



REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH ON TUESDAY, 11TH DECEMBER 2012 AT 5.00 P.M.

PRESENT:

Councillor D.T. Davies - Chairman
Councillor Mrs. E.M. Aldworth - Vice-Chairman

Councillors:

J. Bevan, Mrs. A. Blackman, C.J. Cuss, R.T. Davies, Mrs. E. Forehead, A.G. Higgs,
Ms. J.G. Jones, S. Kent, M.J. Prew, Mrs. D. Price

Cabinet Members: K. James (Regeneration, Planning and Sustainable Development),
D.V. Poole (Community and Leisure Services), T.J. Williams (Highways, Transportation and
Engineering)

Also in attendance to observe: Councillor G. Jones (Cabinet Member for Housing)

Together with:

A. O'Sullivan (Chief Executive), C. Campbell (Transportation Engineering Manager),
R. Hartshorn (Head of Public Protection), D. Price (Parks and Outdoors Facilities Manager),
C. Forbes-Thompson (Scrutiny Research Officer), R.J. Thomas (Committee Services Officer)

APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R.W. Gough, G. Johnston, N. Dix,
C. Elsbury and officers T. Shaw (Head of Engineering Services), M.S. Williams (Head of
Community and Leisure Services)

1. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made at the beginning or during the meeting.

2. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting held on 30th October 2012 (minute
nos. 1 - 11, on page nos. 1 - 4) be approved as a correct record and signed by the
Chairman.

3. CALL-IN PROCEDURE

There were no matters referred to the Scrutiny Committee in accordance with the call-in procedure.

4. CABINET REPORTS

The Cabinet reports listed on the agenda had not been requested to be brought forward for review at the meeting.

5. REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER

Councillor K. James, Cabinet Member for Regeneration, Planning and Sustainable Development, gave a verbal report to Members and made reference to ongoing Bargoed and Newbridge regeneration projects, Christmas events programme around the county borough, Llancaiach Fawr's Heritage Lottery Bid, Blackwood Miners Institute improvements (Phase II), and the Town Centre Managements successful 'Unique Places Christmas Card' scheme.

In closing Councillor James advised Members that Mr Roger Tanner (Strategic Planning and Urban Renewal Manager) had recently attended an awards ceremony and received a personal award for Regeneration in Wales.

Members thanked the Cabinet Member for his presentation and congratulations were given to the Town Centre Management Team for the successful Christmas market in Caerphilly. A number of Members referred to the north of the county borough and asked that this area also be developed and used to hold events.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Consideration was given to the following reports.

6. CIVIL PARKING ENFORCEMENT

The report updated Members on the current status of Civil Parking Enforcement issues within the south-east Wales region and the potential issues for Caerphilly County Borough Council.

Members were asked to note that South Wales Police had withdrawn from on-street parking enforcement, while Gwent Police had stated that it had no such intention. Officers continue to liaise with the Police to direct resources to where it will be most effective, therefore at this time, there is no pressing need for the Council to progress Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) powers. The Council therefore, has no plans to seek powers to implement CPE for Caerphilly County Borough.

Members discussed the report and officers responded to general questions. It was suggested that the Council operate a 6-month trial period of CPE, however officers advised that there is no opportunity for the Council to reverse the process once a CPE Order is made. The effectiveness of the existing on-street parking enforcement was discussed and officers confirmed that they did not receive regular complaints. When some Members suggested that Community Safety Wardens carry out CPE as part of their normal duties, officers advised that this would detract them from other responsibilities that were of higher priority. Consequently a report was requested on the implications of additional responsibilities for Community Safety Wardens.

The Scrutiny Committee noted the contents of the report.

7. CHIEF MEDICAL OFFICER FOR WALES ANNUAL REPORT 2011

The report briefed Members on some of the key issues published within the Chief Medical Officer for Wales's Annual Report for 2011. The report was published in July 2012 and notes that the health of the population continues to improve. However, inequalities in health still exist and more needs to be done to ensure fairer outcomes for all.

The report demonstrated that the position in Wales is poor, and when comparing Caerphilly County Borough Council against the rest of Wales, peoples' healthy lifestyle choices here were among the poorest. In addition, the gap between the poorest and richest areas had increased with life expectancy figures differing by 9 years within the county borough.

Following discussion on the content of the report, the Scrutiny Committee made reference to the need to have robust and successful initiatives to improve the health within the county borough, particularly in the most deprived regions. Officers commented on the initiatives currently in place and agreed to produce report on these, and interventions for healthier lifestyles, to the next appropriate Scrutiny Committee.

A Member informed the Scrutiny Committee that the Caerphilly Youth Forum were recent winners of an award from Ash Wales Tobacco Excellence Awards, in Category 6 - Adult and Youth Advocates.

The Scrutiny Committee thanked officers for the informative report and noted its contents.

8. DOG CONTROL ORDERS

Members were shown a video that tried to influence behaviour and encourage dog owners to pick up after their dogs. The tag line accompanying the video is "Shameful, Filthy, Selfish - Dog Fouling. Don't let them get away with it!"

The report detailed the outcome of a public consultation exercise and sought Members' views on proposals to introduce Dog Control Orders to exclude dogs from enclosed children's play areas and Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs). Following the receipt of any comments, Cabinet would consider the report on 19th February 2013.

Members discussed the report and officers responded to general questions. Clarification was given as to the actual offence that was committed when an owner failed to pick up after their dog, and officers advised that there was a need to balance the rights of all users of public areas by means of a common sense approach.

The proposals were fully supported, with some Members asking whether the Orders could be extended to football fields and community gardens. Officers confirmed that a similar request had been made previously and would be considered within a further report.

The Scrutiny Committee endorsed the contents of the report and recommended that Cabinet approve making Dog Control Orders in respect of:

- (a) the exclusion of dogs from enclosed children's play areas and Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs);
- (b) failing to remove dog faeces from enclosed children's play areas and Multi Use Games Areas (MUGAs).

9. REQUESTS FOR AN ITEM TO BE INCLUDED ON THE NEXT AVAILABLE AGENDA

Councillor Ms J. Jones requested a report on the possible condition and enforcement of stretch limousines parking on the public highway. The Head of Public Protection advised that he did not believe restrictions could be implemented when the vehicle was legally taxed and insured, but that he would confirm this and respond directly to the Member.

Councillor Ms J. Jones also referred to her request at the last meeting for a report on varying tennis court charges. Officers confirmed this report would be brought forward to a future meeting of the Scrutiny Committee.

10. INFORMATION ITEMS

The following reports were received and noted without discussion:

- (1) Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme;
- (2) Minutes of the Prosiect Gwyrdd Joint Scrutiny Panel held on 28th September 2012;
- (3) Minutes of the Blackwood Town Centre Management Group held on 17th October 2012;
- (4) Minutes of the Risca Town Centre Management Group held on 24th October 2012;
- (5) Minutes of the Caerphilly Town Centre Management Group held on 7th November 2012.

The meeting closed at 6.30 p.m.

Approved as a correct record, and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 19th February 2013, they were signed by the Chairman.

CHAIRMAN