

**Minutes of the Environment, Sustainability & Planning Committee held on
Wednesday 20 November 2024 at 6.00 pm.**

The recommendations below will be submitted to the Council Meeting to be held on
Wednesday 11 December 2024

These minutes are subject to confirmation at the meeting of the committee to be held on
Wednesday 15 January 2025.

**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, F Jones, C Morgan, P Seabourne, M Villars (Vice Chair) &
W Walker

*(Councillors S Ashley, R Bennett, M Day & L Lloyd-Tolman participated in the
meeting via remote means)*

Also Gareth Davies (Clerk), Andy Smith (RFO/Deputy Clerk),
Councillor S Morgan (Executive member for Waste & Sustainability TCBC) &
Mark Thomas (Interim Strategic Director for Economy & Environment TCBC)

Absent Councillors L Chaney, L Johnston, G Lloyd-Tolman & K Manneh

(No Public Participation Session was held at this meeting)

ESP24/039 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence were accepted from Councillor L Chaney

ESP24/040 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 L Lloyd-Tolman declared a non-prejudicial interest in Minute
ESP24/042 – Planning lists. She remained in the meeting during the
discussions.*

ESP24/041 Minutes – 9 October 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on 9 October 2024 were confirmed as a
correct record of the meeting and are approved and actioned therein.

Councillor M Villars signed the minutes.

ESP24/042 Planning, Highways & Footpaths Matters

Councillor L Lloyd-Tolman declared a non-prejudicial interest in Minute ESP24/042 – Planning lists. She remained in the meeting during the discussions.

(a) Planning Lists

Planning list 1530 no objections received.

Planning list 1531, item 6642 objection to planning application on the basis that the site will be over developed. No objections were made to the other items on list.

(b) Schedules of Torfaen County Borough Council Planning Decisions

Members noted the Schedule of Planning Decisions.

It was **recommended** that:-

- i) to note the Schedules of Torfaen County Borough Council Planning Decisions.
- ii) the position is noted.

ESP24/043 Neighbourhood Services

Members received a presentation from Councillor S Morgan (Executive member for Waste & Sustainability TCBC) & Mark Thomas (Interim Strategic Director for Economy & Environment TCBC).

Councillor S Morgan (Executive member for Waste & Sustainability TCBC) reported to members that climate change is resulting in serious global challenges, and we need to respond to the climate and nature emergencies, recycle more and make improvements to the local environment. Torfaen CBC recycling waste is on course for NET zero by 2030.

Torfaen CBC are working to improve their own operations with more land management, less usage of fossil fuels, low emission vehicles and staff helping residents understand the impact of their decisions on climate change.

Greening our valley with support for community environmental action, more areas of tree coverage and orchards and a new nature reserve.

Being better connected is also important and Torfaen CBC are working with operators to improve active travel routes, better accessibility, more electric vehicle charging points and easier access to council services.

The 64% Welsh Government recycling target has been achieved and Torfaen CBC now has a clear plan for 70% recycled target by 2025.

Mark Thomas (Interim Strategic Director for Economy & Environment TCBC) informed members how Torfaen CBC are looking to our energy future with local and national interaction and a local area energy plan working with communities and local businesses to be more energy efficient.

Members asked questions including the composting of food and the transparency of where waste ends up and the burning of the residual waste and how the borough plan to improve recycling at flats which is challenging due to the design of some of the buildings.

Members were also interested to know if Styrofoam could be recycled due to its volume when placed in the general waste or collected separately. Mark Thomas confirmed that this is something that should be looked at.

The vandalism of the 20mph signs was also discussed, with members concerned with when the borough will be looking to replace the damaged signs.

Members were also concerned with the amount of leaves on pavements being dangerous to residents and asked if it could be looked at by street scene to clear footpaths.

Members also enquired if the borough could look at removing out of date notices from posts, as these seem to be left in place for a long period after they expire. Mark Thomas will pass this on to the relevant departments.

It was **recommended** that:-

- a) Councillor S Morgan (Executive member for Waste & Sustainability TCBC) & Mark Thomas (Interim Strategic Director for Economy & Environment TCBC) are thanked for their presentation.
- b) the position is noted.

ESP24/044 Environmental Reports

(a) Canal Update

Councillor Ashley informed members that he will be attending the scrutiny meeting where the management of green spaces including the canal will be discussed.

(b) Raising Recycling Rates

Members received a presentation from Councillor S Morgan (Executive member for Waste & Sustainability TCBC) & Mark Thomas (Interim Strategic Director for Economy & Environment TCBC).

(c) Windfarm Development

No update received. The Clerk will enquire if the Council receives the pre-applications.

(d) Solar farm development

No update received.

It was **recommended** that:-

- a) the Clerk will enquire if the Council receives the Windfarm development pre-applications.
- b) the position is noted.

ESP24/045 Reports regarding any Climate & Nature Emergency Activities

The Clerk reported to members that he had attended a meeting with the RFO and the energy team at Torfaen County Borough Council to look at use of Solar and battery power to make the Council House building energy efficient. The Clerk will produce a report for members.

The Clerk informed members that the artificial Christmas Trees, which are reuseable and made from recycled bottle tops have been delivered and installed on site at both the Council House and Pontnewydd.

It was **recommended** that:-

- a) the Clerk produces a report for members on improving the energy efficiency of the Council House building.
- b) the position is noted.

ESP24/046 Climate Conversations Event

The RFO informed members that he had been looking at taking forward the Climate Conversations Event. There are no events planned as yet, and an event would need to take place by the 10 January 2025. Members were asked to forward details of any groups who would be interested in taking part.

It was **recommended** that:-

- a) members forward details of any groups who would be interested in taking part.
- b) the position is noted.

ESP24/047 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.

ESP24/048 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)