



COMMUNITY COUNCIL LIAISON SUB-COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH ON
WEDNESDAY, 21ST NOVEMBER 2012 AT 7.00 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillor L. Gardiner - Chairman
Community Councillor C.R. Roberts - Vice-Chairman

Councillors:

Mrs. A. Blackman, D. Bolter, C.J. Cuss, H. Davies, L. Gardiner, C. Hawker, G.J. Hughes,
A. Lewis, J. Pritchard, J.E. Roberts.

Community/Town Council Representatives:

Aber Valley	-
Argoed	-
Bargoed	- H. Llewellyn
Bedwas, Trethomas & Machen	- Mrs. S. Chick (Clerk)
Blackwood	- J.B. Criddle
Caerphilly	- Mrs. J. Hibbert
Darran Valley	- C.R. Roberts
Draethen, Waterloo & Rudry	- Mrs. S. Chick (Clerk)
Gelligaer	- T. Parry, Ms. C. Mortimer (Clerk)
Llanbradach	- K. Choo Yin, Mr. W.M. Thompson (Clerk)
Maesycwmmmer	- Miss. J. Rao
Nelson	- Mrs. A. Gray
New Tredegar	-
Penyrheol, Trecenydd & Energlyn	- Mrs. A. Nash, Mrs. H. Treherne (Clerk)
Rhymney	- D.T. Williams
Van	- Mrs. E. Macey

Also present:

Superintendent Brendon Williams, Inspector Gareth Jones, Tim Stephens (Development Control Manager), H.C. Morgan (Senior Committee Services Officer)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs. G. Bevan, Mrs. D. Ellis, Mrs. E. Forehead and A. Higgs, Community Councillors M. Stretch, G. Lewis, D. Woodman, Mrs. G. Davies and Mrs. S. Hughes, G. James, Mrs. L. Tams, J. Hold, K. Williams, G. Williams, Mrs. G. Thomas, A. Hoskins and J. Dilworth, Clerks of Aber Valley, Argoed, Bargoed, Blackwood, Caerphilly, Darran Valley/Rhymney, Maesycwmmmer, Nelson and Van Community/Town Councils respectively.

2. VICE-CHAIRMAN - COMMUNITY COUNCILLOR C. ROBERTS

Community Councillor Roberts advised that due to other commitments he would be standing down as Vice-Chairman of the Community Council Liaison Sub-Committee. Members noted that he has served on the Sub-Committee for over thirty years and wished to place on record their appreciation for the way in which he has carried out his duties as both Chairman and Vice-Chairman over that period and to the valuable contributions that he has made during his time on the Sub-Committee.

3. MINUTES - 25TH JULY 2012

The minutes of the meeting held on 25th July 2012 (a copy had been sent to each member) were received and noted.

MATTERS ARISING

4. Local Government (Wales) Measure 2011 (minute no. 10)

Reference was made to the arrangements for representatives of Welsh Government to give a presentation on the proposed measure as it relates to community/town councils following the request of the Town and Community Councils Liaison Committee.

All community/town councillors had been invited to attend the presentation on 25th October 2012 but it was disappointing that only three representatives (two Clerks and 1 Community Councillor) had been in attendance. A copy of the presentation had been sent to all Clerks for circulation.

Members were advised that arrangements are in hand for representatives of the Aneurin Bevan Health Board to make a presentation to all community/town councillors at 7.00 p.m. on Tuesday, 11th December 2012 to provide an overview and update on the progress and developments in relation to the Boards South Wales Programme.

5. New Compact Agreement 2013-2017 (minute no. 12)

It was noted that Community Councillor H. Llewellyn had been nominated to sit on the Panel who are reviewing the compact agreement and had been invited to sit on the Voluntary Sector Sub-Committee in order to see the process through. It was agreed that Community Councillor Llewellyn sit on the Voluntary Sector Sub-Committee on behalf of the community/town councils.

TOWN AND COMMUNITY COUNCILS LIAISON COMMITTEE

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

6. ENFORCEMENT OF PARKING RESTRICTIONS

Superintendent B. Williams attended the meeting to consider concerns raised by the community/town councillors in relation to the enforcement of parking restrictions.

In his opening comments he advised those present that he has been in post for six weeks and was looking forward to working with the community and listening to the views expressed in order that it can be determined how they can be taken forward.

The representatives present outlined specific problems in their areas (Nelson - parking on double yellow lines in the village, Ystrad Mynach - parking on double yellow lines that causes traffic problems, Cefn Fforest - parking in bus stops, Cefn Hengoed - parking of commercial vehicles, Trecenydd - parking close to street corners which causes visibility difficulties, congestion caused both in Nantgarw Road and Mill Road with vehicles parking on double yellow lines near the convenience stores, similar problems in the vicinity of Hendredenny Primary School, illegal parking in Caerphilly Town Centre, parking in bus bays at Highfields, Blackwood, parking on the pavements next to the Post Office in Pontllanfraith, Aber Valley - vicinity of local shops and Police provision in Rhymney generally).

After listening to the concerns raised Superintendent Williams confirmed that he would take up the issues raised with the local Inspectors and requested that any further areas of concern be sent to him. He advised that Gwent Police had disestablished all traffic wardens and that this function is now primarily undertaken by Police Community Support Officers. He detailed the role they perform and the pressures in dealing with difficult challenging problems, particularly in relation to anti-social behaviour, and referred to other policing requirements that must be taken into account.

Superintendent Williams advised that the concerns raised are repeated throughout the Gwent Policing area. Unfortunately no amount of publicity or enforcement will stop a motorist parking on double yellow lines or in locations that are perceived as a nuisance or dangerous. Whilst he did not tolerate dangerous parking he advised that enforcement itself is not a permanent solution to the problems that are being experienced throughout the borough. He gave an example of concerted enforcement action in Caerphilly whereby 250 tickets were issued over a two-week period which had had no affect at all on the illegal parking in the town centre.

The Superintendent made reference to the local community PACT meetings and the opportunity to raise issues of a local nature at that time with the Police representatives. It was pointed out that some PACT meetings are not well attended and the need to ensure the community are engaged in the process was stressed.

It was noted that Mr. Ian Johnston had been elected as the Gwent Police and Crime Commissioner and part of his role in developing the Gwent Police and Crime Plan will be to undertake extensive consultation to ensure what is delivered is what is required, specifically with regards to community safety and crime reduction in the force area.

A query was raised as to whether it was the intention that Gwent Police would hand over the responsibility for enforcement of parking restrictions to the county borough. Superintendent Williams advised that whilst he was aware of other Councils that have taken over this role he is not aware of any proposals by the county borough to take up this option at this time.

A query was raised in relation to blue badge holders and the Superintendent advised that badge holders may park on single or double yellow lines for specific periods but should not park in places where there is a danger or a nuisance to other motorists. The blue badge must be displayed at all times and the clock must show the time the vehicle arrived.

The Chairman thanked Superintendent Williams and Inspector Jones for attending the meeting and for agreeing to take on board the issues raised and discuss them with the local Inspectors.

7. PROPOSED PLANNING REFORMS AND NEIGHBOURLY PLANNING

A query had been raised at the Town and Community Council Liaison Committee in relation to proposed planning reforms by the Government as it relates to extend permitted development rights to permit householders to build longer extensions without planning permission. Mr. Stephens advised this is a proposal for England and as such does not apply in Wales. As far as he is aware there are no proposals to introduce the scheme in Wales.

A query was then raised in relation to retrospective planning and Mr. Stephens explained that if a development proceeds without planning permission and an application is subsequently submitted, the Council is then required to consider a retrospective planning application. If it determines that permission should not be granted enforcement notice would be issued for it to be removed. The applicant can appeal against both refusals of permission and enforcement notices. All applications for retrospective applications are considered on their merits and in accordance with existing planning requirements.

Reference was made to an article seen in the press in relation to a number of applications received to convert garages into playrooms and the subsequent loss of parking spaces. Mr. Stephens advised that any application received would be considered on its merits and in accordance with guidance and conditions as they relate to parking requirements. Applications have been refused on the lack of available parking spaces, although guidance from the Welsh Government suggests that parking spaces should be reduced so that residents have fewer vehicles.

A query was raised by one of the members with regards to 'community planning' as detailed in a number of documents produced by the county borough. It was clarified that it referred to planning for the development of the community generally and not specifically to planning applications.

Clarification was also sought on the devolution of building regulations consent to the Welsh Government and as to whether any further powers are to be devolved. Mr. Stephens advised that in accordance with the Welsh Planning Act it is intended that all planning issues will be devolved.

8. OPEN CAST MINING - NANT LLESG, FOCHRIW

In response to a query as to the stance the Council will take in relation to the proposals for open cast mining at Nant Llesg, Fochriw, it was noted that it is not possible to comment at this stage. The application has not yet been received and once it has been there will be a full consultation exercise and a report presented to the Planning Committee for determination.

Mr. Stephens advised that he would liaise with the Community/Town Councils for assistance in identifying local groups that can be contacted directly and premises where notices and posters advising of the application can be displayed. Information would also be available on the council's website so residents can post their comments online. All of the views expressed would be included in the report that would subsequently be presented to the Planning Committee for consideration.

It was anticipated that the applications would be submitted in the New Year.

The meeting closed at 8.30 p.m.