



Bargoed Town Council

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Minutes of the Full Council Meeting 21st February 2024.

Present: Councillors H Llewellyn; R Carroll; P Collins; J Davies; Y Price; J Bissex (remotely); C Andrews; M Ingram-Jones; S Hamer-Thomas (remotely); D Ingram-Jones.

Also in Attendance: Dr D Llewellyn (Aneurin Bevan Health Board); PCSO L. McKean, PCSO N. Bateman (Gwent Police)

Also Present: Town Clerk: Mrs H Williams.

Meeting Chairman: Councillor H Llewellyn (Mayor)

The mayor welcomed Members and noted neither of the expected visitors had yet arrived. He proposed a motion to proceed with business of the agenda from item 3 and return to the visitors upon their arrival. Members RESOLVED to support the amendment to the agenda.

3. To receive apologies for absence.

Councillor Williams (family commitment).

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

No declarations made.

5. Press and Public Participation Session.

No enquiries received by the clerk.

6. To receive, approve and sign Minutes of the Special Full Council Meeting 24th January 2024.

Members unanimously RESOLVED to approve and sign the minutes as a true record of proceedings.

7. Mayor's Report

The mayor reported attendance, along with the deputy mayor, at the recent celebration event in Taraggan Educational Gardens at which a long service presentation was made to Mr John Pritchard by the Lord Lieutenant of Gwent. The event was well attended and provided an excellent networking opportunity.

Dr Llewellyn joined the meeting at 6.10pm and Members reverted to agenda item 2 at this point.

2. To receive a verbal update on the work of the Integrated Wellbeing Network.

Dr Llewellyn circulated an executive summary of the wellbeing priorities for the Bargoed area and reviewed what people have said they want in the area. The challenge now is: How do we take these priorities forward? The network suggests that small delivery groups are set up to focus on community involved project development for example, more food growing areas? How do we work better with GP surgeries and support them to deliver better public health.

The draft bid to the big lottery has now been finalised for Dementia Friendly Communities Upper Rhymney Valley. The network has also undertaken additional engagement activity with Heolddu school and Dr Llewellyn thanked the town council for starting this work. He also advised members of having provided an input to the Urbanists who are working with CCBC and Bargoed Town Council on the place plan for the area, and that participatory budgeting is now operational and being managed by Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations (GAVO)

Dr Llewellyn opened the floor for questions:

Councillor Andrews thanked Dr Llewellyn for his presentation advising he had already provided answers to some of the questions that had arisen. However, she has concerns about participatory budgeting.

Dr Llewellyn advised that participatory budgeting is working well in several areas, in Torfaen, Blaenau Gwent and Monmouthshire and there are two projects in Newport also up and running. GAVO will be starting a small initiative in Rhymney shortly, and he hopes it will come to Bargoed.

Councillor IngramJones asked if he could explain what participatory budgeting actually is?

Dr Llewellyn explained it is Welsh government additional funding specifically for community driven wellbeing initiatives, and there is no match funding requirement. A total of £462,000 is available for the upper Rhymney valley and Risca.

Councillor IngramJones asked about youth clubs.

Dr Llewellyn advised yes, potentially a proposal to employ a youth worker and establish youth provision could be taken forward, provided a local group is involved.

Councillor Carroll expressed concern about how to engage the public and get them involved.

Councillor Davies asked for clarification on what exactly happens and Dr Llewellyn explained that groups are being asked to develop wellbeing ideas and then the public will be asked to consider which projects they would like to see funded.

The mayor commented that people are being asked to start taking responsibility for their own health and wellbeing, to understand that the NHS is a safety net but should no longer be regarded as a hammock in which to lie over the longer term.

Dr Llewellyn reminded Members that the wellbeing priorities identified for Bargoed are not dependent on participatory budgeting, they will go ahead anyway. GAVO are running participatory budgeting from now.

The mayor asked about Bryntirion surgery becoming a private practise rather than health board management. Dr Llewellyn explained he is aware of several very well run private practises that are delivering high quality services for the community and that the integrated wellbeing network must now support Bryntirion to deliver and involve people in their own wellbeing.

Councillor Davies expressed concern regarding a lack of trust and confidence amongst parents, particularly with regard to immunisations, and that the language used in literature and social media must be more inclusive.

Dr Llewellyn thanked members for the invitation to speak, he advised the next meeting of the integrated wellbeing network is 20th March at the YMCA in Gilfach.

The mayor thanked him for attending and he left the meeting at 6.45pm.

Gwent Police officers were welcomed to the meeting at 6.45pm and invited by the mayor to review the monthly report as per agenda item One.

1. To receive a report from Gwent Police.

PCSOs gave apologies for late arrival and moved on to draw members attention to the comparison statistics that are now included in the monthly report as per last month's request. The mayor asked if officers could give any explanation of why members are seeing a reduction in the statistics. The officers advised this is potentially a result of the inspector's new NET team initiative recently introduced which is separate to the crime team that responds to calls. The team is out patrolling intentionally aimed to bring people in and bring them to court for prosecution. Also there are more people reporting now, the use of social media is increasing and being encouraged by officers. Feedback from the public is that they are not keen on telephoning 101 as there is often a long wait, but the social media is instantly responsive. Antisocial behaviour is also down on previous months. Youths from outside the area are no longer travelling to Bargoed to meet up as large groups.

A member asked if there is a good response to police surgeries?

Officers response was not as good as the response when officers are out in the streets with councillors, they would encourage members to come forward and go out with them to talk to people.

The mayor commented that new initiatives being delivered by the team appear to be working.

Members raised concern about motorbikes and quad bike activity resurfacing again in the local area, of a lack of helmets being worn and the apparent abandonment of a motorbike in Gilfach. Officers advised they will patrol and they plan on visiting Heolddu school.

The PCSOs advised of training to be undertaken in the coming months because they are to be granted new powers and will shortly be issuing parking tickets again. They have been involved in monitoring speed and drivers compliance with the 20mph legislation, noting a maximum of 37mph in a 20 zone.

Members thanked them for their report, welcoming the introduction of their new powers, and the officers left the meeting at 7.05pm.

The Mayor advised members that the meeting would proceed with item 8 on the agenda.

8. To receive draft unapproved minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting 31st January 2024.

Noted.

The mayor asked if anyone had any questions for the chair? No questions.

He asked if members felt the grant scheme is working? Members advised Yes. More applications were received this year. A member asked for clarification regarding the grant sums awarded. The clerk reminded members of the town council grants policy, the discretionary grants and the maximum award under the small grants programme.

9. To receive draft unapproved minutes of the Events & Environment Committee meeting 1st February 2024.

The chair reviewed the minutes with the meeting and reported on the recent installation of the new planters on Hanbury Square, the planting and the support of three young people who were in the town on that morning. He thanked Councillors Carroll and Williams for their support.

10. To receive verbal feedback from the representative at the One Voice Wales Area Committee meeting 17th January 2024 and consider the presentation on the Community Transport Network.

Councillor M IngramJones reported that the committee was encouraging greater involvement in the research being conducted by the NEC on cost of living initiatives. The clerk confirmed having participated.

Two new training modules are being developed by One Voice Wales and Councillor M IngramJones confirmed the training bursary is still available for eligible councils. The next meeting is in April.

The Mayor thanked Councillor M IngramJones for her report and asked if any members had questions? Councillor D IngramJones commented that she noted how some rural councils in Wales have purchased electric vehicles and secured funding to deliver community transport schemes where no other provision exists.

Councillor M IngramJones explained that the Community Transport Network advised they are happy to meet with local groups if Bargoed Town Council feel they wish to get the message out?

Members resolved to instruct the clerk to reach out to the Community Transport Network to request a social media article for sharing in the local community.

Councillor HamerThomas left the meeting at this point.

11. To receive the Aneurin Bevan Health Board Neighbourhood Care Network News issue 3.

Noted.

12. To receive items from the clerk:

12.1 Calendar reminders

The clerk provided members with a reminder of planned training and webinar dates.

12.2 Premises update

The clerk reported on communications with Gwent Police and Crime Commissioners office regarding a new lease on the courthouse. This is in hand and confirmation should be received shortly.

12.3 Personal security

Members received a reminder of the schedule of webinars with the Wales Counter Terrorism team and the clerk encouraged all members to attend one of the sessions.

12.4 Tablets & email

A short briefing was given on maintenance of the tablets and management of emails. Members were reminded to keep their tablets updated to ensure continued receipt of email communications.

This concluded the business of this meeting.

The mayor closed the meeting at 7.40pm