

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting 19th March 2025.

Present In Person: Councillors H Llewellyn; C Andrews; R Carrol; P Collins; J Davies; D IngramJones; Y Price; R Price.

Present Online: J Bissex; C Bissex-Foster; J McCarthy; S HamerThomas.

Also Present: PCSO Williams CO484; PCSO Pearce CO242; Mrs H Williams (Town Clerk)

Meeting Chairperson: Councillor H Llewellyn (Mayor)

1. Gwent Police Report

For reasons beyond the control of the team there was no monthly report provided prior to the meeting, but the PCSO's reported the following:

Most areas saw a decrease in crime statistics with the exception of Aberbargoed for which there was an increase from 22 to 31. Vehicle security, one resident burglary where two persons had broken into a derelict property. There remains no emerging crime trend.

Bargoed and Gilfach saw a decrease in Anti-social behaviour (nuisance) with an increase of one in Aberbargoed. Calls to Morrison's carpark include three teenagers receiving ASB referrals and two of these discussed at the strike process having been offered Reach support.

So far this month there hasn't been any new calls, and it is hoped that the additional officers that will be joining the team from the new intake, which will make a total of 12 officers, will give more resources to the problem areas.

PCSO engagement in the community have included Cupper with a Copper at Bargoed library; Warm Space at Bargoed and Aberbargoed Library; Police Surgery at Aberbargoed Library; Community Concerns at Elm Street Aberbargoed; Walk & Talk Hanbury Rd Bargoed. Officers have also carried out reassurance visits to several residents who have reported incidents.

Since 1st April 2024 25 drug warrants have been executed targeting Class A and Class B supply.

General Update from the Inspector:

There is a Facebook Group "Protect Our Children" – In the event of a Registered Sex Offender being identified by "Save our Children". Specialist teams have been working to maintain public safety and reassure the public when there have been public demonstrations. A number of RSOs have decided to relocate. A Community Threat assessment is being monitored for each section.

2. To receive Apologies for Absence

Councillor M IngramJones (away). Councillor D IngramJones advised of late arrival.

3. To receive Declaration of Interests or dispensations on any item(s) on this Agenda, if appropriate. Councillor Andrews declared an interest in agenda item 9.2 Aeron Court and Aeron Place Residents; Councillor Y Price declared an interest in agenda item 9.1 Aberbargoed Community Action Team

4. Press and Public Participation Session.

No enquiries received.

5. To receive, approve & sign Minutes of the previous meeting 19th February 2025.

Councillor Andrews abstained as she was not present. Councillor Y Price

Councillor D IngramJones joined the meeting at this point.

6. To welcome a visitor from Forces Fitness CIC and discuss Members requirements for a potential taster day and regular monthly sessions for young people aged 11 to 14 years.

Mr Molino explained how the sessions work and what has been delivered locally for young people in recent years and provided an overview of the health and wellbeing days. Members had prior sight of a facebook report from other events delivered by the organisation along with details of learner feedback, of outcomes reported by families and photographs celebrating the achievements of some of the participants. The organisation provided details of their track record, their DBS checks and insurance arrangements prior to the meeting.

Members RESOLVED to go ahead with working with the organisation to deliver such events for local children aged 10 to 14 years and advised Mr Molino that the clerk will liaise with him to make necessary arrangements.

Mr Molino left the meeting at this point.

Members spoke about options for delivering sessions in Bargoed during the school six weeks holidays and instructed the clerk to make enquiries about either 3 full day sessions or 6 half day sessions, which may work better for local families during the school holidays. Members instructed the P&R committee to confirm the expenditure once information has been secured and suitable dates can be arranged.

7. To note draft unapproved minutes of the last meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee 20th February 2025. Noted.

8. To note draft unapproved minutes of the last meeting of the Events & Environment Committee 5th March 2025 and consider the following:

i) minute reference 19022025-08 reintroduction of the Engagement and Wellbeing Committee with effect from Annual Meeting 2025.

The committee will be reappointed at Annual Meeting and the most convenient day of the week for meetings is a Monday at 1pm. Initially meetings will be bi-monthly. The terms of reference will be updated at Annual Meeting.

ii) festive social for Members after full council 17th December 2025 – Members RESOLVED to arrange a social event with everyone contributing to refreshments on the day.

iii) update from the events officers on music festival and winter fair event (minute reference 19022025-08) – the clerk reported on both events and provided Members with sight of a rough layout plan for the music festival with changes to include additional pods, a double sized pod in place of the main stage and utilization of Hanbury Square for an extra pod with drinking area. No parade – keep this for Christmas to reduce budget restrictions.

Christmas Market no wet weather contingency plan. Continue with the music and light parade at the end of the event, but no lantern workshops. Encourage people to attend with lights, lanterns and in costume and offer a collection service for the lantern making materials for community groups to do during their own sessions. Also look to buy lights / glowsticks to hand out for free where needed. Members spoke about the switch on of festive lighting and opted for these to all come on via timer on Friday 21st November including Hanbury Square Christmas Tree, then have a carol singing activity at the tree with a brass band at the end of the parade. The clerk was instructed to communicate this update to the events team the relevant contractors.

The feedback from the town centre team is that the meanwhile space will continue as long as feasibly possible but it is suspected that once others open at the end of the month this one is likely to cease unless a significant number of bookings come forward. Updates will be provided on all the Meanwhile Spaces at the next Stakeholder meeting 10th April as another one will be opening up in Bargoed.

Members were advised that CCBC holds a database of musicians and artists that they regularly communicate with. If Members would like any artists added to the list they should forward this information by the end of March. Members requested the clerk put a notice out via social media advising artists/musicians/groups to contact ward councillors if they are interested in participating in the Summer Music festival and have public liability insurance.

iv) school engagement to promote uptake of CTG activities at Bargoed library (minute reference 19022025-09) – Members were provided with information and a promotional notice from the CTG for dissemination at their respective primary schools. Cllrs Bissex-Foster and McCarthy requested electronic versions of the documents. Members were asked to liaise with their schools to seek a date for a visit from CTG sometime during May if possible.

v) update from the clerk in regards to calendar of dates (minute reference 19022025-10) - the one voice wales national awards conference is in place of the larger councils committee meeting in April – 30th – at Llanelwedd. There are no dates on the calendar for the sport scheme at the moment because officers need to know if members want to plan skateboarding sessions in addition to the summer sports scheme delivered by CCBC. Members RESOLVED to include the same as previous year with two venues of Bargoed and Aberbargoed. Expenditure to be authorised by the P&R committee once details confirmed with the Skateboard Academy and added to the calendar. Trunk or Treat event to be added to the calendar for 31st October, and will be at Morrison's underground car park. The clerk advised she will re-circulate an edited calendar as soon as possible.

9. To consider applications to the special VE Day 80th Anniversary Community Activities Grant Scheme as listed below and to approve delegation of additional grant applications to the next meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee:

- i. Aberbargoed Community Action Team (ACAT) – RESOLVED to make a grant of £500 by unanimous agreement excluding Cllr Y Price who didn't participate having declared an interest.
- ii. Aeron Court and Aeron Place (A&A) Club – RESOLVED to make a grant of £600 with a vote of 8 in favour and 3 against.

10. To receive feedback from the Members delegated to attend the Transport for Wales briefing 5th March 2025 on the Rhymney Valley line.

Councillor Bissex advised she was unable to attend due to a diary clash. Councillor McCarthy provided the following notes: The meeting got quite heated on a number of occasions with Councillors from other communities expressing that they felt there was limited opportunity to have their views taken on board. There's significant closures coming up with two periods of 6-week closure - it's going to be very disruptive for those of us who use the trains day-to-day. It will be worth communicating to residents the two periods so that they can plan for the quarter-of-an-hourly bus services as far as Caerffili.

Members spoke about the need to distribute the information from Transport for Wales, and instructed the clerk to ensure all members received the electronic information as soon as possible.

A community drop in about the Rhymney line will take place at Cartref Community Hall 1st April 4pm.

11. To receive items from the clerk as follows:

a) Confirmation of Event report from ACAT in respect of St Davids Day funding – noted a successful event.

b) Feedback provided to the CCTV unit from Aberbargoed ward members as follows:

We support the continued use of CCTV cameras in the Aberbargoed Ward. The statistics provided only confirm the necessity to continue and even increase the number of cameras in operation. They feel CCTV is an essential tool to combat antisocial behaviour which, in some cases, becomes a deterrent. Having personally witnessed off road bike driving through the village at speed Members feel there is a definite need for the cameras. Members will be interested to see where the new cameras, if any, will be situated.

c) Annual Report 2025-26 from the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales – members are asked to note no changes to the determinations in the draft report received in the Autumn 2024 and confirm the figures of £126.74 for a full day and £63.37 for a half day in respect of the optional payments for compensation for financial loss to be updated in the expenses policy. Noted, policy

documents to be edited as necessary.

d) In House Training on Equality and Diversity with Paul Egan from One Voice Wales Wednesday 2nd April 2025 – the clerk reminded Members of the planned training session and that there are still places available should neighbouring councils wish to join the training.

e) Annual Meeting preparation for the appointment of senior roles – the clerk asked all members to consider if they would like to go into the ballot for one of the senior roles, and if they have completed the necessary charring skills training. Any member who would like to go into the ballot should advise the clerk by the end of April in order that ballot forms might be produced in time for the Annual Meeting.

12. To note correspondence from a town centre trader in respect of a complaint and freedom of information request submitted to the local planning authority regarding bollards in Bargoed. Councillors D. Ingram-Jones and C. Bissex-Foster declared an interest in this item and refrained from discussing it. Members had sight of the correspondence on screen during the meeting and instructed the clerk to write to the trader thanking them for copying the town council into the correspondence, but advising that highways is within the remit of Caerphilly County Borough Council. The correspondence should encourage the trader to attend the next stakeholder meeting in Bargoed which is at 6pm on 10th April in the Meanwhile Space.

13. To receive feedback from the delegated Member who attended the Town and Community Councils Liaison Committee meeting 18th March 2025. Councillor Llewellyn fed back having attended and spoke about the low number of councils represented at these meetings. The vice chair of the committee resigned during the meeting; members appointed Mr Edwards-Etheridge as the representative to the CCBC Standards Committee. The meeting spoke about the CCBC budget cuts, no other business was conducted at the meeting.

14. To note the following reports circulated to members electronically and receive Member comments as appropriate:

- i) The Welsh Government summary of responses to the consultation on Diversity and Inclusion guidance for registered political parties. Noted.
- ii) The Welsh Government report into the role, governance and accountability of the community and town councils sector. Noted.
- iii) The Democracy and Boundary Commission Cymru final determinations on Senedd Constituencies. Noted.

Concludes business for tonight. The meeting closed at 19.42pm.