

# Communication protocol

## **Introduction & Objectives**

Effective communication and engagement underpin a positive working relationship between Bridgend County Borough Council (BCBC) and Town and Community Councils (T&CCs).

Through efficient and transparent communication, we aim to foster strong, collaborative partnerships that support community initiatives, particularly those linked to the Community Asset Transfer (CAT) Programme.

## **Purpose & Target Audience**

The purpose of this protocol is to:

- Ensure consistent and timely communication between BCBC and T&CCs
- Promote mutual understanding, respect and accountability
- Strengthen local collaboration and shared decision-making

This protocol applies to all T&CCs within the Bridgend County Borough.

## **Roles and Responsibilities:**

**Town & Community Council Liaison Officer (T&CCLO)** - the primary BCBC contact for T&CCs.

**T&CC Clerks** - each Clerk will serve as the contact point for their respective council & will liaise directly with the T&CCLO.

All contact from T&CCs must go through the Clerk, which helps to ensure a clear co-ordinated approach and consistent record keeping.

## **Initial Procedure**

The T&CCLO will make initial contact with the Clerk of each T&CC to introduce the role and establish relationships.

The T&CCLO will then visit each T&CC to outline the purpose of the role and discuss the communication processes and any suggestions made for its implementation.

### **Response Times & Frequency of Contact**

For common issues such as pot holes, street lighting, fly-tipping, dog fouling etc. are not deemed 'a *referral*' and should be reported by the constituent directly via the BCBC website - [Report an issue](#)

Where the above type of issue needs to be reported by the T&CC, the Clerk should use the Organizational Account profile for T&CC Clerks on the BCBC website to report the issue. <https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/council/customer-services/report-an-issue/>

For other enquiries from Clerks sent directly to the T&CCLO, these will be acknowledged upon receipt.

Straight forward enquiries that can be answered easily will be answered directly at the earliest opportunity.

If the enquiry requires a more complex answer or involves more than one BCBC department, it is aimed to provide a response to the requesting Clerk within two weeks. If the request is multifaceted or requires further exploration with additional departments, and the enquiry is likely to take longer than two weeks, the T&CCLO will update the Clerk on a fortnightly basis of the progress of the enquiry until it has been resolved.

Where the same (or very similar) issue has been reported on more than two occasions and BCBC's position is unchanged, following consultation with the relevant officer(s) within BCBC, the T&CCLO will inform the Clerk that the matter is deemed as resolved. The report will still be recorded for monitoring purposes.

If additional information regarding the reported issue is required, the T&CCLO will request the information from the Clerk, who should respond within two weeks. If the information is not forthcoming within this time frame, the enquiry will be considered closed.

## **Communication Goals:**

- Establish strong working relationships with Town and Community Councils.
- Act as first point of contact to the Clerks for queries.
- Facilitate clear, two-way communication to support effective partnership working.

## **Ongoing Communication**

Beyond responding to individual enquiries, the T&CCLO will maintain regular contact with Clerks as required, based on need, available capacity and BCBC priorities.

The T&CCLO will produce and circulate a monthly bulletin to notify Clerks of relevant news, funding opportunities and CAT updates, which will be emailed in a PDF.

In addition to responding to enquiries from the Clerks, the T&CCLO will:

- Represent BCBC at the T&CC Forum and Clerks' meetings and will ensure feedback from meetings in relation to non-cabinet committee functions is captured and actioned.
- Receive agenda items submitted by Clerks for inclusion in the T&CC Forum.
- Attend T&CC meetings as required.
- Provide follow-up reports to the CAT Officer and relevant BCBC directorates where required.
- Support T&CCs in funding and project development, including appraising project ideas and assisting with applications.
- Support T&CCs with project planning and signpost to assistance with business cases, feasibility studies and governance and identify potential training opportunities for the Clerks.
- develop a funding guidance pack for BCBC's funding streams e.g. the Town & Community Capital Grant Fund, the CAT Capital Fund and any

other funding opportunities which arise and provide guidance in preparing and submitting bids.

### **Statutory Reporting**

Some matters fall outside the remit of the T&CCLO, which are noted below:

### **Shared Regulatory Services (SRS)**

Shared Regulatory Services (SRS), serves Bridgend County Borough, Cardiff and the Vale of Glamorgan, delivering services which safeguard the health, safety and economic wellbeing of consumers, businesses and residents covering the main areas of environmental health, trading standards and licensing.

If your concern is in relation to these areas, it should be reported to SRS directly and not the T&CCLO.

You may also notify the T&CCLO of your referral for record-keeping purposes, although it is not required.

You can contact Shared Regulatory Services (SRS) in a variety of ways:

**Phone** [0300 123 6696](tel:03001236696)

**Online** <https://www.srs.wales/en/Home.aspx>

**Office Opening Hours: Monday - Thursday: 8.30am – 5.00pm**

**Friday: 8.30am - 4.30 pm**

**Weekends: Closed**

### **Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)**

The Bridgend Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub, or MASH, provides safeguarding services from both BCBC and our partners across the community in one place.

MASH is the single point of contact for all new safeguarding concerns.

If you have any safeguarding concerns, or need to contact the Bridgend MASH, please contact:

## **MASH Children's Services**

Telephone: [01656 642320](tel:01656 642320)

Email Address: [mashcentra@bridgend.gov.uk](mailto:mashcentra@bridgend.gov.uk)

## **Adult Safeguarding Team**

Telephone: [01656 642477](tel:01656 642477)

Email Address: [adultsafeguardingMASH@bridgend.gov.uk](mailto:adultsafeguardingMASH@bridgend.gov.uk)

## **Early Help**

The Early Help Screening Team is made up of one senior practitioner and three screening officers. The Early Help Team can offer a number of support services to children and their families with a range of support needs.

Email Address: [earlyhelp@bridgend.gov.uk](mailto:earlyhelp@bridgend.gov.uk)

## **South Wales Police MASH (Public Protection Unit)**

Telephone: [01656 815808](tel:01656 815808)

You can find out more about MASH on the web page:

<https://www.bridgend.gov.uk/residents/social-care-and-wellbeing/multi-agency-safeguarding-hub-mash/>

You do not need to inform the T&CCLO of referrals to MASH or the Early Help Team.

## **The Role of the Monitoring Officer**

The Monitoring Officer is employed by BCBC and will endeavor to provide support and guidance to Clerks, which may include the provision of training.

Any guidance must be requested by the Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer (RFO).

## **BCBC Contacts**

<b>Monitoring Officer</b>	Kelly Watson	<a href="mailto:Kelly.watson@bridgend.gov.uk">Kelly.watson@bridgend.gov.uk</a>
<b>T&amp;CCLO</b>	Jason Frowen	<a href="mailto:Jason.frowen@bridgend.gov.uk">Jason.frowen@bridgend.gov.uk</a>

**CAT Officer**

Louise Connolly

[louise.connolly@bridgend.gov.uk](mailto:louise.connolly@bridgend.gov.uk)