

CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

COMMUNITY COUNCIL LIAISON SUB-COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, TREDOMEN ON WEDNESDAY, 21ST JANUARY 2004 AT 7.00 P.M.

PRESENT:

Community Councillor J. Criddle - Chairman
Councillor C.P. Mann - Vice-Chairman

Councillors:

Mrs. E.M. Aldworth, H.A. Andrews, M.H. Newman, J.E. Newnham, H. Price,
Mrs. J.A. Pritchard, K.R. Snell

Representing Community/Town Councils:

Aber Valley	-	J.E. Roberts, Mr. J.S. Humphreys (Clerk)
Argoed	-	A.S. Williams, Mr. D.R. Parry (Clerk)
Bargoed	-	H.M. Farrant, Mr. J. Dilworth (Clerk)
Bedwas, Trethomas & Machen	-	Mrs. G. Howell, Mr. D. Allinson (Clerk)
Blackwood	-	J.B. Criddle, Mr. I. Palmer (Clerk)
Caerphilly	-	Mrs. M.J. Hallam, Mr. M. Evans (Clerk)
Darran Valley	-	C.R. Roberts, Mrs. P. Cooper (Clerk)
Gelligaer	-	Mrs. A. Davies (Clerk)
Llanbradach	-	Mr. W.M. Thompson (Clerk)
Maesycwmmmer	-	Mrs. J.H. Rao, Mr. D. Cooper (Clerk)
Nelson	-	Mr. A. Hoskins (Clerk)
New Tredegar	-	Mrs. M. Hill
Penyrheol, Trecenydd & Energlyn	-	Mrs. A. Nash, Mr. R.B. Williams (Clerk)
Rhymney	-	Mrs. M. Betts
Rudry	-	
Van	-	Mrs. E. Macey

Together with

D. Hopkins (Director of Education and Leisure), D. Price (Principal Parks and Open Spaces Officer), H.C. Morgan (Senior Committee Services Officer)

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J. Bevan, P.J. Bevan, Mrs. A. Collins, Mrs. C. Forehead and Mrs. M.E. Hughes, Community Councillors Mrs. M.R. Richards, Mrs. A. Reed and Mrs. M.A. Derrett and Mr. J.L. Matthews and Mr. J. O'Brien (Clerks of Rudry and Van Community/Town Councils respectively).

1. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 17th September 2003 (a copy had been sent to each member) were received and noted.

MATTERS ARISING

2. Christmas Decorative Lighting (minute no. 14)

It was queried as to the reason that the community/town councils have not yet received their award and agreed that the matter be investigated and the Clerks advised accordingly.

The members wished to place on record their appreciation to all those involved in the provision of decorative lighting throughout the county borough.

TOWN AND COMMUNITY COUNCILS LIAISON COMMITTEE

Consideration was given to the following items raised by Community/Town Councils.

3. PROPOSALS TO CEASE TO MAINTAIN BEDWELLY COMPREHENSIVE SCHOOL WITH EFFECT FROM 31ST AUGUST 2005 - ST. ILAN SCHOOL APPLICATION FOR FOUNDATION STATUS

Consideration was given to the report which detailed the process to be followed as a result of the Council's decision to proceed with the publishing of a public notice.

Mr. David Hopkins, Director of Education and Leisure, indicated that consultation has been undertaken in accordance with advice received from the National Assembly and, by 23rd February 2004, any person who may wish to object can do so.

Community Councillor Mrs. Hill expressed concerns at what is perceived to be the lack of consultation within the New Tredegar area and referred specifically to a request that Officers meet with New Tredegar Community Council, which had not been progressed. Mr. Hopkins indicated that consultation was undertaken following discussions with Assembly Officers and community meetings were arranged in Heolddu and Rhymney and there had been a parent evening in Bedwellty School. These were widely publicised and well attended and as such he felt confident that adequate consultation had taken place. The proposals had also been publicised in the press and persons could respond to that advertisement if they so wished. He indicated that his Officers had agreed to meet the community council. With the permission of Mrs. Hill, he circulated details of correspondence between his officers and the Clerk of New Tredegar Community Council, which clarified the issue raised.

With regards to St. Ilan School, Mr. Hopkins reported that its application for foundation status is with the Welsh Office and to date no determination has been made. He pointed out that the County Borough has lodged formal objections to the proposal giving detailed reasons why it was felt that the Council needed to take this step.

4. WEEKEND CLEANSING OF PARKS

Mr. Derek Price, Principal Parks and Open Spaces Officer, attended the meeting to detail the current position with regards to the cleansing of parks.

He indicated that Officers have been seeking to establish savings from the leisure parks revenue budget in order to fund the additional cleansing of park areas during weekend periods. Unfortunately, due to the need to commence and accommodate a comprehensive safety inspection and maintenance programme on the new facilities throughout the Borough (skateboard areas, multi-use games areas, youth shelters, kick walls and new playground sites) further savings from the revenue budget appear to be extremely unlikely this year.

Mr. Price estimated that the Parks playground budget will enter an overspend for this year due to the need to manage the new areas in line with existing council play equipment areas and in compliance with ROSPA guidelines. In light of this, he reported that Officers are undertaking further evaluation works with a view to establishing the most cost efficient approach to any annual weekend cleansing programme covering parks areas before the drafting of growth submissions for the council's consideration.

5. TIMETABLE FOR ELECTIONS

Details of the proposed timetable for the election on 10th June 2004 were noted. It was confirmed that it is not possible to provide any apportioned estimated costs at this stage but noted that it would be sent to each Clerk once available.

6. SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS

Details of the report which outlined the safe routes to schools scheme and the initiatives for Rhymney Comprehensive School and Risca Comprehensive/Crosskeys College and were noted. It was confirmed that a review/assessment is currently being undertaken to determine the next safe routes to schools transport bid submission for 2005/06. This bid will be presented to Cabinet/Scrutiny Committee for approval.

During discussion on this item several members referred to specific problems within their areas. They were requested to write with further details in order that the matters could be investigated.

With regards to the scheme for Rhymney Comprehensive School, Community Councillor M. Betts (Rhymney) wished to complement Officers for the provision of the facility.

7. SCHOOL TRANSPORT

Members made reference to the recent inquest in the Vale of Glamorgan and to its outcome and requested details on any actions being taken and of any initiatives that are being examined. It was agreed that the information be sought and the members advised accordingly.

8. NEW OPPORTUNITIES FUND

Details provided in respect of funding opportunities were noted. It was confirmed that a search of the 'Grantfinder' database (which contains information on a variety of sources of funding) had not revealed any sources of funding specifically for summer play schemes.

Reference was made to a consultation document entitled 'Funding for Children's Play Future Initiatives' and it was agreed that details of this initiative be investigated and Clerk's advised accordingly.

9. OLDER PERSONS CHAMPION

The report which detailed the requirements to appoint an elected member to be older persons champion and set out the key considerations which should be taken into account in selecting that person was noted.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

10. Welsh Assembly Research Reports into the Future Potential of Town and Community Councils

It was agreed that a special meeting be convened (before the end of the consultation period 27th February 2004) to discuss the content of the document.

11. Web Site Provision

In noting that each Community/Town Council will be required, under the Freedom of Information Act, to provide a web site by 2005, it was agreed that the Web Site Manager be invited to the next meeting to outline options which may be available.

12. Proposed Post Office Closures

Reference was made to plans for the closure of Post Offices within the area and it was agreed to seek further information on the proposals.

13. Code of Conduct

Members agreed to the suggestion by the Monitoring Officer, Mr. I. Medicott, that he should attend the next meeting of the Town and Community Council Liaison Committee (17th March 2004) to discuss matters relating to the Code of Conduct.

14. FUTURE MEETINGS

In noting that the current cycle of the Sub-Committee meets in March, June, September and December and that the meeting in December has traditionally been changed to January, and in view of the elections on 10th June 2004 and the need to postpone the meeting scheduled for 16th June 2004, it was agreed that the cycle be amended. Such meetings would be held on the third Wednesday in January, April, July and October.

The meeting closed at 8.15 p.m.