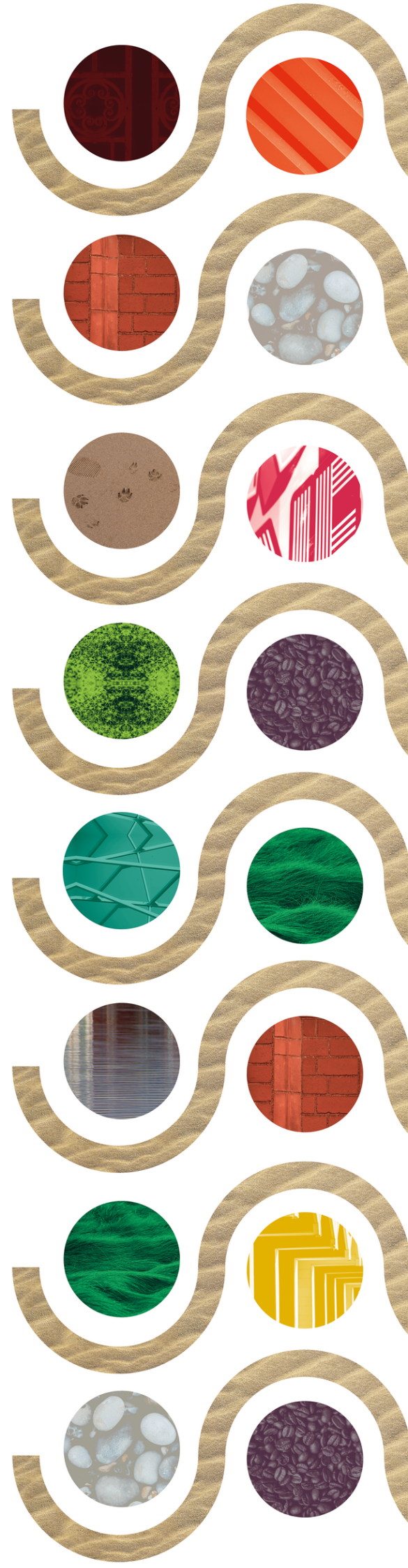


CIVIC OFFICE OF THE YEAR AWARD

BARRY TOWN COUNCIL
ENGAGEMENT & EVENTS TEAM



INTRODUCTION

There are over 730 Town and Community Councils in Wales, with Barry Town Council being the largest, serving a population of over 52,200 (according to the 2011 Census). In Wales, there are approximately 8000 Community and Town Councillors (WLGA data), who represent the interests of the communities they serve as a whole. Barry Town Council has 22 elected Town Councillors (an unpaid role at Town and Community Council level).

The role of Mayor is apolitical and is elected at the Annual Meeting of Council each year (held in May).

Each newly elected Mayor (in their opening speech) will set the scene for the year ahead and nominate their chosen charities to support throughout their term of office.

Councillor Helen Payne was elected as Mayor for the 2022/23 year and announced her chosen charities as being; Llamau (a local homeless charity), Young Minds and Vale People 1st (a local charity dedicated to supporting those with learning difficulties). The Mayor (in her opening speech) stated that the main causes she wished to support throughout her term of office, would be;

- Promoting Barry as a welcoming place for all people across the globe who are fleeing war and persecution
- Supporting continued youth engagement
- Sustainability, including the announcement that she would not buy any new clothes during her term of office and;
- Mental health and Wellbeing

The Office of the Mayor is within the Council's Engagement and Events Team. This team is responsible for all Mayoral, Civic and Corporate events, as well as all Council internal and external engagement and marketing and communications.

Up until recently, the team consisted of one full time Engagement and Events Team Manager and one part-time Engagement and Events Administrator. The Team has now welcomed two (very much needed) members of staff in the roles of one full-time Engagement and Events Officer and one part-time Well-being Projects Officer.

However, for much of the current Mayor's term of office, she has primarily been supported by one part-time Engagement and Events Administrator, with additional support (as and when needed) via the Engagement and Events Team Manager.

In Summary;

The Engagement and Events Team is responsible for;

- Civic Events, including Civic Service, Remembrance Sunday Services, The Bryan Foley Award and the Annual Meeting
- Corporate Events
- Mayoral Events (for the purpose of fundraising towards the Mayor's chosen charities)
- Public Engagement, including all external consultations and marketing



Pictured:- The Mayor of Barry, Councillor Helen Payne at a Queen's Jubilee Street Party held on Dunraven St, Barry

QUALITY & INNOVATION

SERVICE PROVIDED TO THE MAYOR

As mentioned, for much of 2022/23, the Mayor's team has consisted of only one part-time administrator and a full-time member of staff.

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the role of Mayor had to change in terms of how they were able to continue engagement within the community. However, since a new norm has been established, the role has become busier than ever with the new Mayor wanting to take full advantage of the ease in restrictions (surrounding events especially).

Each new Mayor is welcomed into their new role with a "Welcome Pack" which is updated annually. This document sets out the various budgets the Mayor has access to, what is expected of them throughout their term of office and an overview of the roles within the team and ideas for fundraising events they could hold throughout the year. The team also arranges a meeting with the new Mayor to discuss any events they would like to host, as well as their ideas for their term of office. This meeting is vital in order to plan the year ahead, as well as manage the new Mayor's expectations.



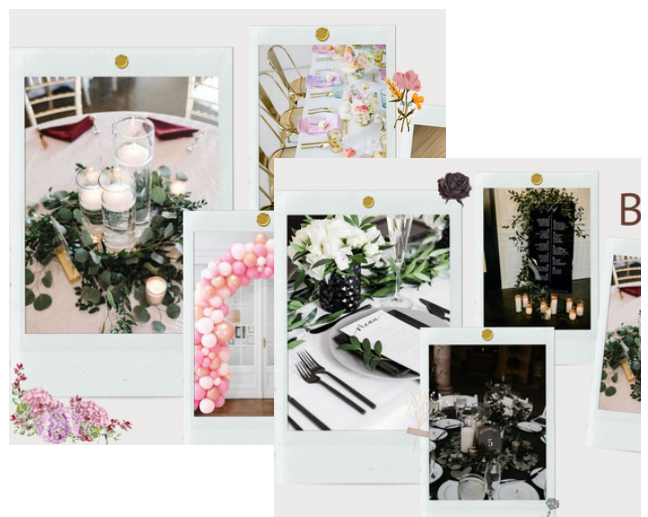
Pictured:- The Mayor of Barry, Councillor Helen Payne at Mayor Making 2022/23 with Council

The Mayor's main point of contact is the (part-time) Engagement and Events Administrator. Although, the Mayor is also able to liaise with the (full-time) Engagement and Events Team Manager to ensure a seamless delivery. The Mayor is kept fully up to date with all invites and engagements through a weekly diary meeting/call. The Council is also kept up to date with the Mayor's engagements through a shared online events list which is kept up to date (weekly) and is accessible to all Councillors.

In order to ensure that the Mayor is fully prepared for each and every engagement and the organisation gets the very most out of their visit from the Mayor, the team have developed "Mayoral Attendance Forms" which are completed in support of every invitation. These forms detail whether the Mayor will be required to provide a speech, what role they will play at the event, parking arrangements, accessibility and so on. The role of Mayor can be daunting, especially in the first few months and so these forms provide a sense of reassurance to the Mayor as they can be assured that every last detail has been taken care of for them. It is also important to note that the role of Mayor within the community is that of prestige, and so, it is vital that the Mayor is briefed prior to an event of what is expected of them to ensure that the Mayoral Office remains professional and ensures the relationship between Mayor and Staff is strengthened.

The Mayor's preferred means of communication is established early on, whether that be via email or telephone for example. The Current Mayor works full-time and so a Whatsapp group has been her preferred way of communicating. This has proved to be very useful in terms of quick decision-making and being able to maintain a positive working relationship.

A new development which has not only been a great way in which to manage Mayoral expectations, but also a fantastic way to improve the way in which the team works and is able to progress events has been the introduction of "Mood Boards." The Mood Boards work by providing the Mayor with inspiration for an event and enable us to share the Mayor's vision. They have been a useful tool in showing the Mayor how we envisage an event, the colour theme, the general feeling etc and in turn, this has meant that the Team are able to progress the organisation of events without any delays in having to refer back to the Mayor, which often means having to wait until we have received an answer.



QUALITY & INNOVATION SERVICE PROVIDED TO THE COUNCIL

Historically, the office of Mayor was a standalone position facilitated by what was previously known as the Mayor's Secretary.

Over the last 5 years, Barry Town Council has committed significant time and resources into the growth of its external engagement and as a result, the Office of Mayor now sits within the Engagement and Events Team. The Engagement and Events Team is an integral part of the Town Council's external services and is responsible for all Civic (Mayoral), Corporate and public engagement.



This change has means that the Office of Mayor now has additional resources that can be called upon (in terms of staffing, for example) and is seen as an integral part of the Council's external engagement. This has led to the Mayor playing an even bigger part in the Council's promotion and the role of Mayor has been able to grow.

The Team organises Long Service Awards for members of staff who have served the Council for 25 years. These members of staff are awarded with £250, as well as a small reception in their honour which is hosted by the Mayor to celebrate this fantastic achievement and commitment.

The Town Council has the power (within the meaning of Section 249(5) and (6) of the Local Government Act 1972) to award members of the community who have rendered eminent services to the Town with the "Freedom of Town."

The team is responsible for highlighting this power to the community by encouraging nominations, as well as organising award ceremonies for those who have been awarded the title.

The Team is also dedicated to all Council's media coverage and will often liaise with the Press to publicise and promote Council's services and achievements.

As the team is not only accountable for the Office of the Mayor, the team itself provides an abundance of services to the Council as a whole. We lead the Council's Shop Local initiative which has meant building a strong network of local traders to improve footfall throughout the town's shopping districts, maintain the Town's Fairtrade status through the facilitation of the Council's Fairtrade Advisory Committee, as well as being the driving force behind the Council's sustainability agenda and its commitment to being carbon neutral by the year 2030.

The team is also responsible for Barry Youth Council, a small group of 11 - 18 year-olds from within the community who meet quarterly to discuss local issues that affect young people and ways in which they can alleviate them. The Mayor has a close working relationship with this group and often attends to speak to the young people about the role of the Mayor and how young people can be involved in democracy. The young people will also assist the Mayor throughout their term of office and will volunteer at events.



Pictured:- Professor Deirdre Beddoe being awarded the Freedom of Town , Mark Sims receiving his Long Service Award and Barry Youth Council

QUALITY & INNOVATION

SERVICE PROVIDED TO THE COMMUNITY

The role of Mayor, whilst ceremonial, also plays an integral part in engaging with the community and raising vital funds for their chosen charities throughout the year.

The Mayor holds a number of events throughout the year that the team will organise on their behalf. This year, the team organised 17 events on behalf of the Mayor and the Mayor has accepted over 50 invitations to events across the community. The majority of these events will have the main purpose of raising money for their chosen charities. However, in 2022 there were a number of current issues which the Mayor felt needed recognition and so the focus of fundraising was sometimes switched to using the Mayoral position as a platform for wider engagement.



For example, the Mayor hosted an event in honour of the late Gareth Jones, who was a Barry born writer responsible for revealing to the world the horrors of Holodomor, where Stalin's regime in the 1930s, starved several million Ukrainians to death. The story would have gone unreported had it not been for the principled determination and incredible bravery of Gareth Jones. His story, so inspiring that it was recently told in the feature film Mr. Jones. In 1935, while reporting on the Japanese invasion of Manchuria, Gareth died in mysterious circumstances, suspicion surrounds his death, and it is claimed that Stalin's notorious NKVD security police were responsible. His ashes were later buried at Merthyr Dyfan Cemetery.

On Sunday, 30 October 2022 in Merthyr Dyfan Cemetery Chapel, The Mayor of Barry, Councillor Helen Payne unveiled a plaque in honour of Gareth Jones. The plaque was made and delivered to Barry Town Council from Canada, and funded by Ukrainians in Canada and the US. The event was so important to the community and to Ukraine that Ukrainian families living in Barry also attended, as well as the Ukrainian Ambassador, Mr Prystaiko Vadym.

The purpose of events such as these being hosted by the Mayor enhance the relationship between two communities and further solidify relationships.

In September 2022, the whole world went into mourning after the passing of Her Majesty, The Queen. As it was the Local Authorities duty to host the local Proclamation, the Mayor of Barry decided that she wished to host a Candlelight Memorial on King Square for all the community to attend and light a candle in honour of Her Majesty.

The event (due to timings) had to be organised in a matter of weeks and was a sombre affair. The Team, working with the Mayor's Chaplain and local services, delivered a candlelight memorial service which was attended by a number of dignitaries, Councillors and members of the public.

However, the event did not go without any issues. King Square has had a recent surge in young people engaging in anti-social and this service attracted the young people who at first were being loud and disrespectful. Once the team had approached the young people and explained to them the importance of the service, they sat down and joined in with the service. The Mayor works with young people in her main job and invited the young people to the chamber following on from the service, to sit and have a cup of tea with her. The end result was a huge success and an opportunity for the team to utilise the Mayoral position to engage with historically harder to reach young people.

Pictured:- The Mayor and the Ukrainian Ambassador

QUALITY & INNOVATION

SERVICE PROVIDED TO THE COMMUNITY CONT'D

The Mayor also has their own Scout Group which is a continuous partnership which sees the Mayoral Office working with the Scouting community to provide young people with opportunities to further enhance their skills. The Mayor's Scout Group is chosen each year by Scouting Leaders, with the lucky few being invited to the Mayor's chamber, along with their parents to be officially invested into the Mayor's Scout Group. The Scouts are presented with a certificate and a special neckerchief which they must wear when representing the Mayor at Civic events.

Following on from this relationship with the Scouting community, the Mayor will also present a recipient of The Bryan Foley Award each year. Bryan Foley was an outstanding member of the community who sadly passed away in 2018. Bryan was an enthusiastic volunteer who worked with a number of organisations across the Town including the scouting community.

The Mayor will work with members of Bryan's family and a representative from the Scouts to pick a worthy winner from a number of nominations to receive this prestigious award. The winner is then invited to a special ceremony, hosted by the Mayor to receive the award.

Working in partnership is integral and is it vital that each Mayor respects and builds upon relationships forged in previous Mayoral years. The relationship between the Mayoral Office and the Royal British Legion is one which has been nurtured throughout the years and results in an annual Remembrance Service each year which the Mayor will attend and head. The parade is attended by hundreds of young people across the uniformed organisations, with the service being held at the Cenotaph by members of the public and is a demonstration of the Town's respect for those who have given their lives throughout all conflicts. As well as the Town's Remembrance Day Service and Parade, the Mayoral Office and Royal British Legion also work with all local schools to hold a special Schools Remembrance Service at Merthyr Dyfan Cemetery where many of our soldiers are buried. This has helped forge links with the local community, especially young people.

Pictured:- Street Party - Queen's Jubilee



The Mayor made a surprise visit to each street party which certainly added to the atmosphere and was a huge surprise to the residents. The Mayor has a lovely time too.

Pictured:- The Mayor's Scout Group



An activity which has proved extremely popular this year has been the introduction of "Story Time with The Mayor." This is a free event which sees children and their parents attending the Mayor's Chamber for a special reading of a children's book. We have held these across different times of the year and the book is chosen dependent upon the theme. For example, the Halloween "Story Time with the Mayor" was the chance to listen to the Mayor read Julia Donaldson's "Room on the Broom." These events are free and an opportunity for the Mayor to invite children into the Chamber to speak with her and to promote the role of the Mayor. Children find the experience very fun and the opportunity to meet the Mayor is very exciting.

As well as children, communities also find the symbol of the Mayor to be important and a huge honour. Barry Town Council awarded a number of street party grants to various streets across the Town wishing to come together to organise street parties to celebrate the Queen's Jubilee.

QUALITY & INNOVATION

SERVICE PROVIDED TO THE COUNCIL CONT'D

The Mayor will also host various coffee mornings throughout the year, one being to officially open Barry Pride, following on from which; She also led the Pride March to Barry Island.

Perhaps one of the most well-known events across the Mayoral calendar is the Annual Santa Fun Run which is a long running event organised each year to raise funds for the Mayor's charities. The event sees hundreds of people congregate at Barry Island in Santa Suits to take part in a 2km Fun Run. The event has grown throughout the years and is reliant on a number of community organisations working with us to ensure the events success. Partners include; Bro Radio (hosting of the event), Brawd Health (host the warm-up), Scouts, Cadets and Barry Youth Council (Stewarding), St John's Ambulance provide medical cover and a local organisation, Barry Round Table also support the event by attending each year with Santa and his sleigh. The Mayor will lead the race and also picks the winner of the children's fancy dress competition.

A new addition to the annual event calendar is the Town's Festival of Light, attended by approximately 15000 people over a week, the Festival is officially opened by the Mayor who then accompanies the first visitors throughout the experience. The festival is aimed at families who may not have the means to visit the larger light shows in the neighbouring cities and so, a ticket is reasonably priced at £1.50 for a family of 5, with all money raised being donated to the Mayor's Charities.



Pictured:- Festival of Light, Santa Fun Run, Remembrance Day and various Mayoral visits

QUALITY & INNOVATION

PROMOTION OF THE MAYOR

The promotion of the Mayor is vital in order to maintain the roles relevance and strong links within the community. Event planning forms have been updated to include a section which reminds event organisers to follow up all events with media coverage and to ensure press releases, social media posts are completed in a timely manner.

The Mayor and her Office will keep abreast of local achievements and make suggestions to the Mayor (or vice versa) when it may be relevant to invite a person or organisation to the chamber to recognise an achievement, for example.

An initiative recently introduced has been "Mayor on the Move." This aims to bring the Mayor to the people rather than expecting the community to come to them. The Mayor will set up 2 chairs (along with their Consort) and sometimes a gazebo (weather dependent), a sandwich board and just invite people to speak to them! This has been a huge success and has meant the Mayor has been able to visit local communities that they may not have done in their usual work/engagements. It has been an opportunity to open discussions and promote the Office of Mayor. As the project has grown, the Mayor is now also joined by a local mobile coffee company to each site she visits which also supports the ethos of shopping locally.



The team also uses social media to its full advantage, providing a weekly round-up of the Mayor's activities and events attended.

The Mayor also has a dedicated section on the Town Council's website which provides a wealth of information such as information about the Mayor, Deputy Mayor, the Mayor's Charities, ways to get in touch and the history of the Mayor.

The Town Council are responsible for administering grants to local organisations to aid in project development and events. Councillors are encouraged to always think of ways that the office of the Mayor can be promoted and positive relationships can be forged so it will often be suggested that a grant will be awarded, subject to the condition that the Mayor is invited to open the event, for example.

Pictured: Mayor on the Move (various) and the Mayor with the winner of the Barry Island 10K and the Mayor and Consort at Glastonbarry Juniors



QUALITY & INNOVATION VALUE

As with many services across the Council, funding has reduced whilst the expectation to maintain and in some cases to improve service delivery has been instilled across the board.

The Mayoral Office receives a small budget to deliver its operations which consists of;

- Mayor's Hospitality (£500)
- Photo Services (£250)
- Travel (£500)
- Donations (£500)
- Advertising (£300)
- Civic Gifts (£500)

It should be noted that there is no specific budget to enable the team to deliver any events and so this is achieved through continuous fundraising throughout the year. Despite there being no initial costs, the team have been able to organise the following events this year; Barry Big Quiz, Barry Bingo, Festive Clothes Swap and the Mayoral End of Year Dinner (currently being organised).

Limited funding has meant that the team has had to be creative and organise events which require little to no budget such as community litter picks and the popular Story time with the Mayor.

The team no longer purchases buffets for certain events and instead offer tea, coffee and Welsh Cakes. This is to recognise the cost of living as well as the issue of food poverty amongst the community.

The team also maintains a careful system which aims to store all past event equipment in clean, labelled boxes. This is to ensure that event decorations for example are re-used across different Mayor's terms which not only saves the department money, but also contributes towards the Council's sustainability agenda.

Since the conception of the Engagement and Events Team, this has meant that resources have been shared across the team, ensuring a seamless and cost efficient service. The team has been able to utilise existing skillsets in order to reduce costs. For example, there is a team member who has a passion for photography and so, in order to not only develop this team member, this skill has been used to reduce the costs previously associated with outsourcing a professional photographer.

The decision has also been taken to not maintain a fully stocked drinks cabinet which was historically used to host guests within the Mayor's Chamber. The decision was made for a variety of reasons including, reducing waste, reducing costs and perhaps most importantly, aligning the Council's workings with its values. The Council is committed to promoting positive wellbeing and mental health. It was suggested that alcohol is one of the leading causes of depression and anxiety and so the decision was made to scale this back which in turn has created a financial saving.

The team does not out-source any design work and instead completes this in-house using free software such as Canva.



Pictured: Barry Youth Council, the Mayor at Barry Town Council Family Fun Day and Story Time with the Mayor