



COMMUNITY COUNCIL LIAISON SUB-COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH ON MONDAY 1ST SEPTEMBER 2008 AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT:

Councillor J. Bevan - Chairman
Community Councillor C. Roberts - Vice Chairman

Councillors:

Mrs. E.M. Aldworth, J. Bevan, G.G. Hibbert, A.G. Higgs, C.P. Mann, M.H. Newman,
Mrs. K. Presley, Mrs. D. Price, J.A. Pritchard, Mrs. B.M. Toomer, A.S. Williams

Aber Valley	- Mrs. E. P. Prendergast, Mr. J.S. Humphreys (Clerk)
Argoed	- Mr. G. James (Clerk)
Bargoed	- Mrs. K. Halvey
Bedwas, Trethomas & Machen	- J.R. Davies, Mrs. S. Chick (Clerk)
Blackwood	-
Caerphilly	- Mrs. U.P. Newman, Mr. K. Williams (Clerk)
Darran Valley	- C.R. Roberts
Gelligaer	- Mrs. C. Mortimer (Clerk)
Llanbradach	- Mrs J. Hanson, Mr. W.M. Thompson (Clerk)
Maesycwmmmer	-
Nelson	-
New Tredegar	-
Penyrheol, Trecenydd & Energlyn	- Mrs. A. Nash, Mrs. H. Treherne (Clerk)
Rhymney	-
Rudry	-
Van	- Mrs. E. Macey, J. O'Brien (Clerk)

Together with

D. Price (Principal Parks and Open Spaces Officer), J. Bennett (Community Regeneration Manager), R. Gough (Senior Development Officer - GAVO), H.C. Morgan (Senior Committee Services Officer)

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor R. Woodyatt, Community Councillors Mrs. J. Rao and D. Woodman, Mr. J. Hold, Mr. A. Hoskins, Mrs. G. Thomas and Mr J. Dilworth (Clerks to Blackwood, Nelson, Maesycwmmmer and Rudry Community Councils respectively).

1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

Community Councillor C. Roberts was appointed Chairman of the Sub Committee for the ensuing year.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

Councillor C.P. Mann was appointed Vice Chairman of the Sub Committee for the ensuing year.

3. CLERK TO BEDWAS, TRETTHOMAS AND MACHEN COMMUNITY COUNCIL

It was noted that Mr. D. Allinson had stood down from his role as Clerk to Bedwas, Tretthomas and Machen Community Council. Members welcomed the new Clerk, Mrs. Sally Chick, to her first meeting of the Community Council Liaison Sub-Committee.

4. MINUTES - 23RD APRIL 2008

The minutes of the meeting held on 23rd April 2008 (a copy had been sent to each member) were received and noted.

MATTERS ARISING

5. Recycling Provision - Garden Waste (minute no. 2)

Reference was made to the collection of bulky green garden waste outside of the normal green waste collection and the protocol for removing large amounts. It was noted that a member had been advised it would be collected in twenty-four hours whilst another had been advised forty-eight hours. It was noted that there is a kerbside green waste collection fortnightly and that bulky green waste is also collected free of charge but the timescales involved were not known. It was agreed that the matter be investigated and the Member advised accordingly (for information the Member has been advised that upon a request to the Customer Care line on 01443 873727, the person is advised of the date on which it will be collected, usually on the next available collection day depending on the geographical area).

6. Community Planning and the Local Service Board in the County Borough (minute no. 3)

Reference was made to the presentation and to the discussions at that time in relation to the limited number on the Board and, in noting that whilst it had been agreed that it should be kept to a small number it had also been agreed that the membership should be kept under review. There had also been a debate on the membership of the Standing Conference and as to whether a community/town council representative should be invited to attend and it had been noted that this would also be reviewed. It was agreed that the matter be investigated and an update be given at the next meeting.

7. Caerphilly County Borough Council Animal Trespass Service (minute no. 5)

Members were thanked for their comments and suggestions regarding the service and information on specific locations and times where the Officers can concentrate their attention to address new problem areas.

8. Code of Conduct (minute no. 7)

Those present were reminded of the training sessions on the code of conduct arranged for 16th and 24th September 2008.

TOWN AND COMMUNITY COUNCILS LIAISON COMMITTEE

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

9. Flower Displays and Locations

Mr. D Price (Principal Parks and Open Spaces Officer) highlighted the content of the report which confirmed that the sites for display have included those from previous years, with one or two amendments. Colour and planting schemes were drawn up by Parks Officers, specific plant numbers were procured and grown to order. He confirmed that some changes had been adopted this year to certain locations in order to try and provide a greater all year round feature in terms of colour. These plantings are more cost efficient by providing greater protection against theft, more resistance to hot temperatures in summers and during cold windy periods in the winter.

Reference was made to the content of the flowering baskets in Caerphilly and Mr. Price pointed out that in view of exceptional weather conditions some of the plants had not matured as has be expected. Discussions are already underway to plan the display for next year.

It was confirmed that the main criteria for the chosen locations is land ownership, the land has to be within the ownership of the authority, normally land under the control and responsibility of the Parks Section. However, other locations are sometimes used, such as highway roundabout locations, the higher maintenance and associated costs are funded by sponsors, i.e. community/town councils and private organisations

It was reported that following works to the cycleway in the vicinity of Caerphilly Castle it would appear that the daffodils have been replanted in rows. Mr. Price confirmed that as a general rule they should appear to be natural and sown in drifts and as such would speak to the Supervisor of the scheme.

10. Community Partnerships

Mrs. Bennett (Community Regeneration Manager) and Mr. R. Gough (Senior Development Officer - GAVO) attended the meeting to give an update and overview of the progress of Community Partnerships across the borough. Community partnerships play an important role in the delivery of the Community Strategy at a local level and work to secure additional resources, which contribute to the delivery of community needs linked to the priorities and themes contained in the strategy.

Mrs. Bennett highlighted the development of the community first programme as part of the community first strategy and confirmed that community planning should empower individuals and the community in the decision making process. It was noted that community planning is about achieving developments that improve the quality of life for communities. This must be in ways that can be sustained, protecting/enhancing opportunities for future generations. It requires partnership work by agencies operating in the borough, engagement of and input from local communities and co-ordination with neighbouring areas in the sub-region to agree on the community strategy for the County Borough. The strategy will be influenced by, but can also influence, regional and Wales-wide objectives.

At a local level there are five community planning areas, at an area level the Area Steering Group, at the county borough level the Standing Conference and Standing Conference Executive and at the National and Regional Level lies the Welsh Assembly Government, Connecting South East Wales Board and the Heads of the Valleys Programme. The communities shape high-level strategies and the service organisations shape local action plans.

It was noted that at present there are thirty partnerships formed throughout the County Borough in both communities first and non communities first areas and reference was made to the role of the Regeneration Unit in supporting the strategy, assisting in the establishment of the local community partnerships and working in close liaison with all partner agencies and local residents. Mr. Gough outlined the role of the local partnerships in bringing together a number of bodies and recognised that the community/town councils are an essential part of the process and need to be an active part of those groups.

It was reported that following extensive consultation (area forum, voluntary organisations, statutory bodies, businesses and agencies) the community strategy, which is an overarching strategic document, had been produced in 2004. The Beecham Review highlighted the need for efforts to implement community strategies to become more focused and there then followed a review of community planning and community strategies. This concept led to the establishment of Local Service Boards. It was explained how the Board fits in with community planning in that it builds on the achievements by continuing partnership working, uses structures already developed, involves communities through community partnerships, voluntary organisations, the viewpoint panel and local members, sets targets to measure progress and published an annual report of achievements

It was noted that the community partnerships (comprising one third community representation, one third business and voluntary representation and one third statutory representation) work together to develop a local action plan to meet local needs and that they are intended to be inclusive and work together. Both Mrs. Bennett and Mr. Gough noted concerns expressed that at certain of the partnerships, there is no community/town council representative and it was pointed out that it is intended that there should be one on each of the partnerships and that nominations had been sought when they had been established. It was requested that those who are not already represented should forward details of their nominee in order that they can be invited to future meetings.

Concerns were expressed that community/town councils are not consulted as part of a formal process other than through their representatives on the community partnerships and as such, there is perceived to be a disproportional influence on the decision taken and suggested that this should be addressed. Concerns were also expressed that developments are being progressed without the knowledge of the relevant community/town council. It was pointed out that the proposals and plans are developed over a period of time with no major decision being taken until detailed consultation has taken place and recognised that community/town councils are an essential part of the consultation process.

Reference was then made to the ways in which the local action plans are developed and progressed in consultation with all parties and to the ability to attract external and partner funding for implementation and examples of collaborative working between the partnership and community councils were outlined (Llanbradach Fisheries, Gelligaer Roman Fort, Bargoed Big Bed, Big Tackle, Open Air Cinema, Christmas Event and Maesycwmmwr Cydcoed Woodland Project). It was noted however that whilst the partnerships are able to identify capital funding for the development of projects, they are unable to attract on-going revenue costs for maintenance and whilst there is an attempt in all cases to minimize maintenance in the design and to ensure maintenance implications are considered at all stages, in such cases, any final decisions on whether the projects will proceed will be determined by Cabinet.

Mrs. Bennett and Mr. Gough then responded to a number of questions raised over and above those which were considered during the course of the presentation (budget preparation, development of community partnerships in non communities first areas, sources of alternative funding and collaborative projects)

The Chairman thanked Mrs. Bennett and Mr Gough for their informative presentation and for responding to questions and issues raised by the Members during the course of the debate.

11. INVASIVE PLANT SPECIES

Members considered the detail within the report and in noting that Mr. Bowes was unable to attend as arranged as he has just become a father wished to congratulate Gethin and Jaclyn on the birth of their son. It was agreed that he be invited to the next meeting

12. FIVE MAN CLEANSING TEAM - FEEDBACK

Consideration was given to the request that details of works completed from the submitted schedules be fed back to the respective community/town council in order that they are informed of what was achieved, what will be picked up on the next cycle and what might be inappropriate suggestions (land not on the ownership of the county borough or other restrictions which prevent the Team carrying out particular works). It was noted that arrangements are in hand for such information to be produced and circulated.

13. WEBSITE UPDATE

In line with launch of county boroughs new website it was noted that the Web Editor, Mr Nick Rutter, would be contacting each Community/Town Council to determine whether there is any information they would wish to include on their respective web page.

The meeting closed at 8.10 pm.