

Minutes of the Environment, Sustainability & Planning Committee held on Wednesday 23 November 2022 at 6.00 pm.

The recommendations below will be submitted to the Council Meeting to be held on
14 December 2022

These minutes are subject to confirmation at the meeting of the committee to be held on a
Wednesday 18 January 2023

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 SWJ Ashley, Rh Bennet, L J Chaney, F Jones, G Lloyd-Tolman, L Lloyd-Tolman, C Morgan, P Seabourne, M Villars, KK Manneh, WJ Walker

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

Also Clare Facey (Interim Clerk), Simon Anthony Head of Service at TCBC, Cllr Mandy Owen Executive Member for Environment at TCBC (both via remote means) & Alice Rees Canal Co-ordinator, Neighbourhood Services at TCBC

Absent Councillors A Bird, M Day, L Johnston

(No Public Participation Session was held at this meeting)

ESP22/039 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence were accepted from Councillor A Bird (Personal).

ESP22/040 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 ESP22/042 Planning, Highways & Footpaths Matters. He remained in the meeting during the discussions.

ESP22/041 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 October 2022 were confirmed as a correct record. The Chair signed the minutes.

ESP22/042 Planning, Highways & Footpaths Matters

Councillor SWJ Ashley declared a non-prejudicial interest in Minute ESP22/042 Planning, Highways & Footpaths Matters. He remained in the meeting during the discussions.

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

(b) Planning Lists

No objections are offered to Planning List 1435, Item 6397 & Planning List 1436, items 6398 & 6399. Observations were awaited on items 6400 & 6401 on Planning List 1436.

(c) Schedules of Torfaen County Borough Council Planning Decisions

Members noted the Schedule of Planning Decisions.

It was **recommended** that:-

- i) a Torfaen County Borough Council Planning Officer attends a future meeting.
- ii) no objections are offered to Planning List 1435, Item 6397 & Planning List 1436, items 6398 & 6399. Observations were awaited on items 6400 & 6401 on Planning List 1436
- iii) to note the Schedules of Torfaen County Borough Council Planning Decisions.

ESP22/043 Neighbourhood Services

(a) Councillor Mandy Owen, Executive Member for Environment (Torfaen County Borough Council) attended the Meeting. The New Head of Service Simon Anthony also attended the meeting.

Councillor Mandy Owen answered questions submitted by members explaining how recycling rounds are organised across the Borough. It was reported that a new fleet of recycling vehicles have started coming into the depo and are currently being put into service. The reasons for missed and delayed collections were also explained to members.

There were further discussions about the matter. Simon Anthony gave a short presentation highlighting the strategy and forward planning to improve the services in the Borough.

It was suggested that the Council is given a regular report updating members on the progress of the refuse and recycling services.

Councillor Mandy Owen and Simon Anthony were both thanked for their full report and willingness to answer members' questions.

- b) Progress on the Wildflower Meadow Planting to be reported at a future meeting.

It was **recommended** that:-

- i) the Executive Member for Environment (Torfaen County Borough Council) together with the Head of Service are thanked for their report and invited to future meetings to report on the progress of the improvements to the recycling service in the Borough
- ii) progress on the Wildflower Meadow Planting to be reported at a future meeting
- ii) the position is noted.

ESP22/044

Seminars & Outside Bodies: Monmouthshire, Brecon & Abergavenny Canal Trust

Alice Rees, Canal Co-ordinator at Torfaen County Borough Council attended the meeting to answer members questions on recent concerns that had been expressed by members at the last meeting regarding some areas of the canal that had been neglected.

The Officer explained that they were currently developing an action plan to improve these neglected areas of the canal. The Officer reported that a general tidy up and weed killing action plan were a high priority, especially in these areas. Another high priority was the installation of identified areas which needed benches along the canal. In terms of maintenance, the Officer explained that there was a difference between non-navigable and navigable canal.

Members were keen to look at ways in which the Council could help to support the canal maintenance and improve biodiversity. It was suggested that a canal walk was arranged for Members, together with the canal co-ordinator. Members also requested progress reports every 3 months either by the Officer attending a meeting or reports to members via Members Matters.

It was **recommended** that:-

- i) Alice Rees is thanked for her attendance and willingness to answer members' questions
- ii) there is a canal walk arranged for members
- iii) progress reports are provided every 3 months, either by the Officer attending a meeting or reports to members, via Members Matters
- iv) the position is noted.

ESP22/045 Future, New Environmental Projects/Well-Being & Anti Poverty /Foodbanks

- a) The Winter Warmer Scheme – Members were pleased to note that the Acting Clerk reported that 1200 blankets had been delivered to The Council House and are currently being distributed to local community organisations in the area. They have already been received by CCYP, Age Connect, Citizens Advice, Co-Star, Thornhill 4U, and some local Churches. It was also suggested that a map is produced identifying ‘warm spaces’ within the Cwmbran area.

Members noted the survey results that had been received by members of the public and were pleased to note that the highest percentages of items requested were for thermal blankets and socks.

Members noted that a press release had been issued and photographs would follow.

- b) Fuel Banks Scheme – The Acting Clerk gave an update. At the last full Council meeting it was approved to fund £10,000 to Citizens Advice to support the fuel bank scheme. The Acting Clerk is awaiting a response from the Chief Executive to arrange the payment process.
- c) Costings for daffodils – The Acting Clerk provided the costing for daffodils. It was agreed to purchase daffodils to distribute to any interested Members within their ward. It was suggested that this item is placed on the next Members Matters to ascertain which members required daffodils and how many the Council need to purchase. Suggestion was made to purchase Pembroke Welsh (Tenby) daffodils if possible.

It was also reported that Torfaen County Borough Council will provide bins if they agree there is a need for a new bin in the location selected. It was suggested that this item is also placed on Members Matters for Members to report any areas they require a bin.

The Acting Clerk provided members with costings of new notice boards. It was decided to place this item on Members Matters for members to identify within their wards, who requires a new Noticeboard.

It was **recommended** that:-

- i) The Winter Warmer Scheme is noted and monitored and a map is created identifying ‘warm spaces’ in Cwmbran
- ii) the payment is made to Citizens Advice Bureau once the Acting Clerk has received details from the Chief Executive
- iii) through Members Matters, Members identify who requires daffodils, bins and noticeboards
- v) the position is noted.

ESP22/046 Welsh Government – The Section 6 Biodiversity & Ecosystem Resilience Duty

Members noted and approved the report and agreed to discuss matters at a future meeting.

It was **recommended** that the report is approved.

ESP22/047 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.

ESP22/048 Task Force Performance Information

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

At the last meeting Members noted that the Task Force would be prepared to install basic draught proofing measures to homes in Cwmbran. Members suggested that costings were brought to the next full Council meeting for members consideration.

It was **recommended** that:-

- a) the Task Force performance information is noted
- b) costings are researched and identified to install basic draught proofing measures to homes within Cwmbran, to be reported at the next full Council meeting
- c) that the position is noted.

ESP22/049 Revenue Estimates 2023-24

Members noted the Revenue Estimates for Code N – Environment, Sustainability & Planning and code M – Task Force.

The Acting Clerk gave a report. Members agreed and noted the Revenue Estimates for Code M relating to the Task Force. With regards to Code N (Environmental and Sustainability & Planning) under N07 members suggested altering the budget from £400 to £1000 under awards and contributions.

It was **recommended** that the Revenue Estimates are amended and noted.

Signed
(Chairman, Environment, Sustainability & Planning Committee)