attend on behalf of the people of Bridgend, but noted that they should undertake a solemn promise that no press releases or photographs would be submitted of the event and that the only record of the attendance would be in an official Town Council capacity and released after the election. He added that he does not believe the Mayor and Mayoress would use their attendance for political purposes and proposed that if anyone else wishes to attend they should do so at their own expense.
- Cllr D Unwin seconded Cllr M Voisey's proposal in its entirety.
- Cllr S Baldwin stated that he also supported the proposal.

**RESOLVED:** That Bridgend Town Council accept an invitation to send representatives to the HMS URGE commemoration ceremonies in Malta in April 2022 and fund the travel costs for the Mayor and Mayoress to attend however anyone else wishing to attend must fund their own travel arrangements.

- The Town Clerk sought clarification on the duration of the visit; Members discussed and advised that the duration of the visit will be dependent on the schedule of events and flight times.

## **16. To discuss the provision of professional photography at Council events and associated budget**

- The Town Clerk informed Councillors that the Town Council does not have the power or budget to arrange photography unless it is covered within the budget of an individual project or event such as Wartime Bridgend or Remembrance Events. The Town Clerk explained that there had been requests to use a professional photographer to document Council events, i.e. Blue Plaque unveilings and she noted that this cost could be permitted using a Section 137 payment. The Town Clerk explained that Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 enables local councils to spend a limited amount of money for purposes for which they have no other specific statutory power. It was noted that the alternative is for staff to take photographs on their mobile phones.
- The Town Clerk asked The Mayor if the Democratic Services Officer could be invited to explain why she feels the provision is needed.
- The Democratic Services Officer was invited to speak and outlined the reasons why Council should consider a dedicated photography budget:
  1. That professional photographs are versatile assets. They could be used for website content, press releases, social media and historical records. Professional photographs can be resized to suit different uses. Historical records are important - The Town Hall being a unique opportunity to document a significant milestone.
  2. That professional photographers have exceptional industry knowledge. i.e. The photographer engaged for Remembrance was familiar with the protocol of the event, was able to use the right equipment, and was also aware of the legal aspects of taking photographs in public of the public.
  3. That staff organising formal events do not have the right equipment, the skill or the time to take photographs. A professional photographer brings the right equipment, creative flair within a clear brief, attention to detail and technical knowledge, as well as arranging group photographs quickly and professionally to include all guests etc.
- The Mayor thanked the Democratic Services Officer and invited questions.
- Cllr M Voisey advised that it was important to make accurate historical records, and that employing a photographer would support local businesses as well as the community in the long term and that staff could also take photographs.
- Cllr F Bletsoe commented that a professional photographer was useful for certain things like mayoral events, but suggested otherwise there is no specific need.
- The Mayor stated that although he understood Cllr F Bletsoe's reasoning, he agreed with Cllr M Voisey.
- Councillors held a discussion on the potential use of amateur photographers and using Bridgend college.
- Cllr S Baldwin advised that BCBC use a professional photographer for Mayoral photos and that the Comms team take general photos.
- Cllr D Unwin stated that he supported a professional attitude and proposed that as the need to use a professional photographer was infrequent, that the cost should be taken out of contingency funds.
- Cllr A Wathan proposed that a photographer be contracted for key events.

- The Town Clerk suggested that in the first instance, the Council could make a decision on whether to use a professional photographer for the Blue Plaque event and the Mayor's Civic Service.
- The Mayor asked for a proposal from Members.
- Cllr D Unwin queried with the Responsible Finance Officer if Council should investigate engaging the same photographer to be contracted for all events.
- The Responsible Finance Officer responded that this would be an option provided that a brief was provided and that 3 quotes were obtained.
- The Town Clerk suggested that if Council take this approach, at least 4 events be included in the contract to outline the minimum work guaranteed to the photographer.
- After discussion between Members, the Responsible Finance Officer asked for clarification on this agenda item relating to section 137 funding.
- The Town Clerk advised that Council are discussing two separate issues; one to agree to using section 137 funding and another to propose engaging a photographer for the year.
- Cllr S Easterbrook proposed that Section 137 funding be used to engage a professional photographer, if and when, required for Council Events.
- Cllr M Voisey suggested that a panel of photographers be approved subject to availability.
- Cllr S Baldwin requested that the Mayor move to next business.
- The Mayor proposed that Section 137 funding be used to engage a professional photographer from an approved list when required for Council events with the delegated authority to the Town Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer.

**RESOLVED:** That Council seek an approved list of professional photographers and that Council funds are used under Section 137 powers to engage a professional photographer from the approved list when required for Council events with delegated authority to the Town Clerk and/or Deputy Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer.

#### **17. To consider and agree a timetable of Council meetings for 2022**

- The Town Clerk referred to the timetable previously circulated and advised that the date of Community Engagement & Well-being Committee meetings may need be moved to accommodate the new date for the Wartime Bridgend event in July.
- Cllr D Unwin proposed that the timetable of council meetings be agreed and accepted and that any dates could be moved at the discretion of The Town Clerk.

**RESOLVED:** That the timetable of Council meetings for 2022 be accepted and that any dates could be moved at the discretion of The Town Clerk.

#### **18. Consultations:**

- 1. Provision for Pupils with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) Establishing a Learning Resource Centre for Pupils with Autistic Spectrum Disorders at Tremains Primary School. Full details can be viewed at: <https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/my-council/equalities-and-engagement/consultations/current-consultations/> Consultation ends 25 February 2022**
  - 2. Provision for Pupils with Additional Learning Needs (ALN) at Ysgol Cynwyd Sant. Full details can be viewed at: <https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/my-council/equalities-and-engagement/consultations/current-consultations/> Consultation ends 25 February 2022**
  - 3. Welsh Government Consultation on Violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence (VAWDASV) National Strategy. Full details can be viewed at: <https://gov.wales/violence-against-women-domestic-abuse-and-sexual-violence-vawdasv-national-strategy> Consultation ends 1 February 2022.**
- All consultations had been previously circulated and were noted.

## **19. Correspondence:**

### **1. Email from a member of the public regarding adding a name of a local resident to Bridgend War Memorial**

- The Mayor referred Councillors to the email (previously circulated), and noted the reply from The Town Clerk which had answered immediate questions. Members were asked to consider the information provided and make a decision on whether the name Cyril Gwyn Griffiths can be added to the Bridgend War Memorial.
- Cllr T Wood queried how names are added to the War Memorial.
- Cllr D Unwin advised that all WW1 names are engraved on bronze plaques fixed to the central column of the War Memorial. He noted that in addition to the four large bronze plaques, there are three smaller bronze plaques very high up and it may be possible to add the name to one of these smaller plaques.
- After discussion Cllr M Voisey suggested that the request be agreed, and the name added.
- Cllr N Burnett agreed that it was important that the name be placed on the War Memorial.
- The Town Clerk advised that the War Memorial is a Listed Building and she would therefore need to speak to the BCBC Conservation Officer about how this can be achieved. She explained that the Council may need to request formal permission to add the name.
- Cllr S Easterbrook highlighted that as the 1921 census had recently been released, going forward it is likely that more names may be identified and will need to be added to the War memorial.
- Members discussed the logistics of where names should and can be added.
- The Mayor proposed that the request be accepted, and that Council would in principle do their best to facilitate the request and cover the cost as a duty to the public. The Town Clerk was asked to reply to the request accordingly.

**RESOLVED:** That Council agree to add the name of Mr Cyril Gwyn Griffiths to the Bridgend War Memorial and will investigate the logistics of how this can be achieved and agree to cover the cost as a duty to the public.

### **2. Letter from Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities re: Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee events**

- The Town Clerk drew Members attention to the previously circulated information and clarified that previously Council had been interested in taking part in the event but that no firm decision had been made. She noted that a decision is required as soon as possible to provide enough time to plan an event if necessary.

**RESOLVED:** That the Letter from Secretary of State for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities re: Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee events be placed on the agenda for the next Community Engagement and Events Committee meeting.

### **3. To consider a request from a local resident re: Request for a dog waste bin at the entrance or exit of the lane from number 50 to number 61 Castle View**

**RESOLVED:** To place the Request for a dog waste bin at the entrance or exit of the lane from number 50 to number 61 Castle View on the agenda of the Facilities Meeting to take place on the 24<sup>th</sup> of March 2022.

**4. Letter from BCBC re: applications for the Town & Community Council Fund 2022-23**

- It was agreed that this letter be forwarded to the Finance Committee for their consideration.

**5. Letter from Minister for Finance and Local Government re: Laying of the Eligible Community Councils (General Power of Competence) (Qualifications of Clerks) (Wales) Regulations 2021**

- The Town Clerk advised Members that the deadline to complete her CiLCA Qualification is July 2022.

**20. 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

*The Mayor thanked everyone for attending the meeting and asked that Members of the public, Youth Representatives and The CE& Engagement Manager leave the meeting.*

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

*The BTC Youth Representative, and members of staff (except the Town Clerk, RFO and Democratic Services Officer) left the meeting.*

**IN CONFIDENCE**

Intentionally left blank

**Meeting closed: 9.25pm**

Signed .....

Date .....

Mayor