



COMMUNITY COUNCIL LIAISON SUB-COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, PENALLTA HOUSE,
YSTRAD MYNACH ON WEDNESDAY, 2ND JUNE 2010 AT 7.00 PM

PRESENT:

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

Councillors:

Mrs. E.M. Aldworth, D. Bolter, D.G. Carter, C.P. Mann, M.H. Newman, Mrs. K. Presley,
Mrs. D. Price, J.E. Roberts, A.S. Williams, Mrs. L. Williams

Community/Town Council Representatives

Aber Valley	- Mrs. E. P. Prendergast, Mr. J.S. Humphreys (Clerk)
Argoed	-
Bargoed	- D.T. Davies
Bedwas, Trethomas and Machen	- Ms. J. Gale, Mrs. S. Chick (Clerk)
Blackwood	-
Caerphilly	- Mrs. U. Newman, Mr. K. Williams (Clerk)
Darran Valley	- C.R. Roberts
Gelligaer	-
Llanbradach	- S. Taviner, Mr. W.M. Thompson (Clerk)
Maesycwmmmer	- Miss J. Rao
Nelson	- Mrs. G. Davies
New Tredegar	-
Penyrheol, Trecenydd and Energlyn	- Mrs. A. Nash, Mrs. H. Treherne (Clerk)
Rhymney	- D.T. Williams
Rudry	- P. Blight, Mrs. S. Chick (Clerk)
Van	- Mrs. E. Macey, Mr. J. O'Brien (Clerk)

Together with

D. Perkins (Head of Legal Services), H.C. Morgan (Senior Committee Services Officer)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors H.A. Andrews, J. Bevan, Mrs. A. Collins and J.A. Pritchard, Community Councillors A. Angel and D. Woodman, Mrs. L. Tams, Mr. J. Hold, Mrs. C. Mortimer, Mrs. G. Thomas and A. Hoskins (Clerks of Bargoed, Blackwood, Gelligaer, Maesycwmmmer and Nelson Community/Town Councils respectively).

2. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN

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

3. APPOINTMENT OF VICE - CHAIRMAN

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

4. MINUTES - 17TH FEBRUARY 2010

The minutes of the meeting held on 17th February 2010 (a copy had been sent to each member) were received and noted.

MATTERS ARISING

5. Holiday Scheme Co-ordinator - Practitioners Day (minute no. 6)

It was noted that information inviting representatives to attend the Practitioners Day at Llanbradach Community Centre on 22nd June 2010 had been sent to each Clerk.

6. Sale of Islwyn Borough Transport (minute no. 10)

It was confirmed that the required information had been forwarded to each Clerk as requested.

TOWN AND COMMUNITY COUNCILS LIAISON COMMITTEE

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

7. CONSULTATION ON THE SUBJECTS CONTAINED WITHIN THE CHARTER

It had been requested that the meeting consider the charter and the perceived lack of consultation on two matters that had recently been considered by the county borough (street lighting and bulky refuse collections). As requested the Head of Legal Services was present in order that his advice and opinion could be sought to ensure the agreement is complied with in future and to determine if any course of action could be taken if further contraventions arise.

There was general consensus from the representatives present that there has been a lack of consultation on a number of issues, particularly in relation to street lighting and bulky items collection, contrary to the consultation agreement between the community/town councils and the county borough and that consultation in the main part is token on behalf of the county borough, without recognising the need for individual town/community councils to have time to meet, discuss and form a view which will be taken into account as part of the process.

The Head of Legal Services referred to the process whereby consultation is undertaken in line with the subjects listed within the charter and to the system where reports are referred to the Monitoring Officer who, in the main, picks up if they should have been referred for consultation. It was his opinion that neither street lighting nor bulky refuse collection fall into that category. With regards to street lighting proposals it was pointed out that an extensive borough wide consultation had taken place with the questionnaire included in Newline which was distributed to every property in the county borough. It was aimed at providing an

opportunity for all the residents to have a say in the way in which the Authority tackles its carbon reduction strategy and sought a preferred option for how long and where lights are left on in the county borough. The consultation deadline had been extended to allow as many interested parties as possible to respond.

Reference was also made the omission of a 'do nothing' option and it was felt that many residents did not bother to reply as the option they preferred was not given as a choice. Mr. Perkins confirmed that the strategy is to reduce carbon and, as street lighting is a significant contributor to this, this option was not provided.

A request was made for further information specifically on the street lighting consultation process and Mr. Perkins undertook to review the consultation that had taken place and to report back to a meeting scheduled for 21st July 2010.

A query was then raised as to whether there was course of action to the Office of the Ombudsman. Mr. Perkins indicated that he did not believe that complaints could be made by a community/town council although complaints from named individuals who have been affected by a decision of the county borough would be permissible. Following further queries raised on this advice given he agreed to seek the views of the Ombudsman and would confirm his findings.

Reference was then made to the agreed charter with community/town councils on exchanging information, liaison and consultation on specific subjects and it was then pointed out that within section 3 of the charter it states that 'after consultation, the county borough will inform the Community Council(s) in writing of its decision within fifteen working days of the decision being made and explain, if necessary, why the decision is different from the view put forward by the Community Council(s)'. It was pointed out that this was not being adhered to. It was accepted that there is a need to review the content of the charter, and in particular those subject for consultation and that this would be considered at that time. The representatives present agreed that Mr. John O'Brien, Mr. Jack Humphries and Mr. Bill Thompson be nominated to meet with the Head of Legal Services in order to undertake this review.

8. COMMUNITY REGENERATION FUND AWARDS PANEL/STANDING CONFERENCE/ RURAL DEVELOPMENT PARTNERSHIP

A nomination was sought for a Community Councillor to represent the Community Council Liaison Sub-Committee on both of the above. Community Councillor David Williams was selected to undertake these roles.

The meeting closed at 7.30pm.

Following the request made for clarification of the information provided, the Head of Legal Services has been in contact with the Ombudsman's Office and been advised that they do not accept complaints from town/community councils. However, they would accept a complaint from named individuals who have been affected by a decision of the County Borough. The Clerks were advised according on 3rd June 2010.