Minutes of a Meeting of the Environment, Sustainability & Planning Committee of Cwmbran Community Council held on Wednesday 9 September 2015

Present Councillor R Jones (Chair), Councillors SWJ Ashley, S Brooks, LJ Chaney, S Evans, D Standing, DJ Williams & TJ Winter

Also Councillor TA Matthews and County Councillor BJ Cunningham

Also David Collins (Clerk to the Council)

ESP15/011 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were accepted from Councillors M Day, M Johnston and WM Howell (all personal),

ESP15/012 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.

ESP15/013 Grow Wild Flagship Site ("Cwmbran's Urban Buzz")

The Chairman welcomed Andrew Neville, Team Leader Environmental Projects (Torfaen County Borough Council), who provided an update on the above project further to Councillor Cunningham's report to members in June (Minute ESP15/005 refers).

Members noted that the project, which aimed to bring communities in Cwmbran together and transform communal areas by sowing and growing wild flowers, had reached the second stage of a national competition.

"Cwmbran's Urban Buzz" would take people on a journey between the Northville and Southville areas of the town, exploring the history of Cwmbran's transformation from pre-industrial farmland to a thriving town centre and residential community, using UK native wild flowers to tell the story.

It was being developed as a partnership by Cwmbran Shopping, Bron Afon, Communities First, Llantarnam Grange Arts Centre, Torfaen Biodiversity Partnership, Torfaen Council and other stakeholders. If successful, the project would receive £120,000 to bring it to life in 2016.

The competition was run by Grow Wild; a partnership between Kew Royal Botanical Gardens and the Big Lottery Fund, and the winner would be decided by a public vote in the autumn.

Members noted that the Urban Buzz project would tell the story of Cwmbran as it transformed from farmland to a modern hive of residential and commercial activity. Working with the local community to tell this interesting tale, the project would use wild flowers to bring it to life in a way that enhanced the environment for local residents, traders and the many shoppers that visit Cwmbran.

The basic concept was in place and, over the next few months, the Project Team would be working with local people and businesses to develop the project together as a partnership. There would then be a public vote through October 6 to midnight November 1 where the project would go up against two others from across Wales, for a prize of £120,000.

Andrew Neville asked members to remember to vote for Cwmbran's Urban Buzz online via the Grow Wild web site or by phone. He also referred to other ways in which support for the project would be galvanised, such as via social media. Further information about the Grow Wild competition was available at www.growwilduk.com.

Members supported the Urban Buzz project and considered that, even if the project was not successful in the Grow Wild competition, it should still be implemented as far as possible.

Members asked about the sequence of events associated with the competition, the availability of land to support planting, soil compatibility and methods of community engagement.

It was **recommended** that

(1) the Council supports the Cwmbran's Urban Buzz project.

(2) Andrew Neville is thanked for his interesting and informative presentation.

ESP15/014 Blaen Bran Community Woodland

On 1 July 2015, members met representatives of Blaen Bran Community Woodland to consider the potential for partnership working between the Council and the Woodland. (Minute ESP15/008 refers). Members had agreed in principle to help fund a project at the woodland and had asked the representatives of the woodland to provide the Clerk with further details of costs of refurbishing the children's education area.

Members noted that these matters were due to be considered by the representatives of Blaen Bran at their monthly meeting in August. Any information arising from this meeting would be reported to members in due course. Members had also suggested that this project could be used to commemorate the centenary of World War One.

Members had authorised the Clerk to contact CCYP, Bron Afon and Cwmbran Shopping to establish whether there was scope to work together in relation to the refurbishment of the children's education area. Members noted that CCYP had subsequently confirmed that they would be interested in collaborating on such a project. Advice had also been sought from "Space Saviours," which was an initiative supported by Bron Afon and others to help communities with aspects of project management. No approach had yet been made to Cwmbran Shopping but this could be taken forward on receipt of the above information from Blaen Bran.

It was **recommended** that the position is noted.

ESP15/015 Memorial Plaques for Members

Members were invited to consider the potential to provide a memorial plaque or other similar memorial to commemorate the contribution made by members of this council who had passed away. The Clerk suggested that, for example, Members may wish to incorporate a memorial into any work undertaken at Blaen Bran Community Woodland. (see above)

Several Members drew attention to discussion which had taken place in 2011 about the planting of memorial trees in memory of the late Councillors Challenger and Evans (Minute ENT10/89.)

Members discussed potential options for commemorating the contribution of former Members who had passed away, such as tree planting, provision of a memorial park/garden or the erection of memorial plaques listing the names of late members. The Clerk indicated that he had already approached Mossfords Memorial Masons to see if they were able to provide any support.

It was recommended that

(1) in principle, the Council supports the commemoration of the contribution of members who had passed away.

(2) the Clerk is instructed to continue to look into options for taking this forward, including the options described above.

ESP15/016 Planning, Highways, Footpaths and Licensing Matters

(a) Planning & Highways Matters

Members considered outstanding planning list 1106.

It was **recommended** that no objections are submitted in relation to list 1106.

(b) Schedule of Torfaen County Borough Council Planning Decisions

Members considered a schedule of recent decisions of Torfaen County Borough Council.

Councillor TJ Winter referred to the redevelopment of the former Pontnewydd Inn site as a store. He advised that gates had recently been removed from the site, leaving an access route through the development. He had raised this matter with the Clerk and asked if the Clerk would advise members of the current position. The Clerk confirmed that he had discussed this with Torfaen County Borough Council (Planning). He confirmed that there should be gates to the northern (rear) boundary of the site and that, once the store was operational, these should remain shut other than for deliveries and employee movements. A planning application had been submitted to remove this requirement (ref 14/P/00399) however permission had been refused and an appeal had not been submitted. Torfaen County Borough Council had indicated that it may be the case that a new boundary was being erected, however, if there were no replacement gates by the time the store is operational; Torfaen County Borough Council would wish to be made aware.

It was **recommended** that

(1) the decisions are noted.

(2) the Clerk is instructed to write to Torfaen County Borough Council to request that the redevelopment of the former Pontnewydd Inn is carried out in accordance with the approved plans.

(3) members contact the Clerk if they become aware that replacement gates at the site are not in place by the time the new store becomes operational.

(c) Footpath Matters

Members noted the Council's application to register a route at Court Farm as a public footpath had been passed to the legal representatives of Torfaen County Borough Council so that the order could be prepared. (Minute CL13/115 refers). The Clerk confirmed that he would continue to follow progress and keep members informed.

The Clerk also referred to another footpath nearby at John Fielding Gardens, about which ward members had enquired. It was anticipated that a report would be submitted to Torfaen County Borough Council in October but, due to the legal processes involved the footpath would not be opened in the near future. The Clerk confirmed that he had informed ward members of the position.

It was **recommended** that the information is noted.

ESP15/017 Neighbourhood Services Matters

Members welcomed Councillor John Cunningham (Torfaen County Borough Council's Executive Member Neighbourhoods) to the meeting, who reported on current issues and answered members' questions, as set out below.

- "Skinny Bins" – Frequently Asked Question
- Fortnightly Nappy Collections
- Food Waste Bags
- Highway Resurfacing Programme
- Cwmbran Skate Park
- Active Travel Consultation (walking & cycling for everyday, short-distance journeys such as to school or work.)
- Community Cycle Ride from Blaenavon to Cwmbran: 12 September 2015

Issues raised by members included:

- Frequency of nappy collections.
- Arrangements to collect medical waste (2 collections could be arranged if notice was given to Torfaen County Borough Council)
- Programme for the resurfacing of Henllys Way (work would commence w/c 21 September 2015)
- Arrangements to replace damaged black bins.

Councillor Cunningham also indicated that he wished to arrange a meeting with the Leader of the Majority Group on Cwmbran Community Council to discuss budgets. The Leader confirmed that he would be happy to meet if some provisional dates could be provided.

It was **recommended** that the information is noted.

Signed …….. (Chair, Cwmbran Community Council)