

Summary of survey responses - Business Networking Meetings - Spring/Summer and Autumn 2022

The following meetings were arranged:

Spring/Summer 2022

TOWN	DATE	VENUE	TIME
Risca	Tuesday 22nd February 2022	Microsoft Teams	8.30 am
Caerphilly	Tuesday 5th April 2022 (meeting cancelled due to low response)	Microsoft Teams	n/a
Ystrad Mynach	Wednesday 15th June 2022	Llancaiach Fawr	8.00 am
Blackwood	Wednesday 13th July 2022	Blackwood Miners' Institute	5.30 pm
Bargoed	Friday 29th July 2022	Bargoed Library	5.00 pm

Autumn 2022

TOWN	DATE	VENUE	TIME
Risca	Wednesday 3 rd August 2022	Risca RFC	5.30pm
Caerphilly	Wednesday 7 th September 2022	Gatehouse	8.00am
Bargoed	Wednesday 12 th October 2022	Bargoed Library	5.00pm
Ystrad Mynach	Wednesday 16 th November 2022	Centre of Sporting Excellence	5.00pm
Blackwood	Wednesday 7 th December 2022	Blackwood Miners' Institute	8.00am

Bargoed

Attendance

<u>Meeting</u>	<u>Businesses</u>	<u>Elected Members</u>	<u>Town/Community Councillors</u>	<u>Other Stakeholders</u>	<u>Support Officers</u>
29/07/23	4	3	1	2	5
12/10/23	1	2	1	6	8

Survey Response Rate

6/20	30%
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Event arrangements

	Very satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Event overall	0	4 (66%)	1 (17%)	1 (17%)	0
Content of event	2 (33%)	3 (50%)	1 (17%)	0	0
Location of event	2 (33%)	4 (67%)	0	0	0
Event venue	1 (17%)	5 (83%)	0	0	0
Duration of event	3 (50%)	2 (33%)	0	1 (17%)	0
Time of day for event	3 (50%)	2 (33%)	0	1 (17%)	0

How did you hear about the event?

Letter	1 (17%)
CCBC email/social media	3 (50%)
Former member of the Bargoed TCMG	1 (17%)
Not sure	1 (16%)

The purpose of the event was to engage with local businesses in our Town Centres. To what extent do you feel the event achieved its purpose?

Fully	0
Partially	5 (83%)
Not at all	1 (17%)

How likely are you to attend future events?

Very likely	3 (50%)
Somewhat likely	3 (50%)
Somewhat unlikely	0
Very unlikely	0

Summary of comments received

A number of respondents referenced the low attendance levels at the event and expressed the need to promote awareness of these events to maximise attendance and contributions from local businesses. Attendees suggested setting the dates in advance as far as possible for the year ahead to give local businesses sufficient notice to attend, and also suggested varying the timings (e.g. one afternoon and one evening session) to maximise stakeholder attendance.

In terms of the responses around the purpose and content of the event, one business welcomed the achievements highlighted by the speaker from Treorchy and suggested that this success could be replicated in Bargoed, such as setting up a business committee to take ownership of local projects. Another attendee felt that the guest presentation could have been shorter, and therefore felt disengaged from the event, as they had been hoping to hear more from CCBC Officers and fellow Bargoed businesses (rather than a speaker from outside the area).

One respondent expressed the need to have a set agenda to make the discussions as focused and as relevant as possible, whilst several attendees highlighted the need for these meetings to concentrate on positive outcomes and with a focus on constructive comments. One respondent hoped there would be more opportunity to engage with fellow businesses at the next event.

The feedback was generally supportive of the engagement activity carried out to date and was appreciative of the expertise of the BERT team whilst also recognising the collective experience of businesses, traders and residents and the need to work together collaboratively. It was felt that the momentum around these events needs to be maintained and that these activities have the potential to make a difference across the town centre, provided there is sufficient engagement and discussion with the people of Bargoed.

Blackwood

Attendance

<u>Meeting</u>	<u>Businesses</u>	<u>Elected Members</u>	<u>Town/Community Councillors</u>	<u>Other Stakeholders</u>	<u>Support Officers</u>
13/07/22	7	3	4	4	4
07/12/22	5	2	1	5	8

Survey Response Rate

5/29	17%
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Event arrangements

	Very satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Event overall	2 (40%)	1 (20%)	1 (20%)	1 (20%)	0
Content of event	2 (40%)	2 (40%)	0	1 (20%)	0
Location of event	3 (60%)	2 (40%)	0	0	0
Event venue	2 (40%)	3 (60%)	0	0	0
Duration of event	2 (40%)	2 (40%)	1 (20%)	0	0
Time of day for event	2 (40%)	2 (40%)	1 (20%)	0	0

How did you hear about the event?

CCBC email/online/social media	4 (80%)
Through the Town Centre Management Team	1 (20%)

The purpose of the event was to engage with local businesses in our Town Centres. To what extent do you feel the event achieved its purpose?

Fully	2 (40%)
Partially	2 (40%)
Not at all	1 (20%)

How likely are you to attend future events?

Very likely	3 (60%)
Somewhat likely	1 (20%)
Somewhat unlikely	1 (20%)
Very unlikely	0

Summary of comments received

Some respondents expressed the need for greater engagement with local businesses in order to improve attendance and maximise the purpose of the event.

In terms of the responses around the purpose and content of the event, one business felt that the guest speaker should be limited to 15 minutes in order to maximise the remaining time for local businesses to engage. Another business felt that some of the approaches undertaken in Treorchy that were outlined at the meeting would not be suited to Blackwood town centre. One respondent stated that there had been little opportunity for networking and that the meeting placed more of a focus on the Council's plans for the town centre.

The feedback cited a need to network with other businesses across the county borough as a whole, and one respondent expressed the need for positive and constructive discussions at these meetings. One business also verbally provided their views following the meeting and indicated that it had been a worthwhile and positive experience and that they looked forward to attending future meetings.

Ystrad Mynach

Attendance

<u>Meeting</u>	<u>Businesses</u>	<u>Elected Members</u>	<u>Town/Community Council</u>	<u>Other Stakeholders</u>	<u>Support Officers</u>
15/06/22	6	2	1	0	5
16/11/22	4	4	0	1	6

Survey Response Rate

6/14	43%
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Event arrangements

	Very satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Event overall	0	2 (33%)	1 (17%)	1 (17%)	2 (33%)
Content of event	0	2 (33%)	2 (33%)	1 (17%)	1 (17%)
Location of event	3 (50%)	2 (33%)	1 (17%)	0	0
Event venue	3 (50%)	2 (33%)	1 (17%)	0	0
Duration of event	1 (17%)	3 (50%)	2 (33%)	0	0
Time of day for event	2 (33%)	2 (33%)	1 (17%)	1 (17%)	0

How did you hear about the event?

CCBC email	3 (50%)
Third-party email	1 (17%)
Word of mouth	1 (17%)
Through the Town Centre Management Team	1 (16%)

The purpose of the event was to engage with local businesses in our Town Centres. To what extent do you feel the event achieved its purpose?

Fully	0
Partially	3 (50%)
Not at all	3 (50%)

How likely are you to attend future events?

Very likely	3 (50%)
Somewhat likely	1 (17%)
Somewhat unlikely	1 (17%)
Very unlikely	1 (16%)

Summary of comments received.

Respondents highlighted the lack of businesses in attendance when compared to the number of CCBC Officers and Elected Members who were present and felt that business engagement is vital in making these events a success and in order for the meetings to be of benefit to attendees. One respondent felt that the event time needed to be changed to outside of the working day to allow greater opportunity for local businesses to attend.

In terms of the responses around the purpose and content of the event, the guest speaker from Treorchy was positively received and the presentation was felt to be informative and inspirational. However, some respondents felt that there was a lack of constructive ideas and solutions during the ensuing discussion, together with a lack of positive comments and no real outcome achieved.

It was also felt that the presentation from the guest speaker took up the majority of the meeting time, with one respondent disappointed that although the UKSP Fund had been listed on the agenda, there was little discussion around this topic during the meeting. Another respondent had also believed that the draft Local Development Plan proposals and the impact on Ystrad Mynach town centre would be discussed at the meeting, and so they would be unlikely to attend again as the event was not as they had expected. One business also stated that they would have appreciated more of an opportunity to network with the other businesses and local councillors at the meeting.

Caerphilly

Attendance

<u>Meeting</u>	<u>Businesses</u>	<u>Elected Members</u>	<u>Town/Community Councillors</u>	<u>Other Stakeholders</u>	<u>Support Officers</u>
05/04/22 - CANCELLED	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
07/09/22	5	2	3	6	7

Survey Response Rate

4/16	25%
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Event arrangements

	Very satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Event overall	1 (25%)	3 (75%)	0	0	0
Content of event	1 (25%)	3 (75%)	0	0	0
Location of event	2 (50%)	2 (50%)	0	0	0
Event venue	1 (25%)	2 (50%)	1 (25%)	0	0
Duration of event	0	4 (100%)	0	0	0
Time of day for event	1 (25%)	3 (75%)	0	0	0

How did you hear about the event?

CCBC email	3 (75%)
BERT member visit	1 (25%)

The purpose of the event was to engage with local businesses in our Town Centres. To what extent do you feel the event achieved its purpose?

Fully	1 (25%)
Partially	3 (75%)
Not at all	0

How likely are you to attend future events?

Very likely	3 (75%)
Somewhat likely	1 (25%)
Somewhat unlikely	0
Very unlikely	0

Summary of comments received

The respondents were positive in their feedback from the network meetings. With regards to the event achieving its purpose, all respondents highlighted the desire to get more businesses as possible from the town centre to attend. One respondent felt the event was not long enough due to the amount of development that is planned for Caerphilly town centre up until 2035 but also praised the Council for recognising Caerphilly's potential as a popular tourist and investor destination.

Several respondents commented that business to business networking could be improved upon at these events. One suggestion was to give business attendants the opportunity to introduce themselves to others or for attendants to be given a list of attendees before arrival. Another suggestion was for local event organisers to be invited so that they can pitch their ideas and requests to the local business community.

Whilst the opinion of a lack of positive comments from Councillors in attendance was conveyed, the overall response from attendees was positive. Regular, face-to-face meetings where business opinions are taken into consideration, are highly valued.

Risca

Attendance

<u>Meeting</u>	<u>Businesses</u>	<u>Elected Members</u>	<u>Town/Community Councillors</u>	<u>Other Stakeholders</u>	<u>Support Officers</u>
22/02/22	1	0	1	0	3
03/08/22	2	2	0	0	5

Survey Response Rate

2/6	33%
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Event arrangements

	Very satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	Somewhat dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied
Event overall	0	1 (100%)	0	0	0
Content of event	1 (100%)	0	0	0	0
Location of event	1 (100%)	0	0	0	0
Event venue	0	1 (100%)	0	0	0
Duration of event	1 (100%)	0	0	0	0
Time of day for event	1 (100%)	0	0	0	0

How did you hear about the event?

CCBC email	1 (100%)
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The purpose of the event was to engage with local businesses in our Town Centres. To what extent do you feel the event achieved its purpose?

Fully	1 (100%)
Partially	0
Not at all	0

How likely are you to attend future events?

Very likely	1 (100%)
Somewhat likely	0
Somewhat unlikely	0
Very unlikely	0

Summary of comments received

Overall, the response to the Risca network meeting was very positive. The respondent verbally responded to the Town Centre Support Officer that, whilst he was disappointed that more businesses had not attended the meeting, he was very much in favour of them continuing and engagement with businesses in Risca should continue for the benefit of the economy and the town.