

**Minutes of the Environment, Sustainability & Planning Committee held on Wednesday
12 January 2022 at 6.00 pm.**

The recommendations below will be submitted to the Council Meeting to be held on 9
February 2022.

These minutes are subject to confirmation at the meeting of the committee to be held on 23
February 2022.

**Venue: The meeting was held remotely and at the Council House, Ventnor Road,
Cwmbran NP44 3JY in accordance with the Local Government and Elections (Wales)
Act 2021**

Present Councillor AL Bird (Chairman), Councillors SWJ Ashley, SJ Brooks, M Day,
KK Manneh, J Rees, M Villars, WJ Walker and DH Williams.

Also Councillor LJ Chaney

*(Councillors Ashley, Day, Manneh, Rees, Villars and Williams participated in
the meeting via remote means)*

Also David Collins (Clerk) and Clare Facey (Administrative Officer) Clare
Facey participated by remote means.

Absent Councillors RhM Bennett, F Jones, LM Ryan and LG Johnston.

(Councillor M Johnston passed away on 8 January 2022.)

(No Public Participation Session was held at this meeting.)

*Prior to the commencement of the meeting, Members observed a period of silence in
memory of former Councillor M Johnston.*

ESP21/012 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence were accepted from Councillors RhM Bennett
(sickness) and LM Ryan (personal)

ESP21/013 Declarations of Interest

Members were asked to declare any personal and/or prejudicial interests that
they may have and sign the Interests Sheet to give details of the nature of the
interest.

Councillor SWJ Ashley declared a non-prejudicial interest in Minute
ESP21/016 (Planning, Highways & Footpaths Matters) as a member of
Torfaen County Borough Council's Planning Committee. He remained in the
meeting during the discussions. He would reconsider the nature of the
interest matters at County Borough Council level taking into account all
relevant evidence and representations.

Councillor DH Williams declared a non-prejudicial interest in Minute
ESP21/016 (c) (Mynydd Maen Wind Farm Proposal) as Chairman of Blaen
Bran Community Woodland. He remained in the meeting during the
discussions.

Councillor SWJ Ashley declared a non-prejudicial interest in Minute

ESP21/017 (Neighbourhood Services) as a member of Torfaen County Borough Council. He remained in the meeting during the discussions. He would reconsider the nature of the interest matters at County Borough Council level taking into account all relevant evidence and representations.

ESP21/014 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 24 November 2021 were confirmed as a correct record. The Chairman signed the minutes.

ESP21/015 Terms of Reference

Members noted that, at a meeting held on 15 December 2021, the Council confirmed that matters relating to sustainability and Well-being would be overseen by this committee in future.

It was **recommended** that the information is noted.

ESP21/016 Planning, Highways & Footpaths Matters

Councillor SWJ Ashley declared a non-prejudicial interest in this item as a member of Torfaen County Borough Council's Planning Committee. He remained in the meeting during the discussions. He would reconsider the nature of the interest matters at County Borough Council level taking into account all relevant evidence and representations

(a) Planning Lists

Members were advised to submit any observation to any outstanding planning applications to the Council's staff.

Ward Members confirmed that they had no objection to application 21/P/0981/HH.

It was **recommended** that the information is noted.

(b) Torfaen Replacement Local Development Plan (2018-2033)

Members were updated on the current position in preparing the Torfaen Replacement Local Development Plan. Details were reported.

There was a need to develop a new timetable for the plan preparation. This timetable would be part of a revised Delivery Agreement which would be presented for Council agreement in mid-2022 (provisionally), rather than November 2021 as previously stated.

It was **recommended** that the position is noted.

(c) Mynydd Maen Wind Farm Proposal

Councillor DH Williams declared a non-prejudicial interest in this item as Chairman of Blaen Bran Community Woodland. He remained in the meeting during the discussions.

Members received a presentation on the above from Chris Jackson and Carey Green of Renewable Energy Systems Ltd., who participated in the meeting via remote means.

Chris Jackson outlined the proposals and described the site of the proposed development. He referred to ecological issues associated with

the development and outlined potential time scales for completion of the project. He also described the potential capacity of the development and referred to further detailed assessments which would be undertaken around issues such as visual impact. He anticipated that the project could be operational by 2026.

Chris Jackson also referred to consultation which would be undertaken with the community about the proposals and to the establishment of a Community Liaison Group. There was scope for the Council to be represented on this group. Further details would be provided.

Issues raised by Members included:

- the visual impact of the development on the town centre of Cwmbran.
- any potential impact on flora and fauna. (Chris Jackson was unaware of any potential adverse impact but explained that this would be fully taken into account as part of the planning process.)
- the impact of the development on the environment around Twmbarlwm and Blaen Bran Community Woodland.

The Clerk undertook to circulate further details of the development from Renewable Energy Systems Ltd., who would also contact the Council about the formation of the Community Liaison Group.

It was **recommended** that the information is noted.

ESP21/017 Neighbourhood Services

Councillor SWJ Ashley declared a non-prejudicial interest in this item as a member of Torfaen County Borough Council. He remained in the meeting during the discussions. He would reconsider the nature of the interest matters at County Borough Council level taking into account all relevant evidence and representations

Members welcomed Councillor A Owen Executive Member for Environment, (Torfaen County Borough Council), who participated in the meeting via remote meas. Councillor Owen described current initiatives, which included measures to tackle climate change, Local Nature Partnerships, the appointment of an officer with responsibility for the canal and other projects such as improved play facilities. Members expressed the Council's support for working with the Executive Member in relation to climate change and for visiting some of the projects described.

Other issues raised by Members included:

- the importance of improving facilities at sites such as Cwmbran Park, Pontnewydd Park and the Boating Lake, including the provision of facilities such as basketball at Cwmbran Park.
- the availability of external funding to help deliver some of the above projects.

It is **recommended** that Councillor Owen is thanked for her participation in the meeting and her report.

ESP21/018 Primary Schools Eco Quiz – 3 February 2022 at The Congress Theatre

Members noted that event would now take place remotely It is anticipated that Knauf Insulation would once again support the event via a donation. Local schools have been contacted to assess their availability. (Minute CL21/111 (5) refers).

Members approved a potential format for the event, as presented by the Administration Officer.

The Council could rely upon Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972 which is the power enabling the Council to discharge its powers and functions.

The event would be delivered under the Environment (Wales) Act 2016: using approved budgets of £800 (N09) with donation from Knauf.

It was **recommended** that

- (1) the format described is approved.
- (2) funds within budget heading N05 (Environmental Projects/New Projects) are also used to support the event and encourage an awareness of environmental issues and sustainability amongst schools.

ESP21/019 Committee Estimates 2022/23

Members considered estimates for the forthcoming year.

Members underlined the importance of establishing a business case for any future projects.

It was **recommended** that subject to the amendment of the title of N05 (Environmental Projects/New Projects) to include Climate Change, the estimates are approved.

ESP21/020 Exclusion of the Press & Public

In view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, it was agreed that the following matter be considered in private and that the power of exclusion of the public under Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 be exercised.

ESP21/021 Task Force Performance Information

Members considered performance information about the work of the Task Force. Members welcomed the format of the report, which had been revised to improve the information available to Members.

It was **recommended** that the information is noted.

Signed
(Chairman, Environment, Sustainability & Planning Committee)