



REGENERATION AND ENVIRONMENT SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH
ON TUESDAY, 19TH FEBRUARY 2013 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, N. Dix, C. Elsbury, R.W. Gough, A.G. Higgs, G. Johnston, Ms. J.G. Jones, S. Kent, M.J. Prew, Mrs. D. Price

Cabinet Members: D. Poole (Community and Leisure Services), K.V. Reynolds (Corporate Services), T.J. Williams (Highways, Transportation and Engineering)

Together with:

A. O'Sullivan (Chief Executive), M.S. Williams (Head of Community and Leisure Services), R. Hartshorn (Head of Public Protection), P. Elliott (Head of Regeneration and Planning), A. Highway (Town Centre Development Manager), D. Price (Parks and Outdoors Facilities Manager), D. Phenis (Sport and Leisure Services Manager), R. Kyte (Team leader Strategic and Development Planning), D. Lucas (Principle Planner, Strategic and Development Plan Team), J. Jones (Democratic Services Manager), H. Morgan (Senior Committee Services Officer)

1. WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed Pauline Elliott to her first meeting of the Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee following her appointment as Head of Regeneration and Planning.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Ms. E. Forehead.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

4. MINUTES - 15TH NOVEMBER AND 11TH DECEMBER 2012

RESOLVED that the following minutes be approved as correct records and signed by the Chairman:

- (1) Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee (Performance Management) held on 15th November 2012 (minute nos. 1 - 6, on page nos. 1 - 6);
- (2) Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee held on 11th December 2012 (minute nos. 1 - 10, on page nos. 1 - 4).

5. CALL-IN PROCEDURE

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

6. INFORMATION ITEM - MINUTES OF THE PROSIECT GWYRDD JOINT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 17TH DECEMBER 2012

This information report was brought forward for review by Councillor Mrs. A. Blackman who sought information on proposed Joint Working Arrangement 2, the minimum/maximum tonnage and the co-mingling of waste.

With regards to the latter it was explained by the Head of Community and Leisure Services that co-mingling is currently the subject of judicial review and that the other issues raised are addressed in the report which will be presented to the Special Meeting of Council scheduled for 26th March 2013.

7. CABINET REPORTS

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

8. REPORT OF THE CABINET MEMBER

Councillor D.V. Poole, Cabinet Member for Community and Leisure Services, gave a verbal report to Members and made reference to the Project Gwyrdd procurement process which is now in its closing stages and it was noted that each of the partner authorities will be considering the report on the selection of a preferred bidder at the end of February/beginning of March. Reference was then made to the development of the new leisure centre in Caerphilly and proposals to review the Leisure Management Structure.

With regards to Catering Services, Councillor Poole was pleased to announce that at the Local Authorities Caterers Association Recognition of Excellence Awards, Catering Services was honoured with the Welsh Catering Management Team of the year Award. Caerphilly County Borough Council was the first Local Authority Catering Services in Wales to achieve full 'Appetite for Life' compliance across all education establishments within their authority.

Councillor Poole advised that the Community Safety Warden Team have commenced the Junior Community Safety Warden scheme in primary schools. The Wardens are attending primary schools to speak to groups of children about community safety and enviro-crime issues including littering, dog fouling, graffiti, criminal damage and general respect for others in the community. The scheme initially involves 15 schools being visited before the end of March and will continue on a rolling basis with the aim that every school will receive a visit from the Team during each academic year.

In the light of the recent concerns about the incidents of horsemeat found in processed beef products supplied in the UK it was reported that Trading Standards Officers have been working closely with their counterparts in other authorities in Wales, the Food Standards Agency and manufacturers based in the borough to check the traceability of minced beef products. Catering Services have received confirmation from their suppliers that they do not deal with any of the firms implicated in the recent reports. As an additional safeguard, and to instil confidence, samples have also been taken by Trading Standards of minced beef, burgers and lasagne supplied to the authority. Local authorities in Wales are coordinating their activities to avoid duplication.

Members thanked the Cabinet Member for his presentation and he responded to the queries raised by Members in relation to the use of the sports hall at Rhymney Comprehensive School during school holidays, the proposed leisure facility in Caerphilly and to the ongoing discussions in relation to proposed improved P.E. facilities at a Bedwas Comprehensive School.

REPORTS OF OFFICERS

Consideration was given to the following reports.

9. COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) - PRELIMINARY DRAFT CHARGING SCHEDULE - REPORT OF CONSULTATION

The report provided Members with a summary of the comments received as part of the consultation on the Council's Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule Community Infrastructure Levy. As a result of the comments made during the consultation period, it sought Members' views on the amendments proposed to the Charging Schedule and Infrastructure Assessment Report prior to its presentation to both Cabinet and Council.

Members were advised of the main issues raised during the consultation period, specifically in relation to the viability report and the preliminary draft-charging schedule, and it was noted that each of the representations has been considered and addressed in the Report of Consultation. Only one significant change is proposed to be made to the documentation in consideration of the submitted representations in that the Draft Infrastructure List is to be amended to include all education infrastructure, i.e. all education infrastructure becomes fundable through Community Infrastructure Levy.

With regards to the latter Members noted the points raised by the Education Service as set out in the report and clarification was given on the differences between Section 106 funding and the community infrastructure levy.

Members noted the representations submitted in respect of the Preliminary Draft Charging Schedule and the analysis and response set out in the Report of Consultation and recommended to Cabinet that, for the reasons contained therein:-

- (i) the proposed changes to the Community Infrastructure Levy documentation, that are outlined in the Report of Consultation, be agreed;
- (ii) the amended Community Infrastructure Levy documents be approved as a basis for statutory public consultation;
- (iii) the amended Community Infrastructure Levy documentation be subject of consultation commencing Wednesday, 20th March 2013 and closing on Wednesday, 1st May 2013.

10. DOG CONTROL ORDERS

Members were reminded that when the proposals to introduce dog control orders in enclosed children's play areas and multi use games areas had been considered, and subsequently approved, it had been requested that a further report be presented outlining the feasibility of making such orders for other public spaces.

It was explained that all recreational land within the county borough has been designated under the Dogs (Fouling of Land) Act 1996 making it an offence for a person to fail to clean up after their dog on such land. Local Authorities are also empowered to introduce Dog Control Orders which allow for additional offences by excluding dogs from certain land or requiring that they are kept on a lead.

Members were advised that at present the Council operates approximately 95 sports pitches and that approximately 18 schools have sports pitches. There are a number of fenced memorial gardens, approximately 25 unfenced gardens and 28 public gardens. The Council manages 10 cemeteries and the current Cemetery Regulations prohibit dogs from them, with the exception of guide and prescribed assistance dogs.

Members were able to identify areas where dog owners allow their dogs to defecate and were advised to contact that Department in order that the areas can be targeted. With regards to enforcement, the Public Protection Division has authorised a team of Enforcement Officers, Dog Wardens and Community Safety Wardens to issue fixed penalty notices. Enforcement work is either as a result of information being provided or as a result of general patrols. There were 84 fixed penalty notices issued for dog fouling and 8 prosecutions were heard by the Courts during 2012. It was noted that any prosecutions are published in Newsline and there is a page dedicated to such detail on the Councils web site.

During the course of the ensuing debate on the merits of introducing dog control orders in other public places, Members were advised that they must be satisfied that an order is justified and balances the interests of those affected by the activities of dogs with the need for those in charge of dogs to have access to areas where they can exercise their dogs without undue restriction. Concerns were expressed as to whether if they were introduced the public would have sufficient certainty about the effect and extent of any Order, particularly with regards to sports pitches. Members considered whether such orders are necessary in all public spaces in that it is a small minority of dog owners who act irresponsibly and allow their dogs to foul.

Following a detailed debate and in that it had been agreed that dog control orders will be introduced in enclosed children's play areas and multi use games areas it was agreed that such orders not be pursued for other public spaces at this time.

11. UPDATE ON THE USE OF DESIGNATED PUBLIC PLACE ORDERS TO CONTROL NUISANCE PUBLIC DRINKING

Consideration was given to the report which provides an update on the use of Designated Public Place Orders to control nuisance drinking of alcohol in public places. It was noted that since 2006 the Council has used adoptive powers to restrict anti-social drinking in designated public places by introducing a number of Designated Public Place Orders. It is an offence for an individual to continue to consume alcohol having been requested to stop by a Police or other authorised Officer.

Members were advised that the Home Office released a White Paper on anti-social behaviour that sets out changes intended to improve the current anti-social behaviour tools. This will include replacing the 19 existing powers with 6 new ones and it is proposed to give local authorities a flexible power to put in place local restrictions called Community Protection Orders (Public Space). This would replace a number of existing controls including Designated

Public Place Orders, and potentially cover a much wider range of problem behaviours. The Home Office has not yet clarified when these proposals might become legislation.

Members were referred to the appendix to the report which identified the areas currently covered by Designated Public Place Orders and were advised that whilst it is not proposed to introduce any further Orders at this time, this situation will be kept under review in consultation with the Neighbourhood Police Teams. Further areas can be considered where there is sufficient evidence of crime and disorder associated with public drinking.

The Scrutiny Committee noted the contents of the report and endorsed the continued use of existing Designated Public Place Orders.

12. TOWN CENTRE IMPROVEMENT GROUP 2012

The report and accompanying presentation provided Members with information on the progress made within the Town Centre Improvement Group during 2012.

Members were informed of the challenges and successes of the past year, which included the launch of the Council's Town Centre Management service into Risca, and of the objective in 2013 to continue to provide a high level of service in the principal town centres, despite growing financial constraints on council services. A number of schemes within the four towns have already been identified, should funding be allocated in the 2013 / 2014 budget.

It was noted that the purpose of the Town Centre Improvement Group is to ensure that there is a responsive and co-ordinated approach to the maintenance of the town centres, through the process of an Environmental Audit. In addition, the Town Centre Improvement Group addresses items raised within the meetings of the four Town Centre Management Groups.

The report detailed progress in each of the principle town centres and the appendices contained a detailed breakdown of the issues resolved in each of those town centres over the past twelve months. Members noted the diverse nature of issues that had been addressed and were pleased to see the additional projects that are to be taken forward.

During the course of the debate, reference was made to car parking charges and the extension of the Christmas discount scheme. Mr. Highway responded to the queries raised. Reference was also made to the need for support for smaller villages and in particular Rhymney, which is not included within the remit of the Group. It was noted that due to current resources there are no plans to widen its remit.

The Scrutiny Committee noted the work of the Town Centre Improvement Group.

13. 10K ROAD RACE - 23RD JUNE 2013

The report advised Members of a proposed new event to organise a 10k road race around Caerphilly Castle on Sunday 23rd June 2013 and highlighted the rationale, target audience and proposed route.

It was explained that following consultation with many key partners it was evident that there was demand for a 10k road race in the county borough. There are currently two options for the route, with the final route to be confirmed following approval of a race licence and verification from Welsh Athletics. This will also give the event accredited status from the Governing Body. Alongside the 10k race and other attractions there will be an opportunity for young people and their families to participate in a fun run over a shorter distance.

Members noted and supported the proposals for a 10k road race around Caerphilly Castle on 23rd June 2013 and requested a further report on other running and cycling events that are taking place throughout the county borough.

14. PLAY SUFFICIENCY ASSESSMENT

Consideration was given to the report which advised of the new duty under the measure requiring local authorities to assess the sufficiency of play opportunities for children, provided an overview of the requirements of the duty and gave an update on progress made in assessing that sufficiency.

It was explained that the Welsh Government have decided to commence the duty in two parts. The first part will cover the duty to assess for sufficient play opportunities (and commenced in November 2012) and the second part of the duty will be to secure sufficient play opportunities, so far as reasonably practicable. This part will commence after full consideration has been given to the assessment.

The purpose of the assessment is to establish a baseline of provision as well as identify gaps in information, provision, service delivery and policy implementation. A review was given of the key findings from the work carried out to date and details of the extensive consultation that has, and will continue to be carried out, was outlined. The baseline evidence has been collated and a comprehensive audit of open space and fixed play facilities within the borough has been completed.

The Scrutiny Committee noted the progress made in meeting the requirements of the Welsh Government in completing the Play Sufficiently Assessments and acknowledged the key findings that will contribute towards the draft action plan to be submitted to Welsh Government by 1st March 2013.

15. MANAGEMENT ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE SPORT AND LEISURE SERVICE

The report sought Members' views on proposals for a management restructure within the Sport and Leisure Service of the Community and Leisure Services Division, following Cabinet's approval earlier in the day to proceed with formal consultation with staff, relevant trade unions and the Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee on the proposals.

Members agreed that they would not comment on the proposals for the management restructure until such time that the formal consultation had been undertaken and the views of the consultees are available.

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

There were no requests for any reports to be prepared for consideration at a future meeting of the Scrutiny Committee.

17. INFORMATION ITEMS

The following information reports were received and noted without discussion:

- (1) Budget Monitoring and Trading Account Report 2012/2013;
- (2) Summary of Members' Attendance Quarter 3;
- (3) Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee Forward Work Programme;
- (4) Minutes of the Bryn Compost Liaison Group Meeting held on 17th October 2012;
- (5) Minutes of the Grants to the Voluntary Sector Panel Meeting held on 26th November 2012;
- (6) Minutes of the Voluntary Sector Sub-Committee Meeting held on 5th December 2012;
- (7) Minutes of the Bargoed Town Centre Management Group Meeting held on 6th February 2013.

The meeting closed at 7.10 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 2nd April 2013, they were signed by the Chairman.

CHAIRMAN