



COMMUNITY COUNCIL LIAISON SUB - COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, TREDOMEN PARK ON WEDNESDAY 20TH MARCH 2013 AT 7.00PM

PRESENT:

Councillors:

C.J. Cuss, H. Davies, C. Hawker, A. Lewis, J. Pritchard, J.A. Pritchard

Community/Town Council Representatives

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| Aber Valley | - |
| Argoed | - G. Lewis |
| Bargoed | - H. Llewellyn |
| Bedwas, Trethomas and Machen | - D. Davies, D. Havard |
| Blackwood | - J. Criddle |
| Caerphilly | - Mrs. J. Hibbert, Mrs. O. Rees |
| Darran Valley | - |
| Draethen, Waterloo and Rudry | - |
| Gelligaer | - Ms. C. Mortimer (Clerk) |
| Llanbradach | - K. Choo Yin, Mr. W.M. Thompson (Clerk) |
| Maesycwmmmer | - Miss. J. Rao |
| Nelson | - Mrs. G. Davies |
| New Tredegar | - |
| Penyrheol, Trecenydd and Energlyn | - Mrs. H. Treherne (Clerk) |
| Rhymney | - D.T. Williams, Mr. G. Williams (Clerk) |
| Risca East | - J. Blackburn, N. George |
| Risca West | - B. Hancock, M. Parker |
| Van | - Mrs. E. Macey |

Together with

Lyndon Ross (Senior Environmental Health Officer), H.C. Morgan (Senior Committee Services Officer)

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs. A. Blackman, D. Bolter, Mrs. D. Ellis, H. Davies and J.E. Roberts, Community Councillors M. Stretch, T. Parry, D. Woodman, Mrs. A. Nash and Mrs. S. Hughes, Mrs. L. Tams, Mrs S. Chick, Mr. J. Hold, Mr. K. Williams, Mrs. G. Thomas, Mr. A. Hoskins, Mr. J. Dilworth (Clerks of Aber Valley, Bargoed, Bedwas, Trethomas and Machen/ Draethen, Waterloo and Rudry, Blackwood, Caerphilly, Maesycwmmmer, Nelson and Van Community/Town Councils respectively).

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

It was noted that Community Councillor Josie Rao had been appointed as Vice Chairman at the meeting of Town and Community Council Joint Liaison Committee.

In the absence of the Chairman, Community Councillor J. Rao took the chair.

3. MINUTES - 21ST NOVEMBER 2012

Subject to it being noted that Councillor Mrs. J.A. Pritchard was in attendance and is not recorded as such, the minutes of the meeting held on 21st November 2012 (a copy had been sent to each member) were received and noted.

MATTERS ARISING

4. Presentation - Aneurin Bevan Health Board (minute no. 4)

Reference was made to the arrangements for representatives of the Aneurin Bevan Health Board to give a presentation and provide an overview and update on the progress and developments in relation to the Boards South Wales Programme. All community/town councillors had been invited to attend the presentation on 11th December 2012 but only 11 representatives had been present.

5. Mr. Ian Johnston - Gwent Police and Crime Commissioner (minute no. 6)

It was noted that arrangements are in hand for Mr Johnston to meet community/town councils to explain his role, the way in which he would like to work with members and to respond to queries that may be raised. The seminar will be held in the Chamber at Penallta House at 6pm on Thursday 18th April 2013 and all community/town councillors have been invited to attend.

It was requested that all county borough Members also be invited to attend, and agreed that subject to the consent of Mr. Johnston, the necessary arrangements be made.

6. Open Cast Mining - Nant Llesg, Fochriw (minute no. 8)

It was reported that the developers of the proposed surface mine are to give a presentation to Members at 5pm on 3rd April in the Council Chamber Ty Penallta. The aim is to make Members aware of all aspects of the proposal in advance of the planning application being submitted. Members of the public will also be able to observe the meeting, which will be advertised in the local media and on the Council's website but will not be able to ask questions. Miller Argent will post the presentation on their website, which also has a free phone number and email address for members of the public wishing to raise queries with the developer.

It is anticipated that a planning application will be submitted at the end of April and once it has been received there will be a full consultation exercise and a report presented to the Planning Committee for determination.

TOWN AND COMMUNITY COUNCILS LIAISON COMMITTEE

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

7. Travellers Occupying the Lower Park and Ride Car Park, Caerphilly

Lyndon Ross (Senior Environmental Health Officer) attended for this item and advised that with regards to travellers occupying land in the ownership of the council there is a legal procedure that is available. However there are no specific bylaws which relate to Travellers.

As part of the process Notices need to be displayed, or given, giving 24 hours notice for them to move or legal proceedings will be commenced. However, before issuing proceedings a welfare assessment is required to be completed by Environmental Health (notices are usually given/displayed at the same time the assessment is carried out). Proceedings can then be issued but the legislation requires that the defendants/trespassers are given at least 48 hours notice of the Court Hearing date.

Specific reference was made to the problems in the Caerphilly park and ride car park during the Christmas period and it was noted that on this occasion by the time the court application had been submitted the travellers had moved on before the Court Hearing. The car park in question is presently not subject to an off-street car parks order. The only benefit of such an order is that it would enable the issue of notice where the regulations are contravened. It was accepted that this is not likely to be much use against travellers as they very often have no fixed address.

Mr. Ross advised that the Highways Department are currently investigating the installation of height barriers at that location.

8. Nuisance Quad and Off Road Bikes on Mountains

It was noted that Simon James (Forgotten Landscapes and Crime Prevention Officer, Caerphilly LPU) was not able to attend and agreed that he be invited to the next meeting.

In the meantime Mr. Ross advised that Illegal off road motorcycling (particularly motocross/scrambling) is a major problem in all parts of the county borough and throughout Wales. The activity causes damage to land, some of its participants damage fences and gates to gain access to land, it creates a danger to other members of the public and it creates a major noise nuisance. It was noted that the activity of off road motorcycling is not in itself illegal. It is a recognised sport and is subject to rules and regulations issued by its governing bodies. Where it is properly regulated and carried out with the permission of the landowner it is an attraction for participants and spectators and, in some areas, can be a boost to the local economy.

Members expressed concerns that there are a growing number of people who are not aware of the rules and regulations or do not wish to comply with them. They ride off road wherever they wish without the consent of the landowner and without regard to the needs of other land users.

It was noted that The Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 substituted a new Section 34 in the Road Traffic Act 1988. This means that it is an offence to drive a mechanically propelled vehicle (which includes motorbikes specifically designed for off road use, such as motocross bikes) without authority on land that is not a road. The Police Reform Act 2002 gives the Police the power to seize cars and motorbikes which are driven carelessly, inconsiderately or 'off road' in a manner that causes alarm, annoyance or distress. The owner of any vehicle seized will have to pay a fine to retrieve it.

Mr. Ross advised that the Countryside and Landscape Section and Environmental Services Division have been working on an initiative with Gwent Police, the Forestry Commission and local landowners to try and control the problems caused by the illegal driving of vehicles off road, particularly those riding motorcycles who use them for motocross. The approach

adopted has been to try to tackle the problem, through the identification of suitable sites for legitimate off road use for motocross, publicity about the law and enforcement of the law. This would be further explained at the next meeting when Simon James would be present.

A query was raised in relation to the identification of suitable sites for this purpose and given the topography of the county borough and the close proximity of centres of population to the rural areas it was accepted that it would prove difficult to find a site for regular use for motocross within the county borough which is acceptable to the general population.

A query was raised as to whether Community Safety Wardens were able to issue fixed penalty notices to offenders and it was agreed that this would be raised with Simon James at the next meeting. It was agreed that it was necessary to explore the current policy and practice around motorised recreation in the countryside and look at ways to work with users and landowners to find a solution to the problem.

9. Update on Prosiect Gwyrdd

It was reported that the five local authority partners (Caerphilly, Cardiff, Monmouthshire, Newport, Vale of Glamorgan) have met and appointed Viridor as the preferred bidder. Viridor proposals involves the development of an Energy from Waste Plant at Trident Park, Cardiff and it is anticipated that the signing of the contract award will take place in the Summer of 2013, Following a transition period after the signing it is probable that the plant will be commissioned in 2015 with full service commencement in April 2016.

Members were reminded that the procurement process commenced in 2008 and a number of procurement stages have been completed (pre-qualification of tenderers, outline solutions stage, detailed solutions stage, final tenders stage and identification of preferred bidder). Details were available in reports available of the Councils website (apart for the information of a commercially sensitive/confidential nature).

During the course of the debate a request was made for details of the financial implications of the project and it was agreed that the information that is available would be made available through Clerks. It was also requested that the slides that were tabled at the meeting be reissued without the colour background. It was noted that they have been downloaded from the website and if it was possible the necessary changes would be made and they would be recirculated.

It was also agreed to invite Mr. M. Williams (Head of Community and Leisure Services) to the next meeting, scheduled for 24th July 2013 and, if appropriate, representatives of Viridor.

10. CODE OF CONDUCT TRAINING

Members of both Risca East and Risca West Committee Councils were reminded of the code of conduct training which is to take place at Risca Library at 6pm on Thursday 28th March 2013.

The meeting closed at 8pm