



Bargoed Town Council

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Minutes of the Full Council Meeting 23rd November 2022.

Present: Councillors H Llewellyn; P Collins; R Carroll; J Bissex; J Davies; R Price; D Price; C Andrews.

Also in Attendance: Mrs H Williams, Town Clerk; Mr G Davies, Assistant Clerk.

Meeting Chairman: Councillor H Llewellyn (Mayor)

1. Police Report.

Inspector Thompson and Sergeant Brookes joined the meeting and presented a brief verbal report to Members. Inspector Thompson apologised for a lack of police presence at recent meetings advising increased resilience to be built into scheduling moving forward which should allow regular police presence at monthly meetings. The regular monthly reports will continue to be provided to town council. Recent statistics show an increase in crimes, with anti-social behaviour in the way of violent crimes having seen a slight increase, and an emerging pattern in Aberbargoed ward being identified. CCTV will be checked for the damage to the town council floral barrels, particularly in front of the police station. The officers took questions from Members as follows:

Q: Are officers able to confirm a decrease in incidents now the weather has turned, which is usually the case for this time of year?

A: Anti-social behaviour, particularly driving issues have increased; there has been a slight decrease in other crimes since Halloween and Bonfire night as expected.

Q: Members have been made aware of a death in Bargoed Town Centre, are officers able to shed any light on this?

A: Not from an incident.

Q: Please can more detail be provided on the statistical increase in crimes to 149?

A: The category of crime which is showing the largest increase is 'violence without injury', which includes domestic issues, verbal abuse, noise etc.

Members expressed concern about drugs activity in the community. CCBC Ward Members also advised having repeatedly raised concerns with the police about this activity, and the officers were asked to provide the meeting with more information about procedure and intelligence gathering activity. Officers explained changes in procedure and encouraged continual feedback to the local team to ensure up to date intelligence gathering can continue and drugs warrants can be expedited.

2. Apologies for Absence

Councillor D Ingram-Jones (unwell); Councillor S Hamer-Thomas (unwell).

3. To receive Declaration of Interests or dispensations on any item(s) on this Agenda, if appropriate.

The clerk and assistant clerk both declared an interest in agenda item 12.

4. To receive, approve and sign Minutes of the Full Council Meeting 19th October 2022.

Minutes moved as a true record by Cllr Collins; seconded by Cllr Davies. Members approved the minutes, which were signed by the mayor during the meeting.

5. Press and Public Participation Session.

No enquiries received from members of the public.

6. To receive a verbal report from the mayor.

The mayor reported having attended a remembrance memorial concert at Heolddu school which was well attended by Bargoed Town Council, but he was disappointed at the low numbers of attendees from members of the public. He also advised having attended church services at St Margaret's, Gilfach and St Gwladys, Bargoed, laying a wreath at the cenotaph on behalf of the town council. The mayor extended his personal thanks to Councillors Carroll and Collins for the work they did in putting out poppy displays in the community. Members echoed the mayor's remarks advising they were most appreciative.

The mayor moved on to advise of having attended the exhibition in Bargoed library for residents to provide feedback on CCBC Local Development Plan, and his concern about the impact on one of the successful businesses in the centre of the Maesyccwmmmer area.

He also advised having delivered a bouquet to celebrate a 60th wedding anniversary for Mr & Mrs Herbert in Bargoed.

7. To receive a Clerk's report and provide instructions to move forward with:

- clock project;

Members RESOLVED to defer the clock project for 24 months instructing the clerk to bring the issue back to a meeting agenda Summer 2026 for discussion. Members advised the budget line to be earmarked for potential cost of living support in the 2023-24 budget.

- premises;

The meeting instructed the clerk to liaise with Gwent Police for information and advice on rear access to the premises. Enquiries also to be made about the recently vacated Gilfach surgery premises.

- market enquiries;

The clerk was instructed to communicate with both organisations encouraging the setup of a monthly craft market and a monthly food producers/farmers market in Bargoed town centre.

- wellbeing practitioner;

Members advised the clerk to make the trader aware they currently have no funding available to support this activity but they will keep the provision in mind should this activity be required in the future.

- community noticeboards.

Councillors were encouraged to look at potential sites for a new noticeboard, however the meeting RESOLVED not to incur the expenditure in the short term but to consider this as a longer-term project. The deputy mayor was instructed to ask CCBC officers for their input at a meeting he is attending with the clerk the following week.

8. To receive a report from the Events & Environment Committee chair in respect of CCBC Warm Spaces/Hubs and consider a resolution to reallocate project funds to support the programme in the four town council ward areas.

The committee chair provided a verbal report along with the information supplied by the clerk. Members talked at some length about the importance of supporting the community with warm spaces throughout the winter months, while also simultaneously supporting local community venues with their energy costs. Members RESOLVED to make a grant of £12,000 towards the programme which will be administered by Caerphilly County Borough Council (CCBC) on behalf of the town council. The clerk was instructed to liaise with CCBC as a matter of priority to make the funds available to local organisations. While all four town council wards are to benefit from this funding; Members were keen to ensure the deprived areas are prioritised for provision and that grant funds should be made available on project start rather than retrospectively. The clerk was instructed to communicate with local organisations and provide support with the application process if needed.

9. To consider the pre-application consultation notice in respect of 15 detached dwellings to the rear of Ty Fry Road, Aberbargoed.

No objections from Members.

10. To receive feedback from Member representative to One Voice Wales Larger Councils Committee.

Councillor Williams reported:

- defibrillators are being encouraged across Wales wherever possible. Only 7% of people are surviving when they experience cardiac crisis in the community. Members spoke about provision in the local community, talked about the costs, the ongoing maintenance and responsibility for registration with and organisation affiliated to the Welsh Ambulance Service. Members expressed concern about the lockable containers being quite expensive.
- concern within the local council sector about attracting and retaining well experience, qualified clerks and the work being done to ensure councils undertake job evaluation exercises, pay the correct salary ranges, and ensure staff are employed with appropriate support, and written terms and conditions of employment. Members confirmed the HR & Staffing committee have completed a job evaluation exercise on the clerk role this year.
- annual allowances for youth representatives is another topic of conversation at the larger councils committee with representations being made to the independent remuneration panel from One Voice Wales.

Councillor Williams also advised that the chief executive had mentioned Bargoed Town Council to the meeting when he gave his report noting the good work being delivered by town council, and he specifically mentioned the geocache project.

The mayor thanked Councillor Williams for his report.

11. To receive expressions of interest and co-opt to fill a casual vacancy at Aberbargoed ward.

The clerk was asked to remind members of the co-option procedure prior to a vote being taken. The clerk advised that current best practise guidelines suggest voting should be by show of hands, and this is reflected in current standing orders. Members have been provided with pen pictures from each of the individuals who have expressed an interest in being co-opted to fill the vacancy at Aberbargoed ward, there should be no discussion about the merits of candidates during the meeting.

The mayor allowed a member proposed a motion "in the interests of democracy a request to suspend standing orders in this instance to allow a secret ballot to take place" which was RESOLVED. The clerk facilitated a secret ballot without delay and one candidate received more than 50% of the vote.

Members RESOLVED to co-opt Megan Ingram-Jones to fill a casual vacancy at Aberbargoed ward.

Both the Clerk and the Assistant Clerk left the meeting prior to agenda item 12 being discussed.

In accordance with Standing Orders, the meeting papers for agenda item 12 are confidential, therefore not open to the public. Confidential minutes were prepared and stored securely.

This concluded the business of this meeting.

The mayor closed the meeting at 7.35pm