

Minutes of the Environment, Sustainability & Planning Committee held on Wednesday 1 June 2022 at 6.00 pm.

The recommendations below will be submitted to the Council Meeting to be held on 22 June 2022.

These minutes are subject to confirmation at the meeting of the committee to be held on a Wednesday 6th July 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 SWJ Ashley (Chairman), Councillors A Bird, M Day, L Lloyd-Tolman, KK Manneh, P Seabourne, M Villars, W Walker

(Councillors R Bennett & L Chaney participated in the meeting via remote means)

. Also Clare Facey (Interim Clerk)

Absent Councillor C Morgan

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

ESP22/001 Appointment of Chair and Membership

At the Annual General Meeting of Cwmbran Community Council held on 18th May 2022, Councillor SWJ Ashley was appointed Chair of this Committee for the Municipal Year 2022/23. Councillor M Villars was appointed as Vice Chair. Membership was appointed as referred to above.

Terms of Reference for the Committee were also agreed at the above meeting.

ESP22/002 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence were accepted from Councillor C Morgan (personal).

ESP22/003 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.

ESP22/004 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 February 2022 were confirmed as a correct record. The previous Chairman signed the minutes.

ESP22/005 Planning, Highways & Footpaths Matters

(a) Planning Lists

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

The Acting Clerk suggested that any outstanding Planning Lists be brought to the meeting for members attention, as pre lockdown/covid administration. The Acting Clerk also mentioned bringing the Schedules of Torfaen County Borough Council Planning Decisions to the meeting for members consideration in the future.

Members raised concerns regarding planning issues and ultimately Cwmbran Community Council's observations and objections being ignored in the past. Members felt that it would be beneficial to the Council to receive a presentation on planning procedures. Members suggested inviting Richard Lewis (Planning Officer at Torfaen County Borough Council) to a future meeting to discuss Torfaen County Borough Council's planning practices.

It was **recommended** that:-

- a) Future planning lists and schedules are outlined and discussed at the Environmental meetings
- b) Torfaen County Borough Council's Officer, Richard Lewis, is invited to explain planning procedures
- c) that the position is noted.

ESP22/006 Neighbourhood Services

The Executive Member for Environment at Torfaen County Borough Council did not attend the meeting.

Members discussed issues that they would like brought to the attention of the Executive Member. Some key points raised:-

- No Mow May – Members would like to invite Torfaen County Borough Council's Ecologist (Officer Steve Williams) to a future meeting, to elaborate on this scheme and explain the process in which they use to identify which areas needed to be cut during May and which areas were left to help wild flowers and struggling pollinators. Members were concerned that some areas were allowed to grow wild, whilst there was only grass and no wild flowers.
- Recycling Issues – Members were concerned regarding the litter that arose during some recycling collections. Members had noticed that in some of their wards, the recycling collections created litter and if the "recycling crews" were made aware of this it might help alleviate the issue.

It was **recommended** that:-

- a) Torfaen County Borough Council's Ecologist, Officer Steve Williams is invited to a future meeting to discuss the No Mow May scheme in more detail.

- b) the Executive Member for Environment at Torfaen County Borough Council is invited to the next meeting to discuss the recycling/litter issues raised by Members
- c) the position is noted.

ESP22/007 Seminars & Outside Bodies: Monmouthshire, Brecon & Abergavenny Canal Trust

The Chairman of the Committee reported to Members that a Canal Co-ordinator Officer (Alice Rees) was now in post at Torfaen County Borough Council. Members agreed that it would be helpful if the Officer was invited to a future meeting of the Environmental Committee to address members on her role as Canal Co-ordinator.

It was **recommended** that Alice Rees the Canal Co-ordinator Officer at Torfaen County Borough Council is invited to a future meeting of the Environmental Committee.

ESP22/008 Future, New Environmental Projects

The Committee noted that the Environmental budget for 2022/23 had set aside £6,000 in the budget for N05 Environmental Projects, including climate change and £20,000 for N10 Well-Being and Anti-Poverty.

Members raised the following ideas/issues:-

- A report was presented to members for consideration on the Council's duty under the Well-Being of Future Generations Act and suggested supporting foodbanks in Cwmbran on a quarterly basis throughout the year
- Looking at long term projects, signposting, education
- Accountability, physical evidence, where the money is actually being spent
- Looking at tree planting. The majority of trees have died that were recently planted, either planted at the wrong time or neglected. The need for any new tree planting schemes to be managed properly. Identifying places for trees, planting and facilitating
- Looking at Climate Change – asking members of the public, through social media platforms (short survey), what they would like to see the Council do to help Climate Change?

It was **recommended** that:-

- a) the report presented by the Chairman of the Council is reported at the next Environmental Committee following report procedures (using the corporate template), for members consideration
- b) the issues highlighted are noted.

ESP22/009 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.

ESP22/010 Task Force Performance Information

Members considered performance information regarding the recent work of the Task Force.

Members suggested that posters are designed and placed in the Council's noticeboards and on social media platforms advertising the service of the Task Force.

Members discussed the current pricing arrangements and suggested that this is brought to the next Committee meeting for consideration. The Acting Clerk is asked to report the income and expenditure of the Task Force service.

It was **recommended** that:-

- a) the Task Force performance information is noted
- b) the Task Force service is advertised
- c) the service costs are reviewed
- d) the position is noted.

Signed
(Chairman, Environment, Sustainability & Planning Committee)