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Date: 19th February 2020

Dear Sir/Madam,

A meeting of the **Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal - Crumlin Arm Working Group** will be held in the **Sirhowy Room - Penallta House, Tredomen, Ystrad Mynach** on **Thursday, 27th February, 2020** at **5.00 pm** to consider the matters contained in the following agenda. Councillors and the public wishing to speak on any item can do so by making a request to the Chair. You are also welcome to use Welsh at the meeting, both these requests require a minimum notice period of 3 working days, and a simultaneous translation will be provided if requested.

All Committee meetings are open to the Press and Public, observers and participants are asked to conduct themselves with respect and consideration for others. Please note that failure to do so will result in you being asked to leave the meetings and you may be escorted from the premises.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Chrissy', enclosed in a large, loopy oval shape.

Christina Harrhy
INTERIM CHIEF EXECUTIVE

A G E N D A

	Pages	
1	To receive apologies for absence.	
2	Declarations of Interest.	

Councillors and Officers are reminded of their personal responsibility to declare any personal and/or prejudicial interest(s) in respect of any item of business on this agenda in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution, and the Code of Conduct for both Councillors and Officers.

A greener place Man gwyrddach



To approve and sign the following minutes: -

- 3 Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal - Crumlin Arm Working Group held on 7th November 2019. 1 - 4
- 4 Membership Of The Monmouthshire And Brecon Canal - Crumlin Arm Working Group. 5 - 10
- 5 To receive an update on the following Matters Relating to the Canal (verbal update):-
 - Maintenance Update;
 - 2019/2020 Works Programme;
 - Funding;
 - Boats.
- 6 Update from Mr Richard Dommett - MBACT (verbal update).

Circulation:

M. Davies, A. Hussey, L. Jeremiah, G. Johnston, Mrs A. Leonard, Ms P. Leonard, B. Owen, D.W.R. Preece, J. Simmonds, C. Thomas, A. Whitcombe (Chair) and R. Whiting

Monmouthshire, Brecon and Abergavenny Canals Trust – Mr R.J. Dommett and Mr B. Illman

Cabinet Member: N. George (Cabinet Member for Environment & Neighbourhood Services)

And Appropriate Officers

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MONMOUTHSHIRE AND BRECON CANAL - CRUMLIN ARM WORKING GROUP

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH ON
THURSDAY 7TH NOVEMBER 2019 AT 4.30 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillor A. Whitcombe - Chair

Mr R. Dommett (Monmouthshire, Brecon and Abergavenny Canals Trust) - Vice Chair

Councillors:

M. Davies, A. Hussey, L. Jeremiah, B. Owen, D.W.R. Preece, J. Simmonds, A. Whitcombe,
R. Whiting

Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services - Councillor N. George

Together with:

Mr R. Dommett (Monmouthshire, Brecon and Abergavenny Canals Trust), K. Kinsey
(Principal Engineer), A. Bolter (Visitor Economy and Destinations Manager), R. Barrett
(Committee Services Officer)

1. WELCOME

The Canal Group gave a warm welcome to Anthony Bolter (Visitor Economy and Destinations Manager), and it was noted that he would be attending future meetings of the Group as part of his remit, following a restructure across the Council's Regeneration & Planning division.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor G. Johnston, Mrs A. Leonard Ms P. Leonard, C. Thomas, and Mr B. Illman (Monmouthshire, Brecon and Abergavenny Canals Trust).

Mr Dommett also explained that Ms Y. Forsey, who has recently been appointed as the MBACT Vice-Chair, had planned to observe the meeting but had since given her apologies.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received at the commencement or during the course of the meeting.

4. MINUTES – 25TH JULY 2019

The minutes of the meeting held on 25th July 2019 were approved as a correct record.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Consideration was given to the following report.

5. UPDATE ON MATTERS RELATING TO THE CANAL

Kevin Kinsey (Principal Engineer) presented a verbal update on matters relating to the Canal and responded to queries from the Group in turn.

Maintenance Update

Canal Channel - Weed cutting/channel maintenance for 2019 is not planned as yet. This will be considered later in the year in consultation with all relevant stake holders. There have been issues around the Navigation Road section whereby felled trees and other foliage from private properties have been dumped in the Canal, and the matter has been passed to the Council's Enforcement Team.

Grass Maintenance – The final cut of the season has taken place and includes the amended cutting regime across the length of the Canal, which has generally been well received by local residents.

2019/2020 Works Programme

Channel Leak Repair - the third phase of works is being designed at present and will be tendered before the end of this calendar year. The length of Canal to be addressed in this phase will extend from the downstream terminus of Phase 1 down to the Pontywaun overbridge. Phase 4 works planned for the upper section of the deeps are to be combined with Phase 3 and issued as one contract.

There is an ongoing issue with water loss at the Pontywaun aqueduct and Officers recently met with external consultants to discuss the problem. The Council is continuing to review the options available to address the problem, including the potential use of waterproof grouting to form an impermeable curtain around the defective sections of the aqueduct which is suffering the water loss.

Water Control – there are also some issues around water control across the Pontywaun section of the Canal. Officers are examining various options, and have recently constructed a clay bund and reactivated the temporary feed to alleviate the problem.

Access Enhancement – the Canal Group discussed access and a Member referred to recent instances of vehicles becoming lodged at Penrhiw Bridge in Risca. Officers confirmed that they are aware of the problem and that colleagues within the traffic management team have been considering options to tackle this problem.

Funding

External Funding – It was noted that the spend for Adventure Triangle funding needs to be completed by December 2020, and that further funding for the project is uncertain.

Capital - A capital budget allocation for 2019/20 is £212k plus the £361k carry over from 2018/19, giving a total budget of £573k. This funding will be used to complete the Phase 3 channel lining works at Pontywaun/Phase lining the Deeps, and match funding for the Adventure Triangle funding mentioned above.

Revenue - The budget for 2019/20 is £54.5k and current spend commitments should see this spent in full. The budget has been halved from previous years but this reduction has not caused problems to date, due in the main to a lack of major works.

Boats

Members were advised that there was no news to report in respect of the Islwyn Canal Association's leisure boat (The Islwyn Lily) and that the boat has now been stationary for some time.

A Member asked if the Council have a presence on the Islwyn Canal Association, and it was confirmed that this query would be progressed following the meeting.

It was also noted that local ward members recently made some enquiries in respect of potential funding available to enhance the area around the Flannel Factory memorial bench located at the Pontywaun aqueduct. It has been established that there is a balance of almost £7k remaining within the Cwmcarn Memorial Cottage Hospital Fund. Enquiries are being made into how this potential funding source can be accessed.

The Canal Group thanked Mr Kinsey for his presentation and noted the details of the update.

6. TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE CANAL GROUP

The Chair referred to the discussions at the previous meeting regarding the composition of the Canal Group, and proposed that the existing Terms of Reference be retained. This was seconded, and by a show of hands (and in noting there were 2 against) was agreed by the majority present.

Following the vote, two Members from the Newbridge Ward who had voted against the proposal expressed reservations over the relevance of their membership on the Canal Group, given that there is no visible or accessible Canal infrastructure in their ward and that the majority of the Canal works are undertaken in the Pontywaun and Risca areas. A Member from the Abercarn Ward stated that he would still wish to contribute to the work of the Group as there are sections of Canal infrastructure remaining across that ward.

The Chair referred the matter to the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhood Services, who confirmed that he would take these views and comments on board and seek advice on the matter of Canal Group membership following the meeting.

7. UPDATE FROM MR RICHARD DOMMETT - MBACT

Mr Dommett (MBACT) provided a verbal update on recent MBACT developments and

matters relating to the Canal.

The Canal Group were advised that a building clearance was recently undertaken at the the Navigation Colliery site at Crumlin as part of ongoing restoration works, which uncovered a number of historic documents at the premises. Some of these documents related to the Canal, and revealed that there was once a dry dock across the Caerphilly section of the Canal.

Mr Dommett updated the Group on the Ty Coch Waterway Park Project, which if successful, would see the restoration of 2 locks at the Llantarnam section of the Canal adjacent to the Ty Coch site, including funding the planning stage through the Heritage Lottery Fund Horizon Grant to enable the project to move forward to the construction stage.

Mr Dommett also advised the Canal Group that Newport and Torfaen Councils have been involved in discussions around setting up a joint Canal Group for their sections of the Canal. If this is successful, this will set the scene for the potential revival of the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal Joint Steering Group/ Regeneration Partnership, which has been dormant for around two years.

The Canal Group noted the verbal update from Mr Dommett.

The Chair thanked those present for their attendance and contributions and the meeting closed at 5.05 p.m.

The next meeting of the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal – Crumlin Arm Working Group will be held on Thursday 27th February 2020.



MONMOUTHSHIRE AND BRECON CANAL – CRUMLIN ARM WORKING GROUP – 27TH FEBRUARY 2020

**SUBJECT: MEMBERSHIP OF THE MONMOUTHSHIRE AND BRECON CANAL
– CRUMLIN ARM WORKING GROUP**

**REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR EDUCATION AND CORPORATE
SERVICES**

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The report reviews the current membership of the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal – Crumlin Arm Working Group and sets out various membership options for consideration by the Working Group, although it should be noted that any changes would need to be considered and approved by Council at its Annual Meeting.

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 At its meeting on the 7th November 2019, Members of the Working Group expressed an interest in reviewing its composition particularly in relation to representation from wards that have no visible or accessible connection to the canal, specifically representation from the Crumlin, Newbridge and Abercarn wards.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 Option 1
Membership of the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal – Crumlin Arm Working Group remain unchanged with full representation from all wards adjoining the canal:

Abercarn (2), Crosskeys (1), Crumlin (2), Newbridge (3), Risca East (3) and Risca West (2) including the Cabinet Member for Environment and Neighbourhood Services giving a committee membership of 13.

- 3.2 Option 2
The Working Group be comprised of 1 Member + 1 nominated substitute from each of the wards adjoining the canal plus the Cabinet Member for Environment and Neighbourhood Services:

Abercarn (1), Crosskeys (1), Crumlin (1), Newbridge (1), Risca East (1) and Risca West (1) – giving a committee membership of 7.

- 3.3 Option 3
The Working Group be comprised of full ward representation from those wards that have accessible connectivity to the canal plus 1 representative + 1 nominated substitute from each of the remaining adjoining wards (Crumlin, Abercarn and Newbridge) and the Cabinet Member for Environment and Neighbourhood Services.

Abercarn (1), Crosskeys (1), Crumlin (1), Newbridge (1), Risca East (3) and Risca West (2) – giving a committee membership of 10.

- 3.4 Option 4
The Working Group be comprised of full representation from all wards apart from the Newbridge ward who would be invited to attend as and when such matters of interest to the ward arise, plus the Cabinet Member for Environment and Neighbourhood Services.

Abercarn (2), Crosskeys (1), Crumlin (2), Risca East (3) and Risca West (2) – giving a committee membership of 11.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To respond to the reservations raised by the Members of the Brecon and Monmouthshire Canal – Crumlin Arm Working Group.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 The report reviews the current membership of the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal – Crumlin Arm Working Group and sets out various membership options for consideration by the Working Group, although it should be noted that any changes would need to be considered and approved by Council at its Annual Meeting.
- 5.2 The Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal – Crumlin Arm Working Group was established in September 2005 as a result of the Corridor Study and its 3 stage enhancement and restoration strategy. Its primary function would be to oversee the ongoing management and maintenance of the Crumlin Arm of the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal and to put in place measures to licence and control activities on the canal. Working to support and participate in any measures or proposals that would result in the full restoration of the canal to navigable standards between Cwmcarn and Fourteen Locks Visitor Centre at Newport. It was agreed by Cabinet and subsequently by Council that the Canal Group would be comprised from the Members of those wards areas adjoining the canal, namely Abercarn, Crumlin, Crosskeys, Newbridge and Risca.
- 5.3 Although a lot of work has been completed since 2005, the aims of that strategy have not been fully realised and at this point in time it is unlikely that any further navigable stretches of the canal will be progressed beyond that which is presently accessible. This means that although adjoining the canal, Crumlin and Newbridge have no visible or accessible canal infrastructure within their wards and Abercarn has only limited sections of the canal infrastructure remaining across its ward, with little prospect of this position changing.
- 5.4 The Canal Group is currently made up of 13 Members, as the Cabinet Member for

Environment and Neighbourhood Services also represents Risca East. Each of the wards that adjoin the canal are represented as follows: -

Abercarn – 2 Members (Councillors D.W.R. Preece and A. Whitcombe)

Crosskeys – 1 Member (Councillor J. Simmonds)

Crumlin – 2 Members (Councillors M. Davies and C.J. Thomas)

Newbridge – 3 Members (Councillors A. Hussey, L. Jeremiah and G. Johnston)

Risca East – 3 Members (Councillors N. George, P. Leonard and A. Passmore)

Risca West – 2 Members (Councillors B. Owen and R. Whiting)

- 5.5 At the last meeting of the Canal Group, Members from the Newbridge Ward expressed reservations over the relevance of their membership given the tenuous physical link the ward has to the canal and for this reason they felt limited in the contribution they could make to the work of the Group. However the Members from Abercarn expressed their willingness to continue their representation, even though the ward has only a few sections of canal infrastructure remaining.
- 5.6 Given the many and varied demands on Councillors time, the Canal Group agreed to seek advice from the Cabinet Member for Environment and Neighbourhood Services and requested that the relevance of its current membership be reviewed and a report be provided to the next appropriate meeting.
- 5.7 Having taken into account the views of the Members and the terms of reference for the Working Group there are several options that might offer a suitable solution to the concerns raised. It should be noted that representation from the Monmouthshire, Brecon and Abergavenny Canals Trust would be unaffected by any of the proposals.

Option 1

The Membership of the Group remain unchanged, however this would not address the reservation raised.

Option 2

The Membership of the Group could be reduced to a single representative from each of the wards adjoining the canal plus the Cabinet Member. The current Cabinet Member for Environment and Neighbourhood Services is also a Ward Member for Risca East, however this might not always be the case, therefore to ensure continuity of representation for each ward it is recommended that this place be in addition to 6 wards identified giving a committee membership of 7. Nominations would need to be sought from the Ward Members for a principal representative and a substitute, in order to mitigate availability issues.

Option 3

The Membership of the Group could be amended to reflect the areas where the majority of the works are undertaken and therefore of greater relevance for those associated wards. Members could consider the suitability of having all member representation from Crosskeys, Risca East and Risca West wards and 1 representative from Crumlin, Abercarn and Newbridge wards. The current Cabinet member for Environment and Neighbourhood Services is also a Ward Member for Risca East; however this might not always be the case, therefore to ensure continuity

of representation it is recommended that this place be in addition to the 9 representatives the above rationale would generate, giving a committee membership of 10. Nominations would need to be sought from Crumlin, Abercarn and Newbridge ward members for a principal representative and a substitute, in order to mitigate availability issues.

Option 4

The Membership of the Group could be amended to reflect the areas where the majority of works are undertaken and the wishes of the Crumlin and Abercarn Ward Members to continue to support the Working Group with a nominated representative from the Newbridge ward invited to attend as and when such matters of interest to the ward arise. The current Cabinet Member for Environment and Neighbourhood Services is also a Ward Member for Risca East; however this might not always be the case, therefore to ensure continuity of representation it is recommended that this place be in addition to the 10 representatives the above rationale would generate, giving a committee membership of 11. Nominations would need to be sought from the Newbridge ward members for a representative and substitute, in order to mitigate availability issues.

6. **ASSUMPTIONS**

6.1 There are no assumptions made in relation to this report.

7. **LINKS TO RELEVANT COUNCIL POLICIES**

7.1 The composition of committees and sub-committees of Caerphilly County Borough Council are in accordance with the Councils Constitution

Councillor attendance is governed by the Local Government Act 1972

7.2 **Corporate Plan 2018-2023.**

The Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal – Crumlin Arm Working Group contributes to the Corporate Plan in relation to:

Objective 5 - Creating a county borough that supports a healthy lifestyle in accordance with the sustainable Development Principle within the Wellbeing of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The canal provides a linear park suitable for users of all abilities who wish to engage in various forms of activity

Objective 6 - Support citizens to remain independent and improve their well-being. The canal provides a linear park suitable for users of all abilities who wish to engage in various forms of activity

8. **WELL-BEING OF FUTURE GENERATIONS**

8.1 This report contributes to the following Well-being Goals as set out in the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act:-

- A healthier Wales
- A more equal Wales
- A Wales of cohesive communities
- A Wales of vibrant culture and thriving Welsh Language

It is also consistent with the five ways of working as defined within the sustainable development principle in the Act in that Canal Group will seek to consider the long-term impact of the management of the canal and its impact on residents, service users and visitors and ensure that the Council as a public body meets its regulatory duties and corporate objectives.

9. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no equalities implications

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no financial implications.

11. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

11.1 There are no personnel implications

12. CONSULTATIONS

12.1 All comments from consultees have been incorporated into the report.

13. STATUTORY POWER

13.1 Local Government Act 1972 and Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011.

Author: Emma Sullivan, Senior Committee Services Officer, sullie@caerphilly.gov.uk

Consultees: Rob Tranter – Head of Legal Services and Monitoring Officer
Lisa Lane – Deputy Monitoring Officer and Head of Democratic Services
Kevin Kinsey – Principal Engineer
Cllr N. George – Cabinet Member for Environment & Neighbourhood Services
Cllr A. Whitcombe – Chair of Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal – Crumlin Arm Working Group.

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