

Minutes of a Meeting of the Environment, Sustainability & Planning Committee of Cwmbran Community Council held on Wednesday 17 January 2018

Present Councillor KK Manneh (in the Chair), Councillors SWJ Ashley, SJ Brooks, M Day, LG Johnston, M Johnston, F Jones, R Jones, M Villars and WJ Walker

Also Councillor RD Kemp

Also David Collins (Clerk to the Council) and Clare Facey (Administrative Officer)

ESP17/035 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence were accepted from Councillors Rh Bennett (personal) and PJ Cathcart (illness).

The Clerk also reported that a representative of M&G Real Estate was unable to attend the meeting in relation to Minute ESP17/037 below. Adrian Wilcock, Torfaen County Borough Council) was also unable to attend (due to sickness) in relation to Minute ESP17/038 below.

ESP17/036 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.

Councillors SWJ Ashley and F Jones declared an Interest Minute ESP17/039 (c) (ii) below Planning, Highways, Footpaths and Licensing Matters (Construction of a new Police Headquarters, multi-storey car park, landscaping and associated works: Gwent Police.)

ESP17/037 Cwmbran Shopping

Members welcomed Rikki Teml, Centre Manager at Cwmbran Centre, who described proposals to renovate and refurbish Gwent Square and Monmouth Square.

He distributed literature about the proposals and answered Members questions. The redevelopment would deliver a modern facility capable of supporting a range of events and activities. Landscaping would be introduced, along with other physical improvements and some bilingual signage. He anticipated that the Council would be consulted on the relevant planning applications in the near future. (See list 1211 referred to in Minute ESP17/039 below.)

Issues raised by Members included

- maintenance of landscaped areas.
- the potential to provide new clocks within the development. (There were no current proposals in place.)
- digital information displays (this could be considered in the future.)
- access for non-car users/public transport (bike racks were provided. A Green Travel Plan was in place and available at www.cwmbrancentre.com)
- The capacity of the bus station would be kept under review)
- any proposals in relation to Gwent House. (There were no current proposals in place as part of the current proposed refresh.)

- the security of new “flexible” seating. (Assurances were given to Members).
- protection from the rain.
- rent increases. (There were no current proposals in place.)
- the importance of retaining the “individuality” of the town, with particular reference to the use of cladding. (Assurances were given to Members).
- Risk Assessments in relation to the cladding (these would be undertaken)
- litter bins (bins would be provided, which could also be used for dog waste)
- use of native tree species as part of the landscaping. (Trees would be sourced via a local supplier. Further details of species could be provided.

The Leader of the Majority Group concluded the debate by broadly welcoming the proposals, which he considered would add further to the success of the town.

It was **recommended** that Rikki Teml is thanked for his attendance and his willingness to answer Members’ questions.

ESP17/038 Consultation on the Torfaen Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) Draft Charging Schedule and Draft Regulation 123 Infrastructure List

Members considered a detailed report which outlined progress in relation to the above. The Draft CIL Charging Schedule was the subject of a consultation exercise which ended on 29 January 2018. In the absence of Adrian Wilcock (see Minute ESP17/035 above), the Clerk encouraged all Members to engage in the consultation process.

It was **recommended** that:

- (1) Members provide the Clerk with any observations to submit as part of the above consultation process.
- (2) Adrian Wilcock, Torfaen County Borough Council is invited to the next meeting of the committee to report on progress.

ESP17/039 Planning, Highways, Footpaths and Licensing Matters

(a) Planning Lists

Members considered outstanding planning list 1211 (the list included proposals relating to Cwmbran Centre at items 6318 and 6319, referred to in Minute ESP17/037 above.).

It was **recommended** that no objection is offered in respect of list 1211.

(b) Planning Decision of Torfaen County Borough Council.

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

(c) Pre Application Consultation

- (i) Demolition of Existing Buildings & Redevelopment of Site for 18 Affordable Apartments with Associated Access, Car Parking & Landscaping at Victoria Street: Bron Afon Community Housing.

Members asked for clarification about the number of parking spaces provided within the development and about access to and from the site for demolition vehicles.

(The Leader of the Majority Group referred to plans of the proposals,

which were on display at the Council's offices.)

- (ii) Construction of a new Police Headquarters, multi-storey car park, landscaping and associated works: Gwent Police.

(Councillors Ashley and F Jones declared an interest in this item)

Issues raised by Members included:

- a request for clarification about the respective costs of carrying out the development at this site in comparison to the site at Croesyceiliog.
- a request for clarification about access to the site and to the multi-storey parking area. Concerns about the small access points to Cwmbran Drive.
- concerns about pressure on existing parking facilities at Llantarnam Industrial Estate, which should be raised with Torfaen County Borough Council.
- concerns about the capacity of the local road network to support this development, where narrow roads presented a particular problem.
- poor provision within the site for cyclists and pedestrians and the need to provide facilities to encourage Active Travel to Work.
- a welcome for the extensive employment opportunities created within the site as a whole but concerns about the pressures this put on parking provision.

It was **recommended** that the Clerk forward the above observations to the relevant parties in response to the two consultation exercises.

(d) Planning Law in Wales – Consultation Paper

Members noted that the Law Commission was undertaking a review of the planning law in Wales, with the aim of ensuring that it worked for the specific needs of Wales and improved accessibility to the general public and stakeholders. The Commission has published a Consultation Paper which could be accessed by using the following link:

<https://www.lawcom.gov.uk/project/planning-law-in-wales/>

Members noted that responses were to be submitted directly to the Law Commission (planning-wales@lawcommission.gsi.gov.uk) by 1 March 2018.

It was **recommended** that Members provide the Clerk with any observations to submit as part of the above consultation process.

- (e) Proposed diversion of Public Footpath Nos 6 (Part), 7 (Part) and 8 at Wrens Nest Farm, Pontnewydd

It was **recommended** that the Council has no observations on the proposals.

ESP17/040 Neighborhood Services

At the meeting held on 29 November 2017, Members discussed opportunities to raise matters with Torfaen County Borough Council in relation to Neighbourhood Services matters. (Minute ESP17/030 (a) refers). It was recommended that any Members wishing to submit questions to the Executive Member for Environment report them to this committee in the first instance to ensure a co-ordinated approach. This was confirmed by the Council on 3 January 2018. Any matters raised would be referred to the Executive Member.

It was **recommended** that the following matter is referred to the Executive Member for a response:

Torfaen County Borough Council is requested to provide details of future proposals for the disposal of waste in the light of a ban on imports of plastic waste by the Chinese government from January 2018, which could see an end to collection of some plastic in the UK and increase the risk of environmental pollution.

(The Leader of the Majority Group took the opportunity to refer to recent discussions with the Leader of Torfaen County Borough Council about potential partnership arrangements between the two councils.)

ESP17/041 Seminars & Outside Bodies

Members considered an oral report in relation to the following seminar/meeting of outside bodies, attended by representatives of the Council.

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| (i) | Blaenau Gwent & Torfaen
Local Nature Partnership | 29 November 2017 |
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It was **recommended** that the report is noted.

ESP17/042 Schools Eco Quiz: 8 February 2018

The Administrative Officer updated Members in relation to the above event, to be held at the Congress Theatre.

She reported details of the number of participating schools and the fees to be paid to each school (Minute CL17/081 (5) refers). Members were pleased to acknowledge the continued sponsorship of the event by Knauf Insulation but noted that Sharper Image would no longer be able to produce a Power Point presentation to support the event. The presentation would now be prepared in-house by Council staff.

The Chairman of the Council encouraged all Members to attend the event, which provided a wonderful opportunity for the Council to engage with local schoolchildren.

It was **recommended** that the arrangements for the above event are noted and endorsed.

ESP17/043 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.

ESP17/044 Task Force

At a meeting of the Policy & Finance Committee held on 24 October 2016, Members recommended that responsibility for receiving regular performance management information about the work of the Task Force was assigned to this committee. (Minute PF16/053 refers).

Members therefore considered performance information about the recent work of the Task Force.

Members also considered an analysis of income levels over recent years, in the light of changes recently introduced. Whilst income had risen, the number of jobs undertaken had declined. Members discussed factors which attributed to this. The Clerk described some of the means by which the service was marketed in the community. He also advised that the work of the committee in monitoring these matters was an important feature of the Council's approach to managing the performance of the Task Force. Members considered that it was important that the committee continued this role.

It was **recommended** that:

- (1) the information is noted.
- (2) a further comparison exercise is undertaken in 2019 to examine income levels.

Signed

(Chairman, Cwmbran Community Council)