

CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

COMMUNITY COUNCIL LIAISON SUB-COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, TREDOMEN ON WEDNESDAY, 26TH MARCH 2003 AT 7.00 P.M.

PRESENT:

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

Councillors:

Mrs E.M. Aldworth, P.J. Bevan, Mrs A. Collins, Mrs M.E. Hughes, M.H. Newman, J.E. Newnham, H. Price, Mrs J.A. Pritchard

Representing Community/Town Councils:

Aber Valley	-	J.E. Roberts, Mr J.S. Humphreys (Clerk)
Argoed	-	Mr D.R. Parry (Clerk)
Bargoed	-	H.M. Farrant
Bedwas, Trethomas & Machen	-	Mrs G. Howell, Mr D. Allison (Clerk)
Blackwood	-	Mr I. Palmer (Clerk)
Caerphilly	-	Mrs U.P. Newman, Mr M. Evans (Clerk)
Darran Valley	-	C.R. Roberts, Mrs P. Cooper (Clerk)
Gelligaer	-	Mrs A. Davies (Clerk)
Llanbradach	-	
Maesycwmmmer	-	Mrs J.H. Rao
Nelson	-	Mr A. Hoskins (Clerk)
New Tredegar	-	
Penyrheol, Trecenydd & Energlyn	-	Mrs A. Nash, Mr R.B. Williams (Clerk)
Rhymney	-	Mrs M. Betts
Rudry	-	Mr J.L. Matthews (Clerk)
Van	-	D.G. Hill, J. O'Brien (Clerk)

Together with:

S. Rosser (Deputy Chief Executive), M. Williams (Public Services Manager), D. Price (Principal Parks and Open Spaces Officer), M. Smith and T. Evans (Recycling Officers), H.C. Morgan (Senior Committee Services Officer)

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors H.A. Andrews, J. Bevan, Ms E.E. Forehead, D.J. Potter and K.R. Snell, Community Councillors A.S. Williams, J.B. Criddle, Mrs M.J. Hallam, Mrs M.R. Richards, J.R. Hanson, Mrs M. Derrett, Mr H. Williams and Mrs S. Newbury and Mrs H. Harris, Mr W. Thomson, Mr D. Cooper and Mr T. Powell Clerks of Bargoed, Llanbradach, Maesycwmmmer, New Tredegar Community/Town Councils respectively.

1. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 22nd January 2003 (a copy had been sent to each member) were received and noted.

MATTERS ARISING

2. **Abandoned Supermarket Trolleys (minute no. 2)**

It was reported that Safeway will be installing a trolley looping system once contractual issues have been resolved.

3. **Off Road Motorcycling/Invitation to Superintendent I. Johnson (minute no. 4)**

It was noted that Superintendent Johnson was unable to attend this meeting but would be present at the next meeting scheduled for 18th June 2003.

4. **Animal Trespass Problems (minute no. 5)**

The issues raised under this minute were considered in conjunction with item four of the agenda. This report gave details of the initiatives that have been progressed in an attempt to alleviate animal trespass problems and the legal powers available to tackle the problem.

The report concluded that Counsels advice confirms that there is currently a lack of effective legislation currently to deal with the problem and Council therefore has to fall back on charging a reasonable fee for the release of animals caught straying together with measures to prevent the problem occurring. The Welsh Assembly Government and Members of Parliament have been requested to improve powers to deal with the problem.

Clarification was again sought as to whether farmers are advised that their animals are straying before the team visit the area to give them an opportunity to remove their animals. Although at the last meeting the Environmental Health Manager had confirmed that they are contacted after they have been impounded and not before it was agreed that this matter be further investigated.

5. **Control on the Storage and Use of Fireworks (minute no. 7)**

It was reported that the bill had received an unopposed second reading on 28th February 2003 and its route would be to committee stage and report stage prior to its third reading in the chamber and its presentation to the House of Lords. Those present were advised to write to their local MP's requesting they support the bill through its legislative procedures.

6. **Japanese Knotweed (minute no. 8)**

Clarification was sought on the success rate of the existing contracts and the Principal Public and Open Spaces Officer detailed the procedures being used to try to eradicate the problem. He pointed out that it can take 2/3 years of regular herbicide straying before the area is deemed clear and that the area would continue to be monitored on a regular basis to ensure it remains so.

7. Dog Fouling (minute no. 9)

Following the request at the last meeting it was confirmed that an item had appeared in Newsline (March issue) highlighting the clamp down on dog fouling. The item indicated that it is an offence to fail to clean up after pets and will result in the issuing of on the spot fines or prosecution and detailed the fines which have been issued to date.

Members were reminded that details of areas where regular offences are seen to occur should be forwarded to the Environmental Health Manager in order that the area can be targeted and CCTV surveillance be undertaken as appropriate.

TOWN AND COMMUNITY COUNCILS LIAISON COMMITTEE

Consideration was given to the following items raised by the community/town councils and to the respective reports for each item.

8. Sustainable Waste Management Initiatives

The Public Services Manager, Mr Mark Williams, detailed the initiatives introduced by the Council in an attempt to promote sustainable waste management.

He highlighted the results of the Viewpoint Panel consultation on recycling, refuse collection and cleansing, community skips and civic amenity sites and detailed the progress on the following initiatives:-

- (a) kerbside collection of dry recyclables - which is to be extended to 48,000 properties;
- (b) kerbside collection of green waste - to be continued following the success of the pilot scheme;
- (c) collection of tree/hedge cuttings - which, in view of its success to date will ensure it continues to operate during 2003/04;
- (d) home composting - 8,000 bins have been sold to date;
- (e) the Community Furniture Enterprise Scheme whose targets have been exceeded which has enabled the project to maximise a range of funding applications to enable development, diversification and sustainability;
- (f) commercial recycling scheme - currently cardboard, glass and cans are collected from 640, 100 and 57 business respectively;
- (g) municipal recycling - strategy being pursued to change this either to materials being re-used or re-processed in house or via partnership with a private company;
- (h) the Real Nappy Service - a company who collects, launders and delivery re-usable nappies;
- (i) mini recycling centres - thirty nine mini recycling centres offer a range of recycling facilities for glass, newsprint, magazines, cans and clothes;
- (j) recycling at civic amenity sites - five civic amenity sites offer a wide range of recycling facilities;
- (k) waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE) - strategy to meet targets set by the WEEE directive;
- (l) education initiatives - details of the comprehensive waste management education programmes and community work;
- (m) educational interactive - production of householder good waste guide and kerbside recycling

leaflets.

With regards to landfill tax credit, Mr Williams detailed the bids submitted for schools recycling and incentives for householders participating in kerbside recycling. Details on whether the bids will be successful are awaited.

Mr Williams then detailed the Authority's municipal waste management strategy and indicated that lengthy community consultation will be undertaken in the near future to establish opinions on waste management. The views of community/town councils would be sought at that time.

Clarification was sought on the future of the Trehir Civic Amenity Site once Trehir landfill site has closed. Mr Williams indicated that Trehir is to close as a landfill site but that there are no plans at present to close the civic amenity site.

A query was also raised as the assistance offered to local groups who wish to improve the area. Mr Williams indicated that the Council always support such groups and can offer assistance by providing skips, bags, gloves, litter pickers etc. and arrange to dispose of anything collected. He made reference to the community environmental awards, which are held on an annual basis, which are aimed at encouraging communities to participate in environmental schemes designed to have an impact on improving the local areas.

In response to a query regarding the kerbside collection scheme, it was pointed out that 48,000 properties (67%) currently have access and that plans to expand the scheme to further properties are being discussed.

9. **Maintenance Of Highway Hedges**

Mr D. Price, Principal Parks and Open Spaces Officer, indicated that over the past few years the management of highway verges, hedges and visibility areas has been developed by the Parks Service in conjunction with the Chief Highway Engineer in order that a uniformed delivery of service can be provided throughout the borough.

It was noted that the vast majority of highway hedges and hedge banks are cut twice a year, cutting banks on which hedgerows are established is undertaken during the main growing period and that highway hedge banks are cut in two cuts/flailing operations.

Specific reference was made to the cutting of private hedgerows and it was confirmed that the Authority requests the owner to trim/cut these hedges themselves. However, in extreme cases and in the event of the owner not complying, using its duty of care where highway safety is deemed to be severely compromised, the Authority will undertake the work and recharge the responsible party the full costs.

A query was raised on the timescale involved once the party concerned is requested to cut the hedge and it was noted that Highway staff are authorised to issue notices which should be complied with. The timescale involved will depend on the deemed danger the overgrowth is causing. If it is a busy road with lots of pedestrian use the notice will have a short deadline as opposed to a rural land with little pedestrian use which will have a longer deadline. After the specified time, works will be undertaken by the Authority and the party recharged. Specific reference was made to a problem being experienced in the Abertysswg/Rhymney area and Mr Price indicated that this problem is being monitored and that he would notify the Officer of the concerns raised.

Reference was then made to the cutting of hedges in rural areas and it was noted that this is dependent on the consistency of the hedge and its growth rate (certain species of hedges having a faster growth rate than others).

10. **REVENUE BUDGET 2003/04**

Mr S. Rosser, Deputy Chief Executive, outlined the content of the report which highlighted details of the final rate support grant settlement, expenditure projections, the allocation of the performance incentive grant and deprivation grant and the key areas of expenditure.

He indicated that a council tax of 6.9% has enabled the Council to maintain most of the existing services and made reference to appendix 2 of the report which sets out key budget pressures.

Members were pleased to note that the maintenance of community assets is now a key priority and were advised that officers are currently compiling the list which will be considered by Cabinet in due course. Those present were invited to submit individual projects for consideration.

Clarification was sought on the future of sixth form funding provision. Mr Rosser explained the existing arrangements with ELWa and referred to the current consultation process on education proposals generally.

Arising from comments within the report a query was raised as to the purpose of the Peer Review. It was noted that the review had been to assess management processes and it had commented on the evaluation of base budgets and the release of resources to priority areas. To facilitate this, it has been agreed that service growth bids would not be sought and the budget for 2003/04 would need to reflect the maintenance of existing service commitments and service improvement/enhancement. It is intended that a framework for a medium term financial plan will be introduced that will assist overall service planning/delivery and service improvement.

11. **SPECIAL MEETING - 3RD APRIL 2003**

The representatives requested that in view of their other commitments, the meeting scheduled for 3rd April 2003, at which the Director of Education and Leisure was due to discuss regeneration and education proposals, be re-arranged to an alternative date.

12. **RETIREMENT OF CLERKS**

The Chairman referred to the retirement of both Mrs Hazel Harris (Clerk to Bargoed Town Council) and Mr Tel Powell (Clerk of New Tredegar Community Council) and paid tribute to the role they have undertaken on behalf of their community/town councils.

The meeting closed at 8.15 p.m.