

**Minutes of the Environment, Sustainability & Planning Committee held on Wednesday
22 November 2023 at 6.00 pm.**

The recommendations below will be submitted to the Council Meeting to be held on
Wednesday 13 December 2023

These minutes are subject to confirmation at the meeting of the committee to be held on
Wednesday 17 January 2024.

**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, C Morgan & WJ Walker

*(Councillors R Bennett, L Chaney, F Jones, P Seabourne & M Villars
participated in the meeting via remote means)*

Also Gareth Davies (Clerk) & Andy Smith (RFO/Deputy Clerk)

Absent Councillors SWJ Ashley, L Johnston, G Lloyd-Tolman, L Lloyd-Tolman &
KK Manneh

(No Public Participation Session was held at this meeting)

ESP23/034 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were accepted from Councillors SWJ Ashley (illness)
& L Lloyd-Tolman (Course)

ESP23/035 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.

There were no Declarations of Interest.

ESP23/036 Minutes – 11 October 2023

Councillor Villars enquired when the Local Park Group ESP23/030 meetings
will be starting, the Clerk is still waiting for responses and will investigate.

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2023 were confirmed as a
correct record of the meeting and are approved and actioned therein.

ESP23/037 Planning, Highways & Footpaths Matters

(a) Planning Lists

No objections are offered to Planning Lists 1483 & 1484.

(b) Schedules of Torfaen County Borough Council Planning Decisions

Members noted the Schedule of Planning Decisions.

It was **recommended** that:-

- i) no objections are offered to Planning Lists
- ii) to note the Schedules of Torfaen County Borough Council Planning Decisions.
- iii) The position is noted.

ESP23/038 Neighbourhood Services

Councillor Mandy Owen, Executive Member for the Environment (Torfaen County Borough Council) was unable to attend the meeting.

Councillor Walker updated members on drop in events he had attended concerning the extension to the active travel paths with the new path opened in the summer changing an existing active travel route. Councillor Walker is concerned that the new route has causes issues with the parking at the main junction at Court Farm, the corner needs to be looked at and Bollards installed to stop parking causing a hazard on the junction.

Councillor Seabourne had concerns about street lighting at Farlays and also with street works being carried out in the ward with the holes remaining open, it has been reported but not yet resolved.

Councillor Seabourne was also concerned about the new 20 mph signs which had been painted over and enquired if Torfaen CBC could be contacted to arrange cleaning the signs.

It was **recommended** that:-

- a) contact is made with Torfaen CBC.
- b) the position is noted.

ESP23/039 Environmental Reports

Canal Update

Members were concerned that further works had not been carried out to clear blanket weed on the canal with approximately £4000 of the original funds remaining unspent on work to the canal and a leak also causing concerns with water levels.

Councillor F Jones informed members of an incident on the canal where a resident was attacked by dogs. The clerk will contact the Police to attend the next Full Council meeting concerning patrols of the canal and Torfaen CBC enforcement.

Members discussed funding awarded to MBACT from Torfaen CBC and asked the Clerk to make enquiries into the funding awarded and report back to members.

It was **recommended** that:-

- a) the Police are invited to attend the next Full Council meeting.
- b) Torfaen CBC enforcement is contacted concerning dog patrols.
- c) Enquiries are made into the funding received by MBACT.
- d) the position is noted.

ESP23/040 Reports regarding any Climate & Nature Emergency Activities

Councillor C Morgan reported to members on the planting taking place at Pontnewydd Park, including bulbs and Cherry Trees. Installation of the new children's roundabout at Pontnewydd Park will be taking place at the end of November.

Councillor Villars informed members that LARCS has planted 12 fruit trees in Oakfield flower garden.

It was **recommended** that:-

- a) the position is noted.

ESP23/041 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.

ESP23/042 Task Force Performance Information

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

It was **recommended** that:-

- a) the Task Force performance information is noted.

ESP23/043 BUDGET 2023/24

Members received an update from the RFO/Deputy Clerk on the attached reports. There is not a lot of movement at the moment with the majority of the budget being spent from December – March.

It was **recommended** that:-

- a) the position is noted.

ESP23/044 BUDGET 2024/25

- a) Members considered the attached reports for the 2024/25 budget. Councillor Villars suggested merging the Well Being and Anti Poverty reserves.

Members enquired about the Blanket Scheme and the Clerk confirmed that he had not received any requests for Blankets this year with some groups still having them left from the stock provided last year. The Clerk would contact the groups to see if they require more blankets.

Councillor Bird enquired about the Awards & Contributions funding which has not been given for some time and suggested moving the Primary Schools Eco Quiz funding to the Events and Community Projects Budget.

Councillor Seabourne enquired about funding for Cwmbran High School to install a Sensory Garden and members suggested that funding could be applied for through either the Grants to Voluntary Organisations or the Regeneration & Major Grants Committee depending on the amount of funding requested.

- b) Members considered the Task Force Proposed Budget for 2024/25 and received a report for the RFO/Deputy Clerk. Efficiency savings have been made including the lease of the van being renegotiated by the Clerk.

Members suggested amendments to the budget and discussed encouraging the purchase of paint from Co-Star.

It was **recommended** that:-

- a) the Clerk to contact groups to see if more blankets are needed.
- b) The RFO/Deputy Clerk to amend the budgets.
- c) the position is noted.

Signed
(Chairman, Environment, Sustainability & Planning Committee)