

**COUNCIL - WEDNESDAY, 24 SEPTEMBER 2025**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL HELD HYBRID IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER - CIVIC OFFICES, ANGEL STREET, BRIDGEND, CF31 4WB ON WEDNESDAY, 24 SEPTEMBER 2025 AT 16:00**

**Present**

Councillor HJ David – Chairperson

H T Bennett  
O Clatworthy  
S Easterbrook  
RM Granville  
M Jones  
JC Spanswick  
HM Williams  
JP Blundell

A R Berrow  
RJ Collins  
N Farr  
GC Haines  
W J Kendall  
I M Spiller  
I Williams  
D Harrison

E L P Caparros  
C Davies  
J Gebbie  
M L Hughes  
J Llewellyn-Hopkins  
T Thomas  
MJ Williams  
D Hughes

N Clarke  
P Davies  
W R Goode  
M R John  
J E Pratt  
AJ Williams  
E D Winstanley

**Present Virtually**

S Aspey  
C L C Davies  
RM James  
A Wathan

F D Bletsoe  
M J Evans  
M Lewis

S J Bletsoe  
P Ford  
R J Smith

P Jenkins  
S J Griffiths  
A Ulberini-Williams

**Officers:**

Mark Galvin  
Adam Provoost  
Lindsay Harvey  
Carys Lord  
Claire Marchant  
Jake Morgan  
Janine Nightingale  
Kelly Watson

Senior Democratic Services Officer - Committees  
Strategic Planning Policy Team Leader  
Corporate Director - Education, Early Years & Young People  
Chief Officer - Finance, Housing & Change  
Corporate Director - Social Services and Wellbeing  
Chief Executive  
Corporate Director - Communities  
Chief Officer - Legal & Regulatory Services, HR & Corporate Policy

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Louis Pannell  
Rachel Keepins  
Michael Pitman

Principal Strategic Planning Policy Officer  
Democratic Services Manager  
Democratic Services Officer - Technical

**181. Apologies for Absence**

Decision Made	Apologies for absence were received from Councillors T Wood, J Tildesley, R Penhale-Thomas, P Jenkins, R Williams, H Griffiths and G Walter.
Date Decision Made	24 September 2025

**182. Declarations of Interest**

Decision Made	<p>The following declarations of interest were received:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Cllr M James declared a personal interest in agenda items 7 and 8, as his wife chairs the Fostering Panel.</li><li>• Cllr E Winstanley declared a personal interest in agenda item 8, as her employer AWEN Cultural Trust is mentioned in the report, as well as her support of the Feel Good for Life Programme run by HALO.</li><li>• Cllr H Bennett declared a personal interest in agenda item 8, as her employing organisation BAVO is noted in the report.</li><li>• Cllr J Spanswick declared a personal interest in agenda item 11, as a trustee of Peace for Nature.</li></ul>
Date Decision Made	24 September 2025

**183. Approval of Minutes**

Decision Made	<u>RESOLVED:</u> That the minutes of a meeting of Council dated 23 July 2025, be approved as a true and accurate record.
Date Decision Made	24 September 2025

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**184. Presentation to Council by the Police and Crime Commissioner (South Wales)**

Decision Made	<p>The Chief Executive submitted a report that introduced Police and Crime Commissioner E Wools and her colleagues to Council to give a power point presentation entitled, 'Together for a Safe, Just and Inclusive South Wales.</p> <p>She advised that the Police Crime and Justice Plan focused on delivering effective policing, fostering community cohesion and ensuring transparency and accountability in the manner by which the police tackled crime.</p> <p>The presentation covered five main themes, as follows:-</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Visible connected and community focused policing;</li><li>2. Crime prevention and violence;</li><li>3. Protecting vulnerable people and communities, including on-line;</li><li>4. Delivering justice for victims and reducing re-offending, and</li><li>5. Policing that is 'Fit for the Future'.</li></ol> <p>Following the presentation, members made a number of points and raised a certain issues, including:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What are the police doing to combat disinformation, mysogony, transphobia, racism and homophobia on-line which was often disguised at being innocuous content targeting the younger generation, as well as encouraging people to report this;</li><li>• The deployment of an extra 70 Officers to the South Wales region, were these PCSO's of Police Officers, or a combination of both;</li><li>• Could the South Wales Police consider making more use of the provision of the Council's CCTV facilities and perhaps supplement this important function with a contribution of funding or further funding, to assist further with the prevention of crime and disorder within the County Borough;</li><li>• There was a problem with albeit low level but persistent anti-social behaviour often taking place in social rented property and sometimes a reluctance for those who are victims of this, reporting it to the Police (for fear of further repercussions). There needed to be a clear channel of communication whereby tenants could report such incidents, ie to the Community Safety Partnership (CSP), the</li></ul>
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	<p>South Wales Police or Registered Social Landlord (RSL's). How are the Police supporting victims and improving communications with the CSP and RSL's to effectively respond to such incidents;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• South Wales Police need to possibly look further at adequately addressing problems associated with the increase in communities of e:bikes and e:scooters; and</li><li>• In terms of attendance times to incidents of emergency, what plans are in place to improve the speed of these visits by the police.</li></ul> <p>The Leader concluded debate on this item, by thanking the South Wales Police representatives for their attendance at today's meeting and sharing some important information with Council as outlined in their presentation. He gave his personal commitment of continued strong partnership working between BCBC and the police. He also complimented in particular, community sector policing, which he felt was very important in conveying key information to residents of any particular community.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED:</u> That the report of the Chief Executive and the presentation by the Police and Crime Commissioner be noted.</p>
Date Decision Made	24 September 2025

**185. To receive announcements from:**

Decision Made	Announcements were received from the following dignitaries (no decisions required or made):- <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Mayor;</li><li>• Chief Executive</li></ul>
Date Decision Made	24 September 2025

**186. To receive announcements by the Leader**

Decision Made	Announcements were received from the Leader (no decisions required or made).
Date Decision Made	24 September 2025

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**187. Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Improvement Check of Childrens and Family Services June 2025**

Decision Made	<p>The Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing submitted a report, the purpose of which, was to present to Council the Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Improvement Check (IC) findings report and to request that the Council considers the report and scrutinises the associated Action Plan.</p> <p>The report advised that Care Inspectorate Wales (CIW) Improvement Check (IC) visited Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) children and family services in June 2025. The improvement check focused on understanding how well the Council had progressed recommendations for improvement set out in a Performance Evaluation Inspection and Improvement Check undertaken in May and December 2022 and a CIW led Joint Inspection of Child Protection Arrangements (JICPA) undertaken in June 2023.</p> <p>The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member, Social Services, Health and Wellbeing advised that the IC had identified that BCBC leaders had consistently prioritised children and family services since the above, to support sustained and timely improvements. This, in turn, had significantly strengthened the quality and delivery of the authority's social services functions.</p> <p>The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member, Social Services, Health and Wellbeing and Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing then gave a joint power point presentation, highlighting the key areas of the IC and the Action Plan introduced as result of this.</p> <p>Back in 2022 the CIW had made 21 recommendations and since then improvements had been made in respect of all of these recommendations, which were the subject of continuous monitoring in order to improve the service further. As a result of the progress that had been made in the last 3 years, a number of new Strategies had been introduced, for example the 3-year strategic plan entitled, "Think Family".</p> <p>86% of the workforce had confirmed that they would now recommend other potential employees to come and work for Childrens and Family Services, which maybe was not the case back in 2022.</p> <p>Following a restructure in 2023-24, there was a 16% reduction in the total number of children allocated to specialist teams, together with a 48% reduction in child protection allocations.</p>
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	<p>92% of children supported by the Edge of Care services in 2024-25, were successfully prevented from entering the care system.</p> <p>The latest CIW Inspection had revealed that the most significant method of change had been a 'positive practice' and that the Council avenues of leadership, should continue to support this advanced approach to quality and learning assurance, not just in Children's Services but Adult Services also.</p> <p>The CIW inspection also commended the Council's approach to an increase in positive partnership working with its stakeholders, etc.</p> <p>The Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing followed on from the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member, Social Services, Health and Wellbeing by giving some examples of case studies, as a conclusion to the presentation.</p> <p>The Mayor confirmed that he would not invite questions from members on this item, given that it was due to be debated at the Social Services, Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee tomorrow.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED:</u> That Council noted the CIW findings report and associated Action Plan.</p>
Date Decision Made	24 September 2025

**188. Social Services Annual Report 2024-25**

Decision Made	<p>The Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing presented a report, in order to submit the Social Services Annual Report 2024-25 (Appendix one of the report referred), to Council for approval.</p> <p>The Social Services Annual Report 2024-25 was a statutory requirement providing the Council, the people of Bridgend County Borough, regulators and partners with an overview of the effectiveness of Social Services and Wellbeing in the county borough within the last 12 months.</p> <p>The report reflected upon 2024-25, highlighting achievements and challenges whilst also outlining priorities for 2025-26. The Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing confirmed that new report guidance has been introduced for the reporting year, with performance being assessed across the 4 areas of</p>
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	<p>People, Prevention, Partnership and Integration and Well-being, with each area focusing on 2 quality standards.</p> <p>As well as the performance assessment section of the report, it also included a Director's summary, information on leadership, workforce, inspections and reviews and complaints and representations.</p> <p>The report highlighted some major risks and financial resources, noting the key challenges and pressures the Directorate and the Council faces in fulfilling its statutory social services and wellbeing duties for the people of the County Borough.</p> <p>The Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing gave a resume of the report, highlighting some key information from the detail that was contained therein and she also expanded upon some of the more important detail that was included within the attached appendix.</p> <p>She specifically made reference to the rising demands faced by Adult and Children's Services, however, notwithstanding these, she was pleased to confirm that the Annual Report reflected some significant improvement in both these areas of work.</p> <p>Members commended the report and the Chairperson of the Social Services, Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee congratulated the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member, Social Services, Health and Wellbeing for the improvements highlighted in the report and the innovative way of working to reach these, which were significant. She added that the methods used to achieve this could be set as an example of 'best practice' and used across other service areas within BCBC.</p> <p>She added that the Draft Annual Report 2024-25 had been the subject of scrutiny at the Social Services, Health and Wellbeing Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 11 September 2025 and whilst the Committee were very pleased with the improvements that had been made, caution was raised in relation to the Authority's reliance on grant funding from the likes of Welsh Government etc, which often comes through very late in the financial year which the Committee had some concerns over. If some of this was not forthcoming, then obviously it could compromise financially speaking, the further progress of the service going into the following financial year. She therefore urged Councillors to raise this issue with Welsh Government moving forward.</p> <p>A member stressed the need to prioritise the wellbeing of staff in Children's and Adult Services as these were work pressure areas and to continue the progress made to date, in the positiveness of recruitment and retention of staff.</p>
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	<p>A member also referred to page 77 of the report where reference was made to the number of people reaching out for the Council's help for services, where there revealed that there was a 24% increase in contacts for Children and Family Services. He made the point that this equated in terms of actual numbers to an extra 14,828 contacts, which was a significant increase to that of previously.</p> <p>The Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member, Social Services, Health and Wellbeing finally extended thanks to the Corporate Director – Social Services and Wellbeing and her staff for the report and the very improved picture that this reflected in the key service areas. She added that a few local authorities in Wales were now committing more of their budget to Social Services than they were to Education.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED:</u> That Council approved the 2024-25 Director of Social Services Annual Report.</p>
Date Decision Made	24 September 2025

#### **189. Retail and Commercial Development Supplementary Planning Guidance**

Decision Made	<p>Following approval by Cabinet at its meeting on 22nd July 2025, the Corporate Director – Communities submitted a report, so as to provide Council with an overview of the public consultation exercise that was carried out on the draft Retail and Commercial Development Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) document. The report also sought Council approval to adopt the final form Retail and Commercial Development SPG.</p> <p>Adoption of the SPG would enable effective implementation of the Retail and Commercial Development Policies within the adopted Replacement Local Development Plan, March 2024 (RLDP), the Council's statutory land-use Planning document.</p> <p>A member noted that there had only been two responses received to the 6 week consultation period, and therefore, he asked how confident Officers were that the SPG reflected the views of the business and commercial community and what methods had been used to engage as fully as possible with those who had an interest in the SPG. He also asked what methods of engagement will be used to ensure that further views received are reflected in the SPG, going forward.</p> <p>The Principal Strategic Planning Officer advised that the consultation had involved all key stakeholders, Councillors and planning consultants and other individuals who have submitted planning applications etc.</p>
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	<p>He added that the fact that only two responses had been received to the consultation, did reflect to some degree, that the new SPG proposals had been considered as a positive move by consultees.</p> <p>A members referred to Table 3 in Appendix 1 and asked if some clarification could be shared with Council, on the difference between the category of District Centres and Local Centres.</p> <p>The Principal Strategic Planning Officer confirmed that a District Centre had to include a 'shop' and had more of a range of services and facilities than a Local Centre, but was also smaller than the category of a Town Centre, which was the next level up.</p> <p>Some further questions were posed to the Corporate Director – Communities and the Planning Officer's present at the meeting and these were responded to accordingly.</p> <p><b><u>RESOLVED:</u></b> That Council:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) Noted the contents of this Report and approved the Officer's consultation responses to the representations received following public consultation on the draft Retail and Commercial Development SPG, together with resultant amendments set out in Appendix 2 of the report.</li><li>b) Adopted the final form Retail and Commercial Development SPG (Appendix 1) for immediate application in making development management decisions and in the determination of planning applications along with the adopted RLDP, subject to the provisions of c) below.</li><li>c) Authorised the Corporate Director – Communities and Group Manager – Planning and Development Services to make minor presentational changes, typographical or factual corrections as necessary prior to publication of the adopted Retail and Commercial Development SPG.</li></ul>
Date Decision Made	24 September 2025

**190. Information Reports for Noting**

Decision Made	<b><u>RESOLVED:</u></b> That Council acknowledged the publication of the reports referred to in paragraph 3.1 of this report.
Date Decision Made	24 September 2025

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**191. To receive the following Questions from:**

Decision Made	<p>Councillor Ian Williams to the Cabinet Member - Climate Change &amp; the Environment (response circulated previously to Members).</p> <p>A supplementary question was asked by Councillor Williams which was responded to at the meeting.</p> <p>Councillor Ian Spiller to the Cabinet Member - Regeneration, Economic Development &amp; Housing (response circulated previously to Members).</p> <p>A supplementary question was asked by Councillor Spiller which was responded to at the meeting.</p>
Date Decision Made	24 September 2025

**192. Notice of Motion Proposed by Councillor Tim Thomas**

Decision Made	<p>Arising from some debate on the wording of the Notice of Motion submitted by Cllr Thomas, it was</p> <p><u>RESOLVED:</u></p> <p>That Council agreed to delegate authority to the political group Leaders, stand alone independent members along with Councillor Tim Thomas, to work with Officers and seek legal advice, to finalise the wording of the motion to ensure it is effective and legally sound, within five working days from the date of the meeting.</p> <p>it was further agreed that the wording when agreed, be circulated to all Members, rather than brought back to the October meeting for a vote to avoid delay in the resolution of this motion.</p>
Date Decision Made	24 September 2025

**193. Notice of Motion Proposed by Councillor Jane Gebbie**

Decision Made	<u>RESOLVED:</u>	Members agreed to defer this Notice of Motion to the next meeting of Council dated 22 October 2025.
Date Decision Made	24 September 2025	

**194. Notice of Motion Proposed by Councillor Rhys Goode**

Decision Made	<u>RESOLVED:</u>	Members agreed to defer this Notice of Motion to the next meeting of Council dated 22 October 2025.
Date Decision Made	24 September 2025	

**195. Urgent Items**

Decision Made	There were no urgent items.	
Date Decision Made	24 September 2025	

To observe further debate that took place on the above items, please click this [link](#)

The meeting closed at 19:23.