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Tredomen Park,
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Hengoed CF82 7PG



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For all enquiries relating to this agenda please contact Sharon Hughes
(Tel: 01443 864281 Email: hughesj@caerphilly.gov.uk)

Date: 10th March 2022

Dear Sir/Madam,

A digital meeting of the **Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee** will be held via Microsoft Teams on **Thursday, 17th March, 2022 at 10.30 am** to consider the matters contained in the following agenda. You are welcome to use Welsh at the meeting, a minimum notice period of 3 working days is required should you wish to do so.

This meeting will be recorded and made available to view via the Council's website, except for discussions involving confidential or exempt items. Therefore the images/audio of those individuals speaking will be publicly available to all via the recording on the Council website at www.caerphilly.gov.uk

PLEASE NOTE

Arrangements have been made for a **pre-meeting of the County Borough Members only, at 10.00 am.**

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'CHARRY'.

Christina HARRY
CHIEF EXECUTIVE

AGENDA

- 1 To receive apologies for absence.

Pages

A greener place Man gwyrddach



2 Declarations of Interest.

Councillors and Officers are reminded of their personal responsibility to declare any personal and/or prejudicial interest (s) in respect of any item of business on this agenda in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000, the Council's Constitution and the Code of Conduct for both Councillors and Officers.

To receive and consider the following minutes: -

- | | | |
|---|--|-------|
| 3 | Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee held on 2nd December 2021. | 1 - 4 |
| 4 | Special Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee held on 27th January 2022. | 5 - 8 |
| 5 | Well-being Assessment Update. | |
| 6 | Community Building Survey Update. | |
| 7 | Presentation from Natasha Jones on her new role as Gwent Police Liaison Officer. | |
| 8 | Items of interest concerning the Voluntary Sector from Compact Partners. | |

Circulation:

Councillors Mrs E.M. Aldworth, J. Bevan, A. Collis, S. Cook, K. Etheridge, J.E. Fussell, R.W. Gough, D.C. Harse, A.G. Higgs, Mrs T. Parry, Mrs D. Price, Mrs E. Stenner, Mrs J. Stone, L.G. Whittle and W. Williams

REPRESENTATIVES OF THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR:

GAVO, Parent Network, Barod Cymru, Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly Care & Repair Cymru, Cruse in Gwent, Menter Iaith Sir Caerfilli, Abertridwr Community Church, Vanguard Caerphilly, The United Reformed Church, Charter Housing, Oakdale Community Centre, The Youth Centre, Cefn Hengoed, SSAFA Gwent, Homestart Cymru, Groundwork Wales, Right From The Start, Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent Citizens Advice, Pobl.

And

Aneurin Bevan University Health Board

Gwent Police

The Office of the Gwent Police & Crime Commissioner

South Wales Fire & Rescue Services

Caerphilly Business Forum

Town & Community Councils Representative

Natural Resources Wales

And Appropriate Officers

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Those individuals that attend committee meetings to speak/give evidence will be named in the minutes of that meeting, sometimes this will include their place of employment or business and opinions expressed. Minutes of Meetings including details of speakers will be publicly available to all via the Council website at www.caerphilly.gov.uk. except for discussions involving confidential or exempt items.

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VOLUNTARY SECTOR LIAISON COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE DIGITAL MEETING HELD VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON THURSDAY, 2ND DECEMBER 2021 AT 10.30 A.M.

PRESENT:

Councillor Mrs E. M. Aldworth - Vice Chair (Presiding)

Councillors:

S. Cook, R. W. Gough, D. C. Harse, A. G. Higgs, Mrs T. Parry, Mrs E. Stenner and L. G. Whittle.

Officers:

P. Cooke (Senior Policy Officer), S. Foley (Regional Community Cohesion Officer), S. Hughes (Committee Services Officer) and M. Afzal (Committee Services Officer).

Together with:

GAVO: S. Tiley (Chief Executive Officer) and A. Palmer (Deputy Chief Executive Officer)

Representatives of the Voluntary Sector: Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly Care & Repair Cymru, Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent Citizens Advice, Homestart Cymru, Oakdale Community Centre and The Youth Centre, Cefn Hengoed.

Compact Partners: Aneurin Bevan UHB.

Also in attendance:

N. Fitzpatrick (Llamau).

RECORDING ARRANGEMENTS

The Chair reminded those present that the meeting was being recorded and would be made available to view via the Council's website, except for discussions involving confidential or exempt items. [Click Here to View.](#)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J. Bevan, A. Collis, K. Etheridge, J. E. Fussell, Mrs D. Price, Mrs J. Stone and W. Williams, together with representatives of GAVO, Menter Caerfilli, Parent Network, SSAFA Gwent, Gwent Police and Natural Resources Wales.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

Councillor A. Higgs declared a personal and prejudicial interest in relation to Agenda Item 6 - Small Grants to the Voluntary Sector (Verbal Update), as he is a representative on the GAVO Executive Committee. Details are also minuted with the respective item.

3. MINUTES – 23RD SEPTEMBER 2021

A representative of the Voluntary Sector requested an update on the Community Empowerment Fund and it was agreed that a report would be provided at the next meeting.

It was moved and seconded that the minutes of the Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee meeting held on 23rd September 2021 be approved as a correct record. By a show of hands this was agreed by the majority present.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee held on 23rd September 2021 (minute nos. 1 – 6) be approved as a correct record.

4. VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN, DOMESTIC ABUSE AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE (VAWDASV)/WHITE RIBBON CAMPAIGN (PRESENTATION).

N. Fitzpatrick, the Head of Service for Llamau's Domestic Abuse and Gender Specific Services, attended the meeting and delivered a presentation entitled 'Imagine a World Without Domestic Abuse'. Members of the Committee were provided with an overview and context of the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) Act Wales and the White Ribbon Campaign. In line with the VAWDASV Act the key strategic priorities were outlined to the Committee.

During the course of the ensuing discussion, a concern was expressed by a representative of the Voluntary Sector in relation to older people and abuse. In response, the Head of Service for Llamau's Domestic Abuse and Gender Specific Services addressed the concern by providing examples of the way in which support is provided.

In response to a query from a representative of the Voluntary Sector it was confirmed that, in many cases, financial abuse is linked to domestic abuse and an example was outlined to the Committee. It was agreed that the representative from Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent Citizens Advice would arrange a meeting with the Head of Service for Llamau's Domestic Abuse and Gender Specific Services to work together on this particular area. Further discussion took place regarding the reasons for violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

The Chair thanked the Head of Service for Llamau's Domestic Abuse and Gender Specific Services for attending the meeting.

5. TREE PLANTING PROGRAMME (PRESENTATION).

The Senior Policy Officer delivered a presentation on the Tree Planting Programme. He outlined why the tree planting programme has been developed, the work to date and the ongoing work including the planting event in March at Ynys Hywel Farm. The Senior Policy Officer also explained to the Committee how they can get involved in the project.

A representative of GAVO raised a question in relation to tree planting nurseries and sought further information on getting allotment societies and allotment holders involved. In response, the Committee was advised that two sub-groups will be set up, one to ensure that the contracts are in place properly and another to look at volunteering and how to maximise the benefits of volunteers, learning and education.

In response to a query from a representative of the Voluntary Sector, the timeline of the tree planting programme was outlined in relation to decarbonisation and offsetting.

6. SMALL GRANTS TO THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR (VERBAL UPDATE).

Councillor A. Higgs declared a personal and prejudicial interest in relation to Agenda Item 6 - Small Grants to the Voluntary Sector (Verbal Update), as he is a representative on the GAVO Executive Committee, and left the meeting during consideration of this item.

The Deputy Chief Executive Officer for GAVO asked the Committee to recall that back in December 2019 a report was written outlining a number of issues in relation to small grants to the Voluntary Sector, which was submitted to the Grants to the Voluntary Sector Panel for consideration. Members were advised that a response has been received and it was discussed at the Voluntary Sector Representatives meeting. Further concerns were raised by representatives of the Voluntary Sector, particularly in relation to the publicity of the scheme and the application process. The need to improve publicity in order to increase awareness of the scheme, to ensure it is maximised for the benefit of the smaller third sector organisations, was emphasised. With regard to the application process, the representative of the Voluntary Sector highlighted the need to make the scheme easier to access by making the application form easier to complete and also available online. Comments were made in relation to the amounts remaining in the Grants to the Voluntary Sector budget and the amounts that are being dispersed. It was suggested that by increasing the amounts available, at this time, it would help kickstart organisations that have been greatly affected by the Covid-19 pandemic. During the course of the ensuing debate further comments were made in relation to discretionary rate relief and the process, administration and governance of the grants to the voluntary sector.

The Chief Executive Officer for GAVO sought clarification as to how all the concerns raised could be taken forward. In response, Councillor R. Gough, who is also a Member of the Grants to the Voluntary Sector Panel, responded to a number of the points raised. It was agreed that the Deputy Chief Executive Officer for GAVO would send Councillor R. Gough an e-mail outlining all the concerns raised by the Voluntary Sector representatives, which would be forwarded to the Chair of the Grants to the Voluntary Sector Panel and relevant Officers.

7. PUBLIC SERVICES BOARD (PSB) WELL-BEING ASSESSMENT AND PLAN (VERBAL UPDATE).

The Senior Policy Officer provided a verbal update on the Public Services Board (PSB) Well-being Assessment and Plan. It was noted that the next meeting of the Gwent Public Services Board will be held on 7th December 2021 and the main element of that meeting would be to look at the Well-being Assessment and the draft consultation. It was highlighted that the next Well-being Assessment is due to be published in May 2022 and the timetable for producing the Gwent Well-being Assessment was outlined to the Committee. The Chief Executive Officer for GAVO also provided an update from a third sector point of view.

8. ITEMS OF INTEREST CONCERNING THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR FROM COMPACT PARTNERS

There were no items of interest concerning the Voluntary Sector from Compact Partners.

The Deputy Chief Executive Officer for GAVO placed on record her thanks to Michelle Jones (Parent Network) and wished her well in her retirement.

The meeting closed at 11.53 am.

Approved as a correct record and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 17th March 2022, they were signed by the Chair.

CHAIR



SPECIAL VOLUNTARY SECTOR LIAISON COMMITTEE

**MINUTES OF THE DIGITAL MEETING HELD VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON
THURSDAY, 27TH JANUARY 2022 AT 10.30 A.M.**

PRESENT:

Chair: L. Jones (Menter Caerfilli)
Vice Chair: Councillor Mrs E. M. Aldworth

Councillors:

A. Collis, S. Cook, Mrs T. Parry, Mrs D. Price, Mrs E. Stenner and W. Williams.

Also in attendance:

P. Cooke (Senior Policy Officer), S. Harris (Head of Financial Services & S151 Officer)
S. Foley (Policy Officer), P. Massey (Policy Officer), S. Hughes (Committee Services Officer)
and M. Afzal (Committee Services Officer).

Together with:

Representatives of the Voluntary Sector: GAVO, Blaenau Gwent and Caerphilly Care & Repair Cymru, Caerphilly and Blaenau Gwent Citizens Advice, Homestart Cymru, Parent Network and The Youth Centre, Cefn Hengoed.

Compact Partners: Gwent Police.

RECORDING ARRANGEMENTS

The Chairperson reminded those present that the meeting was being recorded and would be made available to view via the Council's website, except for discussions involving confidential or exempt items. [Click Here to View.](#)

1. TO APPOINT A CHAIR FOR THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR LIAISON COMMITTEE

It was moved and seconded that L. Jones (Menter Caerfilli) be appointed as Chair. By way of a show of hands this was approved by the majority.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J. Bevan, K. Etheridge, J.E. Fussell, R.W. Gough, D.C. Harse, A.G. Higgs, Mrs J. Stone and L.G. Whittle. Apologies for absence were also received from representatives of Oakdale Community Centre, SSAFA Gwent, South Wales Fire and Rescue Services and Natural Resources Wales.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received at the commencement or during the course of the meeting.

4. DRAFT BUDGET PROPOSALS FOR 2022/23

Consideration was given to the report detailing the Draft Budget Proposals for 2022/23. The Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee was asked to consider and comment upon the content of the report prior to Final Budget Proposals being presented to Cabinet and Council in February 2022.

The Head of Financial Services & S151 Officer delivered a presentation on the 2022/23 Draft Budget Proposals to summarise the report and provide more detail around some of the key elements. The Committee was advised that details of the Provisional Local Government Financial Settlement are normally announced by Welsh Government in early October each year. However, due to the delay in undertaking the UK Government spending review, details of the Provisional Local Government Financial Settlement for 2022/23 were not released until the 21st December 2021. The Head of Financial Services & S151 Officer provided details of the 2022/23 draft budget proposals and outlined a range of cost and service pressures that require funding along with a proposed increase of 2.5% in Council Tax to enable the authority to set a balanced budget for the 2022/23 financial year. The ongoing financial impact of Covid-19 was highlighted and the Committee was informed that the Hardship Fund will cease on the 31st March 2022 and local authorities will be required to meet ongoing financial pressures linked to the pandemic from the funding provided in the Provisional Financial Settlement. A summary of the medium-term financial plan was also provided.

Clarification was sought on the Real Living Wage and how it will be enforced for services commissioned by Social Services from the independent sector. The Head of Financial Services & S151 Officer informed the Committee that the current Real Living Wage hourly rate is £9.90. Further detailed work will now be required with providers on an open book basis to establish fee rates moving forward that will ensure all care staff in commissioned services can be paid the Real Living Wage. Members of the Committee were also assured that this will be monitored by the Commissioning Team in Social Services.

A query was raised regarding additional staffing in a number of areas, including Town Centre Management, Community Safety and Environmental Health. The Committee was advised that there is a commitment to increase staffing capacity in key teams and to maintain these posts moving forward.

A request was made for the Third Sector to be involved in the budget setting process at an earlier stage. The Senior Policy Officer advised that he will be working with the Head of Financial Services & S151 Officer in the new financial year and as part of the Transformation Programme representation from the Voluntary Sector Liaison Committee would be included in the budget setting process. In response to a Members query it was confirmed that official notification of the Police precept has not yet been received.

A concern was raised in relation to raising awareness of climate change as it was felt that members of the public should be made more aware and be involved. The Head of Financial Services & S151 Officer advised the Committee that the Council has approved a Decarbonisation Strategy and also set aside £500,000 in reserves to drive the Strategy forward. The Committee was also advised that it is proposed to appoint a Lead Officer to support the delivery of the Council's Decarbonisation Strategy. It was noted the Decarbonisation Strategy and Action Plan are available on the Caerphilly County Borough Council website.

The Senior Policy Officer advised that the comments from the meeting will be captured as part of the consultation response and asked Members of the Committee to promote the consultation to the wider community.

A representative of the Voluntary Sector drew attention to a further Covid-19 non-domestic rates grant which is currently available and the Committee was advised that the closing date is 14th February 2022. It was noted that details of the Covid-19 non-domestic rates grant is available on the Council's website.

The meeting closed at 11.06 am.

Approved as a correct record and subject to any amendments or corrections agreed and recorded in the minutes of the meeting held on 17th March 2022, they were signed by the Chair.

CHAIR

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