

CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

COMMUNITY COUNCIL LIAISON SUB-COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, YSTRAD FAWR ON WEDNESDAY, 15TH MARCH 2000 AT 7.00 P.M.

PRESENT:

Community Councillor C. Roberts - Chairman
Councillor C.P. Mann - Vice-Chairman

Councillors:

H. Price, Mrs J.A. Pritchard, M.H. Newman

Representing Community/Town Councils:

Aber Valley	-	J.E. Roberts, Mr J.S. Humphreys (Clerk)
Argoed	-	A. Williams, Mr J. Dilworth (Clerk)
Bargoed	-	H. Farrant, Mrs H. Harris (Clerk)
Bedwas, Trethomas & Machen	-	
Blackwood	-	
Caerphilly	-	Mrs M. Hallam, Mr M. Evans (Clerk)
Darran Valley	-	C. Roberts
Gelligaer	-	Mrs M. Richards, Mrs A. Davies (Clerk)
Llanbradach	-	
Maesycwmmmer	-	Mrs J. Rao, Mr D. Cooper (Clerk)
Nelson	-	A. Candy, Mr A. Hoskins (Clerk)
New Tredegar	-	J.R. Jones, Mr T. Powell (Clerk)
Penyrheol, Trecenydd & Energlyn	-	W.H. Allen, Mr R. Williams (Clerk)
Rhymney	-	Mrs M. Betts
Rudry	-	H. Williams
Van	-	Mr J. O'Brien (Clerk)

Together with:

L. Evans, (Street Lighting Manager), T. Peppin (Policy and Research Manager), P. Hotchkiss (Registration Licensing Officer), J. Rogers (Senior Solicitor), M. Williams (Development Officer), H.C. Morgan (Senior Committee Services Officer).

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P.J. Bevan, Mrs C. Forehead and I.G. Franklin, Community Councillor D. Evans and Mr W.G. Woodroffe, Mrs P. Cooper, Mr D.J. Watkins and Mr J.L. Matthews (Clerks of Bedwas, Trethomas and Machen, Darran Valley, Llanbradach and Pwllypant, and Rudry Community/Town Councils respectively).

MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 8th December 1999 (a copy had been sent to each member) were received and noted.

MATTERS ARISING

Christmas Lighting

The Street Lighting Manager indicated that the review of the current policy/specifications in relation to the erection of christmas lighting was almost completed and that details will be circulated to each Clerk in due course. An individual request was made for details of the specifications used in 1999 and it was agreed that it would be sent accordingly.

It was reported however that during the course of the review, it has been agreed to allow the erection of lighting which spans between columns in 2000 and 2001 but after that date for safety reasons it will no longer be permitted. The effects of the decision in certain of the community/town council areas was discussed and Mr Evans indicated that advice would be given on any alternative suggestions proposed. It was also noted that supplies of lighting equipment can be purchased through the Council if required.

Reference was made to the sum of money made available as grant aid towards lighting in 1999 and it was confirmed that in the event of monies being allocated for 2000, applications will be invited at an earlier date. In view of the foregoing decision and the fact that most community/town councils will require new equipment a request was made that additional assistance should be considered.

It was also reported that Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council have indicated that its workforce will no longer be available to erect/dismantle the lights and the community /town councils were advised to seek quotations from other contractors.

A request was made that this information should be published in a future copy of the residents newsletter in order that members of the public are aware of the Councils decision.

Objective One and Community Plan

A verbal report was given on the progress with the community plans.

It was noted that since the last meeting the area basis for community planning has been confirmed and the plan to establish seven area forums has been endorsed. Community/Town Council representatives are now sought to sit on those seven area forums along with county borough members and the public and private sector.

The representatives welcomed the opportunity to become members of the area forums and during the course of the discussion on the number of representatives on each forum (particularly the Caerphilly Forum) requested that each community/town council should be entitled to nominate one person. However, they recognised the need to limit the overall size of the Forums and suggested that Members who have dual membership (i.e. county borough and community council) could represent both. It was also requested that the relevant papers be forwarded to the Clerk for information.

It was confirmed that details of the draft timetable would be circulated to each Clerk in the near future and noted that the meeting of the Upper Rhymney Valley Forum was scheduled for 26th April 2000.

Reports on each of the seven areas will be circulated to key partner agencies (e.g. police, health, WDA) asking them to add in information from their own organisations' perspectives. Having incorporated their comments, these multi-agency documents will then be presented to area forums for discussion and, where necessary, amendment. The next step will be to publicise the plans via a series of public meetings/consultations across the county borough.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Consideration was given to the following reports

Outstanding Requests For Street Lighting

Details of the list of requests for street lighting which are outstanding and including those proposed by community/town councils as outlined in the appendix to the report were noted.

It was confirmed that Cabinet has agreed that all requests should be considered, along with other bids for capital work when the budget is being prepared (a process which is underway at the moment). It also agreed to work, wherever possible, in partnership with any community/ town council who may be considering providing street lighting. As such, community/town councils are asked to bear in mind their requests for street lighting and the offer to work in partnership (wherever possible) when considering the allocation of their budgets. The question of match funding and the future maintenance responsibility was raised and it was noted that match funding could be an option depending on the scheme and that any future maintenance would be the responsibility of this Council. The list is currently under review for accuracy and prioritisation and will be forwarded to each council for consideration in due course.

Financial Assistance Funding of Summer Play Schemes 2000

Reference was made to a request that this Council give consideration to providing financial assistance towards summer play schemes organised by community/town councils.

It was noted that at its meeting on 29th February 2000, the Grants to the Voluntary Sector Sub-Committee considered this request but had agreed that that no contribution should be made towards summer play schemes organised by community/town councils.

Election Costs - Returning Officers Fees

Details of the fee for the Returning Officer in respect of last years elections and his duties as set out in the report were noted. Community/town councils were requested to contact the Electoral Services Manager if they still required further information on the allocation of fees.

Best Value

Reference was made to the establishment of a Best Value Forum comprising of 19 Members and the requirement of best value as a duty to deliver clear standards covering both cost and quality by the most economic, efficient and effective means available. was outlined

It was reported that a best value performance plan was in the process of being prepared and would be submitted in draft form for publication by March 31st 2000. An executive summary would follow from this.

TOWN AND COMMUNITY COUNCILS LIAISON COMMITTEE

Consideration was given to the following items raised by the community/town councils

Use of CCTV in Prosecutions

It was noted that 17 locations have been visited by the mobile CCTV and that 12 fixed penalty notices have been issued, one of which may result in a prosecution. The representatives were requested to provide areas which they wished to be targeted by the mobile facility.

Reference was made to the use of the fixed CCTV for this purpose and the practical difficulties and potential problems of using the system to issue fixed penalty notices were outlined.

It was confirmed that this Council are keen to tackle this issue and anticipate appointing two litter wardens/enforcement officers in the next financial year to deal with the problem.

It was proposed that this information along with the issuing of fixed penalties should be published in the next residents newsletter in order to deter would be offenders.

Kerbside Recycling Schemes & Educational Initiatives

Details of the kerbside recycling schemes and the publicity and educational programmes linked to recycling and other waste management initiatives were noted.

It was confirmed that in addition to the publicity and education for the kerbside recycling, the Directorate of Environmental Services employs a Recycling Officer whose work has primarily involved the implementation of schools initiatives plus other publicity exercises aimed at raising the profile of recycling and changing public attitudes with respect to littering, dog fouling and other general waste management issues. The officer visits schools and provides an extensive programme of schools initiatives.

During the discussion on litter problems in general, reference was made of the need to target schools as the children are seen as key individuals in the long term quest to change public attitudes and concern was expressed that only 30 schools had taken up the invitation to receive a presentation from the Recycling Officer during 1999. It was proposed that this matter be raised with the Cabinet Member for Education and a letter be sent to each Head inviting them to take up the initiative and reminding them of the services available. It was also proposed that the recently appointed Director of Education and Leisure, Mr David Hopkins be invited to the next meeting to discuss any proposal to introduce the initiatives into schools on a more regularised basis.

Street Cleansing Standards

Reference was made to the Environmental Protection Act 1990 which imposes a duty on local authorities to keep specified land clear of litter and refuse as far as practicable and to the Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse which defines standards of cleanliness which are achievable in different types of locations and under different circumstances and is concerned with how clean land is rather than how often it is swept. The code does not therefore suggest cleaning frequencies but sets how quickly differing types of land should be returned to a set cleanliness standard.

The categorisation of areas of relevant land in accordance with zoning guidelines and the relevant cleanliness standards were outlined and a further report was requested giving details of the times in which each of those areas is required to be cleansed. It was agreed that this would be prepared for the next meeting.

It was reported that the Authority is currently giving consideration to the merger of client and contractor functions for certain front line services (including refuse collection and street cleansing) in line with the best value delivery of services. This consideration, combined with the need to undertake best value service reviews will result in the detailed examination of street cleansing service delivery methods with a view to setting out a service improvement strategy. If significant changes are to be made to the methods of street cleansing service delivery in line with a service improvement strategy then further report(s) will be presented to this committee.

Post Offices - Campaign

Reference was made to the campaign against the governments proposal for the payment of benefits and the importance of allowing people to continue to collect their pensions and benefits in cash at the local post office beyond 2003 was emphasised.

It was noted that the National Federation of Sub-Postmasters had recently held a meeting at the Tredomen Offices at which they had encouraged as many as possible to write individual letters to the local MP's and the Secretary for Trade and Industry in opposition to the proposal. At that meeting reference was also made to a proposed lobby at Westminster on 12th April 2000 to which all interested parties were invited to attend.

Public Entertainment Licences

The current policy in relation to the consultation on public entertainment licences as approved at the last meeting was outlined. The Registration Licensing Officer made reference to instances when applications for occasional licences (i.e. school concerts, fetes, open air concerts) are received and the need for the deadline for written receipt to be of a shorter timescale. The importance of each community/town council having a policy in place to deal with such instances was emphasised

It was reported that on some occasions responses are not being received within the agreed period of 21 days and that the respective Clerks would be contacted to remind them of the agreed consultation procedure.

Consultation Response Times

Reference was made to the fact that on some occasions there is insufficient time given to adequately respond to consultation documents. It was noted that in some instances this is due to the deadline imposed by other bodies and every effort would be made to increase consultation periods where possible

REPLACEMENT PROGRAMME FOR PLAYGROUNDS

Members were advised that Special Council on 13th March 2000 had agreed the replacement programme for playgrounds, full details of which were available on request.

The meeting closed at 9.00pm