

Meeting of:	TOWN AND COMMUNITY COUNCIL FORUM
Date of Meeting:	3 DECEMBER 2025
Report Title:	COMMUNICATION BETWEEN BCBC & TOWN & COMMUNITY COUNCILS
Report Owner: Responsible Chief Officer / Cabinet Member	CORPORATE DIRECTOR COMMUNITIES
Responsible Officer:	TOWN & COMMUNITY COUNCIL LIASON OFFICER
Policy Framework and Procedure Rules:	THERE IS NO EFFECT UPON THE POLICY FRAMEWORK AND PROCEDURE RULES.
Executive Summary:	This report is to inform the Town and Community Council Forum of the work undertaken since the engagement of the Town & Community Council Liaison Officer and for the Forum to note and adopt the Communications Protocol to ensure standardised and effective future communication between Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) and Town and Community Councils (T&CCs).

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to inform the Town and Community Council (T&CC) Forum of the progress achieved to date since the engagement of the Town & Community Council Liaison Officer (T&CCLO) and identifies some of the challenges encountered. Approval is sought from the T&CC Forum for the adoption of the Communications Protocol (**Appendix 1**), which sets out how this will be undertaken and has been developed in conjunction with a working group, including representatives from three T&CCs, Democratic Services and the T&CCLO. The Communications Protocol works in conjunction with the T&CC Charter, which is also currently being reviewed by the working group. It is anticipated that the working group will complete its review of the Charter and report back to the next meeting of the T&CC Forum.

2. Background

- 2.1 Collaborative working is encouraged by the Local Government (Wales) Act 2015 and Welsh Government, along with the Welsh Local Government Association

(WLGA) and One Voice Wales. It is a strong ambition of Bridgend County Borough Council. The refresh of the Memorandum of Understanding between the WLGA and One Voice Wales aims to act as a catalyst to bring greater consistency in relationships between the two tiers of government as specified in WLGA and One Voice Wales Agreed Areas of Mutual Interest and Joint Working 2024/26. The specifics of any programme of joint work will be agreed annually, but may include the following exemplars:

- development of charters and communication and consultation between member councils,
- promoting collaboration and joint work within and between the tiers of local government

2.2 The aim of BCBC is to work closely with T&CCs, who represent the interests of their communities and address shared local issues by pooling resources, expertise and influence wherever possible. Effective communication and engagement will underpin a positive working relationship between BCBC and T&CCs. The relationship between T&CCs and BCBC has historically encountered some challenges in terms of communication. Previous reviews of the T&CC Charter had explored ways in which engagement between the two tiers of government could be improved, while attempts to use the T&CC Forum as a means to improve engagement and working relationships between TCC's and BCBC, has at times, become inconsistent. Communication and reporting has been an issue raised recurrently by T&CCs. A request was made through a single letter from 14 of the Town & Community Councils in October 2025, requesting the formalisation and standardisation of communication between BCBC and themselves.

3. Current situation / proposal

3.1 In September 2025, the T&CCLO took up post. The primary purpose of the role is to act as the main point of contact between the Council and T&CCs, providing support, guidance and communication, and the development of strong working relationships. Through efficient and transparent communication, the T&CCLO is working towards the development of strong, collaborative partnerships that support community initiatives, particularly those linked to the Community Asset Transfer (CAT) Programme. The T&CCLO has met with Clerks from 15 of the 20 T&CCs and

visited 13 T&CCs, to inform members of the role and answer questions they may have.

- 3.2 At the time of this report the T&CCLO has dealt with 39 enquiries from 12 T&CC Clerks. Two funding bulletins have been circulated, along with numerous information shares. Engagement has taken place by means of a working group consisting of 5 Clerks representing T&CCs, along with BCBC's Democratic Services, which has resulted in the production of **Appendix 1**, which sets out a standardised communication protocol. A review of the T&CC Charter will also be undertaken. It is proposed that the T&CC Forum also consider future communication between BCBC and T&CCs.

4. Equality implications (including Socio-economic Duty and Welsh Language)

- 4.1 The protected characteristics identified within the Equality Act, Socio-economic Duty and the impact on the use of the Welsh Language have been considered in the preparation of this report. As a public body in Wales the Council must consider the impact of strategic decisions, such as the development or the review of policies, strategies, services and functions. It is considered that there will be no significant or unacceptable equality impacts as a result of this report.

5. Well-being of Future Generations implications and connection to Corporate Well-being Objectives

- 5.1 The well-being goals identified in the Act were considered in the preparation of this report. The activity of the T&CCLO contributes to the achievement of the following Well-Being of future Generations (Wales) Act objectives, both directly and indirectly:

- A prosperous Wales
- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- Cohesive communities

- 5.2 The activity of the T&CCLO contributes to the achievement of the following corporate well-being objectives both directly and indirectly:

Modernising - creating modern, seamless public services – Improving how we engage with people, listening to views, acting on them, modernising, and becoming a more efficient council, as well as improving partnership working with partners, the

third sector and T&CCs. Any future collaborative working between the Authority and T&CCs would need to consider and be based around the achievement of the Council's Well-being Objectives.

6. Climate Change and Nature Implications

- 6.1 There are no climate change or nature implications arising from this report.

7. Safeguarding and Corporate Parent Implications

- 7.1 There are no safeguarding or corporate parent implications as a result of this report.

8. Financial Implications

- 8.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report, however any future collaborative working between the Authority and T&CCs may need to consider the budget implications for both parties.

9. Recommendations

It is recommended that the Forum:

- 9.1 notes and adopts the Communications Protocol to ensure standardised and effective future communication between Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) and Town and Community Councils (T&CCs):
- 9.2 notes that the T&CC Charter will be updated by the working group and reported back to the Forum.

Background documents

None