



COMMUNITY COUNCIL LIAISON SUB-COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, PENALLTA HOUSE,
YSTRAD MYNACH ON WEDNESDAY 15TH SEPTEMBER 2010 AT 7.00 P.M.

PRESENT:

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

Councillors:

M.H. Newman, Mrs. K. Presley, J.A. Pritchard, J.E. Roberts, A.S. Williams

Community/Town Council Representatives:

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

Together with

M. Williams (Head of Public Services), P. Gomer (Assistant Director - Communities and Leisure), D. Price (Parks and Outdoor Facilities Manager), P. Evans (Head of ICT and Property Services), H.C. Morgan (Senior Committee Services Officer)

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs. E. M. Aldworth, H.A. Andrews, J. Bevan, D. Bolter, D. Carter, Mrs. A. Collins, Mrs. D. Price and Mrs. L. Williams, Community Councillors A. Angel, Ms. R. Pritchard, Miss. J. Rao, Mrs. E. Macey and D. Woodman and Mrs. S. Chick, Mr. J. Hold, Mr. K. Williams, Mrs. C. Mortimer, Mr. W.M. Thompson, Mrs. G. Thomas and Mr. A. Hoskins (Clerks of Bedwas, Trethomas and Machen/Rudry, Blackwood, Caerphilly, Gelligaer, Llanbradach, Maesycwmmmer and Nelson Community/Town Councils respectively).

1. MINUTES - 21ST JULY 2010

The minutes of the meeting held on 21st July 2010 (minute nos. 1 - 8 on page nos. 1 - 3) (a copy had been sent to each member) were received and noted.

Matters arising from minute no. 2

2. Public Consultation on Options to Implement Carbon Reduction Within the Street Lighting Infrastructure

It was requested that the first paragraph on page 5 be changed to reflect that the community/town councils were not 'confused as to the exact process that was undertaken' but that the process had been ambiguous.

Reference was also made to the decision taken at Council that 'where there are issues of serious concern an individual risk assessment be completed before a final decision is taken on a particular stretch of road' and at the meeting a request was made for details of those stretches that are to be extinguished in order that further representation can be made if required. It was noted that in response to this request each Clerk had been advised on 30th July 2010 that the process had commenced and that in advance of the lights in specific areas being altered the local county borough members would be informed in writing of the roads affected in their wards. As this was not a further consultation exercise the lists will not be distributed more widely.

3. Review of Charter

It was reported that as agreed at the previous meeting there had been review of the Charter with the nominated representatives. At that time, and with the responses that had been received to the request for views on its content and taking into account comments raised at the meetings on both 2nd June and 21st July 2010, it was suggested that in order that the list of consultation subjects can be more definitive its content should be expanded to ensure there is '*consultation on any matters which are key and fundamental to the majority of wards that have community/town councils*'. Also within section 3, after consultation, the County Borough Council will, it was suggested that in order to ensure that this part of the Charter is adhered to, the Community Council Liaison Officer be advised of any consultation which is in the process of taking place with community/town councils (with the exception of planning applications). In this way when any subsequent report is presented to committee/cabinet respective community/town council can be advised of the outcome.

It was noted that not all community/town councils had had the opportunity to consider and comment on the content of the charter within the given timescale and it was agreed that any proposals be considered at the meeting of the Town and Community Council Liaison Committee scheduled for 20th October 2010 in order that a report can be presented at the meeting of the Community Council Liaison Sub-Committee scheduled for 17th November 2010.

4. Proposed Assembly Local Government Measure (minute no. 3)

It was noted that the offer to facilitate a meeting in order to discuss the proposed draft assembly local government measure prior to expressing views on its content had not been taken up and as such individual community/town councils would respond to the consultation document.

5. TRANSFER OF ASSETS

Prior to the presentation a query was raised as to whether county borough Members are required to declare an interest in this item in that there may be a decision required at some stage.

It was noted that the items to be presented are intended for discussion as part of the consultation process and would detail a combination of options and as such Members could participate in order that all views expressed can be incorporated in any subsequent report so that an informed decision can be made.

6. COMMUNITY CENTRES

The Assistant Director - Communities and Leisure, advised those present that a detailed report would be presented to a meeting of the Education for Life Scrutiny Committee later in the month and that a copy of that report would be forwarded to all community/town councils as part of the consultation process once it becomes available. In the meantime he gave a presentation on the proposed options that are to be included within that report

Mr. Gomer made reference to the community asset transfer initiative which suggests that certain of the county boroughs existing assets, including land buildings and other structures used for a variety of social, community and public purposes, could be transferred to the ownership of community and/or other voluntary sector management who would continue to deliver the service.

It was reported that as part of the medium term financial plan there was a requirement to achieve a reduction in service costs for community centres. Mr. Gomer advised that the ongoing support of 40 centres (37 Council owned centres, 3 independent centres at Rudry, Brithdir and Glan-y-Nant) in its present format is not sustainable in the current economic climate and referred to proposals to see the number reduced through a series of phased changes. These could include closure, transfer to community/town councils or other bona-fide bodies, such as Community Partnerships, Residents Associations or Community Centre Committees.

Discussion ensued on the option of transfer and how this could be achieved and Mr. Gomer advised that any Management Committee or community/town council agreeing to take over their community centre would be fully supported during the transition process and where possible, repairs to make buildings suitable for transfer would be an option for consideration.

It was suggested that it was more efficient and economical to fund the requirement centrally rather than have a community/town council precept their own local rates. The proposal that other appropriate bodies might be approached to take on the running of the centres was also raised, particularly in relation to Partnership Agencies, where long-term funding viability could become an issue. Mr. Gomer reiterated that organisation that chose to take on a facility would be supported through the process to ensure their long-term stability. The county borough would need to invest into the buildings to be transferred and to ensure the facilities meet statutory health and safety requirements.

During the course of the debate concerns were raised in relation to the deprived communities in which the majority of community centres are situated and the effects the removal of such a facility may have on the residents. Mr. Gomer advised that there is one centre which has 15% usage and a further two which only have 10% usage and this information and the views expressed at the meeting, and subsequently submitted, will be taken into account as part of the consultation process. Members were reminded that the closing of centres was only one of the options for discussion and it would need to be determined as to whether it could be declared surplus to service requirements.

Reference was made to the views put forward by the Government that community/town councils should have more responsibility in their local communities for assets and service delivery and that the transfer of community centres would be a step forward. It was pointed out that there is a need for further discussions on both community asset transfer generally and local service delivery as it relates to the transfer of functions and, in noting that the consultation today is part of the overall asset management review and that this was one of the first steps in the evolving process, agreed this be the subject of debate at a future meeting.

With regards to further consultation it was noted that more discussion will be required and the views expressed by the community/town councils will form an important part of the process of change. It was noted that it is important that the report is given enough time to go through the process in order to determine a way forward to continue to provide community centre provision and to meet the budget efficiencies required. At this stage consultation has yet to be undertaken with Members and the individual Community Centre Management Committees. It was pointed out that it is for individual community/town councils to determine whether they would wish to seek the transfer of the centre and that it was anticipated that should a centre be transferred it would continue to be managed through the present community centre management process.

In closing Mr. Gomer indicated that he would be more than happy to provide a breakdown of costs for specific centres and work with any of the community/town councils who may wish to participate in the delivery of the service. He would also welcome any comments on the subsequent report to be presented to the Education Scrutiny Committee, which will be circulated in due course.

7. SELF MANAGEMENT OF OUTDOOR SPORTS FACILITIES

The Head of Public Services then gave a presentation on the proposals for the self-management of outdoor sports facilities and in the first instance detailed the number of facilities that are available (130 soccer/rugby pitches, 21 bowling greens, 12 cricket wickets, 22 tennis courts, 1 athletic training surface and approximately 75 pavilions). He confirmed that level of activity at the above sites show that there were 2500 football/rugby fixtures, 220 cricket fixtures, 750 bowls season tickets sold, 24 tennis season tickets sold and 2800 single tennis tickets sold. He advised that circa £1.15m is spent per annum on outdoor sport but only circa £100,000 is received in income from fees and charges.

Mr. Williams went on to explain the ongoing appraisal of fees and charges and a review of the provision which is currently being considered. He detailed the potential role of sporting organisations (such as WRU, FAW) and the possibility of self-management arrangements, albeit being easier to consider the self-management of single use facilities than those that are multi-use.

It was noted that these proposals would be the subject of a separate consultation process in due course whereby all options will be considered on the individual merits of the case (lease/buy, changing facilities and/or field) but that single use facilities would be the first priority for discussion.

8. STANDARDS COMMITTEE

A nomination was sought for a Community Councillor to represent the Community Council Liaison Sub-Committee as a substitute Member on the Standards Committee. Community Councillor Philip Blight was selected to undertake this role.

9. 21ST CENTURY SCHOOLS STAKEHOLDERS GROUP

A nomination was sought for a Community Councillor to represent the Community Council Liaison Sub-Committee on the 21st Century Schools Stakeholder Group. Community Councillor Garry Lewis was selected to undertake this role.

The meeting closed at 8.00 p.m.