

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

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

These minutes are subject to confirmation at the meeting of the committee to be held on a Wednesday 23 November 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 Councillors SWJ Ashley (Chair), A Bird, M Day, G Lloyd-Tolman, L Lloyd-Tolman, C Morgan, P Seabourne, M Villars, KK Manneh, W Walker

Also Clare Facey (Interim Clerk), Mal Edgson, Chief Executive of CAB

Absent Councillors Rh Bennet, L Chaney, L Johnston

(No Public Participation Session was held at this meeting)

ESP22/030 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence were accepted from Councillor L Chaney (personal) & R Bennett (personal).

ESP22/031 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.

No Declarations of Interest were declared.

ESP22/032 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 7 September 2022 were confirmed as a correct record. The Chair signed the minutes.

ESP22/033 Planning, Highways & Footpaths Matters

(a) Torfaen County Borough Council's Planning Officer, Helen Smith did not attend the meeting.

(b) Planning Lists

No objection is offered to Planning List 1431, items 6384, 6385 & 6386.

(c) Schedules of Torfaen County Borough Council Planning Decisions

Members noted the Schedule of Planning Decisions.

**(d) Torfaen County Borough Council Consolidation Order 2019
(Amendment No 6)**

Members noted the Consolidation Order.

**(e) Torfaen County Borough Council – Proposed Court Farm Road
Parking Control Measures**

Members noted the Parking Control Measures.

It was **recommended** that:-

- i) a Torfaen County Borough Council Planning Officer attends a future meeting.
- ii) that no objection is offered to Planning List 1431, items 6384, 6385 & 6386.
- iii) to note the Schedules of Torfaen County Borough Council Planning Decisions.
- iv) the Consolidation Order received from Torfaen County Borough Council is noted.
- v) the Parking Control Measures are noted.

ESP22/034 Neighbourhood Services

- a) The Executive Member for Environment at Torfaen County Borough Council did not attend the meeting. No questions were submitted.

Councillor Walker expressed his grievances again regarding the recent collection issues that had been occurring in the Llantarnam Ward. He asked if contingency plans could be made to arrange missed collections mid-week rather than early mornings on weekends.

It was suggested that Mandy Owen be invited to the next meeting and is presented clear questions by Members.

- b) Members noted the response from the Head of Neighbouring Services, Rachel Jowitt.
- c) Members agreed to match fund £2,000 with TCBC (Under N05 Environmental Projects) an area of wildflower meadow with guidance from Veronika Brannovic.

Councillor Walker suggested that the wildflower fields be in visible areas such as the green spaces approaching the town centre. Councillor Villars enquired if TCBC could be contacted to ensure that the wildflower meadows are not destroyed during ground maintenance.

The Chair of the Committee suggested that Members come together with Veronica Brannovic to discuss workable priorities and potential sites.

It was **recommended** that:-

- i) Members email the Clerk with their questions so that they can be presented to Mandy Owen for the next meeting.
- ii) Members note the response received from the Head of Neighbouring Services
- iii) Members identify workable priorities and potential sites in conjunction with Veronica Brannovic with regards to the wildflower meadows.
- iv) the information is noted.

ESP22/035 Seminars & Outside Bodies: Monmouthshire, Brecon & Abergavenny Canal Trust

The Chair of the Committee gave an update on the latest meeting. A Canal walk will be taking place in Cwmbran some time in November. The Chair of the Committee will inform Members of the date once it is decided.

Members enquired which stretch of the Canal is owned by the Canal Trust. The Chair of the Committee explained that the Canal is managed as part of a partnership between the Borough Councils and the various Trusts.

Members also expressed concerns that some areas of the Canal in Cwmbran are in disrepair. It was suggested that the Council write to TCBC requesting they look at the condition of the Canal in Cwmbran. It was also suggested that a Multi-Agency meeting could be set up to discuss these matters.

It was **recommended** that:-

- a) the Council write to Torfaen County Borough Council asking them to look at the condition of the Canal.
- b) a Multi Agency meeting be set up to discuss issues with the Canal.

ESP22/036 Future, New Environmental Projects/Well-Being & Anti-Poverty

- a) Winter Warmer Scheme – The Acting Clerk gave an update on the thermal blankets. Promocorp have started production of the blankets which are expected to be ready within the next two weeks.

The Acting Clerk has had meetings with Age Connect and CCYP who are both running similar projects. It was suggested that the projects would work well in partnership with these organisations. The Acting Clerk has also sent correspondence to the other organisations mentioned previously.

TCBC have emailed the Acting Clerk a long list of organisations and projects that could potentially offer support. Councillor Manneh suggested that the list is sent to him so they can decide which projects are most relevant to the Cwmbran Community Council area.

- b) At the Grants meeting held on 5 September 2022 (GVO22/021) Members recommended that a Grant from Thornhill 4 U Too is accordingly amended to meet legal requirements and that the grant is considered as per previous grants awarded to foodbanks, in the sum of £3,333. Members suggested deferring to Full Council for consideration.
- c) Mal Edgson, Chief Executive of CAB attended the meeting via zoom to give a presentation. Mal explained that the 'Fuel Banks' scheme has been a success and between January and September 2022 and it has helped 1,223 people in the Cwmbran area. This is a rising total as the energy crisis is an increasing problem.

The approach of the scheme is to make vouchers available for energy to anyone who needs them. These are currently only offered for top up meters. Direct debit vouchers will be available by the end of October. Charis Grants is a family run business that uses a secure and traceable system to issue vouchers.

Mal Edgson explained that a full advice session is completed before issuing vouchers. In the advice session they complete a benefit screening, offering support with problem debt and give advice on energy saving. There is also a small pot of money available to help with draft proofing and insulation.

There was a short questions and answers session after the presentation and the Chair of the Committee thanked Mal Edgson for his time.

It was agreed that the Acting Clerk contact One Voice Wales for advice on this matter. Members agreed to defer discussions to the next Full Council Meeting.

- d) The Acting Clerk reported to Members of recent suggestions that were received by Councillor Luke Simmonds that fall under the Environmental, Sustainability & Planning Committee.

The first one is a request for funds to plant daffodils along Hollybush Road and Two Locks Road. Members suggested that it might be more cost effective for the Council to purchase the daffodils and ask the Task Force to plant them.

The second item is a request for additional Community Council bins on Two Locks Road and Hollybush Road, and a new Community Council notice board, next to the bus stop on Two Locks Road. Members agreed to defer these items to the next Agenda once the Acting Clerk has acquired costings.

It was **recommended** that:-

- i) the Acting Clerk sends the list of organisations from TCBC to Councillor Manneh so that they can pick the most relevant organisations.
- ii) that Thornhill 4 U Too application for a grant towards their foodbank is deferred to Full Council.
- iii) the Acting Clerk contact One Voice Wales for advice on working in partnership with CAB. The matter is deferred to the Full Council Meeting for further discussions.
- iv) The Acting Clerk source costings for daffodils, two new bins and notice boards, to be included on the next Environment Agenda.

ESP22/037 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.

ESP22/038 Task Force Performance Information

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

The Acting Clerk updated Members that the Task Force would be prepared to install basic draft proofing measures into Cwmbran homes. It was agreed that this would be deferred to the next meeting for further consideration.

The Acting Clerk mentioned the possibility of obtaining Notice Boards for the wards that did not have one. It was agreed that this item would be deferred to the next meeting for further consideration.

It was **recommended** that:-

- a) the Task Force performance information is noted
- b) the Installation of basic draft proofing measures are deferred to the next meeting for further consideration
- c) the purchase and installation of Notice Boards for all wards is deferred to the next meeting for consideration.

Signed
(Chairman, Environment, Sustainability & Planning Committee)