Barry Plan for Neighbourhoods Board Meeting
3pm Friday 14 August 2026
Barry Rugby Club

Welcome and Apologies

Present: Chair David Stevens (DS); Joe Castle (JC); Fay Blakeley (FB); James Scorey (JS); Supt Mark Attwell (MT); Kanishka Narayan (KN); Shirley Hodges (SH)

Apologies: Rob Thomas (RT); Marcus Goldsworthy (MG); Cllr Bronwen Brooks (BB); Lis Burnett (LB);

Absent: Innes Robinson (IR); Matt Blumberg (MB)

In attendance: Mererid Velios (MV); Emma Bradshaw (EB); Sarah Cutting (SC); Lauren Collins (LC); Matt Bowmer (MB); Phil Chappell (PC)

Dan Maggs (DM) (For Rugby Club EOI item)

1. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair opened the meeting; absences noted and gave apologies for the last-minute cancelling of the previously planned Board meeting in July.

2. Notes from last meeting

IR had an action regarding youth representation. Not present at today's meeting so programme team will follow up separately.

DS commented on the previous Board discussion regarding the elevator pitch. The consensus was it would be an oversimplification for one short statement, and no alternatives had been put forward. Invitation remains open to submit a strap line.

DS asked for any questions about the attached board papers. FB queried the Universal Credit Data on the 'It's all About Barry' infographic. Stating the Wales average was around 25% so the Barry statistic in the document seemed low in comparison. Action: SC to double check statistics.

MB – Explained that there had been changes to Universal Credit Rules and this might explain the discrepancy.

FB - Recognised its relevance, but that it skewed information. JC queried who the document was aimed at and stated that the information was quite complex if it were to be shared on the website and that most residents wouldn't recognise the ward names. JC offered to send a refinement of the information to MV. SC clarified the infographic was intended for the Board only, to support decision making. If the information were to be shared with the public in future it was agreed that it should be in an easy-to-follow format.

DS observed that although Action Group Members are not raising the issue, many residents directly spoken to often bring up toilets, specifically not enough public toilets being open in Barry.

3. Project Updates

Domestic Violence Event – Family Fun Day at Cadog's Corner

SH stated that she knew it was very successful but that she didn't get that impression from the update. MV reiterated that the engagement was very good with over 300 attending the event and 80 completing the passports for service referrals. DS commented that it was a cheap event to fund relative to the positive outcomes, and that such events can make a big difference to the community.

Street Art Festival

MV confirmed the Street Art Festival was taking place on Sat 22 & Sun 23 August. SH asked whether the event open to everyone? MV confirmed that it was.

Real Skillz Property Project

MV explained the ambition of the project was to buy a property requiring renovation for Real Skillz along with their students to renovate as a training project. The house would then be sold, and any profit put towards the purchase of the next property for the next cohort of students. Following internal discussions with Legal, it has become clear that the Council is not set up for such a model (buying and selling houses). DS informed the Board he had been in contact with other Pride in Place Chairs and that all were experiencing similar practical issues. MB commented that schools are collectively in deficit and that the authority needs to look closely at whether the revenue funding exists for the project to operate.

MV - at this stage there are two options; Option A – potentially proceed with Council acquisition, knowing this would potentially take several months as a cabinet report would need to be written and approved to purchase a property and a potentially lengthy legal process; Option B – set up a Community Interest Company (CIC) as advised by UK Government as a vehicle for such projects. LC - Currently looking into this.

Since Real Skillz is contracted by Education and ready to start their training project in September, MV has put them in touch with a landlord on Holton Road who has several empty properties that they could potentially work on. Action: all Board members in favour of Option B. MB also in agreement for Option B and happy to support the development of a CIC. MV/LC to set up CIC.

Deployable CCTV

JC - Deployable CCTVs had been put in the following locations - Romilly Park and the Dump, both the west end of Barry. According to the original EOI, the deployable CCTV were to be in the eastern side of Barry to help with fly tipping.

MV - The Operational CCTV Group chose the locations based on need and Safer Vale sit on that group.

SH questioned accountability stating if we do something for the community, we need clarity. How can the Board ensure we have trust from the public if our views are not listened to.

DS felt it was appropriate to express concern to the Operational CCTV Group and request more use in the east end of Barry. SH asked whether there was anything the Board could do to help and whether residents can make requests? Action: MV to contact Safer Vale and the Operational CCTV Group to follow-up.

CAVC – Apprenticeships Programme

This project is ready to run in Sept 2027 but needs the approval of the Barry Futures Action Group. At their last action group meeting, IR and members wanted further information before committing support, including a presentation from James Scorey (or a colleague from CAVC). Action: EB to arrange JS to present at the next Barry Futures meeting in Sept/Oct.

4. EOI – Barry RFC

JC introduced Dan Maggs who explained the plans for Barry Rugby Football Club (Barry RFC) and the potential for match funding. DM issued two documents that they have been working on for 12 months; Barry RFC Phased Development Plan and Barry RFC Sports & Community Impact & Capacity. The EOI was for funding Phase 1a of the plan.

SH asked how confident are Barry RFC that the other phases would go ahead.

DM - Our Initial focus was a 3-G pitch but due to public rights of way and a possible CAT Transfer that was changed. Phase 1a would focus on creating a safer and more accessible route from the site entrance, move the parking area and improve drainage and lighting. Barry RFC are confident they would access more funding for further phases. JC sees this as legacy work and commented that at present there is no sense of arrival and the club has played a huge part in the community for the last 50-60 years. DS asked would there be more parking or less? DM confirmed there would be 200 additional spaces. Council have confirmed material change of use of land. and the planners said it looks good.

SH queried whether capacity building funding could be used? MV confirmed the capacity building element of the funding could not be used for this project and if approved would come from capital spend, potentially years 26-27 and 27-28.

DS asked the Board to vote. Unanimous yes and support for the Barry RFC project with match funding awarded subject to the approval of the Welsh Government Community Facilities funding. Action: MV to inform DM of the decision.

5. Holton Road Workshop

PC gave a presentation relating to Holton Road and the Town Centre which focused on 4 main areas:

1. Reminder for the Board of the challenges / ambitions
2. Provide a complete picture of projects / funding
3. Open discussion about where the Board could deliver its own strategy
4. Agree a possible direction in relation to high level themes

In brief, the Barry and Vale Boards have committed 26/27 Welsh Government Transforming Towns Funding to funding Holton Road. The Council has acquired several properties on Thompson Street which will become an adult social services hub. The former Wilko building is currently in development, with downstairs earmarked as an indoor market. Street Scene Teams have been assigned to each town which will see a heightened level of responsive cleaning in each town centre.

MV explained that the Local Growth Fund spend/allocation has not been agreed and could potentially be used for renewed lighting, better utilising the pedestrian area, offering 12-month support packages to local businesses. A heritage led shopfront enveloping scheme could also be looked at which could lever in funding from Welsh Government Transforming Towns to add value.

PC stated that he wanted to set out what other funding was allocated to Holton Road, what the Board had said it would do in the 10-year Plan to support the town centre and where there might be gaps for the Board to consider.

SH noted that Barry is a unique place that has evolved from 3 places and could be said has 3 town centres. Old Barry Village around St Baruc's, Cadoxton, and the Barry Dock area which developed after the construction of Barry Docks. SH also commented that places like Cardiff celebrate its history and heritage. Barry doesn't do that. FB - Andy Green from the Barry Museum & Heritage Cente and Vibrant Barry Action Group Member is working on a project idea to develop the current Barry museum. SH stated her support for his ideas.

FB stated that she was unable to see what the vision was for Holton Road from the report. The approach should have a commercial consideration. It could be that the future of Holton Road is as a 'Civic Centre'. FB asked why the Council is not considering this and queried whether investments in shop fronts will attract and hold more businesses.

FB strongly expressed that we need to reposition and shift our expectations for what Holton Road could be, rather than what it once was. What was once a Town Centre is no longer the economic town centre and if it is only a civic centre then there is no need to invest in a night-time economy.

FB continued that High Street, Broad Street, and Goodsheds are where individual entrepreneurs are starting their businesses. FB argued that Broad Street was the town's night-time economy area and was thriving primarily down to private investment rather than Council intervention. There are regular markets already happening in The Goodsheds. The Board has already supported Holton Road with the Storenet radios, although the idea of a small grant pot is interesting. FB reiterated that this approach was still looking at what the town centre has been, instead of repositioning to what it is. Another example was given: Barry Waterfront, there are purpose built commercial units, why are they not filled?

JC said that people have finite funds and a Café in Wilko or Thompson Street would take away business from current Holton Road traders if a market were to go ahead.

DS - Reiterated that no decisions were needed today and asked whether this would be of interest to the Vibrant Barry Action Group. FB queried whether the Board were obliged to focus on Holton Road rather than other town areas. PC stated that he was setting out what the Board had said in its strategy, with Holton Road being identified as a spatial priority area, with an increasing vacancy rate.

JC commented that she had several questions and would send them to PC and MV.

PC explained that today was about looking at high level themes and discussing possible options or areas of interest that could be further developed and considered by the Board and action group.

FB commented that Broad Street is busy and vibrant and has a night-time economy.

MV said the Council had invested around £1m on the pavement and parking improvements on Broad Street and lighting Hood Rd tunnel.

DS suggested that a further meeting should take place to discuss potential investment in the Town Centre and other retail areas. Time was limited today and no Board member present expressed a desire to explore any of the ideas set out for investing in Holton Road.

MA commented that this was a good discussion and was taken by JC's point that this is central Government funding, the Board should be brave enough to say what matters to local people and expressed concern that Holton Road could be all consuming.

SH commented that Holton Road was just one area of the bigger picture of Barry and raised concerned over Wilkos, that the Council should not buy properties unless the purpose is decided beforehand.

PC – The Council purchased the building knowing that a market was likely to be an option that it wanted to explore. There is now significant support and interest from the public and potential operators who would like to be part of the development. He stressed that there was no expectation that the Board must invest in any of the ideas put forward for Holton Road, such as the upper floor of Wilko. The Board can change its strategy.

Action: PC to deliver a similar presentation to the Vibrant Barry Action Group and possibly other Action Groups given that Holton Road has cross-cutting themes (particularly Safety and Events).

Action: DS, PC, MV, FB, JC to discuss further in separate meeting.

6. Big Projects

DS briefly mentioned other big ideas that were being discussed and developed within the Action Groups; Barry Together - a boat in the harbour that could be used for entertainment; Vibrant Barry - Community Led Solar Panel Project and re-purpose of the Old Lifeboat Station at the Knap. DS also commented that Barry Town Football Club also have some long-term plans and are in the process of a CAT transfer. They do a lot more than just football. Also, the Barry Together Action Group had queried whether more could be done with the Memo. DS also asked whether a Barry Lido is of interest? It seems that the Lido is not a crazy idea, but the scale and complexity would be a challenge. Suggested that it should not be discounted and that there were always options to consider.

KN raised two areas that are gaining considerable focus; young people in Barry (training, AI and technology) and job support (skills-based). KN was happy to feed into any ideas and future discussions around any apprenticeship programmes. JC added that any future AI based apprenticeships would need to loop in Welsh Government to make sure all are in sync.

JS stated he would support and could link to CAVC which would give extra capacity in a targeted way. DS requested that an amended proposal for an apprenticeship programme be resubmitted inclusive of an AI element and could someone give a presentation for half hour to bring the Board up to speed on such matters. JC queried how the action group could be involved?

MA shared that the Safer Barry action group were developing proposal for a long-term mentoring project involving young people, families and young offenders.

Action: KN confirmed he would work something up for the November Board meeting.

7. Finance Report

SH asked whether the capacity building element of the funding can be rolled over. MV confirmed it can.

8. Structural Implementation Challenges

DS opened a discussion regarding the CIC. SH commented that due to the nature of the Board and the possible turnover of members, it would need a flexible structure. LC explained there are two types of CIC - Limited by Guarantee (CLG) and Limited by Shares (CLS). There is also a community benefit society (BenCom) which is asset-locked and requires 3 directors. MB stated that he would be happy to provide advice to the Board, having established and sat on previous CiCs.

9. Proposed Performance Review

DS explained that an Action Group Review would soon take place. The rationale for this was to review whether the current model was the most efficient means of idea generation, engaging with residents, and choosing projects. DS asked for any comments regarding the proposed questions and commented that they were well designed and comprehensive. JC stated that various platforms should be offered to members to respond (not everyone is comfortable using digital forms) and whether we could contact the residents who had dropped out of an Action Group to find out why. MV commented that a test run using Microsoft forms would be conducted. SC stated the Barry Neighbourhoods team would use their wealth of experience in conducting community engagement, use guidance from UK Government and look at different options for taking things forward. SH asked what will be done with the data. MV stated that it would be analysed and shared in a report to the Board and action group members. DS requested the raw data be shared with the Board and MV stated any raw data would be anonymised.

Action: Barry Neighbourhoods Team to commence with review, analyse, prepare report and feedback.

10. AOB

None

11. Date of next meeting

Friday 13 November 2026

To minimise paper waste, if any board members would like physical paper copies of any documents circulated, please email EB at least 48 hours before the meeting and copies will be provided; ebradshaw@valeofglamorgan.gov.uk.