



**BARRY TOWN COUNCIL
CYNGOR TREF Y BARRI**

PURSUANT TO THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE ABOVE STATUTORY PROVISIONS, NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT A MEETING OF THE FINANCE, POLICY AND GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE IS TO BE HELD AT 7.00 PM ON MONDAY, 19 APRIL FOR THE PURPOSE OF TRANSACTING THE BUSINESS SHOWN IN THE AGENDA SET OUT BELOW.

THE MEETING WILL BE HELD ON A REMOTE BASIS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PROVISIONS OF THE LOCAL AUTHORITIES (CORONAVIRUS) (MEETINGS) (WALES) REGULATIONS 2020.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Emily Forbes'.

Emily Forbes
Chief Officer

1. **Apologies for absence**
2. **To receive declarations of interest under the Council's Code of Conduct.** (Note: Members seeking advice on this item are asked to contact the Monitoring Officer at least 72 hrs before the meeting).
3. **Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**
(To note)

*Finance, Policy and General Purposes committee members will note that this Act sets out the requirement for a public body to act in a manner which seeks to ensure **that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.***

In order to act in that manner, a public body must take account of the following things:

- (a) the importance of balancing short term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to meet long term needs, especially where things done to meet short term needs may have detrimental long term effect;*
- (b) the need to take an integrated approach, by considering how—*
 - i. the body’s well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals;*
 - ii. the body’s well-being objectives impact upon each other or upon other public bodies’ objectives, in particular where steps taken by the body may contribute to meeting one objective but may be detrimental to meeting another;*
- (c) the importance of involving other persons with an interest in achieving the well-being goals and of ensuring those persons reflect the diversity of the population of the part of Wales in relation to which the body exercises functions;*
- (d) how acting in collaboration with any other person (or how different parts of the body acting together) could assist the body to meet its well-being objectives, or assist another body to meet its objectives;*
- (e) how deploying resources to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may contribute to meeting the body’s well-being objectives, or another body’s objectives.*

- 4. To approve the minutes of the Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee meeting held on 8 February 2021
(Pages 2633 - 2637)**
- 5. To receive and note the minutes of the Sustainable Barry Working Group held on 23 February, 15 March and 12 April 2021 and to give consideration to any recommendations therein
(Pages 2638 - 2656)**
- 6. To receive and note the minutes of the Personnel Committee held on 22 March 2021 and to give consideration to recommendations therein at R276 and R282, noting that Policy Recommendations appear later on this agenda at item 11.
(Pages 2657 - 2663)**
- 7. To receive and note the minutes of the Innovation Working Party held on 25 March 2021 and to give to consideration to the recommendations therein.
(Pages 2664 - 2668)**

FINANCIAL REPORTS

8. **To receive a Budget Monitoring Report / Provisional Out-Turn Report for the Year Ending 31 March 2021 (Prior to Year End Close Down)**

(Pages 2669 - 2673)

(If Councillors have any queries on the attached please contact the Deputy Chief Officer prior to the meeting)

9. **Internal Audit Report 2020/21 (Second Interim)**

(Pages 2674 - 2682)

POLICY REPORTS

10. **GDPR Update** **(Verbal)**

11. **To review and approve new policy recommendations from other Committees** **(Pages 2683 - 2723)**

- i. Sickness Absence Policy Review and Redraft
- ii. NEW Draft Bereavement Policy
- iii. NEW Draft Covid-19 Vaccinations Policy
- iv. NEW Draft Workplace Mental Wellbeing Strategy

12. **Date of Next Meeting**

The date of the next meeting of the Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee will be agreed at the Annual Meeting scheduled to be held on 17/18 May 2021

13. **Exclusion of the Press & Public**

In accordance with section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public are excluded from the remainder of the meeting.

14. **To Consider Recommendations from other Committees**

- a) Enhanced Services at Merthyr Dyfan Cemetery– Recommendation from Halls, Cemeteries and Community Facilities Committee - 8 March 2021
- b) Fence and Gates - Recommendation from Halls, Cemeteries and Community Facilities Committee – 12 April 2021

(Pages 2724 – 2728)

Distribution

Email notification of electronic papers to all Barry Town Councillors (22). A full copy of the agenda and papers for this meeting (with the exception of confidential items) will be available at the Town Council Offices and at Barry Library for inspection; electronic copy to Barry & District News

This document is available in large print and other formats upon request/Cewch y ddogfen hon mewn print bras a ffor matiau eraill drwy holi.

BARRY TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE FINANCE, POLICY & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY, 8 FEBRUARY 2021 AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillors Brooks (Chair), Drake, N Hodges, S A Hodges, Lloyd-Selby (Vice Chairperson).

ALSO PRESENT: Mark Sims – Deputy Chief Officer
Rhian Burns – Administrator
Councillor Clarke - Observer
Councillor Hooper – Observer
Councillor Payne – Observer
Councillor Perkes - Observer

F259. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Councillor Rowlands.

F260. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None were received.

F261. WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS (WALES) ACT 2015

It was noted that this Act sets out the requirement for a public body to act in a manner which seeks to ensure that the needs of the present are met without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

In order to act in that manner, a public body must take account of the following things:

the importance of balancing short term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to meet long term needs, especially where things done to meet short term needs may have detrimental long term effect;

(b) the need to take an integrated approach, by considering how—

(i) the body's well-being objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals;

(ii) the body's well-being objectives impact upon each other or upon other public bodies' objectives, in particular where steps taken by the body may contribute to meeting one objective but may be detrimental to meeting another;

(c) the importance of involving other persons with an interest in achieving the well-being goals and of ensuring those persons reflect the diversity of the population of the part of Wales in relation to which the body exercises functions;

(d) how acting in collaboration with any other person (or how different parts of the body acting together) could assist the body to meet its well-being objectives, or assist another body to meet its objectives;

(e) how deploying resources to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may contribute to meeting the body's well-being objectives, or another body's objectives.

F262. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE, POLICY & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE'S MEETING HELD ON 16 NOVEMBER 2020

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Finance, Policy & General Purposes Committee's meeting held on 16 November 2020 be approved and signed as a correct record.

F 263. TO RECEIVE AND NOTE THE MINUTES OF THE COMMEMORATIVE NAMING ADVISORY COMMITTEE HELD ON 25 JANUARY 2021 AND TO GIVE CONSIDERATION TO ANY RECOMMENDATIONS THEREIN

Member received the minutes of the Commemorative and Naming Advisory Committee held on 25 January 2021 and discussed the recommendations contained therein.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the minutes of the Commemorative Naming Advisory Committee held on 25 January 2021 be received and noted.**
- 2. That an application form is created to be provided for applications to commemorating people, which includes supplying evidence to support the application and the history of the person being nominated.**
- 3. That officers investigate whether a commemorative wall in the Town Hall Council office be placed on the large wall along the stairs to the second floor.**
- 4. That an application form be created for nominating individuals for commemoration.**
- 5. That officers investigate whether a virtual wall on the new website can be created to commemorate all with additional information included.**
- 6. That officers approach Chris Parsons (Barry Scouts) to discuss options relating to a commemorate cup in memory of Bryan Foley.**

F264. SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS FOR FEBRUARY 2021 (INTERIM)

Members received the schedule of payments for February 2021 (interim) consisting of direct debits and BACS payments, in the amount of £25,968.58.

RESOLVED: That the schedule of payments for February 2021 (Interim) consisting of direct debits and BACS payments, in the amount of £25,968.58 be approved.

F265. BUDGET MONITORING REPORT

Members received a report containing details of the Council's income and expenditure in the 2020/21 financial year as at the end of January 2021.

Councillor S Hodges and Councillor Perkes advised members of a discussion which had taken place at the meeting of the Shop Local Barry Advisory Group prior to this meeting regarding the creation of a Shop Local reserve.

The Deputy Chief Officer advised that this recommendation would be presented at the meeting of Full Council to be held on 22 February 2021.

RESOLVED: That the budget monitoring report for January 2021, indicating actual income and expenditure up to the end of month ten in the 2020/21 financial year, noting the projected overspend of £29,852 for 2020/21 that will result in a net amount of £173,968 being transferred from reserves.

F266. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2020/21 (FIRST INTERIM)

Members received the internal auditor's report (first interim) for 2020/21.

RESOLVED: That the Internal Auditors Report 2020/21 (First Interim) be received and noted.

F267. GDPR UPDATE

The Chief Officer advised that there had been no issues or data breaches to report and that staff continued to be mindful of and adhere to GDPR.

RESOLVED: That the update be received and noted.

F268. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED that the next meeting of the Finance, Policy and General Purposes Committee will be held on Monday, 19 April 2021.

The meeting closed at 7.21pm.

Signed..... (Chairperson) Date.....

FOR INFORMATION ONLY

ACTION SHEET - FINANCE, POLICY & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE - 8 FEBRUARY 2021

MINUTE NO.	ACTION TO BE TAKEN	ACTION TO BE TAKEN BY	DATE ACTION TO BE CARRIED OUT	PROGRESS
F 263 (2)	That an application form is created to be provided for applications to commemorating people, which includes supplying evidence to support the application and the history of the person being nominated.	CO	28.04.21	In Progress
F 263 (3)	That officers investigate whether a commemorative wall in the Town Hall Council office be placed on the large wall along the stairs to the second floor.	CO	28.04.21	In Progress
F 263 (4)	That an application form be created for nominating individuals for commemoration.	CO	28.04.21	In Progress
F 263 (5)	That officers investigate whether a virtual wall on the new website can be created to commemorate all with additional information included.	CO	28.04.21	In Progress
F 263 (6)	That officers approach Chris Parsons (Barry Scouts) to discuss options relating to a commemorate cup in memory of Bryan Foley.	CO	28.04.21	In Progress

BARRY TOWN COUNCIL

DRAFT MINUTES OF A MEETING OF SUSTAINABLE BARRY WORKING PARTY HELD ON TUESDAY 23 FEBRUARY 2021, AT 6PM

PRESENT: Councillor Clarke (Chairperson) together with, Councillors Drake, S Hodges, Lloyd-Selby and Payne (arrived at 18:21pm)

ALSO PRESENT : Robyn Walsh – Community Engagement Officer
Beth Hillier – Sustainable Project Officer
Hannah Linton – Trainee Administrator
Councillor Johnson – Observer

59. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None were received.

60. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE COUNCILS CODE OF CONDUCT

None were received.

61. WELLBEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS (WALES) ACT 2015

RESOLVED: That the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 be received and noted.

62. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON 18 JANUARY 2021

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Sustainable Barry Working Party meeting held on 18 January 2021 be received and signed as a correct record.

63. UPDATE FROM A MEETING OF FULL COUNCIL HELD ON MONDAY, 22 FEBRUARY 2021

The Project Officer provided members with a brief update from a meeting of Full Council held on 22 February 2021. Members were informed that Full Council had formally approved the Working Parties request for a budget of £15,000 (in line with the Shop Local budget). Members were also informed that Council had formally approved the Climate Change Action Plan for public consultation and that the Sustainable Barry Working Party would be able to present the results of which to Full Council at the next annual meeting.

RESOLVED that the update be received and noted.

64. CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY – PUBLIC CONSULTATION PLAN

Members were provided with two plans for the Public Consultation of the Climate Change Action Plan (CCAP), noting that 'Plan A' was to be actioned

in the event that the current Tier-4 restrictions (Coronavirus Act 2020, Schedule 22) are removed and restrictions are limited to Tier-3 or lower, representing a “return to normality” and that ‘Plan B’ was to be actioned in the event that the Tier-4 restrictions are not lessened and “normal” activities are restricted or where Tier-4 restrictions are again put in place following a spike in Coronavirus cases during steps towards “normality”.

The Project Officer began the discussion with a question to the Committee on how the plan was received and if the Committee had any recommendations or views of the Climate Change Action Plan.

Councillor S Hodges noted that due to the current situation with the pandemic and the uncertainty of how as a community can go forward, it had been wise to create two plans. The Councillor also emphasised that it was difficult to engage during consultations, and the Committee should promote as much as they can and contact organisations to receive responses.

The Chair suggested that he could contact Keith Stockdale of Friends of the Earth to request that the consultation be added to their next agenda for discussion.

Councillor S Hodges suggested looking into the traders and community groups that had received grants in the past from the Council, specifically those with a link to the work contained within the Climate Strategy and that the consultation should be sent to them directly for their views.

The Chair suggested promoting the consultation through Beautiful Barry and other social media organisations based in Barry.

Councillor Johnson emphasised that the consultation would need to be a mixture of both informed specialists and the community, including groups with a fair amount of knowledge to back the consultation up. The Councillor also agreed that voluntary groups could help promote the consultation, and also that the Committee could contact schools to help with promoting the consultation within the younger community. The Councillor also wanted to ensure that it would be youth friendly to help engage with the younger community and encourage them to take part, he also noted that the dates of the consultation would be similar to the Vale of Glamorgan Council’s own Climate Change Strategy Consultation.

Councillor S Hodges recommended sending the consultation to the Vale of Glamorgan Council to receive their views on the plans the Committee have suggested.

Councillor Lloyd-Selby noted that as the strategy contains specific recommendations based around workforce that it would be necessary to invite the Personnel Committee to share their views.

Councillor Johnson queried if the consultation would be shared with the Halls, Cemeteries and Community Facilities Committee, to which he was advised that it would.

Councillor Lloyd-Selby suggested that the Committee may wish to utilise the Cemetery as the Council's biggest example of bio-diversity, also noting the regular footfall it receives. The Councillor suggested providing information on a notice board or a physical voting opportunity.

Councillor Drake recommended using plastic suggestion boxes with tokens in an open area where the community can vote on specific actions. The Community Engagement Officer noted that the Council already have boxes of that type available from previous projects.

The Project Officer requested that members consider which areas of the strategy could be influenced by the public, noting that Climate Change Action Plan (within the strategy) was office/Council specific.

The Chair concurred that the document is for the office and not the public. However, the actions within it were necessary for public consultation due to the potential expenditure of public money and it would be useful to hear the public's views on this.

Councillor Lloyd-Selby recommended that the Officer determine which actions are internal or external and what the Committees priorities are and what the priorities are for the community, as this may show a difference. The Councillor also agreed that a simpler document would need to be provided for the public.

Councillor Payne joined the meeting.

Councillor Johnson agreed that the document should be simplified and should be focused for a more meaningful feedback. The Councillor suggested a short, punchy questionnaire to guarantee focused feedback.

The Chair noted that the Public Service Board are also in talks about Climate Change and queried if it would be the same as the Vale of Glamorgan Council's Climate Change plan.

Councillor Johnson stated that they would be interlinked between both Public Service Board and the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

Councillor Johnson suggested contacting Tom Bowring who is the Lead Officer at the Vale of Glamorgan Council for their Climate Change Strategy. The Project Officer asked the Committee whether or not they should provide prizes for the consultation, suggesting that this might help to engage a younger audience.

Councillor Payne suggested using sustainable food in terms of a voucher system, which can include local shops and food outlets.

Councillor Lloyd-Selby agreed with the voucher option and noted that the Committee should align the prizes to include the Shop Local values and use local traders across all of Barry. The Councillor also suggested giving the

prize winners the option of where the voucher comes from and use a list of traders across the whole of Barry they can select from.

Councillor S Hodges noted that the Community Engagement Officer will have contacts of traders from previous work and grants and suggested the Officer drawing up a list of traders to provide winners, which can also be used going forward in future projects.

The Project Officer enquired how much the Committee would like to put aside for the prizes.

Councillor S Hodges suggested a budget of £300 and also stated that it should include all age groups to receive and spread the money across for a few people to win.

Councillor Payne agreed with the £300 budget and spreading the money to provide a few prize vouchers. The Councillor also suggested provided the first 20 responses a £10 voucher and using the rest of the budget for the final prize winners.

Councillor S Hodges agreed that £10 vouchers for the first 20 responses to the consultation be provided and suggested two £50 vouchers for the final prizes.

The Chair left the meeting due to connection issues.

The Community Engagement Officer continued with the meeting and concluded that the Committee were all in agreement with the budget and prizes.

The Chair re-joined the meeting.

The Chair considered which budget the £300 would be sourced from. The Community Engagement Officer noted that there was a budget of £3000 remaining in the Community Engagement budget which could be used for this project.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the consultation be centred around the Council's internal and external work.**
- 2. That members approve both plans presented by the Project Officer, and that delegated authority be granted to the Project Officer to instigate these plans in adherence to Schedule 22 of the Coronavirus Act 2020 ("Powers to issue directions to events, gatherings and premises").**
- 3. That members note that should they have any suggestions for the simplified "information pack" that these are received by the Project**

Officer no later than 3 March 2021 to allow for Welsh translation.

- 4. That a budget of £300 be approved from the Community Engagement budget for the purpose of purchasing the following incentives; 20 x £10 vouchers to the first 20 responses to the consultation and 2 x £50 vouchers as the final prizes which can be redeemed at any trader on the list provided.**
- 5. That the Community Engagement Officer contact Tom Bowring of the Vale of Glamorgan Council to request a copy of their Climate Change Strategy to be circulated amongst members.**
- 6. That the Project Officer create a simpler more focused document of the Climate Change Action Plan for the public.**
- 7. That the Project Officer collate a list of local traders to include in the voucher prize list.**
- 8. That the Project Officer forward the consultation directly to local traders and organisations who have received grants from Barry Town Council in the past for their opinions/views.**
- 9. That the Chair contact Keith Stockdale of the Friends of the Earth to request that the consultation be added to their next agenda for discussion.**
- 10. That the consultation is sent to the Vale of Glamorgan Council, local schools, community groups and organisations.**
- 11. That the consultation is forwarded to both the Personnel Committee and the Halls, Cemeteries and Community Facilities Committee for their feedback.**
- 12. That the Project Officer explore utilising the natural footfall of Merthyr Dyfan Cemetery for the purpose of consulting with the public.**

65. LOCAL NATURE PARTNERSHIP

The Project Officer provided members with a brief update regarding the Vale's Local Nature Partnership.

The Chair queried if there was a website available to show where the local nature places are such as the mini forest shown in the news.

Councillor Johnson asked if the Council had contact with the Officer leading the partnership.

The Project Officer stated that there were no direct website or group but found the information require on the Bio-Diversity group, also that not all groups were listed and she is hopeful to attend the next meeting to create better

networks for the Committee. The Officer also confirmed that the Lead Officer is Emily Shaw.

Councillor Lloyd-Selby noted the opportunity to show the Council's support and that the Council provide green grant schemes for organisations across Barry.

RESOLVED that the Project Officer attend the next meeting and create a network of organisations involved with the Local Nature Partnership for the Council.

66. TERRACYCLE BLISTER PACK RECYCLING SCHEME

The Project Officer provided members with information pertaining to the TerraCycle Medicine Packet Recycling Scheme and other free recycling schemes for their consideration so that the Project Officer may develop a network of volunteers to broaden recycling availability/options in the Barry area.

The Project Officer started the discussion noting that the Terracycle Blister Pack Recycling Scheme was a section of the grant repair café plan, the Officer agreed with the original plan and suggested the set-up of the Recycling site and had been in contact with Awesome Wales regarding the plan. The Project Officer confirmed that medicine will still have to be recycled with a separate practise or pharmacy.

Councillor Lloyd-Selby agreed with the Terracycle Blister Pack Recycling Scheme and the suggested site, the Councillor also noted having an additional recycling options within the Town Centre can help the local community.

Councillor Payne noted that an emphasis on the packets needing to be empty would have to go into the advertisement.

Councillor S Hodges agreed with the plan and supported the report by the Project Officer and concurred that promotion of what is and isn't recyclable would be needed.

RESOLVED that the Project officer explores the Terracycle Blister Pack Recycling Scheme further and provide members with a future report.

67. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The Community Engagement Officer noted that the Committee needed to arrange a date for an extraordinary meeting, to allow time for the consultation responses to be received by members and a final draft of the Strategy to be approved for recommendation to Full Council.

The Project Officer suggested dates for the extraordinary meeting to be held on either April 29th, May 5th and May 6th.

The Chair noted the May dates would conflict with Councillors due to busy election period and suggested the meeting to be held on April 29th, with the scheduled meeting on Monday 15 March 2021.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the extraordinary meeting of the Sustainable Barry Working Party be held on Thursday 29 April 2021.**
- 2. That the Sustainable Barry Working Party scheduled meeting be held on Monday 15 March 2021.**

Meeting closed at 18:56 pm.

Signed (Chairperson) Dated

FOR INFORMATION ONLY

ACTION SHEET - SUSTAINABLE BARRY WORKING PARTY - 23 February 2021

MINUTE NO.	ACTION TO BE TAKEN	ACTION TO BE TAKEN BY	DATE ACTION TO BE CARRIED OUT	PROGRESS
64 (3)	That members note that they have any suggestions for the simplified "information pack" that these are received by the Project Officer no later than 3 March 2021 to allow for Welsh translation.	SBWP	03/03/2021	
64 (5)	That the Community Engagement Officer contact Tom Bowring of the Vale of Glamorgan Council to request a copy of their Climate Change strategy to be circulated amongst members.	CEO	29/04/2021	In progress
64 (6)	That the Project Officer create a simpler more focused document of the Climate Change Action Plan for the public.	PO	29/04/2021	In progress
64 (7)	That the Project Officer collate a list of local traders to include in the voucher prize list.	PO	29/04/2021	In progress
64 (8)	That the Project Officer forward the consultation directly to local traders and organisations who have received grants from Barry Town Council in the past for their opinions/views.	PO	29/04/2021	In progress
64 (9)	That the Chair contact Keith Stockdale of the Friends of the Earth to request that the consultation be added to their next agenda for discussion.	Chair	29/04/2021	In progress
64 (10)	That the consultation is sent to the Vale of Glamorgan Council, local schools, community groups and organisations.	CEO		
64 (11)	That the consultation is forwarded to both the Personnel Committee and the Halls, Cemetery for the purpose of consulting with the public.	CEO		
64 (12)	That the Project Officer explore utilising the natural footfall of Merthyr Dyfan Cemetery for the purpose of consulting with the public.	PO	29/04/2021	In progress
65	That the Project Officer attend the next meeting and create a network of organisations involved with the Local Nature Partnership for the Council.	PO		

66	That the Project Officer explores the Terracycle Blister Pack Recycling Scheme further and provide members with a future report.	PO	29/04/2021	In progress
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BARRY TOWN COUNCIL
DRAFT MINUTES OF A MEETING OF SUSTAINABLE BARRY WORKING PARTY
HELD ON MONDAY 15 MARCH 2021, AT 6PM

PRESENT: Councillor Clarke (Chairperson) together with, Councillors Drake, S Hodges, N Hodges (Joined for Item 5), Lloyd-Selby and Payne

ALSO PRESENT: Beth Hillier – Sustainable Barry Project Officer
Hannah Linton – Trainee Administrator

68. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None were received.

69. TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE COUNCILS CODE OF CONDUCT

None were received.

70. WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS (WALES) ACT 2015

RESOLVED that the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 be received and noted.

71. TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 15 MARCH 2021

The Chair informed the committee that he had received a quote from Keith Stockdale, the Coordinator for Barry & Vale Friends of the Earth;

“We thank the Council for sharing their climate change document with Barry & Vale Friends of the Earth. We welcome the Councils determination to address these issues and commend their suggestions. We stress that the actions proposed are merely the beginning and we are pleased to see that Barry Town Council accepts this is a working document”.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Sustainable Barry Working Party meeting held on Monday, 15 March 2021 be received and signed as a correct record.

72. CONSULTATION: LITTER AND FLY-TIPPING PREVENTION PLAN FOR WALES – DEADLINE 22 APRIL 2021

Councillor S Hodges noted that the issue was under the Vale of Glamorgan Council’s jurisdiction and noted uncertainty of what they wanted from Barry Town Council.

The Councillor suggested that the council could provide a town skip if the Vale of Glamorgan Council could provide the funding, or suggest the idea for the Vale Council to provide one for community usage.

The Chair noted his concerns with how quickly the skip would fill and how unmanageable it would be.

Councillor Payne recommended improving the reporting procedure to enable town Councillors the opportunity to report issues to the Vale of Glamorgan Council in an easier way, and also suggested a protocol to be put in place to allow Town Councils to be able to report problems without going through the standard public reporting system.

Councillor Lloyd-Selby agreed with Councillor Payne and noted neighbors have been in contact regarding fly-tipping. The Councillor noted there needed to be a better line of communication.

Councillor S Hodges suggested looking at the charter between Town Councils and the Vale of Glamorgan Council to confirm if it is already in place, and noted the Community Engagement Officer could look into it. The Councillor also noted the protocol should be included already and if not Barry Town Council could take it forward to be added.

The Chair prompted the committee to discuss which factor they thought was the priority in the document. The chair noted that he believed behavioral change and education to make a lasting impact should take priority.

Councillor N Hodges noted his concern with the process of the hiring of skips for residential use and the need to check certificates of the company that you are hiring from. The Councillor stated the need to educate the community on what certificates are needed and what they look like. Councillor N Hodges also stated the Vale of Glamorgan Council already provided a Recycling and Waste Centre, but that it is currently extremely hard to access with the appointment system in place during the Pandemic and meant that more private skips were being hired across Barry and other towns within the Vale. The Councillor suggested the need to make it easier for the public to dispose of their waste, and for the Committee to pass the recommendation of this to the Vale of Glamorgan Council. The Councillor also pointed out that Welsh Government do not provide funding to help Town Councils with this matter.

The Chair concurred with the points raised by Councillor N Hodges.

Councillor N Hodges suggested an online list of accredited and certified skip hires be accessible to the public.

The Chair recommended that Councillor N Hodges and himself work on a response for the document and put together a report for the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

Councillor S Hodges stated her approval and asked for the report to be circulated to all Councillors once completed.

Councillor Lloyd-Selby agreed with the recommendation made by both the Chair and Councillor S Hodges. The Councillor also noted the focus on social

landlords but not private sector landlords and recommended it needed to be included in the strategy.

Councillor S Hodges noted that space needed to be looked at with more housing being erected in Barry without the plans of space for recycling and waste being included.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That Councillor Clarke (Chairperson) with Councillor N Hodges create a report on the recommendations from this committee on the Consultation: Litter and fly-tipping prevention plan for Wales for the Vale of Glamorgan Council.**
- 2. That the report created by Councillors Clarke and N Hodges be distributed to all Councillors to provide feedback.**
- 3. That the Town Charter between Barry Town Council and the Vale of Glamorgan Council be reviewed for clarification on the direct lines of reporting by Town Councillors to the Vale of Glamorgan Council on issues of fly-tipping and littering by the Project Officer.**

73. CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN CONSULTATION UPDATE WITH PROJECT AND COSTING PLANS

Sustainable Barry Project Officer updated the Committee that the new condensed and reader-friendly document had been created, and noted the consultation period started that day with a website update and social media posts. The Project Officer noted that the voucher system previously recommended proved difficult to execute and noted that they would be purchasing from one local trader, Awesome Wales.

Councillor Payne asked if the vouchers could be spread around and not just from Awesome Wales.

The Project Officer noted a number of issues as responses had been minimal and not all shops had a voucher system in place. Traders had also voiced concerns about delays in financial reimbursement from Barry Town Council.

Councillor Payne objected to the vouchers only being provided from one shop.

Councillor S Hodges noted the need for caution in purchasing vouchers from one trader, but also understood the difficulty. The Councillor suggested increasing to at least two or three more local shops so that Barry Town Council could not be accused of favouritism.

The Project Officer stated that the vouchers can be purchased at Awesome Wales, whilst other retailers weren't happy to wait 10-15 days to be reimbursed with a BACS payment due to the current economic uncertainty.

Councillor Lloyd-Selby suggested purchasing vouchers from a few local traders and distribute on a first come, first serve basis, with using £100 in each shop.

Councillor S Hodges recommended that the Council provide letters to the voucher winners and also provide the money already in the chosen shops.

The Project Officer asked the committee to provide a few shops on which she can contact regarding the voucher prizes.

Councillor Lloyd-Selby suggested a gift shop for the younger generations, with the Deli and Goodsheds to be included for variety. The Councillor also suggested the Council making their own vouchers which could be redeemed in local shops.

The Chair expressed that the Committee were happy with the Project Officers work and happy for the consultation to carry on.

Councillor Lloyd-Selby thanked the Project Officer for all the work she has done for the consultation and the high quality document provided.

The Project Officer stated that she is waiting to hear back from the contractor at Lapidier who was putting together information. The Project Officer also noted so far there was no information on costings, and that she was waiting for more information to be provided by contractors by April.

Councillor Payne noted that the image on page 321 is a stock-photo and suggested using the Youth Action images instead.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the Project Officer contact more local shops to provide vouchers for the Climate Change consultation prizes.**
- 2. That the Project Officer edit the image on page 321 from the stock pile image to the Youth Action image.**

74. WILDLIFE TRUST SOUTH AND SOUTH WEST WALES: GLADSTONE ROAD DEVELOPMENT UPDATE WEBINAR HELD ON THURSDAY 25 FEBRUARY 2021

The Chair stated that the document be noted and thanked the Project Officer for the information and the better understanding provided through the document.

RESOLVED that the Wildlife Trust South and South West Wales: Gladstone Road development update webinar held on Thursday 25 February 2021 be noted and received by committee.

75. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

RESOLVED that the next meeting of the Sustainable Barry Working Party is scheduled to be held on Monday, 12 April 2021.

Meeting Closed at 18:42 pm.

Signed (Chairperson) Dated

FOR INFORMATION ONLY

ACTION SHEET - SUSTAINABLE BARRY WORKING PARTY - 15 MARCH 2021

MINUTE NO.	ACTION TO BE TAKEN	ACTION TO BE TAKEN BY	DATE ACTION TO BE CARRIED OUT	PROGRESS
72 (1)	That Councilor Clarke (Chairperson) with Councillor N Hodges create a report on the recommendations from this committee on the Consultation: Litter and Fly-tipping prevention plan for Wales for the Vale of Glamorgan Council.	Cllrs Clarke and N Hodges	22.04.21	
72 (2)	That the report created by Councillors Clarke and N Hodges be distributed to all Councillors to provide feedback.	Cllr Clarke and N Hodges	12.04.21	
72 (3)	That the Town Charter between Barry Town Council and the Vale of Glamorgan Council be reviewed for clarification on the direct lines of reporting by Town Councilors to the Vale of Glamorgan Council on issues of fly-tipping and littering by the Project Officer.	PO	12.04.21	
73 (1)	That the Project Officer contact more local shops to provide vouchers for the Climate Change consultation prizes.	PO	12.04.21	
73 (2)	That the Project Officer edit the image on page 321 from the stock pile image to the Youth Action image.	PO	12.04.21	

BARRY TOWN COUNCIL

**DRAFT MINUTES OF A MEETING OF SUSTAINABLE BARRY WORKING PARTY
HELD ON MONDAY 12 APRIL 2021, AT 6PM**

PRESENT: Councillor Clarke (Chairperson) together with, Councillors Drake,
S Hodges and Lloyd-Selby

ALSO PRESENT: Beth Hillier – Project Officer
Hannah Linton – Trainee Administrator
Councillor N Hodges – Observer
Councillor Johnson – Observer

76. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None were received.

77. **TO RECEIVE DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST UNDER THE COUNCILS
CODE OF CONDUCT**

None were received.

78. **WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS (WALES) ACT 2015**

RESOLVED that the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015
be received and noted.

79. **TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING HELD ON
MONDAY 12 APRIL 2021**

The Chair started the meeting with holding a one-minute silence to honour the
Duke of Edinburgh.

The Chair firstly noted his apologies for the lateness of the document which
coincides with agenda Item 4. The Chair continued to note that research into
the Charter between Barry Town Council and The Vale of Glamorgan Council
was completed, and suggested checking with the Project Officer and action
plan.

The Project Officer confirmed that the latest Town Charter had been found,
but unfortunately no action plan was included. The Project Officer suggested
the Town Charter document can be distributed to all Councillors.

Councillor Lloyd-Selby noted that the document would be too lengthy and
would not like to receive it, but would like clarification on the issue on
communication between the Town Council and the Vale of Glamorgan
Council.

The Chair stated that the document is quite short and that the issue between
communication would be found under Principle 4 of the document. To clarify,
the Chair noted that the document states that the Vale of Glamorgan Council
'supply contact information to Officers and Council members'. The Chair

suggested reviewing the Town Charter and raising any issues to the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

Councillor S Hodges noted that the Council needed an up-to-date bail Officers contact information and any concerns with the Town Charter be brought up through the Community Liaison Officer.

The Chair queried if the Sustainable Barry Working Party group would be the appropriate Committee to discuss the Town Charter and any issues raised.

Councillor Lloyd-Selby stated that the Committee should not do the Project Officers role, and for the Project Officer to clarify the communication issue and any other issues with the Town Charter should be dealt with through the Community Liaison Group.

Councillor Drake apologised to the Committee for the disruption due to signal and computer problems. The Councillor noted that fly-tipping is a big problem at the moment and is getting worse, but not sure what can be done.

The Chair noted that it is more for the Committee to receive help so the Town can move forward and have completed as Barry Town Council.

Councillor Lloyd-Selby was happy with the work done and for it to go forward to the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

Councillor Drake noted Item 13 on the document stated 'him' suggesting that only men are fly-tipping and it should be corrected.

The Project Officer stated that it was a quote direct from the consultation document provided by the Vale of Glamorgan Council.

Councillor Lloyd-Selby agreed that this should be changed on the document.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That the Community Engagement Officer clarify the communication issue raised in regards to the Town Charter between Barry Town Council and the Vale of Glamorgan Council and raise any issues with the document to the Vale of Glamorgan Council.**
- 2. That the minutes of the Sustainable Barry Working Party meeting held on Monday 15 March 2021 be received and signed as a correct record.**
- 3. That the Project Officer raise the issue of the term 'him' used in the document to the Vale of Glamorgan Council.**

80. CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN CONSULTATION – UPDATE

The Project Officer started with updating the Committee on the 85 responses to the consultation so far, with positive responses in regards to the Talking Bins and interest in the Councils Litter Picking equipment. The Project Officer also noted the current communication between herself and Keep Wales Tidy/Caru Cymru regarding a 'Litter Picking Loan Hub' being set up in Barry soon. The Officer continued with an update on the consultations survey

prizes, noting a few more retailers have been added to the list of places the winners can claim their vouchers from. The Officer also stated that the Bro Radio interview has been postponed due to conflicting diaries, but the content will be a six-minute slot to provide information to the public on the Action Plan. The Project Officer concluded that Consultation events have been organised virtually and promoted on the Councils social media and will be included on the interview, for the chance to converse with the public in regards to the Action Plan. The Officer noted that the first slot on Tuesday 13 April has not received any interest, but is hopeful for the two other slots on Saturday 17 April and Tuesday 20 April.

Councillor Johnson wanted to point out that the funeral for the Duke of Edinburgh is to be taken place on the Tuesday 13 April.

The Project Officer suggested the event for Tuesday 13 April be rescheduled and discussed with the Chair to arrange a date/time.

Councillor Lloyd-Selby thanked the Project Officer for talking through the consultation update and noted that the amount of responses to the consultation so far are good. The Councillor pointed out that an hour and a half period for the virtual/video event may be too long and hinder the interest for the event, and suggested taking the opportunity to shorten the event with less talking to the public and provide more of a conversation between the Council and public.

The Chair concurred with Councillor Lloyd-Selby's points and noted he would hope the public attending would have read the document before attending the events, and concluded that himself and the Project Officer will shorten the event and talking times.

Councillor Johnson noted that the principle of the events is for the public to come and listen to the intended Action Plan, and suggested engaging with other organisations.

The Chair pointed out that Keith from Friends of the Earth already provided a quote after receiving the Climate Change Action Plan and assumed other organisations would see the event being advertised. The Chair concurred that a few groups and organisations in Barry should be contacted to make enquiries in regards to the Action Plan and events.

Councillor Lloyd-Selby queried if the event is linked to the consultation responses.

The Project Officer noted that at the time the questionnaires the events were not organised, but have been advertised.

Councillor Lloyd-Selby suggested contacting the individuals who have sent in responses to the consultation and enquire if they would like to join the events.

The Project Officer agreed with the Councillors suggestion.

RESOLVED:

1. That the Chair and Project Officer organise a new date and time for the first event on Tuesday 13 April and shorten the event time.
2. That the Project Officer contact the individuals who responded to the consultation and enquire if they would like to join the events for a discussion on the Climate Change Action Plan.

82. **CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION PLAN – PROJECT COSTINGS REPORT UPDATE**

The Chair started with thanking the Project Officer for all the work that has been put into the Climate Change Action Plan and costings.

The Project Officer noted the one estimate has been provided and is awaiting responses from more companies, and insisted that the Council could get a lower price than provided.

Councillor N Hodges firstly liked to acknowledged the good work that has been provided by the new Gardener recently hired. The Councillor noted in regards to Bio-Diversity the employee and line Manager could complete training to help provide more to the position and the grounds maintained cheaper than hiring an outside company to fulfil. The Councillor updated the Committee regarding the Air-Raid shelter and noted that the Council are still waiting for the control of the property, and preferred that until the deeds are signed that the Council not spend money on the property. The Councillor also emphasised the need not to spend too much money on consultancy and use the team in place to complete any work.

The Project Officer noted that in terms of reference would need updating in light of the new budget the Sustainable Barry Working Party is to receive, and queried if it would have to be recommended to Full Council or the Finance Committee.

RESOLVED that the Project Officer confirmed with the Town Clerk on whether the ‘terms of reference’ regarding the new budget be forwarded to the Finance Committee or to Full Council.

83. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

RESOLVED that the next meeting of the Sustainable Barry Working Party is scheduled to be held on Thursday 29 April 2021 for an extraordinary meeting.

Meeting closed at 18:37pm.

Signed(Chairperson) Dated

BARRY TOWN COUNCIL

DRAFT MINUTES OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE HELD ON MONDAY 22 MARCH 2021 AT 7PM VIRTUALLY

PRESENT: Councillors Charles (Chairperson) together with Councillors Clarke, Payne (Vice Chair) Perkes, William (arrived 7.17 pm), Wilkinson and Wright

ALSO PRESENT: Emily Forbes - Chief Officer
Rebecca Blackwell – Office Team Leader
Councillor S Hodges – Observer

R272. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None received

R273. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Perkes declared an interest in item 16 as she is a Governor at Holton Road School.

R274. **WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS (WALES) ACT 2015**

RESOLVED: That the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 be received and noted.

R275. **TO APPROVE AND SIGN THE MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE HELD ON 25 JANUARY 2021**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of a meeting of the Personnel Committee held on 25 January 2021 be approved and signed as a correct record.

R276 **BUDGET MONITORING REPORT TO 28 FEBRUARY 2021**

Members received a budget monitoring report to 28 February 2021, noting the projected out-turn for the year is to be underspent by £58,466

The Chief Officer advised members that there was £6,000 of committed expenditure in relation to Cemetery Training and advised that this training will be completed by the end of April and asked if the £6,000 could be earmarked for staff training and not placed into the general reserves.

RECOMMENDATION: That a recommendation to Finance, Policy and General Purposes Committee requesting that £6,000 of committed expenditure for Cemetery Training be earmarked by transferring to a Staff Training Reserve at the year end.

RESOLVED: That the budget monitoring report to 28 February 2021 be received, noting the projected out-turn for the year is to be underspent by £58,466

R277.

SCHEDULE OF PAYMENTS FOR MARCH 2021

Members were provided with the schedule of payments for March 2021 consisting of direct debits and BACS payments, in the amount of £307,981.54.

RESOLVED: That members receive and note the schedule of payments for March 2021 consisting of direct debits and BACS payments, in the amount of £307,981.54.

R278

SICKNESS ABSENCE POLICY REVIEW AND REDRAFT

Members were provided with a redraft of the current Sickness Absence Policy.

The Chief Officer advised that she had looked at the Vale of Glamorgan Council's Sickness Absence Policy as a comparison. She advised that some areas have been made clearer in terms of Line Management and employee responsibility, to be clearer on reporting when staff report their sickness absence and there has been an inclusion of Covid. The Chief Officer also advised that there had been a review on the Long Term Sickness Absence to make it clearer for Management to follow and that the policy had been reviewed and redrafted following ACAS policy.

RECOMMENDED: To a meeting of the Finance, Policy and General Purposes Committee that the Sickness Absence Policy review and redraft be approved and adopted subject to staff and union consultation.

R279

DRAFT BEREAVEMENT POLICY

Members were provided with a draft Bereavement Policy.

The Chair welcomed the addition of a Bereavement Policy.

The Chief Officer advised members that the Council does not have a standalone policy in relation to bereavement as currently the bereavement leave is set out within the special leave policy. Members were advised that the Chief Officer had used a template provided by ACAS and added comments for members' consideration.

RECOMMENDED: To a meeting of the Finance, Policy and General Purposes Committee that the Draft Bereavement Policy be approved and adopted subject to staff and union consultation.

DRAFT COVID-19 VACCINATIONS POLICY

Members were provided with a draft Covid-19 Vaccinations Policy for consideration.

The Chief Officer advised members that the policy had been drafted using guidance from ACAS and CIPD. The Chief Officer talked members through the draft policy highlighting areas such as refusing the vaccine due to personal reasons.

Councillor Payne advised that it is personal choice to be vaccinated and that professional advice should be sought from health professionals.

The Chief Officer advised that members of staff will be signposted to Public Health Wales if they raise concerns in relation to having the vaccine and that if they do not wish to have the vaccine, there will be a conversation with them to understand the reasoning why.

Councillor Payne raised concerns in relation to the part where it states disciplinary action may be taken if staff refuse to take up the vaccine.

The Chief Officer advised that it would only be invoked if members of staff imposed a risk to other members of staff but felt that it shouldn't get to that point but it is there as a buffer and as a protective measure for health and safety of the workforce.

Councillor S Hodges shared the same concerns as Councillor Payne as it could set a precedent and requested that the Chief Officer keeps Council updated in relation to changes being made.

Councillor Perkes advised that the Council should encourage staff to take the vaccine but not enforce the vaccine as it is not law to have it.

The Chief Officer advised that the paragraph can be removed if members are concerned and advised that it was there to safeguard employees and the Council. The Chief Officer also advised that the policy would go to staff consultation and the Unions for consideration.

Members requested that paragraph 3 under 'Options if staff refuse the vaccine' be removed.

RECOMMENDED: To a meeting of the Finance, Policy and General Purposes Committee that the Draft Covid-19 Vaccination Policy be approved and adopted subject to staff and union consultation following the suggested amendment.

R281 **DRAFT WORKPLACE MENTAL WELLBEING STRATEGY**

Members were provided with a draft Workplace Mental Wellbeing Strategy.

Councillor Clarke advised that at the end of the strategy there are three links that require amendment.

RECOMMENDED: To a meeting of the Finance, Policy and General Purposes Committee that the Draft Workplace Mental Wellbeing Strategy be approved and adopted, following the amendments being made and after staff and union consultation.

Councillor Wiliam joined the meeting

R282 **STAFF SUGGESTION SCHEME REVIEW**

Members were provided with a review of the current Staff Suggestion Scheme.

The Chief Officer gave an overview of the current process in relation to the current staff suggestion scheme outlining that it is within the remit of the staff to suggest changes and suggested a review to amend this allocation into a fund for staff wellbeing.

Members gave suggestions of ideas and suggested that staff make suggestions via the Personnel Committee for approval.

RECOMMENDED: To a meeting of the Finance, Policy and General Purposes Committee that the Staff Suggestion Scheme is replaced with a Staff Wellbeing Fund where staff can make suggestions to utilise the funding each year for promoting their mental and physical health and wellbeing in the Workplace.

R283. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

RESOLVED: The next meeting of the Personnel Committee will be agreed at the Annual Meeting scheduled to be held on Tuesday 18 May 2021

R284. **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

RESOLVED: That in accordance with Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the press and public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting.

R285. **TOIL**

Members were provided with the current levels of TOIL for officers with a breakdown of accrual and TOIL taken since last reported.

RESOLVED: That the levels of TOIL for officers be received and noted.

R286 **TEMPORARY SUSTAINABLE BARRY PROJECTS OFFICER**

Members were provided with a report in relation to the retention of the Temporary Sustainable Barry Projects Officer for another 6 months.

RESOLVED:

- 1. That Personnel Committee members agree an extension of the Temporary Sustainable Barry Project Officer post for at least a further 6 months (April to September 2021) at a cost of £8,000 which can be found within the Sustainable Barry budget already agreed by Council;**
- 2. That following this extension, a further review takes place to evaluate the impact of the role and any future requirements.**

R287. **MINOR AUTHORITY REPRESENTATIVES**

Members were provided with applications for the Minor Authority Representative positions that are currently vacant.

a) **Gladstone Road**

Members were advised that only one application had been received in relation to the vacancy at Gladstone Road School.

Given that only one application had been received, members requested that they would like to see a wider number of community representatives take up the opportunity to apply to be a Minor Authority Representative for the Town Council.

RESOLVED: That the position for Gladstone Road School is re-advertised, with a view to receiving a wider selection of community representatives.

Councillor Perkes left the meeting.

b) Holton Road School

Members were provided with two applications in relation to the vacancy at Holton Road School.

Members considered the two applications received and decided that Mr Alexander Saunders is given the position as Minor Authority Representative for the Town Council at Holton Road School.

RESOLVED: That Alexander Saunders is appointed the Minor Authority Representative for Holton Road School and that Alexander Saunders is advised that he has been successful in the appointment of the Minor Authority Representative role on behalf of Barry Town Council.

The meeting closed at 7.30 pm

Signed

Dated

DRAFT

FOR INFORMATION ONLY

ACTION SHEET - PERSONNEL COMMITTEE - 22 MARCH 2021

MINUTE NO.	ACTION TO BE TAKEN	ACTION TO BE TAKEN BY	DATE ACTION TO BE CARRIED OUT	PROGRESS
R276	That a recommendation to Finance, Policy and General Purposes Committee requesting that £6,000 of committed expenditure for Cemetery Training be earmarked by transferring to a Staff Training Reserve at the year end.	DCO	19.04.21	Completed
R278	To a meeting of the Finance, Policy and General Purposes Committee that the Sickness Absence Policy review and redraft be approved and adopted subject to staff and union consultation.	CO	19.04.21	Completed
R279	To a meeting of the Finance, Policy and General Purposes Committee that the Draft Bereavement Policy be approved and adopted subject to staff and union consultation.	CO	19.04.21	Completed
R280	To a meeting of the Finance, Policy and General Purposes Committee that the Draft Covid-19 Vaccination Policy be approved and adopted subject to staff and union consultation following the suggested amendment.	CO	19.04.21	Completed
R281	To a meeting of the Finance, Policy and General Purposes Committee that the Draft Workplace Mental Wellbeing Strategy be approved and adopted, following the amendments being made and after staff and union consultation.	CO	19.04.21	Completed
R282	To a meeting of the Finance, Policy and General Purposes Committee that the Staff Suggestion Scheme is replaced with a Staff Wellbeing Fund where staff can make suggestions to utilise the funding each year for promoting their mental and physical health and wellbeing in the Workplace.	CO	19.04.21	Completed

BARRY TOWN COUNCIL

DRAFT MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE INNOVATION WORKING PARTY HELD ON THURSDAY 25 MARCH 2021 AT 6:00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor Brooks (Chairperson) together with Councillors Drake and N Hodges

ALSO PRESENT: Emily Forbes - Chief Officer
Mark Sims – Deputy Chief Officer
Rebecca Blackwell – Office Team Leader
Councillor Clarke – Observer
Councillor Johnson - Observer

97. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

None received

98. **DECLARATIONS OF INTERST**

It was noted that Councillor Clarke is a members of Arts Central Trustees in the event that Arts Central was discussed during the meeting.

99. **WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS (WALES) ACT 2015**

RESOLVED: That the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 be received and noted

100. **TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE INNOVATION WORKING PARTY MEETING HELD ON 8 DECEMBER 2020**

RESOLVED: That the minutes of the Innovation Working Party held on 8 December 2020 be received and signs as a correct record.

101. **LEARNING FROM THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AND POST-CRISIS STRATEGIC DIRECTION**

As deferred to this Group by Full Council, Members were provided with a detailed report outlining the proposed Council's future strategic direction considering changes to ways of working due to the Covid-19 Pandemic and plans for delivering the final year of the 5-year Corporate Plan.

Hybrid Working

The Chief Officer advised that the hybrid remote working model is based on the office staff who are currently remote working during the pandemic.

Councillor Brooks advised that she is happy to see a healthy mix of remote working and office working but raised concerns in relation to prescribing a percentage of working remotely and suggested that it should be based on an individual basis.

The Chief Officer advised that a clause in the contract could be set to advise that remote hybrid method of working will be implemented in line with the needs of the business and the needs of the individual.

Councillor Johnson agreed to not prescribe a percentage in terms of setting out time in office and time at home. He also raised a concern in relation to costs to the individuals in terms of utility bills as whereby travel costs may have reduced, utility costs would have risen.

The Chief Officer advised that the hybrid remote working model can be assessed on an individual basis with a universal clause included in office staff contracts.

Councillor N Hodges agreed with the proposal for a hybrid remote working model and proposed that the allowance for remote working is adjusted to accommodate remote working costs depending on how much time is spent working at home.

Councillor Clarke raised concerns in relation to GDPR, waste and the health and safety of those working at home.

The Chief Officer advised that in terms of GDPR, staff are complying with the regulations as they use the Citrix portal which is password protected and advised that any personal documents are stored within the Council Offices, which are not taken home. The Chief Officer also advised that no confidential waste is disposed at the individuals' home and there is a confidential waste disposal contract in place for the Council. Finally, the Chief Officer advised that all staff have completed risk assessments and DSE assessments with their Line Managers.

The Chief Officer addressed Councillor Clarke's concerns advising that all staff comply with the GDPR regulations, health and safety assessments have been conducted with each team member and that little to no waste is produced at the staff homes due to the encouragement of electronic methods of communication. She also advised that if letter or deeds need to be mailed out, this takes place within the Council Offices, when required.

The Chief Officer gave members an overview of the emergency response in relation to virtual meetings and advised that consideration is sought for future meetings when the restrictions begin to lift.

Councillor Brooks advised that it is not an easy decision to make in the current climate as things are changing constantly but did request for more public and press participation.

Councillor Johnson agreed with the level of uncertainty and advised that the mix of face to face and virtual could cause complications and it should be one or the other. He also agreed that public and press participation should be accessible. Councillor Johnson also highlighted the importance of face to face meetings for collegiality and agreed that it is too early to make a decision with regard to the Councils AGM. Members noted that the decision to continue with remote meetings was made at a meeting of Full Council held on 22 February whereby it was resolved that all Council meetings continue to be held on a remote basis and be reviewed prior to the Annual Meeting to be held on 17 and 18 May 2021.

Marketing and Communication

Members were requested to note the Marketing, Communications and Digitalisation section of the report with the Chief Officer advising that an update will be provided at the Annual Meeting scheduled for 18 May 2021. Councillor Clarke questioned the Councils stance on the distance selling regulations. The Chief Officer advised that guidance will be sought and implemented where necessary.

Community and Youth Engagement

Members were provided with information in relation to Community Engagement, Youth Engagement and Public Participation. Councillor Brooks noted that it links in with the Community Plan and will be a large project to undertake and requested an update.

The Chief Officer advised that due to the pandemic the Community Plan meeting that was scheduled for March 2020 was cancelled and is now scheduled for 26 April 2021 to begin the process. The Chief Officer also advised that the Community Engagement Officer will be working towards providing an update for Council which will be presented at the Annual Meeting.

Members were advised that the Grant Programme had already been discussed and resolved at the meeting of Full Council held on 22nd February 2021.

The Chief Officer advised that members are requested to note points raised on Corporate Services and advised that a number of issues had been dealt with via the Personnel Committee.

RECOMMENDED to a meeting of the Finance, Policy and General Purposes Committee on 19 April 2021 that:

1. the Council formally adopts a hybrid workplace model (where office staff are able to choose to share working time between the office and remotely balancing the needs of the individual with the needs of the business);
2. an appointment system for public appointments is put in place when Welsh Government Guidance allows face to face appointments to resume at the office.

102. **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

RESOLVED: That the date of the next meeting for the Innovation Working Party be held when required

The meeting ended at 6.50pm

Signed: (Chairperson) Date:

DRAFT

FOR INFORMATION ONLY

ACTION SHEET - INNOVATION WORKING PARTY 25 MARCH 2021

MINUTE NO.	ACTION TO BE TAKEN	ACTION TO BE TAKEN BY	DATE ACTION TO BE CARRIED OUT	PROGRESS
101 (1)	RECOMMENDED to a meeting of the Finance, Policy and General Purposes Committee on 19 April 2021 that: the Council formally adopts a hybrid workplace model (where office staff are able to choose to share working time between the office and remotely balancing the needs of the individual with the needs of the business)	CO	14.04.21	Completed
101(2)	RECOMMENDED to a meeting of the Finance, Policy and General Purposes Committee on 19 April 2021 that: an appointment system for public appointments is put in place when Welsh Government Guidance allows face to face appointments to resume at the office.	CO	14.04.21	Completed

FINANCE, POLICY & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE	19 APRIL 2021	AGENDA ITEM: 8
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BUDGET MONITORING REPORT / PROVISIONAL OUT-TURN REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31 MARCH 2021

Report Author

Mark Sims, Deputy Chief Officer

- Attached:**
- A. Budget Monitoring Report / Provisional Out-Turn for Year Ending 31 March 2021 (2 pages)
 - B. Projected Reserves at 31 March 2021 (Prior to Year End Closedown) (1 page)

Purpose of Report

To inform members about the Council's provisional out-turn for the year ending 31 March 2021.

Background Information

On the following pages is the budget monitoring report / provisional out-turn for year ending 31 March 2021, indicating actual income and expenditure up to the end of month twelve in the 2020/21 financial year. The projected out turn for the financial year is currently projecting a net overspend of **£67,965** that will result in a net amount of £212,081 being transferred from reserves rather than an amount of £23,615 in the original budget for 2020/21.

Members are requested to note that the attached report was prepared on 13 April 2021 and that further invoices relating to the financial year 2020/21 may be received that will result in a change to the figures on the attached report.

Members are also requested to note the following items that form a major part of the variance in funds being transferred from reserves.

New money from General Reserve for Covid-19 Recovery Fund	£120,500
Cemetery Approach Building (Previous Yr in Acquisition Reserve)	£131,632
Cemetery Approach Building F&F (Previous Yr in Acq Reserve)	£12,080
Additional expenditure re Covid-19	£18,961
Loss of income from Pioneer Hall	£21,598
Loss of burial income	<u>£14,999</u>
Total	<u>£300,809</u>

Also included is a current projection of the Council's reserves at 31 March 2021 based on the attached provisional draft out-turn report.

Recommendation

Members are requested to receive the budget monitoring report / provisional out-turn report for year ending 31 March 2021, noting the projected overspend of **£67,965** for 2020/21 that will result in a net amount of £212,081 being transferred from reserves.

Budget Monitoring Report / Provisional Out-Turn March 2021

Description	Item No.	Gross Expenditure						
		Budget	Expenditure	Committed	Balance	Budget	Year End	Projected
		12 Months	12 Months	Expenditure	£	For Year	Projections	Variance
		£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Salaries	1	726,990	674,072	0	52,918	726,990	674,072	52,918
Pension Added Years Costs	2	9,049	6,705	2,344	0	9,049	9,049	0
Personal Hygiene Facilities	3	2,100	1,448	0	652	2,100	1,448	652
Personal Protective Equipment / Clothing	3	2,750	1,231	0	1,519	2,750	1,231	1,519
Cleaning Products	3	1,650	399	0	1,251	1,650	399	1,251
Officers Travel and Subsistence	4	3,000	741	0	2,259	3,000	741	2,259
Rates	5	13,283	12,456	0	827	13,283	12,456	827
Water	6	3,050	2,268	0	782	3,050	2,268	782
Rent	7	31,000	36,256	0	-5,256	31,000	36,256	-5,256
Electricity	8	7,570	4,413	0	3,157	7,570	4,413	3,157
Gas	9	1,250	824	0	426	1,250	824	426
Telephone	10	3,550	3,685	0	-135	3,550	3,685	-135
Postage	11	1,000	40	0	960	1,000	40	960
Printing and Stationery	12	1,500	849	0	651	1,500	849	651
Insurance	13	5,000	4,850	0	150	5,000	4,850	150
Photocopier Costs	14	3,000	1,688	0	1,312	3,000	1,688	1,312
Property Maintenance and Improvements	15	33,490	35,236	0	-1,746	33,490	35,236	-1,746
Equipment	16	9,000	21,083	0	-12,083	9,000	21,083	-12,083
Equipment Maintenance	17	12,700	10,050	0	2,650	12,700	10,050	2,650
Bank Charges	18	800	464	0	336	800	464	336
Audit Fees - Internal	19	1,380	890	445	45	1,380	1,335	45
Legal Fees	20	6,000	1,514	0	4,486	6,000	1,514	4,486
Audit Fees - External	21	460	0	460	0	460	460	0
Professional Fees	22	6,000	11,328	0	-5,328	6,000	11,328	-5,328
General Salaries Contingency	23	30,000	16,680	0	13,320	30,000	16,680	13,320
Health and Safety	24	5,000	1,478	0	3,522	5,000	1,478	3,522
Internet Broadband	25	3,596	2,927	0	669	3,596	2,927	669
Election Costs	28	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
BACAS Burials System Annual Maintenance	29	2,550	2,200	0	350	2,550	2,200	350
Microshade Citrix	30	7,440	7,645	0	-205	7,440	7,645	-205
Welsh Translation Service	31	2,000	2,115	0	-115	2,000	2,115	-115
Horticulture	8	800	69	0	731	800	69	731
Vehicle Maintenance	11	1,200	697	0	503	1,200	697	503
Haulage and Fuel	12	3,375	2,812	0	563	3,375	2,812	563
Vehicle Tax and Insurance	13	549	535	0	14	549	535	14
Philadelphia Cemetery	14	500	0	0	500	500	0	500
Interest on PWLB Loan	15	2,899	2,899	0	0	2,899	2,899	0
Capital Repayment on PWLB Loan	16	16,921	16,921	0	0	16,921	16,921	0
Treework Maintenance	17	6,195	4,375	0	1,820	6,195	4,375	1,820
Cemetery Roads Maintenance	19	3,000	0	0	3,000	3,000	0	3,000
Memorial Safety Advertising	20	250	0	0	250	250	0	250
Subscriptions	21	850	625	0	225	850	625	225
New Play Equipment	11	3,000	116	0	2,884	3,000	116	2,884
Civic Hospitality	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mayor's Hospitality	2	500	0	0	500	500	0	500
Mayor's Medallions and Plaques	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Photographical Services	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mayor's Allowance inc. On Cost	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Deputy Mayor's Allowance inc. On Cost	5	500	519	0	-19	500	519	-19
Mayor's Travel	6	200	0	0	200	200	0	200
Mayor's Donations	7	642	188	0	454	642	188	454
Mayor's Advertising	8	750	100	0	650	750	100	650
Civic Gifts	9	500	0	0	500	500	0	500
Core Funding to Memorial Hall Theatre	1	150,000	112,500	37,500	0	150,000	150,000	0
Capital Grant to Memorial Hall Theatre	2	22,800	22,800	0	0	22,800	22,800	0
Corporate Events	3	19,000	7,335	11,665	0	19,000	19,000	0
Corporate Advertising and Marketing	4	3,250	3,190	0	60	3,250	3,190	60
Corporate Engagement Strategy	5	7,000	849	300	5,851	7,000	1,149	5,851
Shop Local Campaign	6	14,000	3,203	10,797	0	14,000	14,000	0
Community Grants	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Grant to Pioneers Club re use of hall	8	1,270	0	0	1,270	1,270	0	1,270
Website Costs	9	2,000	230	0	1,770	2,000	230	1,770
Fairtrade Campaign	10	1,000	63	0	937	1,000	63	937
Subscriptions	11	8,925	8,388	0	537	8,925	8,388	537
Councillor Training	12	2,000	0	0	2,000	2,000	0	2,000
Staff Training	13	16,000	5,608	6,000	4,392	16,000	11,608	4,392
Councillor Allowances	14	3,300	1,200	0	2,100	3,300	1,200	2,100
Councillor Tablets	15	792	792	0	0	792	792	0
Councillor Emails	16	380	363	0	17	380	363	17
Staff Suggestion Scheme	17	500	0	0	500	500	0	500
Sustainable Barry Initiative (Minute number 654(2))	18	500	0	0	500	500	0	500
Place Plan (Minute number 673(4) refers)	19	3,000	0	0	3,000	3,000	0	3,000
Barry Youth Action	1	1,500	0	0	1,500	1,500	0	1,500
Dementia Friendly Project	2	3,000	0	0	3,000	3,000	0	3,000
Cemetery Fencing	3	27,000	6,835	20,165	0	27,000	27,000	0
Cemetery Roads Improvement	4	20,000	13,527	0	6,473	20,000	13,527	6,473
Cemetery Benches	5	2,000	1,916	0	84	2,000	1,916	84
Cemetery Treework	6	20,000	0	22,445	-2,445	20,000	22,445	-2,445
COVID-19 Recovery Fund	7	208,278	196,696	11,582	0	208,278	208,278	0
Cemetery Approach Building (Prev Yr Reserves)	8	0	120,949	10,683	-131,632	0	131,632	-131,632
COVID-19 EXPENDITURE	1	0	18,961	0	-18,961	0	18,961	-18,961
Total Expenditure		1,516,284	1,420,796	134,386	-38,898	1,516,284	1,555,182	-38,898

Budget Monitoring Report / Provisional Out-Turn March 2021

Gross Income								
Description	Item No.	Budget	Income	Income	Balance	Budget	Year End	Projected
		12 Months	12 Months	Expenditure		For Year	Projections	Variance
		£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Bank Interest	1	2,000	553	0	-1,447	2,000	553	-1,447
Interment Fees	1	75,141	70,644	0	-4,497	75,141	70,644	-4,497
Exclusive Right of Burials	2	27,557	27,837	0	280	27,557	27,837	280
Memorial Fees	3	23,616	17,633	0	-5,983	23,616	17,633	-5,983
Transfer of Exclusive Right of Burials	4	1,800	1,710	0	-90	1,800	1,710	-90
Hire of Chapel	5	770	0	0	-770	770	0	-770
War Graves	6	78	78	0	0	78	78	0
Cemetery Lodge Rent	7	5,465	5,398	0	-67	5,465	5,398	-67
Other Miscellaneous Income	8	2,000	1,587	0	-413	2,000	1,587	-413
Cemetery Improvement Fee	9	0	3,056	0	3,056	0	3,056	3,056
Grants Receivable	10	0	6,713	0	6,713	0	6,713	6,713
Porthkerry Agreement	3	10,781	12,888	0	2,107	10,781	12,888	2,107
Lettings	1	26,826	140	0	-26,686	26,826	140	-26,686
Lettings - Old Pioneers Club via S137	2	1,270	0	0	-1,270	1,270	0	-1,270
Total Income		177,304	148,237	0	-29,067	177,304	148,237	-29,067
Net Expenditure								
Description	Item No.	Budget	Expenditure	Expenditure	Balance	Budget	Year End	Projected
		12 Months	12 Months	Expenditure		For Year	Projections	Variance
		£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Total Net Expenditure		1,338,980	1,272,559	134,386	-67,965	1,338,980	1,406,945	-67,965
Transfer to / (from) reserves		(144,116)				(144,116)	(212,081)	
Amount to be met from Precept		1,194,864				1,194,864	1,194,864	
Our revised net budget for the year is £1,338,980 with actual expenditure for the 12 months to 31 March 2021 of £1,272,559 and committed expenditure of £134,386 noting that an amount of £144,116 will be drawn down from reserves.								
Our projected out-turn for the year produces an overspend of £67,965 (£38,898 more expenditure with £29,067 less income). This will result in a net amount of £212,081 being transferred from reserves rather than transferring £144,116 from reserves noting that an additional amount of £80,500 was approved from the General Reserve during the year to add with £69,500 of repurposed existing budgets to create the COVID-19 Recovery Fund and a further £40,000 from reserves for the COVID-19 Recovery Fund.								

FINANCE, POLICY & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE	19 APRIL 2021	AGENDA ITEM: 9
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INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2020/21 (SECOND INTERIM)

Report Author

Mark Sims, Deputy Chief Officer

Attached: A. Internal Audit Report 2020-21 (Second Interim) (8 pages)

Purpose of Report

To provide members with the internal auditor's report (second interim) for 2020/21.

Background

At the Committee's previous meeting on 8 February 2021 members were advised that Auditing Solutions Ltd undertook their first visit (remotely) for 2020/21 on 7 December 2020 and provided their First Interim Report. Minute number F266 **RESOLVED: That the Internal Auditors Report 2020/21 (First Interim) be received and noted.**

Auditing Solutions Ltd undertook the second interim review for the internal audit programme for 2020/21 on 22 March 2021. Due to the continued impact of the Covid-19 pandemic the interim review was again undertaken remotely. A copy of the internal auditor's report for 2020/21 (Second Interim) is attached for the Committee's consideration. The report provides a summary of the work undertaken at the first visit and officers are pleased to report that the internal auditor concludes that the Council continues to maintain adequate and effective internal control arrangements.

Auditing Solutions Ltd are scheduled to undertake the final visit on 10 June 2021 to complete the internal audit work for 2020/21 and 'sign off' the Council's Annual Return for 2020/21. Any decision to attend in person will be made in conjunction with Welsh Government guidance and regulations at that time.

Recommendations

Members are requested to receive and note the internal audit report (second interim) for 2020/21.



Barry Town Council
Cyngor Tref y Barri

Internal Audit Report 2020-21 (Second interim)

Chris Hackett

Consultant Auditor
For and on behalf of Auditing Solutions Ltd

Background

All town and parish councils are required by statute to make arrangements for an independent internal audit examination of their accounting records and system of internal control and for the conclusions to be reported each year in the Annual Return.

This report sets out the work undertaken in relation to the second interim review for the 2020-21 financial year, which took place on the 22nd March 2021 together with our preparatory work. Due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic this interim review has been undertaken remotely. We wish to thank the Deputy Chief Officer and Responsible Finance Officer for providing all the requested documents in electronic format to facilitate the completion of our work. This Report does not repeat the findings of the first report issued in December, but a consolidated report will be issued following our final visit/review which is arranged for 10th June 2021.

Internal Audit Approach

In continuing our review for the year, we have again had regard to the materiality of transactions and their susceptibility to potential misrecording or misrepresentation in the year-end Statement of Accounts/Annual Return. Our programme of cover has been designed to afford appropriate assurance that the Council's financial systems remain robust and operate in a manner to ensure effective probity of transactions and to afford a reasonable probability of identifying any material errors or possible abuse of the Council's own and the national statutory regulatory framework. The programme is also designed to facilitate our completion of the 'Internal Audit Report' in the Council's Annual Return, which requires independent assurance over ten internal control objectives.

Overall Conclusion

Based on the work completed to date we have concluded that the Council continues to maintain adequate and effective internal control arrangements. Our detailed findings are set out below.

We request that this report is presented to Members.

Detailed Report

Maintenance of Accounting Records & Bank Reconciliations

The Council uses the Rialtas accounting package to record its financial transactions with a single cashbook in place to reflect transactions through the Lloyds current account.

Our objective here is to ensure that the accounting records are being maintained accurately and currently and that no anomalous entries appear in the cashbook or financial ledgers. We have:

- Confirmed that the accounting system is in balance at the time of our review by running a data check;
- Confirmed the arrangements for processing journals, manual adjustments on the Rialtas accounting package. These are done by the Deputy Chief Officer and reviewed by the Chief Officer;
- Checked and agreed one sample month's transactions (January 2021), as recorded in the current account cashbook, to the Lloyds bank statements;
- Checked and agreed the December 2020 and January 2021 month-end Lloyds bank reconciliation detail to ensure that no longstanding uncleared amounts or abnormal entries exist; and
- Discussed arrangements for Member oversight of the bank reconciliation.

Conclusions

Based on our testing the accounts are in balance and being reconciled with no anomalous adjusting entries in the reconciliations.

We understand that arrangements have been reinstated to allow Member oversight of the bank reconciliation, (which was temporarily suspended due to the Covid 19 lockdown).

We shall undertake further work in this area at the final review/visits including verifying the accurate disclosure of the year-end balances in the 2020/21 Annual Return and Accounts.

Review of Corporate Governance

Our objective is to ensure that the Council has a robust series of corporate governance documentation in place; that Council and Committee meetings are conducted in accordance with the adopted Standing Orders and that, as far as we are able to ascertain, no actions of a potentially unlawful nature have been or are being considered for implementation.

We note that the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations were included on the agenda of the Town Council's Annual Meeting held on 28th September 2020 and that Members discussed and resolved to approve them.

We have continued our examination of the minutes of the Full Council and its extant Standing Committees, excluding Planning, for the 2020/21 financial year to date, to ensure that, as far as we are reasonably able to ascertain, no actions of a potentially unlawful manner have been taken or are under consideration by Members, although it is for the Council to seek legal assurance where it deems it necessary.

Conclusions

No matters have been identified in this area from the work undertaken so far this year. We will extend our review of minutes up to the end of the financial year at our final review/visit in June.

Review of Expenditure

Our aim here is to ensure that:

- Council resources are released in accordance with the Council's approved procedures and budgets;
- Payments are supported by appropriate documentation, either in the form of an original trade invoice or other appropriate form of document confirming the payment as due and/or an acknowledgement of receipt, where no other form of invoice is available;
- All discounts due on goods and services supplied are identified and appropriate action taken to secure the discount;
- Relevant Standing Orders and Financial Regulations have been met in relation to formal tendering processes;
- The correct expense codes have been applied to invoices when processed; and
- VAT has been appropriately identified and coded to the control account for periodic recovery.

We have extended our review in this area. We understand that due to the Covid-19 lockdown it was not possible last year to regularly obtain the signature of two members on invoices. We understand this control has now been reinstated and that members are now initialling invoices.

We have extended our audit sample of payments in the cash book and have now tested 49 payments including all those individually in excess of £3,500, together with a more random sample of every 35th cashbook transaction (irrespective of value). Our test sample includes also the non-domestic rate charges. The sample now totals £580,250 and equates to 75% of all non-pay related expenditure for the period to 8th March 2021.

Supporting information in the form of invoices or other documentation was provided for all the payments in our sample. As for our first interim visit our sample included Covid-19 support grants given under the Power of Wellbeing. For these payments we were provided with a summary spreadsheet listing the grants balancing to the payments in the cash book. We understand the grants were authorised by the Chief Officer under delegated authority in agreement with Group Leaders through the urgent action process. We confirmed that a listing of grants awarded was taken to the Sustainable Barry Working Party on 1st December 2020 for

noting. We agreed the spreadsheet detailing the Covid-19 grants to the Rialtas cash book and then sample checked 35 individual grants to the application form which officers scanned to us. (We tested 9 grants at our first review therefore we have tested 44 in total to the application form).

Our payments review included the Council contribution to the new Community Building. We agreed the amount paid to an invoice from Vale of Glamorgan Council confirming also this was supported by a contractor's invoice and a Surveyor's certificate.

We reviewed the Council's VAT records. Specifically, we reviewed the second and third quarterly VAT reclaim for 2020/21 ensuring the funds were recovered into the Council's accounts.

Conclusions

No matters arise from our review of payments to date requiring recommendations.

Precept Determination and Budgetary Control

Our objective here is to ensure that the Council has a robust procedure in place for identifying and approving its future budgetary requirements and the level of precept for the coming financial year: also, that an effective reporting and monitoring process is in place. We also aim to ensure that the Council retains appropriate funds in general and earmarked reserves to finance its ongoing spending plans, whilst retaining appropriate sums to cover any unplanned expenditure that might arise. We note:

- The Council approved its 2021/22 budget and precept at its meeting on 22nd February 2021, following preliminary considerations and public consultation. Members considered key issues for example the impact of the pandemic and how long halls might be closed and the impact of changes to the council tax base etc. Members were provided with a detailed budget report analysing income and expenditure by service area and special projects and a summary report highlighting reserve movements; and
- Members have been provided with budget monitor reports during the year providing information at a detailed and summary level enabling the Council to monitor the projected outturn position.

Conclusions

No issues have been identified in this area of our work requiring formal comment or recommendation. We will consider year end balances at our final review.

Review of Income

In considering the Council's income streams, we aim to ensure that robust systems are in place to ensure the identification of all income due to the Council from its various sources; to ensure

that income is invoiced in a timely manner and that effective procedures are in place to pursue recovery of any outstanding monies due to the Council.

At this second interim visit we have:

- Agreed the third instalment of the 2020/21 precept as recorded in the Council's minutes to the amount receipted into the Council's cash book;
- Confirmed the Council keeps its fees and charges under review;
- Reviewed grant income agreeing the Covid-19 support grant for the Pioneer Hall to supporting documentation;
- Reviewed the unpaid invoices report on the Council's sales ledger noting there were no significant aged amounts due; and
- As previously noted, test checked one month's income from the bank to the accounting records.

Conclusions

No issues arise in this area. At our final review/visit we will complete our year on year analysis of income.

Petty Cash and Charge Card Accounts

Whilst the amounts expended in this area are limited, we are required, as part of the Annual Return certification, to confirm the Council's petty cash accounting controls.

Financial Regulations allow a petty cash float of up to £500 with the requirement to retain vouchers to support payments and for reimbursements from the bank account to maintain the float being separately identified in the schedule approved by Members.

We tested this area at our initial review. At this stage we have confirmed the petty cash book was reconciled at the end of January 2021 to Rialtas.

Conclusion

No issues have been identified in this area of our work requiring formal comment or recommendation.

Salaries and Wages

In examining the Council's payroll function, we aim to confirm that extant legislation is being appropriately observed as regards adherence to the Employee Rights Act 1998 and the requirements of HM Revenue and Customs (HMRC) legislation as regards the deduction and payment over of income tax and NI contributions, together with meeting the requirements of the local government pension scheme in relation to employee percentage bandings.

We tested this area during initial review. At this stage we obtained the payroll reports for January 2021 and:

- Agreed the payroll reports to Rialtas;
- Test checked for a sample of 5 staff the calculation of tax, national insurance and pension contributions; and
- Reviewed salary costs in the cash book month on month to ensure there were no unusual variations in the period April 2020 to February 2021.

Conclusions

No matters have arisen from our work to date. We will review salary payments in total at the final review/visit querying any anomalies that may arise.

Investments and Loans

Our objectives here are to ensure that the Council is “investing” surplus funds, be they held temporarily or on a longer term basis, in appropriate banking and investment institutions; that an appropriate investment policy is in place; that the Council is obtaining the best rate of return on any such investments made; that interest earned is brought to account correctly and appropriately in the accounting records and that any loan repayments due to or payable by the Council are transacted in accordance with appropriate loan agreements. At this review we have:

- Agreed the balance on the Council’s CCLA account to the latest third-party statement dated 28th February 2021 confirming this was correctly recorded in Rialtas; and
- Agreed the balance of the loan to Purple Shoots to the Loan agreement and confirmed the Council received interest in accordance with the Agreement.

Conclusion

There are no issues arising in this area based on our work to date. We will agree the year-end balances on loans and investments disclosed in the Annual Return to third party statements at our final review/visit.

Recommendations made during the First Interim Audit

Response

Maintenance of Accounting Records & Bank Reconciliations

R1	Officers should consider emailing monthly bank reconciliations and supporting paperwork to the Chair of Finance and for the Chair to confirm their review by email.	<i>Bank reconciliations are being reviewed regularly and signed off by the Chair of the Finance, Policy and General Purposes Committee.</i>
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SICKNESS ABSENCE POLICY

Barry Town Council recognises that its employees form a vital part in ensuring its commitment to the people of Barry is met. High levels of attendance are essential in the delivery of services to our customers and in maintaining the health, well-being and effective contribution of our workforce. To this end it will encourage and develop initiatives to promote the health and wellbeing of all employees.

The aim of Barry Town Council's Sickness Absence Policy is to minimise absence levels across the organisation, whilst providing support to those absent, with the primary aim of assisting a return to work at the earliest opportunity. This policy is based on the premise that all correctly reported sickness absence is for genuine reasons and that all appropriate support should be given to enable employees to return to work safely and as early as possible

The policy will inform Barry Town Council employees of their own responsibilities in relation to sickness absence, and the relevant reporting mechanisms.

Barry Town Council will seek to ensure that the reasons for sickness absence are understood in each case and investigated where necessary.

Whilst there is a collective responsibility to minimise sickness absence all such absence will be monitored and dealt with fairly and effectively in accordance with the National Joint Council for Local Government Services National Agreement on Pay & Conditions of Service.

The UK's largest annual survey of sickness absence rates and costs shows that sickness absence was an average of 2.8% of working time per annum, or 6.5 days per employee, during 2014.

Barry Town Council aims to significantly reduce its levels of absence from 8% (2017) to 3% per area over a two year period.

Date reviewed and adopted by the Council
Date for Next Review

March 2021~~July 2017~~
July 2020~~March 2023~~

RESPONSIBILITIES OF LINE MANAGERS

In relation to this policy there will be a requirement for all managers to:

- Strive for high levels of staff attendance within their service area
- Support the attendance and well-being of employees at work
- Support the early but safe return to work of employees from sick leave
- Oversee the sensitive management of employees that cannot return to work
- Operate the attendance policy fairly and consistently
- Monitor the attendance levels within their section on a monthly basis

RESPONSIBILITIES OF EMPLOYEES

In relation to this policy there will be a requirement for all employees to:

- Strive to ensure their own high levels of attendance at work
- Comply fully with the reporting arrangements within the policy
- Keep managers updated on a regular basis during their absence
- Do all they can to minimise periods of absence
- Do all they can to ensure an early but safe return from any sick leave
- Look after their own health, safety and wellbeing in the workplace

SICKNESS ABSENCE PROCEDURES

REPORTING SICKNESS ABSENCE PROCEDURE

If you are away from work because of illness you **MUST** telephone your line manager within 15 minutes of your usual start time. If your line manager is not available you must speak to the Deputy Chief Officer or the Chief Officer and if they are unavailable, another Senior Manager. If you are unable to make the call, in exceptional circumstances, you may ask someone to make it on your behalf. You must however make direct contact with your line manager as soon as possible thereafter. You can expect your line manager to make enquiries with you about work matters during the telephone call. Text messages, emails or indirect methods of communication are not acceptable.

The call should include:-

- Name
- Nature of illness
- Likely duration of absence
- Work commitments that need to be covered during absence

If you are employed to work outside of normal office hours and you need to contact your line manager out of hours you will have been provided with a telephone number to call. However, if you are aware that you will not be well enough to attend work prior to that date you should make every effort to contact the main office or your line manager during working hours the previous day.

This process must be repeated on the third working day of absence

CERTIFICATION AND MEDICAL CERTIFICATES

You must complete a sickness self-certification form for every period of sickness absence unless covered by a fit note. Self-certification can only be made for periods of absence covering up to 7 calendar days.

A doctor's or hospital fit note is required if the absence is more than 7 calendar days (regardless of whether these are working days. i.e. including Saturday and Sunday). The certificate should be forwarded ~~immediately after your 7th~~ on the 8th day of absence and will be required chronologically for all subsequent absences. Where there is continuing sickness absence you must therefore, submit consecutive fit notes to cover the whole period of absence and these must be sent to your line manager within 2 days of the previous note expiring.

Failure to notify sickness absence or provide self-certificates or fit notes may lead to the absence from work being considered as unauthorised, resulting in the loss of occupational sick pay and possible disciplinary investigation.

SICKNESS REPORTING PRODECURE

<u>DAY 1</u>	<u>If you are away from work because of illness you MUST telephone your line manager within 15 minutes of your usual start time. If your line manager is not available you must speak to the Deputy Chief Officer or the Chief Officer and if they are unavailable, another Senior Manager. If you are unable to make the call, in exceptional circumstances, you may ask someone to make it on your behalf. You must however make direct contact with your line manager as soon as possible thereafter. You can expect your line manager to make enquiries with you about work matters during the telephone call. Text messages, emails or indirect methods of communication are not acceptable.. The employee should advise their manager of the reason and likely duration of the absence and the work commitments for that day</u>
<u>DAY 3</u>	<u>On the third calendar day of absence the employee must contact their Line Manager (in accordance with the times as set out above) repeating this process to provide an update on their absence.</u>
<u>DAY 8</u>	<u>On the eighth calendar day of absence a doctor's Fit Note should be forwarded promptly and the employee must telephone their Line Manager (in accordance with the times as set out above).</u>

HOSPITALISATION

Employees who become hospitalised will still need a Fit Note to cover their absence in hospital if exceeding seven days. This can be provided by the hospital.

ACCIDENTS AND INJURIES

An employee who has an accident, incident or near miss (that could have resulted in injury or ill health) that occurs whilst they are at work must report it to their line manager. The incident can then be investigated to identify any action needed to prevent further injuries and ill health and to ensure that the incident is recorded in the Accident Book and reported as necessary.

WORK RELATED ILL-HEALTH OR INJURY

If the employee or line manager believes that ill-health or injury has been caused by work, the manager must complete the Council's accident report form as above.

If the reason for absence is work related stress the line manager should complete a Stress Risk Assessment with the employee to endeavor to establish the root causes of the pressure. They must then refer the individual to Occupational Health sending the risk assessment in order to seek advice on how to support the employee and facilitate a return to work as soon as possible.

CONTACT WITH INFECTIOUS DISEASES

Employees prevented from attending work due to contact with a reportable infectious disease should notify the Chief Officer immediately.

MONITORING SICKNESS ABSENCE LEVELS

All sickness absences must be recorded on the Council's monitoring system.

The information recorded will be used to produce corporate sickness absence level statistics on a quarterly basis to monitor the success of the Sickness Absence Policy and identify any causes of concern. This information is presented to the Council's Personnel Committee on a quarterly basis.

Line managers will use this information to identify employees with frequent short-term absence which may require further investigation as set out within the Sickness Absence policy and procedures.

RETURN TO WORK

On the first day of your return to work, or at least within three days of your return, you will have a "return to work" interview with your line manager. This must be completed for any period of sickness absence, including short term sickness of one day only. The purpose of the interview is to assure both you and your manager that you are fit to return to work and to identify any concerns around your health that need to be addressed. All information will be recorded on the form and signed to show that both you and your line manager agree. Any recommendations will be clearly stated.

If your absence was for less than 7 days you will be asked to complete a Self-Certification Form.

If your absence was medically certified your G.P. will provide you with a Statement of Fitness for Work, commonly known as a "Fit Note". In this your doctor may suggest ways of helping you return to work, e.g.:-

- A phased return to work
- Altering hours
- Amended duties
- Workplace adaptations

There may also be recommendations following a referral to Occupational Health.

Where recommendations have been made by a doctor or Occupational Health specialist, these are dependent on whether or not they are available and must have Chief Officer agreement. The Council will try to accommodate recommendations and support needed to facilitate a return to work.

Phased returns to work will normally be for a 4-week period and will be paid at normal salary regardless of days or hours worked in this period. Options during this time include reduced hours, different working days or adjusted work times and will be agreed between you and your line manager. Generally the return with phased which means you will gradually increase your hours until you return to your normal pattern of work and contracted hours over a 4 week period.

If a phased return to work is recommended over a period more than 4 weeks, then salary will be based on the hours and days worked and not the normal salary. Arrangements can be considered to use annual leave or any TOIL owed as part of this phased return which will need to be considered and agreed by the line manager and Chief Officer.

If the Council is unable to support the change(s) recommended by the doctor, the fit note will be interpreted as you not being fit for work. A further sick note is not required but you will not be allowed to return to work until we have an occupational health opinion that you are fit for work, and you will continue to be classed as on sick leave.

MANAGEMENT OF AN OVERALL RECORD OF UNACCEPTABLE ABSENCE

There will be occasions where an employee's absence record becomes of concern as a result of the combination of both short and long term sickness. In such circumstances the manager will have the discretion to take a rounded view of the sickness record and escalate as appropriate through the stages of the sickness absence policy.

For combined periods of absence, consideration should be given to the significance of such absence measured including spells of absences as well as working days lost.

The Council will take all practical, possible and reasonable measures to avoid dismissing employees for sickness absence. However there will be occasions where

the intermittent or continuing absence of an employee undermines the viability of the employment contract

FREQUENT AND/OR PERSISTENT SHORT-TERM SICKNESS ABSENCE

The Council may, on reviewing your sickness record, take action if:-

- There are three instances or 10 self-certified days of absence within 12 months
- There emerges a regular pattern of recurring absences or if the reason given for absence gives rise to concern or if the line manager has concerns

REVIEW PROCESS

FIRST STAGE INFORMAL REVIEW

This will be an informal review meeting with your line manager who will advise you of their concerns. This meeting will be in addition to the Return to Work Interview and Return to Work form being completed.

The line manager will send a letter to the employee inviting them to the Review Meeting providing at least three days' notice. Representation is not required at this meeting. The line manager, ~~HR Manager~~ and the employee will discuss -

- The reasons for the repeat absences.
- The likelihood of further absences.
- Whether medical advice is required - Occupational Health, G.P. and whether there is an underlying medical condition,
- If any measures might improve the employee's health and/or attendance.
- A way forward, including the immediate improvement expected and a review date set.
- If a further sickness absence is recorded the disciplinary procedure may be followed.

The line manager may at any meeting escalate to the Formal Action stage if it appears the employee's attendance has not improved, without the need for a further meeting under the informal review stage.

-FORMAL ACTIONREVIEW

If the informal review meeting has not led to any improvement in the sickness absence, the Council will make the matter a formal issue and follow the process outlined below.

FORMAL SICKNESS REVIEW STAGES

If there is insufficient improvement within the monitoring period in the employee's sickness absence record, a formal review will be held with the line manager where reasons for the continued absence levels will be explored.

Four or more occurrences will automatically trigger a Formal Review to discuss the sickness absence record.

In terms of the Formal Sickness Review Stages, the following will apply:

Stage 1 Formal Action

The employee will be given a minimum of seven days' notice inviting them to a meeting and advising the employee of the reason for the Formal review, the date and time, their right to be accompanied by a trade union representative or work colleague. The purpose of the Formal Review is:

- To highlight the unacceptable level of attendance
- Explain the impact of the levels of absence on service delivery
- Explain future attendance will be monitored and reviewed
- Advise the employee of the future consequences if the employee continues with this level of attendance

At the end of the meeting, the line manager will consider all aspects of the case and may decide to take no action if further information is required, i.e. G.P., Occupational Health assessment etc.

The line manager may issue a formal First Written Warning where, despite previous discussions, the employee has failed to improve their sickness absence level and their attendance is unsatisfactory.

The line manager will write to the employee within 7 calendar days of the Formal Review meeting confirming:

- The points discussed
- The unsatisfactory sickness absence record
- Actions agreed
- The first written warning (if issued) will be valid for six months
- That a sustained improvement is expected within timeframes
- The employee's right to appeal
- That failure to improve will normally lead to a final written warning for unsatisfactory attendance and performance to undertake their duties

If attendance improves, the process will end at Stage 1 Formal Action.

If required improvements are not demonstrated then Stage 2 Formal Action will be followed.

Stage 2 Formal Action

The employee will be given a minimum of seven days' notice inviting them to a second meeting and advising the employee of the reason for the second Formal review, the date and time, their right to be accompanied by a trade union representative or work colleague. The purpose of the Formal Review is to discuss:

- Why attendance levels continue to be unacceptable

- What progress has been made towards improving attendance and what further improvement is required to meet the standard of attendance required
- Assess whether an improvement is likely
- Obtain views from the employee in relation to any circumstances or reasons that may be affecting attendance

At the end of the meeting, the line manager will consider all aspects of the case and may decide to:

- take no further action if appropriate
- to extend the monitoring period
- to obtain further medical information from a G.P., Occupational Health assessment etc.(if appropriate)
- that the employee needs further advice and / or support
- to issue a First or Final Written Warning which will be valid for twelve months

The line manager will write to the employee within 7 calendar days of the Formal Review meeting confirming the outcome.

If the line manager issues a formal First or Final Written Warning, the required improvements and monitoring procedures will be agreed and the employee will be given an opportunity to reach the required standard. The Final Written Warning will be held on file for 12 months.

Stage 3 Case Review Hearing

Where the required attendance is still not being met and the employee has had a final warning issued at Stage 2 Formal Action, then Stage 3 will be invoked which is a Case Review Hearing.

The line manager, Chief Officer and a member of the Council's Personnel Committee will hear the final review hearing.

The employee will be given a minimum of seven days' notice of the meeting and advising the employee of the reason for the Case Review Hearing, the date and time, their right to be accompanied by a trade union representative or work colleague and that their employment may be terminated and the right of appeal.

Copies of the report and the case to be presented will be sent to the employee and attendees at least seven days before the Case Review Hearing.

The purpose of the Case Review Hearing will be to consider whether there are any further actions that the Council can take to assist the employee in continuing their employment or whether employment should be terminated due to the employee's incapability to undertake their duties effectively because of ill health.

The decision will be communicated at the meeting with the employee and their colleague / trade union representative whenever practical. In all instances, employees will be treated in a fair and reasonable manner appropriate to their particular case. The decision will be confirmed in writing within 7 days of the meeting.

Where, as a result of a Case Review Hearing, the decision has been taken to terminate employment, the employee will be notified of the reasons for this decision and their right of appeal. In order to exercise this right, the employee must write to the Chief Officer within 140 working days of receipt of the letter confirming dismissal. The employee must state their grounds for their appeal.

PREGNANCY

Pregnancy related sickness will be recorded separately from other sickness absence details (inclusive of attendance at antenatal appointments) and will not be included in terms of Barry Town Council's trigger system. The line manager will ensure a Health and Safety risk assessment is completed with the pregnant employee upon notification of pregnancy, at the four months and seven months stages.

COVID-19 RELATED SICKNESS

Covid-19 related sickness will be recorded separately from other sickness absence details and will not be included in terms of Barry Town Council's trigger system

DISABILITY

Disability related sickness records will be recorded separately from other sickness absence details and will not be included in terms of Barry Town Council's trigger system. However, review meetings will be held with the employee and the line manager to discuss the level of absence and impact on productivity. Barry Town Council will assist, where possible, in making reasonable employee adjustments to support an employee with a disability to continue working, i.e. Access to Work Claim.

ACCESS TO WORK

Reasonable Adjustments

All reasonable adaptations and adjustments will be considered to help an employee remain in work or return to work. This can be organised with support and advice following appropriate risk assessments taking place. Access to Work is a government scheme that helps cover the financial cost of providing disability solutions that would otherwise not be considered a "reasonable adjustment" under the Equality Act 2010. (www.gov.uk/access-to-work.)

The line manager will discuss eligibility with the employee. The employee would then need to make an application to Access to Work. If successful, Access to Work will liaise with the line manager and/or Chief Officer to visit the employee's work place

The Council is committed to the rehabilitation of those employees who become disabled during the course of their working life and where necessary the reasonable retraining of those employees who may require redeployment. The Council will make all reasonable adjustments that may be necessary including any reasonable modifications to the employee's job role.

LONG TERM SICKNESS ABSENCE

Sickness absence lasting over four weeks is considered Long Term.

The wellbeing of all employees is of prime concern to the Council and any individual who is unfortunate enough to be away from work because of long term sickness will be contacted regularly by their line manager or a senior manager who will discuss:-

- The length of expected absence
- Developments at work
- The requirements of the Council for further medical examinations

This will only be done with the express consent of the employee and conducted in a very sensitive way to avoid any stress.

The line manager will seek to make telephone contact with the employee after two weeks to keep in touch and to conduct a home visit at four weeks. Progress will then be reviewed formally on a monthly basis.

Stage One Review meeting: After four weeks the employee's manager should invite the employee to a review meeting. In exceptional circumstances this may be done over the telephone. The meeting will help to gain further information about the absence, confirm if there is a need for a referral to Occupational Health and respond to any concerns raised by the employee. It may be important to make a referral Occupational Health in order that advice can be obtained in relation to:-

- o the likely length of absence
- o the long term effects on performance
- o any proactive support/intervention

The outcome of the informal absence review meeting should be confirmed to the employee in writing and any agreed interventions pursued.

Stage Two Review Meeting: Not later than 10 weeks of continuous absence

A further meeting will be arranged by the manager in order to review the absence and any information and advice received from Occupational Health. At this meeting consideration should be given to the timescales of the employee's likely return to work, their ability to undertake the full range of their duties on return and the impact of the

employee's absence on the service. Based on this it will be necessary to consider options including:-

- The employee being expected to be fully fit and return to work in the short-term. This may need to be facilitated by appropriate support as advised by Occupational Health. A further date will need to be set to review the progress of this option
- The employee not being expected to be fully fit and returning to work in the short-term and needing a further review by Occupational Health or external medical intervention/review/support. A further date will need to be set to review any further information received or the expected date of receipt of that information

Actions arising from the above review meetings will be confirmed, in writing. Based on the employee's absence up until this point and the circumstances of the case it may be necessary to advise the employee that there is a concern about their absence and its impact on service delivery. The employee should be advised that the absence will be reviewed at the next meeting and the outcome of any agreed interventions or support mechanisms.

Stage three Review Meeting: Not later than 20 weeks of continuous absence

A further meeting will be necessary to review the employee's absence following the actions agreed at the 2nd review meeting. The meeting will be conducted by an appropriate manager.

At this meeting consideration should be given to the effect of the interventions progressed since the last meeting, any additional medical information received, the timescales of the employee's likely return to work and/or their ability to undertake the full range of their duties on return. Specific consideration will need to be given to the impact of the employee's absence on the service.

Based on the above it will be necessary to consider options including:-

a) The employee being expected to be fully fit and return to work in the short-term. This may need to be supported / confirmed by appropriate advice from Occupational Health and any supportive interventions.

b) No indication or evidence of the employee being fit enough to return to work in the foreseeable future.

Actions arising from this meeting will be confirmed, in writing. Whilst acknowledging the health concerns for the employee it will be necessary to advise him/her that there is also an increasing concern about the number of days lost and the inevitable impact of such on service delivery.

Additionally, in the circumstances of a) above the employee will be advised that their absence will be monitored and reviewed in the context of the actions agreed at the meeting. The employee should be advised that their continued employment may need to be reviewed in accordance the sickness review procedure and if there is not a return to work within a reasonable timeframe.

In the circumstances of b) it may be necessary for the matter to be progressed to a final meeting to consider continued employment chaired by

Prior to any referral to any final meeting (as above) the employee should be advised that their continued employment will be considered including the possibility of their dismissal. It will also be important to ensure that any updated medical information from Occupational Health is available for the final meeting. In the event that the employee does not attend or provide permission for the information to be released a decision will be made on the information that is available.

Final Case Review Hearing: Not later than 30 weeks of continuous absence

A final Case review meeting will be held to consider the updated information from Occupational Health or the status of the employee's absence if they have not returned to work as expected. The meeting will be chaired by a Personnel Committee member

NB: Where an employee returns to work and within a short period of time commences another period of potentially long term sickness absence the procedure may resume as if the employee had not returned to work

The Council will take all practical, possible and reasonable measures to avoid dismissing employees for sickness absence. However, there will be occasions where the intermittent or continuing absence of an employee undermines the viability of the employment contract

If as a result of the above there is no likelihood of an improvement in the employee's overall absence record or a return from long term sickness in a reasonable period then the following options should be considered:-

a) Where the employee's inability to attend work on a regular basis has an impact on service delivery

b) If an employee's attendance at work has not reached a satisfactory level following consideration and there is no likelihood of improvement then the contract of the employee may be terminated on the grounds of incapability with appropriate notice.

c) Where an employee has been on long term absence and there is no prospect of a return to work in a reasonable period.

Following consideration that the employee is unlikely to return to work in the foreseeable future then consideration will be given to:-

- i) Pursuing a case for ill health retirement (if appropriate) with access to pension and appropriate notice

ii) Terminating the employee's contract with appropriate notice

iii) Pursuing arrangements for consensual termination

d) Where the overall level of absence (long and short term) is unacceptable

Where it becomes evident that an employee's overall sickness record is unacceptable and having a negative impact on the service then the employee's contract may be terminated on the grounds of incapability with appropriate notice. This may be the case as a result of the gradual review of an employee's sickness absence record or as a result of considering the overall absence pattern over a 2 to 5 year period.

Medical examination

The Council, as an employer has the right to seek a second or further medical opinion if an employee has been absent for or is expected to be absent for a continuous period of 2 months or a total of 42 days within any 12 month period.

Occupational Health

Occupational Health is a specialist branch of medicine focusing on health in the workplace. It is concerned with the physical and mental wellbeing of employees. Barry Town Council ~~has selected Caer Health Services, Caerphilly~~ will outsource its Occupational Health Provision, to provide the necessary support and advice on work-related illnesses and accidents and monitoring the health of employees.

The Line Manager will make a referral to Occupational Health if an employee is absent from work due to long term sickness and if this is deemed appropriate or would provide useful medical information or when absence from work is occurring on an above average frequency. Likewise, any problems which are health, disability or injury related and which appear to be affecting performance or attendance may be discussed with an employee and considered for referral.

When an employee is absent from work they may be referred to Occupational Health before they return to work, to discuss their absence and potential return to work and if a phased return is recommended. This may not always be possible due to the difficulty of obtaining an appointment in time. In such cases, an appointment will be made as soon as possible after returning to work.

Once a referral has been made the employee will be contacted directly by the Line Manager with an appointment date and time. The Line Manager will be notified if these offers of appointment are refused or not attended as scheduled. A consent form will be completed prior to obtaining a medical report.

The Occupational Health Service will then send a report detailing the outcome of the appointment to both the employee and the Line Manager. This report may be discussed if appropriate with the Chief Officer and the employee's line manager to agree a way forward. All matters will be treated in strict confidence.

Barry Town Council's overall concern is that employees are able to be effective in their work and that their health is protected.

Taking into account advice received from Occupational Health or other medical examination, a further discussion will take place with the line manager to discuss the position.

One or more of the following actions may be taken:

- A further review period set
- A phased return to work or practical reasonable adjustments
- Other appropriate support mechanisms
- Investigations as to whether the employee is eligible for ill health retirement pension benefits
- Case Review Hearing to be set up

The line manager will discuss any actions contemplated with the employee before any decisions are made.

~~The Council may choose one of two routes in respect of Occupational Health Assessment and this can be dependent on the reason for the long term sickness. If it is likely that the employee will make a full recovery and return to their normal role within the Council the Line Manager may choose the "Fit for Work Route".~~

~~Alternatively, if the employee has already been referred for a "Fit for Work" assessment within the last 12 months or their medical condition is deemed to be of a more serious nature then the Line Manager will be required to use the Council's nominated Occupational Health provider.~~

Fit For Work Assessment

~~"Fit for Work" assessment is a free referral for an occupational health assessment for employees who have reached, or whose GP expects them to reach, four weeks of sickness absence. The service is aimed at helping employees return to work sooner. Employees may be referred by their GP or employer.~~

~~To enable an employer to make the referral for a Fit for Work Assessment the following consent is required at all stages:-~~

- ~~• Before referral to Fit for Work by employees GP or Employer~~
- ~~• Before the initial assessment takes place~~
- ~~• Before each version of the Return to Work Plan is shared with the GP and employer~~

- ~~Before Fit for Work contacts the GP or employer or any third party if this is necessary as part of the assessment~~

~~Following assessment a return to work plan may be prepared, however it is not mandatory that this is followed. The return to work plan is designed to assist the employee's return to work sooner. Once a return to work plan has been prepared and the employee and employer and GP agree to implement it there will no longer be a requirement for the employee to provide a Fit for Work note.~~

~~Employers and employees are advised to familiarise themselves with the "Fit for Work" guidance notes provided by the Department for Work and Pensions for both employers and employees and to use them in conjunction with this policy when appropriate (copies can be obtained from Line Managers).~~

SICKNESS IMMEDIATELY PRIOR TO OR DURING ANNUAL LEAVE

If an employee is ill during a period of pre-arranged annual leave it is permissible to treat the days of incapacity as sickness absence instead of annual leave, subject to the provision of a medical certificate which covers the full period of sickness. Please note this will not be the case for non-certificated absence. This will enable the Council to arrange alternative leave dates, subject to the demands of the business

If an employee falls ill whilst on annual leave travelling abroad, they must produce acceptable documentation signed by an accredited medical practitioner, together with the employee's name and contact details. This should also state whether the employee is fit to travel. If declared unfit to travel, the certificate must give an indication of the date the employee is likely to travel, if this is after the last authorised day of leave. When employees return to the UK, they are required to submit a Fit Note by their UK Doctor in order to return to work.

Employees will continue to accrue annual leave (excluding bank holidays) at their normal rate whilst on sick leave in accordance with legislation.

Where, as a direct result of long term sickness absence, employees have been prevented from taking their holiday entitlement, it may be possible for an employee to carry forward/be paid (dependent on the amount of annual leave) the statutory element of their remaining annual leave entitlement into the next annual leave year; management reserves the right to specify when that leave must be taken.

SICK PAY ENTITLEMENT

During first year of service (After completing 4 months service)	1 month full pay 2 months half pay
During second year of service	2 months full pay 2 months half pay
During third year of service	4 months full pay

	4 months half pay
During fourth and fifth year of service	5 months full pay 5 months half pay
After five years service	6 months full pay 6 months half pay

The Council have the discretion to extend the period of sick pay in exceptional circumstances

The period during which sick pay shall be paid, and the rate of sick pay, in respect of any period of absence shall be calculated by deducting from the employee's entitlement on the first day the aggregate of periods of paid absence during the twelve months immediately preceding the first day of absence.

Abuse of the Sickness Absence Policy

If an employee abuses the Sickness Absence Policy for any of the following reasons then sick pay may be suspended and, in addition the matter may be referred through the disciplinary procedure. Examples of such abuse are set out below:-

- Absence on account of sickness due or attributable to the employee's own misconduct or conduct prejudicial to recovery
- Absence on account of sickness due to an injury while working for private gain or for another employer or resulting from participation in professional sport.
- Failure to comply (without good reason) with the reporting procedures set out in this Policy
- Failure to attend (without good reason) absence review meetings as required by the Policy
- Absence levels where the reasons appear to be fraudulent or exaggerated

Date reviewed and adopted by the Council
Date for Next Review

~~July 2017~~ March 2021
~~July 2020~~ March 2023

Barry Town Council

Bereavement policy (based on ACAS template)

Bereavement policy

Barry Town Council acknowledges the personal nature of bereavement and grief and is committed to supporting employees in practical and reasonable ways.

Paid leave

Bereavement leave is paid leave that allows an employee time off to deal with their personal distress and related practical arrangements, primarily, but not limited to, when a member of their family dies.

Barry Town Council acknowledges that bereavement impacts all individuals differently and the guidelines below are intended to show the minimum paid leave an employee is entitled to in different circumstances. Barry Town Council acknowledges that not all employees will need to take the full allowance, and some employees will need additional time, depending on their relationship with the person who has died and the circumstances of the death.

In the event of the death of an immediate relative, 10 working days paid leave will be granted.

An immediate relative includes a spouse, civil partner or partner (including someone with whom the employee is co-habiting but is not the employee's spouse or civil partner), child, (includes children in respect of whom the employee is the adoptive parent and legal guardians and carers) parent, step-parent, sibling or a person with whom the employee is in a relationship of domestic dependency.

5 days leave will be allowed on the death of a mother/father-in-law, grandparents, grandchildren, son/daughter-in-law.

1 day of leave will be allowed on the death of an uncle/aunt to facilitate attendance at the funeral.

In exceptional circumstances, 3-5 days leave may be granted on the death of someone outside the immediate family. These circumstances would include (but are not limited to) situations where the employee is responsible for funeral arrangements or has to travel abroad to attend the funeral.

An employee should notify their line manager of their need to take leave as soon as possible or, at latest, on the first day of absence. In exceptional circumstances, applications for leave will be considered after the first day of absence. Line managers have the right to exercise discretion in exceptional circumstances as outlined above. Leave days do not have to be taken consecutively.

Annual leave

In the event of a bereavement, an employee will be able to take unpaid leave or annual leave at short notice to supplement their bereavement leave. Requests should be directed to the employee's line manager.

An employee who suffers a family bereavement while on annual leave can convert their annual leave into bereavement leave and take their annual leave at a future date.

Unpaid leave

Unpaid leave on compassionate grounds up to a maximum of 2 weeks may be granted after bereavement. An employee must consult with their line manager before starting unpaid leave.

Return to work

In certain circumstances a full return to work may not be possible for an employee following the death of an immediate relative – for example, when the employee's grief is likely to impact on their ability to perform their role, or where new child care arrangements have to be sourced or responsibility for the care of an elderly parent has transferred to the employee.

In such instances Barry Town Council will allow a phased return to work on a part-time or reduced hours basis where practicable. Alternative duties may also be considered. Any such arrangement would need to be agreed in advance by the line manager, would be subject to an agreed maximum number of days and would be managed in line with Barry Town Council's Flexible working policy.

Employee support

Barry Town Council acknowledges that bereavement leave is intended to support employees in the immediate period around the death of a relative. However, the process of grief, the natural reaction and adjustment to loss and change may take a significant time and will be personal to each individual.

An employee with any concerns about the grieving process impacting on their work performance should discuss this in confidence with their line manager, to ensure that any reasonable adjustments that may be necessary are discussed and put in place and that the employee is supported in their return to the full range of duties and responsibilities that they had prior to the bereavement, or their duties and responsibilities are adjusted (as necessary) with the prior agreement of line manager.

Barry Town Council recognises that the majority of people do not require counselling to cope effectively with their grief. However, for employees wishing to avail themselves of professional help in coming to terms with a significant loss, the organisation has put in place an Employee Assistance Programme which includes

counselling sessions and independent support. This is a confidential service and can be accessed directly through the employee assistance programme CareFirst.

Health and safety

Bereavement can have an impact on concentration, sleep, and decision-making. The health and safety assessment of the workplace will include consideration of the impact of bereavement on employees, their duties and responsibilities, and the context in which they are working, e.g. do they operate heavy machinery. Risk Assessments are carried out for every role.

Any employee who is concerned about their ability to conduct their duties safely in the weeks following a bereavement must discuss this with their line manager.

Barry Town Council reserves the right to request an employee to meet the organisation's chosen medical practitioner before resuming full duties.

Culture and diversity

Barry Town Council recognises that different cultures respond to death in significantly different ways.

Line managers will check whether the employee's religion or culture requires them to observe any particular practices or make special arrangements which would necessitate them being off work at a particular time. Employees should not assume that their line manager is aware of any such requirements and should draw this to their line manager's attention as soon as possible.

Line managers who are unsure of how to respond to a bereaved employee from a different culture should ask the bereaved employee or someone else from their cultural group about what is appropriate.

Date adopted: March 2021

CREATING A COVID SECURE WORKFORCE

GETTING THE CORONAVIRUS VACCINE FOR WORK POLICY

(based on ACAS Guidance and CIPD guidance updated on 02.03.2021)

Encouraging vaccination

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 obliges employers to take reasonable steps to reduce any workplace risks; this duty gives employers justification for encouraging their employees to be vaccinated to protect themselves and everyone else at the workplace. COVID-19 is also a reportable disease under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (known as RIDDOR) which strengthens employers' encouragement that employees should agree to vaccination.

Most people will welcome the opportunity to be vaccinated against COVID-19, but there will be a minority who will be reluctant or refuse to have the vaccine. The reasons could be many and varied, including individuals who can't have the vaccine (for example, on medical grounds), those who can have the vaccine but refuse (for example, on religious or spiritual grounds) and those who can have it but have concerns and are uncertain (for example, due to a fear of vaccinations generally). While it is primarily the role of the government and health service to combat vaccine hesitancy, employers play a vital role in helping promote a persuasive case for COVID-19 vaccinations as they are gatekeepers for the health and safety of employees.

The wisest approach for employers to begin planning for the wider rollout of the vaccine is to encourage staff to be vaccinated and publicise the benefits to improve take up of the vaccine when offered through the NHS Engagement by organisations through good communication will help employees make informed decisions regarding their vaccination. Explaining and encouraging employees with impartial, factual information will keep them informed about the workplace impact and risks of COVID-19.

We will retain copies of any communications produced to encourage vaccination to comply with our health and safety duties.

Adopting a vaccination policy

Developing a policy on vaccination allows us as an employer to outline our stance on vaccination and explain the role of and expectations on managers, HR and employees.

This Vaccination policy is part of the overall COVID-19 secure steps towards maximising the number of employees who can attend work safely. However, it is part of the overall matrix and not a substitute for other measures.

We will follow a voluntary approach when setting out our aims and objectives in a policy. This policy can help explain the benefits of vaccination and how employees can contribute to wider public health by protecting themselves and other employees and wider community by being vaccinated.

The Welsh Government's Vaccination Strategy for Wales is attached to this document at Appendix A.

Risk assessments

Existing COVID-19 risk assessments must be updated to refer to being vaccinated.

We encourage employees to get vaccinated once their age group becomes entitled to it.

Risk assessments must also include alternative safety measures to receiving the vaccine (for example the continued use of PPE).

Other aspects to be explored when carrying out risk assessment include:

- Updating risk assessments to reflect the availability of the vaccine to different age groups.
- Special measures for any clinically extremely vulnerable staff and potential health and safety, discrimination or other claims resulting from vaccination or failure to vaccinate.
- Review of other COVID-19 secure measures and reasonable alternatives to or additions to vaccination such as continued working from home, social distancing, use of PPE, handwashing and so on. (This consideration should include people unable to have the vaccine, those who are pregnant, trying to conceive or those with an allergic response).
- The potential for individual employees to refuse a vaccination and additional measures the employer can put in place if any staff refuse vaccination.

Access to the Vaccine

The NHS will offer everyone the free coronavirus vaccine, starting with those most at risk and the government has set out its policy in terms of tiers and priority groups for vaccination.

Barry Town Council supports staff in getting the coronavirus (COVID-19) vaccine once it's offered to them as per the Welsh Government's priority group milestones set out in the Strategy at Appendix A and copied below for information.

Welsh Government Priority Group Milestones

Milestone 1 – by mid February – cohorts 1 - 4. Subject to supply, our aim is to offer vaccination to all care home residents and staff; frontline health and social care staff; those 70 years of age and over; and clinically extremely vulnerable individuals.

Milestone 2 – by the Spring – priority cohorts 5 – 9. Subject to supply, which becomes more uncertain further into the future, our aim is to offer vaccination to all Phase 1 priority cohorts (i.e. 50+s and clinically vulnerable/at risk).

It is estimated that taken together, these at risk groups represent around **99%** of preventable mortality from Covid-19.

Milestone 3 – by the autumn Our ambition is to offer vaccination to the rest of the eligible adult population according to the further JVCI guidance that will be produced on priorities. We do not yet know supply for this phase, so there is further planning to do on this milestone that will take account of supply and the further JVCI guidance.

Cemetery Staff

At Barry Town Council, our partnership working with the Vale of Glamorgan Council has currently put in place measures for our outdoor workers (Cemetery and Gardening Teams) to receive the vaccine.

There is a chance someone might still get or spread coronavirus if they've had the vaccine. Vaccinations must not replace the government's working safely guidelines or be used to give a false sense of security which circumnavigates the need for rigorous Risk Assessment, even though it can support the mitigation of risks.

For health advice about the vaccine:

In Wales, see coronavirus vaccine information on Public Health Wales <https://phw.nhs.wales/topics/immunisation-and-vaccines/covid-19-vaccination-information/>

Supporting staff to get the vaccine

As an employer we would like to support staff to get the vaccine and we will talk to staff to agree how this will work.

We will discuss:

- the draft policy
- the government's latest vaccine health information
- when staff might be offered the vaccine
- if staff will need time off work
- pay for staff if they need time off work related to the vaccine
- whether any staff might need to get the vaccine to be able to carry out their work

To encourage staff to get the vaccine, we will consider:

- paid time off to attend vaccination appointments
- paying staff their usual rate of pay if they're off sick with vaccine side effects, instead of Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) or Company Sick Pay entitlements
- not counting vaccine-related absences in absence records or towards HR sickness absence 'trigger' points for review

Talking to staff can help us as an employer to:

- agree this Vaccine Policy that's appropriate for both staff and the organisation
- support staff to protect their health
- keep good working relationships
- avoid disputes in the future

As an employer we do feel it is important for staff to be vaccinated, particularly for those working in a setting where there is public contact which can increase risk of transmission. As many office staff are currently working remotely and not required to attend their normal place of work, at the time of writing, this primarily relates to our outdoor teams within the Facilities and Cemeteries Department (March 2021).

We will work with staff and the organisation's recognised trade unions, if required, to discuss what steps to take.

If someone is concerned about being vaccinated

If someone does not want to be vaccinated, we will listen to employee concerns. We will be sensitive towards individual situations and we must keep any concerns confidential. We will listen to any concerns employees have around vaccination with empathy and understanding, as with the many issues that people have been facing due to the pandemic (like illness, fear and anxiety, childcare issues and so on) – we recognise that this is a period that needs very careful and sensitive management.

Line managers will likely be the first port of call for most employee concerns – hopefully the relationship they have with their team will be based on trust and the kind of environment that enables honest conversation. Managers will be briefed on the organisation's vaccination policy and any awareness campaign around vaccinations, possible questions and concerns they could face from employees about the vaccine, and how to deal with them or seek further advice / signpost if needed.

COVID-19 is a reportable disease under RIDDOR and having the vaccination can be a means of protection of other staff or, for example, patients in a health or social care setting. The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 requires the employer to take all reasonably practicable steps to reduce workplace risks to their lowest practicable level. All employers have well established duties of care to protect employees in both contract and tort law. Vaccination requires an individual's informed and voluntary consent and cannot be forced. If employees refuse vaccination, to discharge their health and safety duty, the employer may need to consider other steps that can be taken to protect them. An employer could consider potential disciplinary proceedings for failure to follow a reasonable instruction in certain settings (such as health or care) where an employees' refusal has serious consequences but this approach is not without risk.

Staff should talk to their doctor if they're concerned about their health and getting the vaccine.

Employees who can't have the vaccine

Some individuals may be advised not to have the vaccine due to a medical condition, while others may be allergic or have trypanophobia (a fear of needles). These people could be protected by the disability provisions within the Equality Act 2010 if they refuse the vaccine.

It is possible that some allergic reactions could be protected as a disability but this should not be an issue if employees refuse the vaccine due to an allergy. Following

the initial roll-out, the MHRA has advised that individuals with a history of anaphylaxis to food, an identified drug or vaccine, or an insect sting can still receive any COVID-19 vaccine, as long as they are not known to be allergic to any component of the vaccine. All recipients of the Pfizer BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine should be kept for observation and monitored for a minimum of 15 minutes. All vaccination sites should have equipment for managing an anaphylactic reaction.

For employees with a genuine medical reason that prevents vaccination, employers should take other steps with regards to health and safety, for example reinforcing their COVID-19 secure working environment, facilitating remote working where possible, or considering a different role. In some cases, medical advice may need to be taken with the employee's consent.

Employees who may be hesitant

'Vaccine hesitancy' is the term used to describe either a delay in taking vaccines, or a refusal to have them. It is a complex area with much scientific research considering the reasons behind it and the approaches to take.

Encouraging people with a deeply established anti-vax stance to receive a vaccination is difficult. How best to manage this is a complex aspect of behavioural science and really falls to the state rather than individual employers. However, employers may find some of the overall research helpful in managing employees who are hesitant. Encouragement, engagement and education are key.

Pregnant or breastfeeding employees

Advice for those who are pregnant, breastfeeding or planning to get pregnant has changed since the vaccination programme started. There's no evidence the COVID-19 vaccines are unsafe, but more evidence is needed before pregnant women are routinely offered the vaccine and they have to discuss pros and cons with a healthcare professional before having the vaccination. Women may be able to have the vaccine if they are pregnant and:

- at high risk of getting coronavirus because of where they work
- have a health condition that means they are at high risk of serious complications of coronavirus.

Breastfeeding women can have the COVID-19 vaccine.

Women do not need to avoid pregnancy after vaccination. However, those who avoid vaccination because they are planning a pregnancy may be able to use this to assert sex discrimination if they are then treated less favourably or are later dismissed due to this refusal.

Ethnic minority groups

There has been some evidence that hesitancy about the vaccine has been disproportionately higher in ethnic minority groups. The government's scientific group for emergencies (SAGE) has warned of a risk that vaccine uptake could be lower among certain ethnic minority groups.

The additional effort to identify and encourage ethnic minority patients to take up COVID-19 vaccination is primarily down to the government and the NHS. Employers should not identify employees based on ethnicity and stereotype them based on their ethnicity as this would potentially be discriminatory treatment. We will distribute information equally to all employees. There is an NHS anti-disinformation drive and a national equalities board dealing with the disproportionate impact of the virus on ethnic minority communities.

We will consider any cases of hesitancy individually, offering support and directing to NHS and government advice where possible.

Employees who refuse the vaccine

As stated above, employees may refuse vaccines for many reasons, ranging from concerns about potential allergy, a phobia of needles or misplaced concerns about fertility. There is also misinformation around vaccines including disbelief about the rigorousness of the approval process, which could lead to concerns or refusal.

Whatever reason an employee has for refusing to be vaccinated, we must consider each case individually, taking into account the issues outlined below. Some of the concerns people may have could reflect deeply held views or feelings of apprehension, and these are taking place against a backdrop of heightened levels of fear and anxiety due to the pandemic and the challenging circumstances many are experiencing.

Refusal due to philosophical belief

Some employees have an anti-vaccination belief. They could argue this is a protected philosophical belief under the Equality Act 2010. For example, an employee who believes in natural medicine only could try to establish that this belief is genuinely held and worthy of respect, which could lead to a claim that would need to be evaluated by a tribunal if progressed. As an employer, we could argue that an anti-vax belief is not a philosophical belief protected by the Equality Act, because there is an inadequately coherent belief system behind it. Whilst there are legal subtleties surrounding whether the 'anti-vax' movement would attract Equality Act protection there is at the very least a risk that this type of belief could be protected and lead to compensation.

Similar claims may arise from vegans who may also be protected under the Equality Act if a vaccine includes animal products. The COVID-19 vaccines do not contain any products derived from animals so this will be made clear to employees.

We will discuss someone's concerns and objections and take them seriously, by listening to their reasons for refusing vaccination and, if necessary, exploring other COVID-19 secure ways of working.

Refusal due to religious belief

Some employees may refuse to be vaccinated on the basis of their religious beliefs. Religious beliefs do not have to be shared by everybody within that religion. An anti-

vaccination belief could be held by some people of a certain faith and potentially be protected, even though others of the same faith are in favour of vaccination.

Although pork gelatine is historically used in some vaccines, which could lead to refusal on the grounds of religious belief for people of Muslim, Jewish or Hindu faith, the COVID-19 vaccines being used in the UK do not use pork gelatine. In fact, the UK COVID-19 vaccine rollout is endorsed by the British Islamic Medical Association, Hindu Council UK, and the Board of Deputies of British Jews. Full information on the ingredients of the Oxford-Astrazeneca, Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccines can be found on their websites and patient information leaflets. This information will be used to discuss any objections based on religious beliefs.

Other religious groups with an objection to vaccines include religions that rely on faith healing including some Christian churches. Some Amish may be reluctant to vaccinate.

Options if staff refuse vaccination

If staff refuse vaccination we will seriously consider the employee's reasons and any concerns they may have, and look to implement alternative solutions, where relevant.

This could include continued working from home if possible, social distancing within the workplace, screens, the use of PPE and so on. If possible, we may be willing to consider changing the employee's work responsibilities or role if this could enable them to work remotely or in a safer working environment, though this may not be achievable within such a small organisation.

~~Ultimately, if a return to the workplace could pose a threat to the wider workforce's health and safety, we may consider not allowing unvaccinated employees to return to the workplace, but this would be discussed fully and all avenues exhausted before invoking disciplinary processes for not adhering to Council policy.~~

Resolving an issue about getting the vaccine

If an employee or employer feels there's an issue, it's best to try and resolve it informally. An employee can raise an issue by talking with their:

- employer
- trade union representative, if they're a member of a trade union

If it cannot be resolved informally, staff can raise a problem formally by 'raising a grievance' or the employer could start a disciplinary process. Our Grievance Policy and Disciplinary Policy can be found in the Staff Handbook.

Data Protection (GDPR considerations)

Employers can ask if employees have or have not been vaccinated but should have a good reason for needing to know, for example, the safety of other employees.

We recognise that this information is sensitive personal health data and we will comply with the data protection rules. Medical information that an employee has received a vaccine will constitute special category data and as we choose to keep

these records, we will do so in accordance with GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.

Under this legislation processing of personal data concerning health constitutes a special category and is prohibited, unless vaccination records are necessary and proportionate.

We will ask employees to notify us of their vaccination as this processing of health data is in order to comply with employment law, our health and safety duties and for reasons of public interest in health. Employees who have been vaccinated could show their vaccination record card as proof, but as yet there are no plans for a national vaccine passport or certificate.

The processing of this data is set out below to ensure compliance with key data protection principles including transparency, data minimisation and security requirements. Only necessary data will be kept. The information kept will include basic details e.g. name, Covid-19 vaccination on date, and signed by (for consent); the details will then be entered onto an Excel spreadsheet, password protected and saved in the Personnel Confidential Folder (with limited access) on the electronic internal filing system. We will keep a scanned copy of the form to show employee consent to hold the data within each employee's folder within the Personnel Confidential internal electronic filing system and then destroy any hard copy and dispose of via Confidential Waste.

We will review and update our Employee Privacy Policies to reflect any changes including the provision below:

These types of data are described in the GDPR as “Special categories of data” and require higher levels of protection. We need to have further justification for collecting, storing and using this type of personal data. We may process special categories of personal data in the following circumstances:

- *In limited circumstances, with your explicit written consent.*
- *Where we need to carry out our legal obligations.*
- *Where it is needed in the public interest, such as for equal opportunities monitoring or in relation to our pension scheme.*
- *Where it is needed to assess your working capacity on health grounds, subject to appropriate confidentiality safeguards.*

Less commonly, we may process this type of personal data where it is needed in relation to legal claims or where it is needed to protect your interests (or someone else's interests) and you are not capable of giving your consent, or where you have already made the information public.

Barry Town Council

Workplace Mental Wellbeing Strategy

Policy position

Barry Town Council is committed to promoting a healthy and supportive working environment, and to promoting mental and emotional health and wellbeing among staff. Mental health includes our emotional, psychological, and social well-being. It affects how we think, feel, and act. It also helps determine how we handle stress, relate to others, and make choices. Mental health problems and stress can affect anyone at any time. Everyone can contribute to improve mental wellbeing in the workplace, and can therefore help to develop a positive working environment for all employees. Mental wellbeing is about feeling good and functioning well and staff that function well, who are positive, and are well supported, cope better with demands of day to day life. In our Health and Safety Policy, Barry Town Council has already set out its aims to:



Promote the mental wellbeing of all staff by providing information, advice and opportunities for employees to look after their own mental well being



Develop the skills of managers and supervisors to promote mental wellbeing among employees and effectively deal with issues around mental health and stress



Provide support and advice to employees by offering help and advice to staff who experience a mental health problem and supporting staff returning to work after a period of absence.

By creating this standalone **Workplace Mental Wellbeing Strategy**, we are re-emphasising our commitment to good workplace mental health, following best practice and consolidating the tools, resources and actions we have into a single strategic document that evidences our commitment, our policy and our practice.

Legal framework

Laws pertaining to mental health at work include:

- The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974
- The Equality Act 2010
- Employment Rights Act 1996
- Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999

We have a number of policies and procedures in place, which are regularly reviewed and create a supportive framework to ensure that we meet our legislative duties including:

- Health and Safety Policy
- Stress Risk Assessments
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Recruitment and Redundancy Policies
- Sickness Absence Policy
- Flexible Working Policy
- Agile Working Policy
- Anti-Harassment and Bullying Policy
- Disciplinary and Grievance Policies
- Member-Officer protocol
- Line Manager's protocol

Specifically, Barry Town Council's objectives for Workplace Mental Health are to:

1. Develop a supportive culture, develop knowledge and skills to promote mental wellbeing and address factors which may have a negative impact on mental health.

- We will develop a supportive culture to promote mental wellbeing and address factors which may impact on a person's mental health
- Raise staff awareness about mental wellbeing and provide information and advice about protecting and improving mental wellbeing and reducing stigma.
- Provide opportunities, including activities based around the '5 Ways to Wellbeing', for staff to maintain and promote their mental wellbeing
- Develop flexible working arrangements for staff where possible
- Ensure staff are provided with clearly defined job descriptions, objectives and responsibilities. Offer them support, adequate training and resources to do their job, along with opportunities to develop and fully utilise their skills
- Provide opportunities for regular reviews where staff can discuss both their work and personal development needs
- Establish a good two-way communication process and ensure that staff are included in planning, policy development and decisions that affect them or their role
- Arrange a comprehensive induction programme for new employees to ensure they understand their role and the policies and procedures in place within the organisation

- Maintain an Anti- Bullying and Harassment Policy to support the effective management of conflict and ensure the workplace is free from bullying, harassment and discrimination
- Give non-judgemental and proactive support to staff who experience mental health problems

2. Provide help and support for employees experiencing mental health difficulties

- Ensure that individuals with a health problem, including mental health problems, are treated fairly and are not made to feel guilty about their problems
- Encourage staff which are experiencing problems to seek appropriate support
- Arrange a phased return to work for staff that have had a long term sickness absence wherever possible
- Identify suitable alternative roles if viable, in full discussion with the employee, if a return to the same role is not possible
- Treat all matters relating to individual employee and their mental health in the strictest confidence

3. Comply with the Equality Act 2010 by not discriminating against those with mental health problems and ensuring that people are recruited based on their ability to do the job required

- Include positive statements which encourage applications from people who have experienced mental health problems
- Ensure that all staff involved in the recruitment and selection process are briefed on the Equality Act 2010 and are trained in appropriate interview skills
- Give all managers, team leaders and supervisors information and training about recognising and supporting those with mental health problems

4. Acknowledge that workplace stress is a health and safety issue

- Carry out risk assessments of an individual's role, to include factors that may cause stress at work
- Put in place appropriate measures that will reduce or eliminate the causes of work related stress
- For those that are managing or supervising staff, provide training on communication, health and safety, mental health and wellbeing at work, people management and sickness absence management
- Ensure that managers, team leaders and supervisors are given the resources they need to implement the organisation's agreed Workplace Mental Wellbeing policy
- Develop a system where staff can raise concerns about work related issues

Reviewing our progress

The commitments and objectives set out above were first made in 2016 and now five years on, with the ever increasing mental health impact of the Covid-19 Coronavirus Pandemic of 2020-21, it is timely to assess how well we are doing as a Council on achieving our objectives of creating positive workplace mental wellbeing. Our progress will be formally reviewed every two years and we will look to introduce a mental health audit of the workforce within our Staff Wellbeing Survey.

Renewing our Commitment

The Mental Health at Work Commitment is a set of actions, organised into six standards, that any organisation can follow to improve and support the mental health of their people. Barry Town Council has signed up to this Mental Health Commitment and by developing this Workplace Mental Wellbeing Strategy, the Council wishes to ensure that workplace mental wellbeing is strategically embedded throughout the organisation, linked with other policies and procedures and championed by its leaders and employees.

Who is responsible?

Everyone in our organisation is responsible for putting this plan into action.

Chief Officer (Town Clerk): will take responsibility for providing advice and support to managers and employees as the organisation's HR lead. They will lead on reviewing employee wellbeing and monitoring sickness absence across the organisation, a function which will be shared with the Administrative Team.

Council Leaders and the Personnel Committee: will play a key role in creating change by ensuring reliable processes, checks and action plans are in place which are regularly monitored.

Line managers: will take responsibility for assessing their teams' mental health. They can do this through regular team meetings, mental health audits and regular one-to-ones. Managers should seek and take any appropriate action from regular feedback on their approach.

Employees: are responsible for accessing support when they need it and raising any concerns with their line manager. All employees, irrespective of their seniority in the organisation, should also try to have a healthy work/life balance

Setting the context for mental health

The Stevenson / Farmer review of mental health and employers was commissioned by the UK Prime Minister in January 2017 and conducted by Lord Dennis Stevenson, the mental health campaigner and former chairman of HBOS, and Paul Farmer CBE, the CEO of Mind. Including analysis from Deloitte and a range of interviews and case studies, the report shows that 300,000 people with a long-term mental health problem lose their jobs each year, and around 15% of people at work have symptoms of an existing mental health condition. It looks into how employers can better support everybody currently in employment – including those with mental ill health or poor wellbeing – to remain in, and thrive through, work. The report shows the scale of the current challenge and the cost to employers. It discusses the economy of not improving our response to workplace mental health and the stigma that surrounds it.

Key Findings

- More people with mental health conditions (defined as those affecting how a person feels, thinks and acts) are working than ever before
- around 15% of people at work have a mental health condition
- Annually, 300,000 with a long-term mental health condition lose their job – a much higher rate than for people with a physical health condition such as diabetes or arthritis.
- Failing to support such people is costly to employers, mainly in terms of sickness absence and ‘presenteeism’ (defined as people being at work when they should not be e.g. excessive overtime, not taking due holidays and working when ill).
- Research commissioned from Deloitte puts this cost at £33–£42 billion annually
- Adding in NHS costs and lost tax income leads to a total annual cost to society of £73–£97 billion
- Conversations with more than 200 organisations revealed many ways that employers can better support and promote workers’ mental health
- Investment in tackling mental health can be cost-effective. The Deloitte research gave 23 validated examples and points to an average return of £4.20 on every pound spent.

Stevenson and Farmer concluded the UK could and should be a leading nation in relation to mental health and set out a 4-point action plan, to be delivered by 2027:

- Employees in all types of employment will have ‘good work’, which contributes positively to their mental health, our society and our economy
- Every one of us will have the knowledge, tools and confidence, to understand and look after our own mental health, and the mental health of those around us
- All organisations, whatever their size, will be:

1. Equipped with the awareness and tools to not only address but also prevent mental ill-health caused or worsened by work.
2. Equipped to support individuals with a mental health condition to thrive, from recruitment and throughout the organisation.
3. Aware of how to get access to timely help to reduce sickness absence caused by mental ill-health
4. We dramatically reduce the proportion of people with a long-term mental health condition who leave employment each year and ensure that all, who can, benefit from the positive impacts of good work.

Mental Health Core Standards

The review proposed a set of “mental health core standards” – a framework for a set of actions which all organisations in the country are capable of implementing quickly. There is also a set of more ambitious “enhanced” standards, building on the core standards, for employers who can do more to lead the way or who are larger.

The **Thriving at Work Six Core Standards** that every organisation should adopt include:

1. Produce, implement and communicate a mental health at work plan that encourages and promotes good mental health of all staff and an open organisational culture
2. Develop mental health awareness among employees by making information, tools and support accessible
3. Encourage open conversations about mental health and the support available when employees are struggling, during the recruitment process and at regular intervals throughout employment, with appropriate workplace adjustments offered to employees who require them
4. Provide your employees with good working conditions and ensure they have a healthy work/life balance and opportunities for development
5. Promote effective people management to ensure all employees have a regular conversation about their health and wellbeing with their line manager, supervisor or organisational leader and train and support line managers in effective management practices
6. Routinely monitor employee mental health and wellbeing by understanding available data, talking to employees, and understanding risk factors

ACAS Framework for Positive Mental Health at Work

Employers, managers and individuals all have a part to play in working towards a shared goal of positive wellbeing and productive workplaces. Based on detailed research and experience from working with thousands of organisations, ACAS has produced a simple framework to show the contribution that each can make, so that

- employers are visibly committed to positive mental health;
- individuals are self-aware and ask for help when needed
- managers are informed and open to conversations with their staff



Barry Town Council will ensure that its Senior managers receive ACAS training to understand this framework and can put it into practice for a positive mental health in the workplace.

The Impact of Covid-19 and mitigating against a possible Mental Health Pandemic

The Covid-19 pandemic has seen an increasing number of people reporting mental health issues at work. All the key workforce studies in the UK and internationally report that employees are struggling significantly more with anxiety and mood. Trauma symptoms are also being reported with those working in frontline healthcare roles. Constant negative news alerts, reduced social interaction and financial worries are among the key drivers of heightened anxiety and low mood. However, this impact isn't being felt equally by everyone. There has been an increase in reported mental health issues among those working from home, especially parents. The stressful balance of full-time work – while also acting as teacher and childminder – is seeing working parents endure longer days and minimal downtime.

It has been reported that other groups being disproportionately affected include those living with low resources, ethnic minority groups, men and millennials. Existing inequalities have made the mental health of ethnic minority groups worse during the pandemic, according to research from the British Medical Journal, which found that quarantine constraints made access and engagement with support more difficult.

The heightened mental health issues at work can impact detrimentally on motivation, performance and absenteeism which comes at a high cost for organisations. Undoubtedly, we are only beginning to see a small percentage of the impact. Many experts are convinced that a mental health pandemic in the workplace is on its way (alongside many other groups of our population) and that it is the time to prepare for this, to adapt a preventative approach, rather than a reactive one.

The first priority for our organisation and our managers should therefore be to communicate the support available. It is also important to encourage regular communication between teams which should encourage non-work related informal video meetings / chats to nurture relationships between colleagues. It is also vital that managers maintain regular dialogue with their team.

Importantly, there needs to be a shift in language when discussing mental health in the workplace. Conversations are often based on a medicalised idea of mental health, focusing on illness, diagnosis and conditions. This fuels the outdated idea that anyone experiencing emotional distress is 'unwell' and needs to be 'treated', which inhibits supportive conversations taking place. Instead, language should reflect the fact we all have mental health that can change at any time depending on life's circumstances. Mental health is a lot more than the absence of mental ill-health.

Workplace triggers of poor mental health

It is recognised that typical workplace triggers for stress and mental health problems include:

- long hours and no breaks
- unrealistic expectations or deadlines
- overly pressurised working environments
- unmanageable workloads or lack of control over work
- inability to use annual leave
- a poor physical working environment
- high-risk roles
- lone working
- poor relationships with managers
- poor relationships with colleagues
- poor internal communication
- poor managerial support
- job insecurity or poorly managed change
- bullying
- financial worries.

Monitoring mental health and wellbeing

Noting these workplace triggers of poor mental health, the Council wishes to create a working environment which promotes positive mental health and supports its staff mentally, emotionally and physically through the working environment.

In order to monitor our staff's mental health and wellbeing we need to develop a clearer picture of the mental health of our organisation to help us understand what affects staff's mental wellbeing and how well we are supporting them. We can also assess whether our approach is effective and plan further improvements.

Using different types of data

Existing levels of mental ill-health

It is important to consider the quantity and quality of information we have regarding existing levels and incidences of mental health problems within our organisation. We currently do not know how many of your staff have a mental health problem. A question in a staff survey can be a good way of capturing this data (anonymously) so that we can then reinforce the message that our organisation will respond proactively and reassure that their personal information will be kept confidential.

Team mental health audits

It is important managers regularly take stock of the mental health of their staff, the types of pressures they're under and how to alleviate them. A useful way of doing this is to carry out a regular mental health audit which allows staff to share their challenges and work together to identify solutions if they feel comfortable to do so.

Staff surveys

We will use our staff survey as a tool to capture information about wellbeing and integrate mental health into the existing survey to generate this information. We can ask questions such as:

- How confident do you feel in supporting those you line manage with mental wellbeing at work?
- Do you feel you have been given sufficient information and guidance from your organisation on how to support those you line manage that experience mental ill health?
- Are you aware of any support your organisation offers to staff on health and well-being?
- Do you feel supported by your line manager?
- Do you feel that your organisation encourages staff to talk openly about mental health?

HR data

HR data can also be an important source of information on wellbeing. Sources we can use could include absenteeism data, staff turnover and exit interviews. How often staff take sickness absence, and the reasons they give for it, can provide some useful clues about mental health. However, don't make assumptions without getting the whole picture. Just because staff don't give mental health problems as the reason for being absent doesn't mean they don't exist. It could be that people just don't feel comfortable sharing problems because of the reaction they'll get.

Increased employee confidence to disclose their mental health also helps to ensure reliability in HR data.

Staff focus groups

We will consider facilitating an informal discussion to gain feedback on what is working well and what improvements could be made, creating space for employees to be involved especially with the decisions that affect them. We will communicate information regularly in a transparent way and create methods for staff to suggest ideas and improvements

Wellbeing initiatives

We organise an annual staff away day / team building day that brings people together and facilitates social networks as well as organising a Christmas meal / party where staff can relax in a social setting.

Keeping you well – quick reference guide for staff

There are a range of options, resources and services which can support you with your mental health; this short overview may help you to choose which support is best for you.

INTERNAL SUPPORT	EXTERNAL SUPPORT
<p>Talk to your Line Manager who will have been trained to support your mental health</p>	<p>Employee Assistance Programme CareFirst – for free CONFIDENTIAL telephone counselling 24 / 7 contact 0800 174 319</p>
<p>Talk to your colleagues – think about setting up a peer support group (your manager can help with this)</p> <p>We can also consider setting up formal or informal buddying systems for people to have the opportunity to talk to someone other than their managers</p>	<p>Online health and wellbeing service Care First Lifestyle covers You at Home, At Work, Your Health and FAQs www.carefirst-lifestyle.co.uk Username: vog01s and password: Glamorgan</p> <p>Care First Zest is an interactive website and mobile app accessed via www.welshframework-zest.co.uk orgcode: WF1</p>
<p>We will shortly be training Mental health first aiders who will be our Mental Health Champions and you can talk to them if you are struggling and don't wish to talk to your manager</p>	<p>Occupational Health – Your line manager can refer to you our chosen Occupation Health provider and this will be discussed with you</p>
<p>We can offer you time of for medical appointments, a phased return to work after long term absence and if you are suffering from workplace stress, we will undertake a stress management risk assessment</p>	<p>Silver Cloud - you can self-refer for free CBT online https://www.silvercloudhealth.com/uk</p>
<p>With your consent, we can ask for information from your GP or other medical professional to help you effectively manage your mental health in the workplace</p>	<p>_Ablefutures can offer support for mental health and you can call their free helpline on 0800 321 3137 or go online https://able-futures.co.uk/</p>
	<p>Mind have a host of resources for looking after your mental health and work – visit https://www.mentalhealthatwork.org.uk/</p>
	<p>For webinars and podcasts on a range of topics visit https://phw.nhs.wales/services-and-teams/healthy-working-wales/covid-19-information-and-advice-to-support-employers-and-employees/webinar-podcasts/</p>

How will Barry Town Council effectively implement the Thriving At Work mental health standards in the workplace?



As an employer we recognise that mental and physical health and wellbeing are key to a happy and health workforce; we will lead and embed a wellbeing strategy, reduce stigma, tackle the causes of workplace stress and understand the impact personal issues can have on mental wellbeing



We will celebrate key dates in the mental health calendar and raise wider awareness through social media campaigns and marketing



We will embed mental health in induction and training, ensuring that all staff receive mental health and resilience awareness and that our managers are trained to manage mental health in the workplace



We will recruit Mental Health Champions and train Mental Health First Aiders across the organisation



We will ensure time and space to talk, as teams, on a one to one basis with your manager, or via external counselling provision



We will use Wellness Action Plans with staff to identify triggers for poor mental health and ways in which staff can be best supported.



We will ensure that staff can access confidential and free counselling through the Employee Assistance Programme, CareFirst



We will ensure that line Managers have the tools, resources, training and toolkits to support staff through policies and processes and we will signpost staff to further useful information and resource points

Other resources

ACAS

For Guidance on mental health, including the ACAS framework for employers, employees and line managers; promoting positive mental health at work; dealing with stress; managing staff experiencing mental ill health; and workplace anxiety and work-related anxiety. Includes case studies. <http://www.acas.org.uk/mentalhealth>

CIPD

For an overview of mental health in the workplace focusing on supporting employees' mental health, understanding the links between work, health and well-being, and a line manager toolkit see <https://www.cipdwales.co.uk>

Every Mind Matters Looking after your mental health - Having good mental health helps us relax more, achieve more and enjoy our lives more. We have expert advice and practical tips to help you look after your mental health and wellbeing.

<https://www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/>

Fit for Work

Free, expert and impartial advice for employers and employees to help those who are in work with health conditions or off sick. Advice hub, Helpline (on 0800 032 6235 (English) or 0800 032 6233 (Cymraeg)) and webchat available.

<http://fitforwork.org>

Good Day at Work (Robertson Cooper)

A wellbeing resources hub founded by Professor Cary Cooper and Robertson Cooper. Blog, videos, downloads, podcasts and more.

<https://www.robertsoncooper.com/gooddayatwork>

Health and Safety Executive (HSE)

Guidance on stress at work including how to manage it; the HSE's Management Standards; a workbook; risk assessments; case studies; an infographic poster.

<http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress>

Mental Health Foundation

Various booklets including how to support good mental health at work.

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/publications/how-support-mental-health-work>

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) Wales

Includes film clips; infographics; a workplace wellbeing strategic toolkit; tips for measuring the impact of your wellbeing strategy and initiatives <https://mhfawales.org/>

Mind

Includes A-Z information on mental health topics; webinars; a guide for small businesses; guidance on how to take stock of mental health in your workplace; and guidance on how to promote wellbeing and tackle the causes of work-related mental health problems. Also offers an Influence and Participation Toolkit for anyone whose organisation wants to engage with people with mental health problems in a meaningful way. <https://www.mind.org.uk>

Mindful Employer

Benefits and principles of being a Mindful Employer, including information on access to low- cost specialist guidance in managing workplace mental health

<http://www.mindfulemployer.net/business>

Mind & Heads Together *Mental Health at Work* gateway to documents, guides, tips, videos, courses, podcasts, templates and information from organisations across the UK. <https://www.mentalhealthatwork.org.uk>

Time to Change

Includes posters; leaflets; campaigning at work materials. Sign the Employer Pledge to demonstrate your commitment to change how we think and act about mental health in the workplace

<https://www.time-to-change.org.uk>