



COMMUNITY COUNCIL LIAISON SUB-COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT COUNCIL OFFICES TREDOMEN
ON WEDNESDAY 20TH JULY 2005 AT 7.00 PM.

PRESENT:

Councillor L. Gardiner - Chairman

Councillors:

K.M. Derrick, N.S. Dix, C.P. Duggan, M.H. Newman, Mrs. D. Price, G.R. Price, A.S. Williams

Representing Community/Town Councils:

Aber Valley	- J.E. Roberts, Mr. J.S. Humphreys (Clerk)
Argoed	- Mr. D.R. Parry (Clerk)
Bargoed	-
Bedwas, Trethomas & Machen	- Mrs. G. Howell, Mr. D. Allinson (Clerk)
Blackwood	- A. Wilkins, Mr I. Palmer (Clerk)
Caerphilly	-
Darran Valley	-
Gelligaer	- D. Roberts, Mrs. A. Davies (Clerk)
Llanbradach	- J. Hanson, Mr. W.M. Thompson (Clerk)
Maesycwmmmer	- Mrs. J.H. Rao
Nelson	- Mrs. A. Blackman
New Tredegar	-
Penyrheol, Trecenydd & Energlyn	- Mrs. A. Nash, Mr. R.B. Williams (Clerk)
Rhymney	-
Rudry	-
Van	- Mrs. E. Macey, J. O'Brien (Clerk)

Together with

A. Jones (Community Safety Officer), G. Thomas (CCTV Manager), H.C. Morgan (Senior Committee Services Officer)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors H.A. Andrews, Mrs. E.M. Aldworth, B.A. Barker, J. Bevan, D. Bolter, Mrs. A. Collins, D.J. Potter, Mrs. J.A. Pritchard and C.P. Mann, Community Councillors Mrs. C. Osborne, I. Hughes, Mrs. M.J. Hallam, C.R. Roberts, D. Woodman, Mrs. G. Bevan, Mrs. B. Jones and Mr. J. Dilworth, Mr. M. Evans, Mrs. P. Cooper, Mr. D. Cooper and Mr. A. Hoskins (Clerks of Bargoed/Rudry, Caerphilly, Darran Valley, Maesycwmmmer and Nelson Community/Town Councils respectively).

2. MINUTES - 27TH APRIL 2005

The minutes of the meeting held on 27th April 2005 (a copy had been sent to each member) were received and noted.

MATTERS ARISING

3. Community Centre Constitution

Arising from the query raised at the previous meeting, it was confirmed that clause 3(m) of the constitution bestows powers upon a management committee to employ such persons as necessary to further its objects. This refers primarily to a contracted employee, such as a clerk, caretaker, cleaner, manager etc. Clause 18(b) then states that a paid employee of the management committee shall not be eligible to become a member of that management committee or sub groups thereof. Such a person, (being an employee of the committee) may therefore not become a member of that committee. If the caretaker/cleaner is employed by the authority they would be eligible to be a member of the management committee and depending on the contractual arrangements of those who are employed by the centre (casual workers who may have no contract, no guarantee of work and are under no obligation to accept work) they may be eligible to be a member of the management committee (subject to the conditions outlined in the sub-clauses of 3(n)).

A query was then raised as to whether a substitute member is allowed to attend meetings if the nominated member is unable to and it was agreed to seek the views of the Community Centres Manager and report to the next meeting.

TOWN AND COMMUNITY COUNCILS LIAISON COMMITTEE

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

4. JAPANESE KNOTWEED

Consideration was given to the report which detailed the problems being experienced with Japanese knotweed and to particular actions that are being taken to combat its spread.

It was noted that the extent of knotweed infestation in the county borough is not fully known despite a survey being undertaken with the assistance of various groups including community/town councils. It was requested that any further areas that are identified should be notified to Countryside and Landscape Services for inclusion on the existing data.

Members were pleased to note that funding has been secured to appoint an Invasive Plant Species Officer (the postholder will target primarily, but not exclusively, Japanese knotweed) and that the person will not only implement direct treatment controls in identified priority areas (yet to be confirmed) but also have an educational role. It was pointed out that the post holder will be required to prepare presentations and meet with community/town councils, community partnerships and educational establishments whilst also preparing a range of information and good practice guidance leaflets and other publicity. It was agreed that if in post at that time, the Officer be invited to the next meeting of the sub-committee.

5. ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION IN DESIGNATED PUBLIC PLACES

Mr. A. Jones (Community Safety Officer) presented the report which gave information on existing "alcohol free zones" within the county borough, outlined how new areas can be designated by order and provided details of progress to date. He reiterated that the byelaw

prohibits the consumption of alcoholic liquor by any person in designated places within a local authority area, after being requested to stop by a Police Officer.

Reference was then made the model byelaw introduced by the Home Office (and adopted in 1998) which designated certain public areas as “alcohol free zones”. Mr. Jones reported that the provisions of the byelaw have now been superseded by new legislation and greater enforcement powers will now be given to the Police. Existing public drinking byelaws will cease to have effect once the area is designated in accordance with Section 13 of the new Act. Any byelaw that is not replaced by a Section 13 Designation Order will lapse after a period of five years commencing on 1st September 2001 (September 2006).

Specific discussion ensued on the provisions of the Criminal Justice and Police Act 2001 and to the changes in the way areas are designated as alcohol free zones. It was noted that the new provisions also harmonise powers under designated alcohol free zones made under the new legislation and under the Confiscation of Alcohol (Young Persons) Act 1997.

It was noted that in order to designate further alcohol free zones it is now necessary to proceed with making an order under Section 13 of the Act rather than proceeding with a byelaw. Mr. Jones indicated that Section 12 of the Act provides new Police powers to deal with anti-social drinking in areas that have been designated for this purpose. The Police have the power to require a person, in such a designated area, not to drink alcohol in that area. The Police also have power to confiscate alcohol or alcohol containers (other than sealed containers) in the person’s possession. It is not an offence to drink alcohol in a designated public place, but failure to comply with a Police Officer’s request to stop drinking in public or surrender the alcohol without a reasonable excuse is an arrestable offence. These measures go further than the byelaw, which does not carry the powers of arrest or confiscation.

It was confirmed that the regulations require the local authority to consult with the Police prior to making a designation order and proposals that consultation would also take place with community/town councils covering areas to which the order will apply, licensees within the area, or who may be affected by the designation order and the owners of occupiers of any land that may be identified in such an order were welcomed.

With regard to existing designated areas, it was noted that it is proposed to “convert” those areas currently designated under the bylaw to areas designated under existing orders. Consultation is also taking place with the Police on expanding the current designated areas, (recognising that it will be they who will have the responsibility for enforcing any resulting restrictions on public drinking). When this is completed, a report will be submitted to Cabinet for approval and formal consultation on the specific areas will take place.

Reference was made to problems associated with the existing byelaws, particularly with regards to the location of the signs identifying the area and as such, the importance of ensuring that such signs are correctly placed and highly visible in order that the enforcement can be undertaken was highlighted.

6. UPDATE ON THE COUNCIL’S CCTV SYSTEMS

Mr. G. Thomas (CCTV Manager) gave an update on the current position with regard to CCTV within the borough and detailed both recent initiatives and future projects.

Details of the existing provision as outlined in the report were highlighted and the current locations of the fixed CCTV (monitored from the control room at Tiryberth) were noted. Mr. Thomas indicated that monitoring is also undertaken for Monmouthshire County Council through a Welsh Assembly Government facilitated partnership and that an annual fee is charged for this service.

Reference was then made to the several new schemes or extensions to existing schemes which have been planned and to the progress in each of those areas. With regard to mobile CCTV, and in noting the effectiveness of the service being deployed in areas where there are specific problems areas it was pointed out that if the Department is made aware of any particular problems which are causing serious disruption to the lives of residents, the van can be deployed as necessary.

Mr. Hughes then pointed out the recent development of the Overhead Surveillance Camera Assessment Resource (OSCAR) and reported that they can be redeployed at minimum expense and can be easily moved to take account of the new location of problem areas. All that is required is a suitable lighting column and a power supply. Some of the OSCARS, can be monitored and controlled from the CCTV control room, while others can store up to four days of evidential quality images which can be downloaded if an incident takes place.

Members were pleased to note that as a result of the public perception survey undertaken to find out what local people think about CCTV (postal survey to the Viewpoint Panel and completed face-to-face in Blackwood, Caerphilly and Risca Town Centres at various times on weekdays and weekends) an awareness campaign of posters, leaflets, beer mats and advertising on the back of car parking tickets was undertaken. Mr Hughes indicated that the message of the campaign was that CCTV is watching the criminals while at the same time protecting innocent people using town centres or car parks.

With regard to incidents viewed by the control room, it was confirmed that they are reported to Police Headquarters and the images being monitored can be transferred as necessary. These images can then be used as evidence if required.

Mr. Hughes then extended an invitation to those at the meeting to visit the Control Room to view the surveillance being undertaken and procedures which are required to be followed.

7. BT MULTI MEDIA KIOSKS

It was noted that proposals by BT to realign payphone provision and remove certain kiosks to meet customer demands have been received and the Chief Planning Officer has written objecting in principle to their removal and requested detailed justification of the proposed action in each of the cases.

8. SCHOOLS MAINTENANCE

Following a query in relation to concerns from a number of Community/Town Council Members who are School Governors that it is alleged that school maintenance must be undertaken by the Direct Labour Organisation, it was confirmed that the county borough does not impose any restrictions on schools to have to use its Direct Labour Organisation and has no such policy to that effect. Property Services offer Service Level Agreements to schools which they are able to buy if they so wish.

It was also pointed out that Officers are currently working with the Direct Labour Organisation to look at ways to improve day to day maintenance services to all clients but schools will still be able to choose whether to use this service or not.

9. SATELLITE DISHES ON FLATS

It was confirmed that a single satellite dish can be erected on a house without planning permission provided it complies with certain specifications contained in the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995 (GPDO). However, permission is

required to erect a dish on a flat, and an application for planning permission has to be accompanied by a fee (currently £120).

Reference was made to the siting of dishes on flats in council ownership and it was pointed out that landlords consent is required and that this is not always forthcoming as only one satellite dish is allowed per complex. It was agreed that representations should be made to the Chief Housing Officer that the residents in communal flats/sheltered housing schemes should have the same opportunities as those in private flats and houses.

Reference was then made to difficulties in receiving digital/analogue TV in council communal/sheltered accommodation and Members noted that this matter is currently being examined and that a report would be presented to the Health Social Care and Well Being Scrutiny Committee in due course. Until that time, the policy of applying and granting satellite dishes to residents of sheltered housing scheme will remain in place.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm
