

CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

COMMUNITY COUNCIL LIAISON SUB-COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, TREDOMEN ON WEDNESDAY, 21ST MARCH 2001 AT 7.00 P.M.

PRESENT:

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

Councillors:

H.A. Andrews, P.J. Bevan, D. Bolter, M.H. Newman, D.J. Potter, H. Price, Mrs. J.A. Pritchard

Representing Community/Town Councils:

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

Together with

M. Williams (Public Services Manager), M. Rees-Williams (Highways Infrastructure Manager),
S. Andrews (Emergency Planning Officer), H.C. Morgan (Senior Committee Services Officer)

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J. Bevan, P.D. Ford, Mrs C. Forehead and Mrs M. Hughes, Community Councillors J.B. Criddle, Mrs J. Rao, A.P. Candy, Mrs M.R. Richards, Mrs M.J. Hallam and G. Llewellyn and Mr J. Dilworth, Mr W.G. Woodroffe, Mrs P. Cooper, Mr A. Hoskins and Mr W.M. Thompson (Clerks of Argoed, Bedwas, Trethomas and Machen, Darran Valley, Nelson and Llanbradach Community/Town Councils respectively).

1. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 20th December 2000 (a copy had been sent to each member) were received and noted.

MATTERS ARISING

2. **Christmas Decorative Lighting**

Following an enquiry as to when the community councils will be advised whether monies will be spent on the replacement of the identified defective lighting columns which support Christmas decorative lighting, it was reported that while the overall budget for street lighting has been allocated, the specific details of the individual budget heads has not yet been determined.

3. **Animal Trespass**

An update was requested on the suggestion made at the last meeting that a cattle grid placed before the bridge to Grove Park playing fields would prevent future trespass onto the area. No information was available at the meeting but it was noted that the community council would be contacted in due course.

4. **EMERGENCY RESPONSE ARRANGEMENTS**

The Highways Infrastructure Manager, Mr M. Rees-Williams, attended the meeting to speak in this item and made reference to the content of the report presented to the meeting in December.

He referred to the recent organisational/merger changes within the department and circulated details of those changes to those present. Details of the roles and responsibilities of the merged Highway Infrastructure Group as outlined therein were noted. Mr Williams indicated that for ease of reference a pamphlet summarising the new arrangements is being prepared and copies will be sent to community/town councils in due course.

Details of the emergency response to conditions caused by severe weather such as heavy and prolonged rain, strong winds etc were noted. It was confirmed that the winter maintenance service is covered within the Winter Maintenance Plan (a copy of which has been previously circulated to all community/town councils).

It was confirmed that the emergency response service operates at all times throughout the year and during the normal working day instances are usually reported via the Highway Infrastructure Customer Care number 01495 235323 (outside of normal working hours 01443 875500). The defined process followed once a call is logged and determined to be an emergency was outlined. It was confirmed that the management and operation of the service is currently the subject to review as part of the merger process.

Reference was made to the use the customer care line for general matters and the Clerks were encouraged to use that facility. It was noted that this conflicts with the Charter that all communication should be made through one central point. It was noted that in some instances where this has been done, it has not been possible to be supplied with a log number for future reference.

Sheryl Andrews then outlined her role as Caerphilly Emergency Planning Officer and detailed the co-ordinated approach between the Gwent Emergency Planning Service and the local authority. It was noted that Emergency Planning Service, based at a central office in Cwmbran, has a joint arrangement with each of the local authorities who have an appointed member of staff to deal with such matters. Those Officers are available during the day at their offices and are on an out of hours duty rota system at other times. They are normally contacted directly by the Police/Fire Brigade if a major incident occurs.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Consideration was given to the following reports.

5. Future Strategy For The Provision And Running Of Closed Circuit Television Within The County Borough

Details of the report considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 27th February 2001 which outlined the Council's future strategy with regard to the provision and monitoring of CCTV were noted. It was confirmed that as part of the strategy, consultation will take place with a number of bodies including town/community councils on the future site locations for CCTV.

The community/town councils representatives were requested to provide details of suggested areas for future site locations for CCTV and to determine whether they are in a position to make a contribution towards the scheme.

Reference was made to the success of the mobile CCTV and it was noted that an increase in the enforcement activity has generated an increased number of requests for surveillance and use of the system. Unfortunately, the overwhelming demand for its use exceeds the supply.

It was requested that details of its use and the successful prosecutions arising therefrom be published in Newsline in order to deter would be offenders.

TOWN AND COMMUNITY COUNCILS LIAISON COMMITTEE

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

6. Budget Submissions - Feedback

It was noted that a wide range of submissions were received from the community/town councils encompassing a variety of ideas. It was reported that whilst the budget has been set, departments are seeking to establish what savings they need to make to balance their budgets. It is anticipated that further detailed information will be available early in April.

It was confirmed that the Council was unable to address all of the essential requirements to maintain existing service delivery and it is unlikely that many of the submissions can be taken forward.

It was requested that the community/town councils revisit the lists they have submitted to identify their priorities and consider whether they may be able to offer assistance for its provision. The representatives requested feedback on whether their schemes are successful or otherwise. It was agreed that reports presented to subsequent committees which identify those that have been successful will be forwarded to each Clerk at the appropriate time.

7. Progress Of Playground Replacement Programme

It was noted that Phase 1 of the playgrounds replacement programme commenced on site on Monday 22nd January 2001 as part of a twelve week contract to install ten playgrounds. These include one premier playground at Morgan Jones Park, Caerphilly and standard playgrounds at Llanbradach, Cefn Hengoed, Fochriw, Senghenydd, Argoed, Butetown, Trethomas and Bargoed.

Officers are currently finalising the contract details for Phase 2 which also consists of ten playgrounds and it is anticipated that these will also be installed in time for the school summer holidays, 2001.

Reference was made to the consultation process that has been used and to the fact that in accordance with the agreed charter, community/town councils should be consulted on arrangements or changes to play areas. An instance was quoted in the Aber Valley whereby SALT had been asked to comment on the plan but the Community Council had not. The Cabinet member for Education and Leisure indicated that he would take the comments on board.

8. **Winter Maintenance Service Arrangements**

Details of the report which highlighted winter service arrangements were noted.

Specific problems raised in respect of the apparent lack of gritting on the Rhymney by-pass between Twyn Cano roundabout and Butetown were highlighted and it was agreed that the Highways Infrastructure Manager would speak to the representatives of the community council following the meeting. It was noted that all community/town councils have received a copy of the winter maintenance plan which identifies those routes which are gritted.

Reference was made to the re-filling of local salt bins and it was reported that this activity throughout the winter period is proving to be increasingly demanding and costly and warrants a review as to the role of such as part of the winter maintenance service. It was noted that an audit of all grit bins is being undertaken in order to ensure that they are located in their correct position in order that a comprehensive schedule is available.

It was confirmed that it is the intention to carry out a thorough review of the winter maintenance service prior to next winter (route optimisation, appropriate response times, the cost benefits of implementing limited additions to the current network, the cost effectiveness of local salt bin provision and snowplan procedures) and the community/town councils will be consulted as part of the review.

9. **Progress On Alcohol Free Zones**

Details of the Criminal Justice and Police Bill which is currently going through parliament were noted. It was confirmed that if passed, part of its provisions will introduce an adoptive power for local authorities to designate alcohol free zones.

It was reported that it has been agreed that, in view of the fact that a list of streets and areas have been identified to be considered for inclusion as 'alcohol free zones', this process for the county borough to adopt the existing by-law should continue rather than wait for the bill to become law.

It was noted that a report will be presented to Cabinet in the near future and a copy will be forwarded to all community/town councils at that time.

10. **Street Cleansing In Caerphilly County Borough**

Details of the report which outlined various cleansing initiatives within the County Borough and advised on enforcement actions taken to date and planned changes to the delivery of street cleansing services were noted. It was confirmed that since the merger of client and contractor cleansing services in July 2000 various changes have been made with respect to service delivery and budget growth. Some £241,000 has been granted for street cleansing services for financial year 2001/2002 and this will be used to improve the services. It was noted that this sum will fund the employment of 13 additional cleansing staff and that the options for the purchase of various pieces of equipment is currently being examined.

Reference was made to enforcement action that has been taken to date in respect of littering and dog fouling and the success of the mobile CCTV operation outside Crosskeys College was

outlined. The interest that the enforcement activity has generated has resulted in an increased number of requests for surveillance and use of the CCTV system.

It was confirmed that future enforcement action will now target takeaway food premises in the form of street litter control notices. The notices will initially be served on a number of "problematic" takeaways in the Caerphilly and Blackwood areas. Their effect will then be reviewed prior to extending the service to other areas in the County Borough. It was agreed that liaison would take place with the respective community/town council prior to service of notices in order that those causing local problems can be targeted.

The pressures upon the services were noted and particular reference was made to the cleansing of by-passes, by-pass lay-bys, rear lanes and street washing. With regards to bypasses, it is proposed that in 2001/2002 each highway and strategic route will be scheduled for a monthly cleanse (if required). In respect of bypass lay bys, it is proposed that "mobile" takeaway food vans that regularly occupy specific lay-bys will be targeted with street litter control notices. Rear lanes are one of the areas targeted by the budget growth bid expenditure and, in relation to street washing, a machine has been acquired and a programme of hot, high pressure washing is currently being drawn up for 2001/2002.

During the course of the discussion, reference was made to the shopping trollies that adorn Caerphilly town centre and it was noted that the Officer would liaise with the Clerk in that area with a view to using powers under the Environmental Protection Act.

Concern was expressed that although Environmental Services and Housing is responsible for the cleansing of highways, streets, pavements and paved public areas within the street cleansing contract, the duty to keep all other relevant local authority land clean is then divided across the other Directorates of the Authority and unless specific information is available it is not possible for a member of the public to differentiate. It was confirmed that consideration is being given to the introduction of a unified cleansing service or one-stop shop for the cleansing of all relevant land.

Reference was also made to the cleansing of parks (which falls into the above category). The Public Services Manager indicated that he was meeting the Head of Lifelong Learning and Leisure to discuss various issues and that he would raise this matter with him at that time.

In addition to the normal educational activities undertaken by the Directorate details of the a number of high profile campaigns that are receiving consideration (sponsorship of a "clean-up Caerphilly" campaign and an environmental award scheme) were noted.

In conclusion it was noted that there are varying pressures that exist on the street cleaning services and various initiatives and improvement strategies that are due to commence in April 2001. Many of these strategies will need to involve community/town councils, local ward members and the general community and it is therefore hoped that this joint approach will assist in the achievement of service improvement and cleaner streets.

11. **Technical Services Department - Responses**

Concern was expressed at the length of time it sometimes takes to receive a response to written enquiries submitted through the agreed liaison procedure. It was noted that of the three specific instances notified, two have been resolved and one still remains outstanding. It was acknowledged that there are outstanding issues with other that those who responded to the request for details.

It was indicated that it is the best intention to respond within a reasonable period but in certain instances it is not possible to comply with the agreed policy.

It was agreed that the Community Council Liaison Officer and Highways Infrastructure Manager examine the problems being experienced with a view to improving the situation.

The meeting closed at 8.40pm