



## MINUTES OF BRIDGEND TOWN COUNCIL MEETING

**Monday 16<sup>th</sup> March 2020, Council Chamber, Carnegie House**

<b>Present:</b>	Cllr Alan Wathan (Mayor) Cllr Stuart Baldwin Cllr Steven Bletsoe Cllr N Burnett Cllr Steven Easterbrook Cllr Ceri Evans Cllr M Voisey	Cllr David Unwin Cllr T Wood Cllr L Walters Cllr C Webster Cllr I Williams Cllr C Woodman
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**In Attendance:** Mrs L Edwards (Town Clerk), Mrs D Jones (Deputy Town Clerk & RFO), Ms J Brown (Democratic Services Officer)

The Mayor welcomed the Chief Superintendent of Police to the Chamber at 6.30 pm for a Q& A opportunity.

**1. To receive apologies for absence:**

Apologies: Cllr R Thomas, Cllr F Bletsoe, Cllr R Porter, Cllr S Charles

Absent: Cllr R Marsh, Cllr A Morelli

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

- Cllr N Burnett – Prejudicial interest in item 11, BCBC Planning Matters.

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

- There were no questions raised from members of the public present.

**4. To confirm and sign minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> February 2020**

**RESOLVED:** The Minutes of the Town Council Meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2020 were confirmed as a true record and duly signed.

**5. To consider matters arising from the Town Council Meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> February 2020**

**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 Additional Premises Project Manager left the Council Chamber*

**CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** The public and representatives of the press were permitted to re-join the meeting.

*The Additional Premises Project Manager returned to the Council Chamber.*

## **6. To note for information Mayoral Announcements.**

Mayor's Engagements:

- Friday 21st February 2020 – Opening of Festival of Light exhibition at Carnegie House
- Thursday 27th February 2020 – Town Twinning Reception for French Students and host families for the Villenave D'Ornon Student Exchange
- Monday 2nd March 2020 – Heronsbridge School Assembly to present Friends Charity with donations and cheque
- Wednesday 11th March 2020 – Presentation of Town Plaque to Williams & Evans to mark the 120th anniversary of trading in Bridgend Town centre
- Thursday 12th March 2020 – Meeting with Mr Dickinson, grandson of the Captain of HMS Urge, Lt.Cdr. Edward Philip Tomkinson, DSO

The Mayor proposed that Agenda item 13 be brought forward due to the length of the agenda. Council agreed to this proposal.

## **13. To discuss the Additional Premises Project:**

### **13.1 To receive an update from the Town Clerk and Additional Premises Project Manager regarding the progress for the Additional Premises Project and next steps**

- The Town Clerk reported that the project was progressing and that she had spoken to Whittighams solicitors who can act for the Town Council in the purchase of the land and buildings at Sunnyside. The cost of this service was reported to Council at £2,500 plus VAT. Town Clerk advised that the purchase of the property will require additional searches and these will incur additional costs.
- The Town Clerk advised that a provisional date of 25<sup>th</sup> April had been proposed by BCBC for the current occupants to vacate the property.
- The Additional Premises Project Manager explained that he was liaising with BCBC regarding the fixtures and fittings included in the sale. The Project Manager and Members discussed amendments to the project plan regarding roller racking, moving internal walls and relocating the existing Chamber to the new building.
- The Additional Premises Project Manager informed Council that matters were proceeding well and advised that he had prepared a tree survey and database.
- Cllr C Webster enquired if any bats were roosting on site. The Additional Premises Project Manager confirmed that there were no roosting bats on the site and he would include this in his final report.
- The Additional Premises Project Manager informed Council that in light of the Covid-19 pandemic, according to Government guidelines he is in a vulnerable category and therefore will not be able to attend physical public meetings until further notice. He explained he would understand if Council wanted to terminate his contract.
- Cllr L Walters suggested that Council valued the expertise of the Additional Premises Project Manager, and that the flexibility shown needed to be reciprocated.
- After discussion, Council agreed that flexible alternative arrangements are made to conduct the business for this project remotely until further notice.
- Members acknowledged that the project is time sensitive, and although delays and challenges are expected in the current circumstances, the project should not be put on hold.

- The Additional Premises Project Manager stated that he would be glad to continue and thanked The Mayor and Councillors for these alternative arrangements.
- Members discussed delegation arrangements for progressing the purchase of the property.
- A lengthy discussion took place regarding the retention/disposal of the roller racking. Members agreed to delegate the decision regarding retention/disposal of the racking to The Town Clerk and Deputy Town Clerk.
- It was noted that the Town Council require vacant possession of Ty'r Ardd unless otherwise negotiated with the Council prior to the sale.
- It was acknowledged that Heads of Terms for the surrender of the lease for Evergreen Hall are required.

**RESOLVED:** To appoint Whittinghams Solicitors act for the Town Council in the purchase of the land and buildings at Sunnyside.

**RESOLVED:** That the Additional Premises Project Manager continue in his role but will work remotely due to Covid-19 guidance and that he pursue the purchase of the Ty'rdd property and surrender of the lease of Evergreen Hall.

#### **7. To receive Town Clerk's Report for February/March 2020 (for information).**

Town Clerk provided a verbal update on work and matters for Bridgend Town Council between February and March 2020.

- The Town Clerk informed Council that she had received communications regarding the clearance of drug paraphernalia and cleaning of bodily fluids from the Rhiw carpark. She advised that this is not within the Town Council remit, although the complaint had been forwarded to BCBC. The Town Clerk advised Councillors to report any similar issues directly to BCBC.
- The Town Clerk reported that the Facilities Manager had attended a PACT meeting, which had discussed the setting up of a dedicated social media page for a safer Bridgend, bollard damage and the sale of illegal cigarettes at the Star public house.
- The Town Clerk reported that it had been an extremely busy month. She had spent a considerable amount of time working on confidential HR matters and most recently understanding and disseminating Covid-19 pandemic Government information.
- Council agreed that due to the most recent announcements, the current COVID-19 situation and impact on Council should be discussed.
- The Town Clerk outlined the most recent advice from the Government and steps to be taken to reduce social interaction between people to help reduce the transmission of COVID-19. She advised that large gatherings should not take place and whilst it is reported that the risks of transmitting the disease at outdoor mass gatherings are thought to be low, these steps will allow emergency services that would have been deployed for these events to be prioritised in alleviating pressure on public services. She explained this would have an impact on pre-planned Council events.

- The Town Clerk informed Council that she had sought advice from One Voice Wales, NALC and BCBC and that there is currently no legislation in place to hold Council meetings remotely via video calls.
- The Town Clerk referred to the Scheme of Delegation and advised that decisions could be made on existing projects/staff only and decisions of a new financial nature could not be taken.
- It was acknowledged that the meeting could be the last physical meeting of Council for a while in these unprecedented times. The Town Clerk assured Councillors that she was in constant contact with Once Voice Wales and The Welsh Government to seek guidance in these matters going forward.

**The Town Clerk advised Councillors that it was her duty to inform them of the following:**

- The Council Annual Meeting would normally take place in May, however due to the current situation it will be likely that the current Mayor will stay in post until such a time as meetings can be reconvened.
- That the Government guidance on shielding or self-isolation for vulnerable people may apply to some Councillors which could cause issues if meetings have to be held in person.
- That a duty of care to public, staff and Councillors needed to be upheld.
- That a contingency plan and delegation arrangements need to be put in place.
- Councillors discussed delegation arrangements, Council meetings and the 6 month rule for non-attendance at Council meetings.

**RESOLVED:** Due to the current emergency COVID-19 situation the Town Council authorises the Town Clerk, Deputy Town Clerk/RFO, Mayor and Deputy Mayor of the Council to act with delegated authority on behalf of the Council in accordance with the Bridgend Town Council Scheme of Delegation.

- It was agreed that the Chair of the Personnel Committee would liaise with The Town Clerk regarding staffing and the delivery of critical functions and services.
- Councillors discussed the closure of the Carnegie House Arts Centre. It was proposed that the Arts Centre be closed for the foreseeable future.
- The Town Clerk highlighted that many tutors and artists had been contracted to deliver activities at Carnegie House for the Spring programme. She explained that it may be possible to run some projects and activities online and that she is working with relevant staff, tutors and artists to find new ways of delivering this work.
- Cllr N Burnett highlighted that good working relationships have been built up with tutors and the public, therefore she suggested that the Town Clerk should be given delegated powers to arrange alternative ways of working to support the continuation of arts centre activities online. This was agreed by Members. This was supported by Members.

**RESOLVED:** That Carnegie House Arts Centre would close with immediate effect. Projects will run online where possible and subject to approval of the Arts Council of Wales for grant funded projects.

**RESOLVED:** That tutors and artists already under contract with the Town Council will be paid in full for activities and events planned in the Spring programme.

- The Town Clerk advised Council that allotment tenancies are due for renewal at the end of March. She explained that there are approximately 125 plots over five allotment sites and many tenants

pay in person with cash. She explained that in light of the COVID-19 pandemic this will be difficult to manage.

- Chair of Finance Committee, Cllr D Unwin proposed deferring payment until 1<sup>st</sup> October.

**RESOLVED:** That a letter is sent to all allotment tenants explaining that due to the COVID-19 situation, allotment tenancy renewals will be deferred until October 2020.

- Cllr S Bletsoe highlighted that the BTC Business Awards are currently receiving applications and proposed that they be suspended for 12 months.

**RESOLVED:** That the BTC Business Awards Scheme is suspended until 2021.

- The Town Clerk reported that the Town Twinning Anniversary Civic Dinner due to take place at the Court Coleman will need to be cancelled and she will endeavour to recover the deposit.
- The Town Clerk reported that the HMS Urge Commemorative trip to Malta had been cancelled and she will seek reimbursement for the cost of the flights and will cancel the accommodation.
- The Town Clerk highlighted that the Wartime Bridgend event planned for Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> June will need to be postponed or cancelled. She explained that some of the budget allocated to the project had already been committed. She explained she had discussed the implications of postponing or cancelling the event with the BTC Military Advisor and concluded that the safety of the public must be a priority.
- Members agreed that it is unclear when the cases for Covid-19 will peak in Wales and how long the pandemic will impact public activities. For this reason it will be difficult to reschedule the event.

**RESOLVED:** That the Wartime Bridgend Event will be cancelled for 2020.

#### **8. Personnel: To consider draft minutes of the Personnel Committee Meeting of 28<sup>th</sup> February 2020**

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

## CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES

**RESOLVED:** The public and representatives of the press were permitted to re-join the meeting.

**9. To consider draft minutes of the Regeneration Committee Meeting of 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2020**

- The Chair of Regeneration referred Members to the minutes of the meeting, which were duly noted.
- The Mayor suggested this agenda is deferred to a future meeting.
- Cllr Unwin agreed that the lamp standard banners are not essential and proposed that this work is postponed for now.
- It was noted that the names for three recipients had been put forward for a Blue Plaque in 2020.
- Members agreed that a Regeneration Committee meeting scheduled to take place to discuss feedback for a BCBC consultation response by 23<sup>rd</sup> March was to be cancelled. It was agreed that the Town Clerk should contact BCBC to enquire if the project will be suspended during the COVID-19 situation.
- If the project is not suspended, the Town Clerk was asked to collate responses to the consultation by email to submit to BCBC.

**10: Finance:**

**10.1 To receive a balance of accounts as at 16<sup>th</sup> March 2020 and payments since last meeting**

**RESOLVED:** accounts paid, read and approved by Members.

**10.2 To consider draft minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting of 5<sup>th</sup> March 2020**

- Chair of Finance referred Members to the minutes of the meeting, which were duly noted.

**11 To consider draft minutes of the Planning Committee Meeting of 11<sup>th</sup> March 2020**

*Cllr C Webster, Cllr N Burnett and Cllr M Voisey declared a prejudicial interest in Item 11, BCBC Planning Matters and left the Chamber for this item.*

- Chair of Planning Committee advised that page 2 item 7 'Heronston Lane', should be corrected to 1 Heronston Lane

**RESOLVED:** That page 2 item 7 of the minutes of the 11<sup>th</sup> March be corrected to 1 Heronston Lane.

- The Chair outlined his concerns regarding the Local Development Plan for 2020-2033, which consisted of a 50 page document prepared according to the Well Being and Future Generations Act. He highlighted that a response to this document is required by 3<sup>rd</sup> April. He proposed that he consider the document and draft a response for consideration by the Planning committee via email and submission to BCBC.

**RESOLVED:** That The Chair of Planning proceed with the review of the new LDP document and prepare a draft response to BCBC.

*Cllr C Webster, Cllr N Burnett and Cllr M Voisey re-joined the meeting.*

*Cllr C Webster left the meeting at 9.25 pm.*

**12 To fill vacancies on the Council Committees listed below:**

- **Planning Committee (1)**

**RESOLVED:** That Cllr I Williams be duly elected to the Planning Committee.

#### **14 HMS Urge:**

**14.2:** To consider the development of a small replica plaque and a brass plaque listing the names of those lost on HMS Urge to be erected at a location to be discussed. (Cllr D Unwin).

**RESOLVED:** To defer this item.

#### **15 To consider a letter from Bridgend Athletic RFC regarding Newbridge Fields Proposal.**

**RESOLVED:** To defer this item

#### **16 To receive a six monthly survey of empty retail units in Bridgend Town Centre and associated report (Cllr D Unwin)**

**RESOLVED:** To defer this item

#### **17 To discuss the co-ordination of VE Day celebrations in Bridgend Town Centre on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> May 2020 (Cllr D Unwin)**

**RESOLVED:** To defer this item

#### **18 Consultations:**

Welsh Government Resource Efficiency and Circular Economy - Consultation Events Beyond Recycling.

**RESOLVED:** To defer this item

#### **19 Correspondence:**

1. Email from BCBC Wellbeing Manager – Connected Communities re: Bridgend Love2walk Festival 2020
2. Email from BCBC re: HERONSTON LANE, EWENNY, BRIDGEND) TEMPORARY TRAFFIC ORDER 2020
3. Email from Future Generations Commissioner for Wales re: Future Generations Report 2020 Feedback Conference
4. Email from Keep Wales Tidy re: Exciting New Opportunity - Local Places for Nature packages
5. Email from Keep Wales Tidy re: : Spring Clean Cymru - 20 March – 13 April
6. Email from One Voice Wales re: Important Message Green Growth funding opportunities for Community and Town Councils
7. Email from Wales Council for Voluntary Action re: Help Nature Work for your Community with Local Places for Nature funding
8. Email from BCBC re: Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Annual Report - February 2020
9. Email from One Voice Wales re: Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales draft Supplementary Report–the principles relating to the reimbursement of costs of care
10. Email from One Voice Wales re: Innovative Practice Annual Awards Conference & Ceremony 26th March 2020
11. Email re: Noah's Ark Children's Hospital: Great Welsh Walk 2020!
12. Email from One Voice Wales re: One Voice Wales/SLCC Joint Event – 20 May 2020
13. Email from Bridgend Branch Royal British Legion re: Poppy Volunteer Celebration Evening
14. Email from BAVO re: Super Agers Bridgend
15. Email from resident re: Tree Maintenance - Ground Adjoining Suffolk Street (Oldcastle Ward)
16. Email from One Voice Wales re: Training opportunities:
  - a. MODULE 19 - DEVOLUTION OF SERVICES/COMMUNITY ASSET TRANSFER - BRIDGEND - WEDNESDAY 18TH MARCH - 6:30-9:00
  - b. MODULE 9 - CODE OF CONDUCT - COWBRIDGE - THURSDAY 19TH MARCH 6:30-9:00
  - c. MODULE 2 - THE COUNCILLOR - NEATH - 23RD MARCH 6:30-9:00
  - d. MODULE 4 - UNDERSTANDING THE LAW - BARRY- TUESDAY 24TH MARCH 6:30-9:00
17. Email from BCBC re: Temporary Footway Closure, Waunscil Avenue

**RESOLVED:** To defer this item

**20. Town and Community Forum.**

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

Meeting closed at 9.30 pm

Signed .....  
Mayor

Date .....