

Minutes of the Environment, Sustainability & Planning Committee held on Wednesday 6 July 2022 at 6.00 pm.

The recommendations below will be submitted to the Council Meeting to be held on 27 July 2022

These minutes are subject to confirmation at the meeting of the committee to be held on a Wednesday 7th September 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 Councillors A Bird, M Day, F Jones, L Johnston, L Lloyd-Tolman, G Lloyd-Tolman, KK Manneh, M Villars (Vice-Chair – chaired the meeting), W Walker

(Councillors SWJ Ashley (Chair), & L Chaney participated in the meeting via remote means)

Also Clare Facey (Interim Clerk), Alice Rees Canal Co-ordinator at Torfaen County Borough Council & Councillor Mandy Owen Torfaen County Borough council, who attended remotely

Absent Councillors R Bennett, C Morgan & P Seabourne

(No Public Participation Session was held at this meeting)

ESP22/011 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence were accepted from Councillors R Bennett (work commitments), C Morgan (holidays) & P Seabourne (holidays).

ESP22/012 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 M Day declared a non-prejudicial interest in Minute ESP22/014 (a) Planning Lists and Councillor SWJ Ashley declared a non-prejudicial interest in Minute ESP22/016 Seminars & Outside Bodies: Monmouthshire, Brecon & Abergavenny Canal Trust below.

They remained in the meeting during the discussions.

ESP22/013 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 1 June 2022 were confirmed as a correct record. The Vice-Chair signed the minutes.

ESP22/014 Planning, Highways & Footpaths Matters

Councillor M Day declared a non-prejudicial interest in Minute ESP22/014 (a) Planning List 1417/18.

(a) Planning Lists

No objection is offered to Planning Lists 1417 and 1418

Members noted that a Torfaen County Borough Council Planning Officer would be attending the September Committee meeting, to explain planning procedures.

(b) Schedules of Torfaen County Borough Council Planning Decisions

It was **recommended**:-

- i) that no objection is offered to Planning Lists 1417 and 1418.
- ii) To note the Schedules of Torfaen County Borough Council Planning Decisions.

ESP22/015 Neighbourhood Services

At the last Environmental Committee Meeting, Members requested information from the Ecologist Officer, regarding the No Mow Scheme at Torfaen County Borough Council. Members noted that Veronica Brannovic, an Officer at TCBC, would be attending the September Environmental Committee meeting to discuss.

Members welcomed Councillor Mandy Owen, Executive Member for Environment at Torfaen County Borough Council to the meeting.

At the last meeting Members requested information on the recycling issues that members had experienced in their wards. Members were concerned regarding the litter that arose during recycling collections. Mention was also made to the “throwing” and “slamming” of the black bins causing damage to the boxes.

Councillor Owen responded by reporting that the department were unfortunately affected by staff shortages (due to sick, covid) plus vehicle breakdowns. However, 2 new electric vehicles had recently been purchased, named by local schools; “Burt” and “Trevor” and they were also looking to deliver more training, to meet expectations, resulting in further improvements to the collections in the future.

It was **recommended** that:-

- a) the Executive Member for Environment at Torfaen County Borough Council is thanked for her report.
- b) the position is noted.

ESP22/016 Seminars & Outside Bodies: Monmouthshire, Brecon & Abergavenny Canal Trust

Councillor SWJ Ashley declared a non-prejudicial interest in Minute ESP22/016 Seminars & Outside Bodies: Monmouthshire, Brecon &

Abergavenny Canal Trust.

Members welcomed Alice Rees, the Canal Co-ordinator Officer at Torfaen County Borough Council.

The Officer gave a full and informative presentation to members, relating to her role as Canal Co-ordinator, which covered:-

- Bringing the right people together
- Aligning aspirations and visions for the canal
- Action planning – short, medium and long term
- Positive community engagement
- Key themes – Natural and Historical Environment
- Navigation/Tow path/Destination planning/Restoration
- Events & Promotions

Members thanked the Officer for her presentation and the following points were raised:-

- The badly neglected area of canal between St Dials and Two Locks – members were extremely disappointed by this area of the canal and felt it was in desperate need of restoration/clearing/dredging works/rat infestation
- Community Engagement being really important
- Important for community to take ownership
- Concern over area of canal between Ty Coch & Bettws
- Re-igniting the Monmouthshire & Brecon Canal Partnerships
- Advertising the classes and event activity on the canal
- Costs involved
- Regular updates

It was **recommended** that Alice Rees is thanked for her report and willingness to answer members questions.

ESP22/017 Future, New Environmental Projects

At the last Committee meeting members 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 received reports from Councillors A Bird and C Morgan. After deliberation it was recommended that both reports are deferred to the next full Council for full consideration.

The Item deferred from the Grants Committee (GVO22/014(a)) was considered by members, suggesting that the grant is funded from the anti-poverty budget under Environment Committee N10 (under the Local Government Charities Act 2011 s3(1)).

It was **recommended**:-

- a) that both reports are deferred to the next full Council for consideration
- b) that the Item deferred from the Grants Committee (GVO22/014(a)) is funded from the anti-poverty budget under Environment Committee N10 (under the Local Government Charities Act 2011 s3(1)).

- c) that the position is noted.

ESP22/018 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.

ESP22/019 Task Force Performance Information

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

Members noted the service charges of the Task Force.

At the last meeting 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 noted the poster and suggested other platforms to advertise the service.

Members discussed the current pricing arrangements and felt that these prices should remain the same but that the Acting Clerk speak to the Task Force team to identify how they manage the criteria process.

It was **recommended** that:-

- a) the Task Force performance information is noted
- b) the Task Force service is advertised
- c) the service costs are noted
- d) the Acting Clerk report to the next meeting on the criteria identification process
- e) the position is noted.

Signed
(Chairman, Environment, Sustainability & Planning Committee)