



## Community and Wellbeing committee minutes

### Minutes

From the committee meeting at 7pm on Tuesday 16 July 2024

At St. Margaret's Hall, Bradford on Avon

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### Decision making

The **decisions** made by the committee at this meeting are at minutes [10](#), [11](#), [13](#) & [18](#).

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### Present

Councillors:

- Kate Bessant
- Alison Potter
- Katie Vigar

Town Council Officers:

- Ian Brown - Chief Executive & Town Clerk
- George Tomlinson – Engagement Officer
- Matthew McLaughlin – Communications Officer

Meeting clerk:

- Sarah Howe – Committee Clerk
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### Apologies

From Councillors unable to attend the meeting:

- Sam Blackwell
  - Jennie Parker
  - Jack Vittles (Vice-Chair)
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10. Election of Chair of the Committee

Nominations for Chair were sought by Councillor Katie Vigar

Councillor Jennie Parker was Proposed by Councillor Vigar, Seconded by Councillor Bessant and with all in favour it was **resolved** that Councillor Jennie Parker was elected as Chair of the Community and Wellbeing committee for 2024-25.

11. Election of Vice Chair of the Committee

Nominations for Vice-Chair were sought by Councillor Katie Vigar

Councillor Katie Vigar was nominated by Councillor Potter, and Seconded by Councillor Bessant and with all in favour it was **resolved** that Councillor Katie Vigar was elected as Vice-Chair of the Community and Wellbeing committee for 2024-25. Councillor Vigar therefore chaired the meeting in Councillor Parker's absence.

12. Declarations of interest

None

13. Minutes of the previous meeting

Proposed by Councillor Potter

Seconded by Councillor Bessant

And with all in favour it was **resolved**: that the Minutes of the last committee meeting held on 16 April 2024 be accepted as a true record of the meeting.

14. Matters arising

None.

15. Barnardo's at the Youth and Community Centre

Meryl Hardiman, employed for 15 years by Barnardo's, and retiring soon, came to the meeting to give a short presentation to councillors. Barnardo's have a Wiltshire Council contract to provide clubs across Wiltshire for those children identified as in need. Meryl runs 2 of their clubs including the Bradford on Avon club at the Youth and Community Centre. Meryl described the space as 'fantastic' for the club and those children that attend. The children respond to the venue in such a positive way and like nothing else she has seen across Wiltshire. She went on to say 'possibly it's the high ceilings, where the centre it is



situated, availability of outside space, presence of the sports hall (an unusual facility for a youth and community centre), orientation of the space so everyone has a good view of everything without a sense of claustrophobia', but the Barnardo's staff, children themselves (including those with a non-verbal autistic diagnosis, based on behaviour and how happy they are), parents and Meryl all feel the space offers something very special. Meryl gave a couple of examples:

- 1) Non-verbal autistic children can often arrive at centres and experience meltdowns, unable to cope with change, noise, other individuals, however at the BoA community centre those children are able to settle quickly and enjoy the club. Parents have even reported that the BoA club is the only activity in their timetable that they are excited to attend. Parents have also been thrilled to see their children with limited mobility trying new things such as learning to ride a disability trike around the sport hall, which has led to been able to use a trike outside to enjoy the countryside and feel the benefit of exercise.
- 2) The club has visits from the disability nurses who come along to monitor progress of some children who live in residential facilities e.g. those who are profoundly deaf. The parents only have their child home in the holidays. In some cases the behaviour at home is very testing. The disability nurses come along to the clubs to try and witness the behaviours to subsequently assist the parents however again at the BoA club one of the nurses reported the club had a lovely vibe and the testing behaviours were largely absent and some of the children are so chilled out they are almost unrecognisable.

Meryl is convinced it is something to do with the building and alongside the features mentioned previously, the fact that it's not too precious a space and not too pristine so there is no risk of messing anything up. Upon Meryl's retirement a lovely team of staff and dedicated volunteers will take over to carry on the club's good work. Some of the volunteers have also taken so much from helping out that they have developed the confidence to train up as teachers and doctors. Meryl also wished to thank the council for taking over the building (when some clubs around the county have lost the spaces they occupied) and that it continues to be available to Barnardo's. Meryl also thanked those that have been running the centre for all their support over the years including Roger, who has been extremely helpful and always texts ahead of the sessions to check the club has everything it needs.



Councillor Vigar thanked Meryl for coming and wished her well in her retirement. She also said that listening to Meryl was one of the reasons it so fantastic to be a councillor, to hear such lovely testimonies of a council run space and the work that such groups as Barnardo's do. She hopes the impending 'spruce up' will not make any difference to those with disabilities and that they continue to feel relaxed, the space does need to be 'something for everyone'. Meryl confirmed that about 30 children use the BoA centre with 12-14 in any one session with some children coming quite a distance to attend. The club meets one Saturday a month and on a Wednesday in school holidays. Councillor Bessant also thanked Meryl for speaking and again reiterated that it is wonderful that some groups value the centre as it is and that if there was to be any refurbishment, Barnardo's should be consulted to ensure the space continues to work for them.

16. Policing in Bradford on Avon

The Vice-Chair read out an update supplied by Sergeant Gemma Rutter. The update has been summarised at Appendix B.

Sergeant Rutter hopes to attend future meetings.

17. Agenda item 10 – Chair's Update

The Vice-Chair referred to the update as supplied with the agenda to investigate whether there is support for a community minibus. Councillor Parker thinks there might be interest from some of the senior citizens groups in town as well as residents from some of the outlying villages. Councillor Vigar also wondered if the resident's panel could include the topic in the next round of questions.

Councillor Vigar also thanked everyone involved in the BoA Join In! day and confirmed that work on the Poulton Park play area has begun.

18. Agenda item 11 – Grant's panel

The committee considered the recommendations from the latest grants panel meeting.

Proposed by Councillor Bessant

Seconded by Councillor Potter

And with all in favour it was **resolved** to approve the recommendations of the grants panel of the 8 July 2024. These included the following:

- Alzheimer's Support Communi-Tea cost of St Margaret's Hall hire



- Wiltshire Young Musicians £1434 to support the cost of tutors
- Carers Support Wiltshire £390 for Carers Café refreshments costs

19. Agenda item 12 – Safeguarding at the Youth and Community Centre

The Community and Engagement Officer outlined the safeguarding issue with West Wilts Radio broadcasting from the community centre's music room/studio at the same time as BoA Youth sessions, Barnardo's school holiday sessions and any other child-centred activities. The radio can have regular staff, contributors and guests coming and going throughout their shows and at other times and the youth groups invariably need to have the front door locked for safeguarding reasons.

A trial is underway with Barnardo's sessions where there will be a sign on the door with a phone number for radio staff to call to gain access to the building. The Radio and Barnardo's have also exchanged a schedule of dates, so everyone's movements have been communicated. A slightly more informal arrangement is in place with BoA Youth, radio guests wait outside and are escorted in by radio staff who are known to BoA Youth staff.

Other adults such as town council staff will also be notified that access is controlled when children's groups are present in the building.

Councillor Vigar thanks those involved for considering the issue carefully and also thanked the Engagement Officer for organising the 'spruce up' day at the community centre in late July.

20. Agenda item 13 – Resident's Panel

The Communications Officer introduced the item as supplied with the agenda. He confirmed that the responses for specific topics such as the cemetery and Christmas lights will be fed back to the relevant town council officers. There was also a discussion around the drop off in response rate. It was agreed to email all the responders to see if anyone would like to be rotated off the panel and if so those on the waiting list (to take part) approached.

21. Agenda item 14 – BoA Youth

The Community and Engagement Officer introduced the item as supplied with the agenda. The Tuesday evening group is very popular, open to 8–



12-year-olds, and in fact there are weeks when the staff are anxious they may have to turn kids away. The teenage drop-in sessions are less popular averaging at around 10 or so per week. Councillor Bessant suggested perhaps members of the younger group will migrate up to the teenage group and bolster numbers in the fullness of time.

The Summer Holiday Club programme has gone live for about a week. Most activities are around half booked up. Those eligible for free school meals were given advanced notice consequently some partially and fully funded places have been taken up however some are still available.

22. Next meeting

The next committee meeting is arranged for Tuesday 8 October 2024.

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**End of the meeting**

The meeting finished at 7.32pm

Appendix A: Comments and Questions from the Public and Councillors

There was 1 members of the public present. There were no questions from members of the public or councillors.



## Appendix B: Police Update from Sgt Gemma Rutter

The (policing) team has had a couple of priorities to focus on in town:

- A spike in shop lifting offences in Sainsburys. There is no instore security guard anymore. The team are planning to park up in the area whilst carrying out routine patrols, instore engagement and visibility in the carpark. The team also plans to liaise with Bath Neighbourhood Policing Team, as it is believed many offenders come across from Avon and Somerset, to share intelligence and identify offenders.
- Following on from the criminal damage in Poulton Park, PC Miller is focusing on reducing the likelihood of repeat offending, liaising with youth partnerships and the town council. The installation of CCTV would be beneficial although understandably there are cost implications. Anti-social behaviour concerns have also been raised in the town centre and train station area. A number of youths have been spoken to with reports to social services, schools and parents. (A weapon/drug sweep was also carried out and fortunately nothing came to light.)

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