



RIVER RHYMNEY TASK GROUP

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT THE COUNCIL OFFICES, PENALLTA HOUSE
ON TUESDAY 27TH SEPTEMBER 2011 AT 10.00AM**

PRESENT:

Councillor R. Woodyatt - Chairman

CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL

Mrs. M. Dodd, Ms. M. Isles and Mrs. C. Forbes-Thompson

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY WALES

Mr. B Pyott

RHYMNEY RIVER FEDERATION OF ANGLING CLUBS

Mr. P Couldrick, Mr. D. Roberts

WELSH WATER SERVICES (WALES)

Mr. D Humphreys, Mr. S. Churches

SOUTH EAST WALES RIVERS TRUST

Mr. T Rees

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M.P. James and M.G. Parker, Mr. G. Jones, Mrs. A. Jones, Ms. M. Johnson, Mr. G Richards (Caerphilly County Borough Council), Mr. S. Hill (The Coal Authority), Miss F. Attwood, Mr. J. Goldworthy, Mr. P Burgess and Miss K. Holland (Environment Agency Wales), Mr. L Keil and Mr. D. Power (Welsh Water Services - Wales) and Mr. R. Williams (Rhymney River Federation of Angling Clubs).

2. MINUTES - 7TH MARCH 2011

The minutes of the meeting held on 7th March 2011 were received and noted.

3. MATTERS ARISING

Minewater Contamination at Tiryberth/Culvert at Pontlottyn (minute no. 5)

Mr. S. Hill provided an update for the minutes in lieu of his absence, he stated that he doubts if picnic/amenity areas at Pontlottyn, although they would add benefits, would be sufficient to change the classification.

Mr. Roberts circulated a map of the land at Pontlloftyn playing fields, which is close to Rhymney Comprehensive School. He stated that the land is a small wooded area close to the school, and suggested it could be developed into an amenity area and nature trail for local schools and residents. He suggested that a site meeting is arranged to look at the possibilities of increasing the amenity value.

It was agreed that officers would clarify the ownership of the land and then arrange a site meeting. The following interested parties will be invited to the site meeting: Mr. P. Griffiths (Countryside and Landscape Services), Mr. T. Rees (South East Wales Rivers Trust), representatives from Rhymney River Federation and Rhymney Comprehensive School and the Local Members. A report on the site meeting will be presented to the next meeting of the Rhymney River Task Group.

Incidents on Data Base - Combined Sewer Outlet - New Tredegar (minute no. 2)

This issue has now been resolved.

4. WATER QUALITY UPDATE

The Environment Agency gave a verbal update on the water quality monitoring carried out to date. A map showing the European Union Water Framework Directive (WFD) grades on quality standards for 2009 and 2010 was circulated. The quality standards of the river are highlighted in orange (poor), yellow (moderate) and green (good). Major improvements have been seen upstream of Bargoed which has changed from moderate to good. There has also been improvement at Nant Bargoed, which has changed from poor to moderate and the stretch from Aberbargoed to Ystrad Mynach has remained at good.

It was reported there has been a sewage pollution incident at Nant Glyddyda, for which the Environment Agency is awaiting the report, however it was noted that no were fish killed. The Environment Agency is also awaiting a report on the minewater investigation along the Rhymney River.

The Environment Agency have taken samples along the Rhymney, Draethen and Llanrumney rivers, the results show good quality water for invertebrates until the river meets Llanrumney, where it is poor to moderate. The information is from the spring 2011 samples, however the autumn samples that are currently being carried out will give a final score for 2011.

Mr. Roberts discussed the apparent lack of mature fish along the main stretch of the Rhymney River, he stated that there are plenty of fish 1-2 years old but none 2+ years. To date the Environment Agency has not been able to identify the reason for the lack of mature fish.

Mr Roberts informed the meeting of the work carried out by the Rivers Trust to the culvert at the Old Mill on River Street and Factory Road Bargoed. This will improve the access for migratory fish, making it easier for them to traverse the culvert upstream.

5. INCIDENTS ON DATABASE

Details of incidents reported to the Environment Agency from 13th March - 3rd August 2011 were reported and noted. Officers present responded to queries raised on the information provided and confirmed the action being taken on each of the incidents reported.

It was noted that with regards to the sewage discharge to Nant Gledyr on 3rd August 2011 there was a blocked manhole from a private sewage network, this has now been resolved.

Mr. Roberts asked for an update on the Ambulance Station at Aberbargoed and the sewage pipe at Sannon Street. Welsh Water reported that there have been no further reports of blockages. They are looking at new units that may be suitable for the narrower manhole pipes at Sannon Street.

Members asked if there had been any further action on the incident at Bargoed Train Station on 5th May 2011, Officers to bring details to next meeting of Task Group.

Mr Roberts stated that he had reported an incident at New Tredegar Rugby Club, where Japanese Knotweed had been cut and entered the Rhymney River. This was not on the database and clarification was sought to determine if this would be classed as an incident.

6. MINEWATER CONTAMINATION AT TIRYBERTH/CULVERT AT PONTLOTTYN

It was noted that due to other commitments Mr. Steve Hill was unable to attend, he had however wished it noted that monitoring is ongoing at both sites and there have been no significant changes.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

7. CULVERT - BRIDGE STREET BARGOED

Mr. Roberts asked if contacts for queries on land ownership at Welsh Water and the Council could be made available. Mr Humphreys stated that land agents for Welsh Water would shortly be coming in-house making contact easier.

8. CRAYFISH - PARC CWM DARREN

Mr. Roberts informed the meeting that there are signal crayfish in Parc Cwm Darren pond and raised concerns that they may also be in other areas such as Bryn Bach Park and Rhos Las. The Rhymney River Fishing Federation has put traps into the pond at Parc Cwm Darren and caught 31 mature crayfish. There are concerns that they may get into the river and threaten the native crayfish in the lower part of the Rhymney River. They have also stopped fishing at Parc Cwm Darren to remove the source of food to the crayfish, it is hoped that these actions will result in the removal of the crayfish from the pond.

The meeting closed at 11:10am