

Minutes of the Engagement and Wellbeing Committee 7th July 2025

Present: Councillors H Llewellyn; D Ingram-Jones; C Andrews; J Bissex; M Ingram-Jones

Chairperson: Councillor M Ingram-Jones

Also Present: Mr. T Oliver (Deputy Clerk / Deputy RFO)

1. To welcome visitors to the meeting to hear about the Night Out scheme.

The visitors expected for the Night Out scheme did not attend the meeting.

2. To receive Apologies for Absence.

No apologies received.

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 members of the press or public present.

5. To discuss Member involvement in the advertising of events and community activities, consider reminders for the way Members use social media and hear proposals from the Deputy Clerk on additional social media tools to be considered for implementation.

The Deputy Clerk emphasised the importance of Members engaging with community groups within their wards to promote upcoming events and encourage public participation. He also provided an update on two new noticeboards the Town Council intends to install.

- Morrisons has granted permission for one noticeboard to be placed near the cash machines.
- Cllr D. Ingram-Jones agreed to liaise with the relevant officer at Caerphilly County Borough Council to seek permission for a second noticeboard in the Park Estate.

The Deputy Clerk further highlighted the value of positive engagement on social media as a tool for communicating the Town Council's work and offerings to the community.

Following a robust discussion, the Committee RESOLVED to:

- Instruct Officers to create a Bargoed Town Council Instagram page to broaden the Council's social media reach.
- Instruct Cllr C. Bissex-Foster to carry out the proposed research into social media usage across different age groups, with the aim of informing the Council's future marketing strategy.

The Committee agreed that Cllr Bissex-Foster will present her findings at a future Engagement and Wellbeing Committee meeting.

6. To consider town centre engagement initiatives for use with Traders and discuss the promotion of visits from the Mayor in celebration of big birthdays, anniversaries, sporting achievements and such like.

Cllr M. Ingram-Jones proposed expanding the civic role of the Mayor as a means of enhancing engagement with the town centre. The Committee discussed how the Mayor's presence could be used to celebrate business anniversaries, sporting achievements, and other notable community milestones.

The Committee unanimously supported the idea of broadening the scope of Mayoral civic activities, noting that it would help raise the profile of the Town Council and promote community spirit.

Members instructed the Clerk to:

- Develop an engagement pack aimed at the not-for-profit sector, to support outreach and highlight the Mayor's role in community engagement.
- Ensure the engagement pack includes information on Town Council grant opportunities.

The Committee agreed that engagement with community groups through these initiatives would help strengthen local connections and increase awareness of the Council's support for residents and organisations.

7. To discuss opportunities for engagement with families through local schools.

The Committee discussed how the Town Council could most effectively distribute relevant and timely information to local schools. Following a detailed discussion, Members agreed to create a regular newsletter specifically for schools.

Committee instructed the Clerk to ask all Councillors who serve as school governors to liaise with Headteachers to seek permission for Town Council community activity information to be shared via school apps and newsletters.

Members commented that this approach would help the Council reach more families across Bargoed, Aberbargoed, and Gilfach.

8. To receive information from the Deputy Clerk about the 2025 efforts to attract Youth representatives to the town council and discuss Youth representative involvement at Bargoed Town Council.

The Deputy Clerk updated the Committee on the low response to the advertised Youth Representative position. He also reminded Members that Youth Representatives can remain in post until the age of 26, meaning the current representatives may be eligible to continue in their roles.

The Committee discussed the potential benefits of having Youth Representatives attend Engagement and Wellbeing Committee meetings rather than Full Council meetings, as the former focuses more on grassroots community activities that are likely to be more relevant and engaging for young people.

Following the discussion, Members instructed the Clerk to:

- Approach the current Youth Representatives to offer them the opportunity to extend their tenure.
- Develop a new framework for the Youth Representative role, highlighting the benefits and opportunities of the experience and clearly outlining what the role entails.

Councillor C Andrews left the meeting at this point.

9. To carry out a thought shower exercise to identify potential community activities for teenage young people.

Members participated in a thought shower exercise and identified the following potential community activities aimed at engaging teenage young people:

- A gaming club for young people
- A youth club
- Online gaming initiatives

The Committee commented that it would be beneficial to consult with other Town Councils to gather further inspiration and ideas. It was agreed that the outcomes of this exercise should help inform the Town Council's contribution to the placemaking plan.

10. To start a creative list of community wellbeing activities and initiatives.

The Committee began an initial discussion on potential community wellbeing activities and initiatives in preparation for the upcoming meeting with the Integrated Wellbeing Network. The importance of bringing well-developed ideas to that meeting was noted.

The discussion focused on the need to design initiatives that address key issues such as loneliness and poverty, with an emphasis on targeting specific demographics. Members also highlighted the value of utilising local venues across Bargoed, Aberbargoed, and Gilfach to deliver such activities.

Due to time constraints and the need for further input, the Committee agreed to revisit this item at a future meeting to allow for a more focused and productive discussion.

11. To hear from the Chair about using the Town Council website to consult the community on the priorities set by Members for Bargoed Town Council.

Cllr M. Ingram-Jones spoke about potential improvements to the Town Council website to make it more user-friendly and easier to navigate. She also proposed using the website redesign as a tool for community engagement by incorporating a simple pop-up question on the homepage. The question would ask residents whether they agree with the Town Council's current priorities (which would be listed), and if not, invite them to suggest alternative priorities.

Members of the Committee agreed that this was a positive idea and decided to explore both enhancing the website's usability and using it as a platform for community consultation.

12. To discuss plans for marking the 40th anniversary of Bargoed Town Council and issue instructions to the Clerk.

The Committee discussed plans to commemorate the 40th anniversary of Bargoed Town Council. Members agreed to instruct the Clerk to contact local schools, inviting families to submit digital photographs of Bargoed, Aberbargoed, and Gilfach from the past 40 years. These images will be used to create a digital album, which will also include historical information about the Town Council.

The Committee agreed on the use of the slogan:
“Bargoed Town Council: Building Better for 40 Years.”

In addition, Members instructed the Clerk to obtain quotes for four commemorative banners to be displayed throughout the town.

Finally, the Committee agreed to bring forward a proposal for a community clean-up initiative to the next Full Council meeting, with Cllr M. Ingram-Jones presenting the idea.

13. To finalise arrangements for the Scarecrow Trail, develop an advertising plan and issue instructions to the Clerk.

The Committee reviewed the revised and simplified Scarecrow Trail plan. Members unanimously approved the proposal and instructed the Clerk to:

- Prepare letters for local businesses, to be distributed at the Bargoed Summer Music Festival.
- Contact local schools to arrange assembly times where Ward Members can promote the initiative.
- Advertise the event via the Town Council’s social media channels.

The Chairperson thanked Members for their attendance and closed the meeting at 2:30 PM.