

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting 16th April 2025.

Present In Person: Councillors H Llewellyn; C Andrews; R Carrol; P Collins; J Davies; R Price, J McCarthy.

Present Online: J Bissex; S HamerThomas; M IngramJones.

Youth Representatives: Miss E Harding; Miss E Jones.

Also Present: PC D Evans; Mrs H Williams (Town Clerk); Mr T Oliver (Deputy Clerk)

Meeting Chairperson: Councillor H Llewellyn (Mayor)

Members observed a minute's silence in respect of the 1990-1991 mayoress Mrs Brenda Evans who recently passed away.

1. Gwent Police Report

PC Evans reviewed monthly statistics with Members noting a decrease in crime in the Bargoed wards, but in all other wards a significant increase in crimes, and in anti-social behaviour also. In Aberbargoed there has been a significant increase in off-road bike incidents, and the Operation Harley initiative continues, with CCBC installing a fence and CCTV camera in the park area to try and reduce these offences. The neighbourhood team is still appealing for residents' assistance with these issues.

A positive drug warrant has taken place in Bargoed with the offender receiving a long custodial sentence, and also a trading standards warrant has been successful. Dog warrants have recently been enforced and one is currently being actioned also. A road safety and road offences initiative is currently ongoing and there have been 22 community engagement events in the Bargoed area. Library surgeries are planned for 16th April 4pm and 26th April 2pm.

A member asked what does the team attribute the significant rise in crime stats to? The weather improvement and lighter nights are possibly the reason. The team continues to monitor for trends, but no patterns have yet been noted.

The mayor advised of being interviewed by BBC radio Wales about the prime minister's plans for more police on the street, explaining he spoke about the positive relationship with the local police team, and a proactive ward manager and police inspector at Bargoed.

A member asked if the increased police on the street plan is for PCSOs or officers? It will be a mix as there is a focus on increasing neighbourhood policing.

Finally PC Evans thanked Members for their engagement with the need for CCTV at the Bargoed Rugby Club stadium as the joint working has led to a positive outcome with the CCTV being installed and jointly funded by CCBC and Bargoed Town Council.

2. To receive Apologies for Absence

Councillor D IngramJones (family bereavement); Councillor Y Price (away); Councillor C Bissex-Foster (no information).

3. To receive Declaration of Interests or dispensations on any item(s) on this Agenda, if appropriate. No declarations received.

4. Press and Public Participation Session.

No enquiries received.

5. To receive a verbal report from Aberbargoed Fire Station.

The clerk received apologies for non attendance after the meeting.

6. To receive, approve & sign Minutes of the previous meeting 19th March 2025.

RESVOLED to approve and sign the minutes.

7. To note draft unapproved minutes of the last meeting of the Policy & Resources Committee 24th March 2025. Meeting minutes were formally received by all members.

8. To receive an update from the clerk on the Easter activity being delivered by the town centre team in Bargoed and approve expenditure of up to £200 for prizes. RESOLVED to authorise £100 expenditure and instruct the clerk to purchase prizes. The Mayor will make presentations at the town hall on the day of the May Fair.

9. To receive a verbal report from the clerk regarding the Section 6 Environmental Duty and consider correspondence and requests on environmental issues as follows:

i) Park Primary School in respect of raised beds for the development of children's growing spaces – Members were keen in principle to support growing activities with young people however wanted more specific information from the school. The clerk was instructed to liaise with the school and discuss their request in more detail.

ii) Mr Owen in respect of the establishment of a Community Orchard at the top end of Lewis Street and Pant-Y-fid Road in Aberbargoed – RESOLVED to authorise £300 expenditure for a skip on site, and to instruct the clerk to liaise with all parties to move forward with a potential community orchard project with the volunteer residents. Councillor Andrews declared an interest in this item.

Members spoke about how encouraging and uplifting it is to have volunteer residents coming forward with enthusiasm about being involved in community projects such as this.

iii) The Innovate project at the Hangar in Aberbargoed. Councillor Andrews declared an interest in this item before discussion commenced. RESOLVED to authorise £150 expenditure to support the purchase of topsoil and seeds or starter plants in support of the innovate project managing the growing beds in Aberbargoed. The clerk was instructed to liaise with Keep Wales Tidy to arrange a further site visit.

iv) The octagonal planters on Hanbury Square – expenditure needs to be authorised for volunteer planting. RESOLVED to authorise £40 for the purchase of perennial flowering shrubs. Councillors Carroll, Collins, R Price and potentially Andrews to do the planting, depending on the date chosen. Members are requested to provide instruction to the clerk, to set up a small working party to produce the Section 6 report and action plan, and oversee the development of the projects as approved by full council. RESOLVED to appoint Councillors Collins, Carroll, Bissex and Llewellyn to work with the clerk and produce both an environmental report and a new three year action plan.

10. To consider requests for financial support as follows:

(i) an application to the small grants programme from Gilfach Ladies Bowls Club. RESOLVED to award a small grant of £250.

(ii) Llangollen International Eisteddfod. RESOLVED to award a small donation of £100.

11. To receive an update from the clerk on Youth Representatives and Summer activities for Young People. Members are requested to approve the expenditure for Skateboarding, Fitness and Wellbeing sessions, Trunk or Treat event and Summer party and note the dates for the expressions of interest and group interview session. Members RESOLVED as follows:

1. £900 expenditure to support skateboarding at Aberbargoed and Bargoed during Whitsun 27th May and 30th May, and during the Summer Monday 4th August, 11th August, 18th August from 1-3.30pm.

2. £1,800 + vat expenditure for three full days of wellbeing and outdoor activities for young people aged 10-14 during the Summer with Forces Fitness CIC.

3. A donation of £500 to support the costs of delivering the Trunk or Treat community event delivered by the Parent Network in October.

The clerk noted that the remaining Youth reserves of £300 after items 1 and 2 would support the costs of the summer picnic event for families.

12. To receive verbal feedback from Members as follows:

(i) Councillor representative to the One Voice Wales Larger Local Councils Committee.- Councillor McCarthy apologised for non-attendance.

(ii) Deputy Mayor attendance at the town centre stakeholder meeting. – Councillor Carroll reported low attendance with just three traders present. He advised that the town centre team will be opening another meanwhile space in the old Gus Jones shop which has been provided to CCBC rent free. The traders present were mostly concerned about the bollards in town preventing deliveries, and officers from highways department explained that there will be an increase in enforcement in loading bays to try and reduce parking. Officers brought up the possibility of a re-establishment of the chamber of trade, but it would appear that there is insufficient interest amongst businesses at the current time. Some positive news was that two ladies who have been using the meanwhile space have gone on to open up their own businesses. Finally, officers reported having produced a longer term plan for the steps leading down from Hanbury road to the car park behind.

13. To discuss a request from town centre businesses about the possibility of signage at the pierhead in Bargoed.

The Mayor spoke about a request he received from traders about information signage to upper High street. Members discussed the item at some length and unanimously agreed that this is not the right time to be looking at such a project. Members may be willing to consider it in the future once town centre planning has been completed.

14. To review, edit and provide instruction to the clerk on the Annual Report 2024-25. (Members are requested to confirm the number of printed copies required, and the locations to be distributed.

Members are also requested to approve a special meeting of town council to approve the accounts 2024-25 and formally publish the annual report)Concludes business for tonight.

RESOLVED £300 expenditure for translation costs; quotes to be requested for 50 printed copies in English.

The meeting closed at 19.34pm.