

**Minutes of the Environment, Sustainability & Planning Committee held on Wednesday  
10 April 2024 at 6.00 pm.**

The recommendations below will be submitted to the Council Meeting to be held on  
Wednesday 8 May 2024

These minutes are subject to confirmation at the meeting of the committee to be held on  
Date to be Confirmed.

**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 (Chair), R Bennett, A Bird, L Chaney, M Day,  
G Lloyd-Tolman, L Lloyd-Tolman, K Manneh, C Morgan, M Villars &  
WJ Walker

Also Andy Smith (RFO/Deputy Clerk), Councillor Mandy Owen Executive  
Member for Environmental (Torfaen County Borough Council), Mal Edgson  
(Chief Executive CAB Torfaen) & Lisa Hamer (Deputy Chief Executive CAB  
Torfaen)

**Absent** Councillors L Johnston, F Jones & P Seabourne

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

**ESP23/064 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for Absence were accepted from Councillors F Jones (Holiday)

**ESP23/065 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.

**ESP23/066 Minutes – 28 February 2024**

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 February 2024 were confirmed as a  
correct record of the meeting and are approved and actioned therein.

Councillor SWJ Ashley signed the minutes.

## **ESP23/067 Planning, Highways & Footpaths Matters**

### **(a) Planning Lists**

Planning list 1502, item 6568 new 3G sports pitch at Llantarnam Playing Fields. Cllr Walker objects to the application due drainage issues at the site which need to be resolved. A site meeting is to be arranged to address the issues. No objections to other items.

### **(b) Schedules of Torfaen County Borough Council Planning Decisions**

Members noted the Schedule of Planning Decisions.

It was **recommended** that:-

- i) Objection to planning item 6568, site meeting to be arranged to discuss drainage issues.
- ii) to note the Schedules of Torfaen County Borough Council Planning Decisions.
- iii) the position is noted.

## **ESP23/068 Neighbourhood Services**

Councillor Mandy Owen, Executive Member for Environment (Torfaen County Borough Council) attended the meeting by remote means and answered questions from members.

Councillor Walker raised his concerns with the ongoing major drainage issues at the Llantarnam playing fields. He is very disappointed with the email responses to the issues with the swales installed failing and also water pouring out from a broken pipe.

Councillor Owen reported that Officers had visited the site and identified issues with the swales constructed for the active travel site, which would be rectified, and a dedicated drainage system would be constructed for the 3G site. An issue had also been identified with a blocked culvert under a nearby factory which had now been cleared.

Councillor Walker said that he would object to the planning application for the 3G pitch until all the issues had been resolved.

Councillor Villars requested a site visit with Officers to look at the issues. Councillor Owen will ask Mark Thomas to contact Councillor Villars to arrange a site meeting with himself and Councillor Walker.

Councillor Bird reported graffiti by Heron Foods in the town centre. Councillor Owen will check if the area is the responsibility of Torfaen CBC or Cwmbran Shopping to resolve the issue.

It was **recommended** that:-

- a) Councillor Mandy Owen is thanked for attending the meeting.
- b) a meeting is arranged at Llantarnam Playing Fields to address the drainage issues.
- c) the position is noted.

## **ESP23/069 CAB Update**

Members received a presentation from Mal Edgson (Chief Executive CAB Torfaen) and Lisa Hamer (Deputy Chief Executive CAB Torfaen) showing the data from the case recording system specific in the Cwmbran area.

The data shows on both a local and national level that due to the cost of living crisis a high number of people are failing to get by and are just layering debt, with 1 in 9 missing the payment of an important bill in the last 6 months and not having any disposable income left each month. Single people of working age, renting in the private sector are the worst affected with the cost of living crisis.

44% of clients using CAB Torfaen are from the Cwmbran area, with almost all the advice given being focused on income, entitlement to benefits and budgeting. 2000 fuel vouchers and 700 food vouchers were issued across the Torfaen area with 36% in Cwmbran.

The national data shows that people are struggling to top up pre-payment utility meters with 5 times as many people now requesting Charitable help including fuel and food vouchers.

The main issues for the CAB are funding capacity and recruitment of volunteers, which the organisation heavily relies on. Volunteers are now returning with many of the volunteers of working age and moving on to employment roles after several months, requiring continual training of volunteers.

Members thanked Mal Edgson and Lisa Hamer for the presentation and asked questions. Members were concerned with benefits moving to Universal Credit and becoming increasingly digital based with residents requiring more help to complete applications, this was confirmed with many people requiring help with digital applications. Members also enquired if there was evidence of landlords increasing rents which is adding to the cost of living issues residents are experiencing which was confirmed as an ongoing issue the CAB are seeing.

It was **recommended** that:-

- a) Mal Edgson and Lisa Hamer are thanked for attending the meeting.
- b) the position is noted.

## **ESP23/070 Environmental Reports**

### **(a) Canal Update**

Councillor Ashley updated members and members discussed the positive impact of the posts installed on the canal funded by the Lottery Heritage Fund and History Society which provide digital information on the history of the canal using a QR code.

The Deputy Clerk/RFO attended the South Sebastopol Environmental Steering Group where the provision of notice boards was discussed. The Deputy Clerk will contact Asbri Planning regarding suggested locations for notice boards, to be discussed at the next Regeneration and Major Grants Committee Meeting.

### **(b) Boating Lake Naming**

Members discussed the importance of recognising and paying tribute to Reg Hann for his contribution to the creation of the Cwmbran Boating Lake. Members discussed various ideas including a Plaque at the Boating Lake and posts with a QR code providing information on the creation and history of the boating lake.

It was **recommended** that:-

- a) the Deputy Clerk contacts Asbri Planning concerning notice board locations.
- b) Notice Boards to be added to the next RMG meeting agenda.
- c) the clerk to make enquiries into a Plaque at the Boating Lake and posts with QR codes.
- d) the position is noted.

## **ESP23/071 Reports regarding any Climate & Nature Emergency Activities**

Members discussed the impact of sea warming and the extreme weather with further discussion on an agenda proposed.

Members proposed discussions on Raising the Recycling Rates and Wind Farm Development are included in the next agenda.

It was **recommended** that:-

- a) Raising the Recycling Rates and the Wind Farm Development are included in the next Agenda.
- b) the position is noted.

**ESP23/072 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.

**ESP23/073 Budget**

Members received a Budget update from the RFO/Deputy Clerk on the attached reports.

It was **recommended** that:-

- a) the position is noted.

**ESP23/074 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.

*Signed .....*  
*(Chairman, Environment, Sustainability & Planning Committee)*