



## COMMUNITY COUNCIL LIAISON SUB-COMMITTEE

### MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT COUNCIL OFFICES, PENALLTA HOUSE, YSTRAD MYNACH ON 21ST NOVEMBER 2018 AT 7.00PM

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PRESENT:

Councillor – J. Ridgewell - Chair  
Community Councillor Ms J. Rao - Vice Chair

Councillors:

C. Andrews, L. Jeremiah, V. James, Mrs T. Parry, C. Thomas, A. Whitcombe, R. Whiting, B. Zaplatynski

Cabinet Member for Social Care and Wellbeing - Councillor C. Cuss

Leader of Council – Councillor D.V. Poole

Community/Town Council Representatives

Bargoed	- H. Llewellyn
Caerphilly	- Mrs J. Hibbert. Mr. P. Davy (Clerk)
Gelligaer	- J.A. Pritchard, Ms. C. Mortimer (Clerk)
Maesycwmmmer	- Ms. J. Rao, Ms R. Kedward (Clerk)
Nelson	- Mrs. G. Davies, Mr. T. White (Clerk)
Penyrheol, Treceynydd and Energlyn	- Mrs. H. Treherne (Clerk)
Rhymney	- D.T. Williams, Mr. G. Williams (Clerk)
Risca Town	- B. Hancock
Van	- Mr. J. Dilworth (Clerk)

Together with:-

Councillor D.V. Poole (Leader of Council), S. Harris (Interim Head of Business Improvement Services). M. Jones (Parent Network), T. Wallbank and F. Wallbank (Parent Network), C. Edwards (Manager, Environmental Health), P. Hudson (Marketing and Events Manager) and E. Sullivan (Senior Committee Services Officer).

And: -

G. Owens (Vice Chair Independent Remuneration Panel) and S. Willey (Independent Remuneration Panel)

#### 1. APPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

It was moved and seconded that Councillor John Ridgewell be appointed as Chair of the Sub Committee for the ensuing year and by a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that Councillor J. Ridgewell be appointed Chair of the Sub Committee for the ensuing year.

## **2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR**

It was moved and seconded that Community Councillor Jo Rao be appointed as Vice Chair of the Sub Committee for the ensuing year and by a show of hands this was unanimously agreed.

RESOLVED that Community Councillor J. Rao be appointed Vice Chair of the Sub Committee for the ensuing year.

## **3. APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A. Angel, A. Farina Childs, A. Gair, A. Higgs, P. Leonard, M James, J. Pritchard and Mrs M.E. Sargent.

Community Councillors A. Deblasi, W. Williams, J. Winslade, D. Davies, P. Roberts, J. Garland, A. Reed, D. Woodman, B. Allen, J. Blackburn and J. Leek.

and

Clerks Mrs S. Hughes (Aber Valley), Mr G. James (Argoed), Mrs L. Tams (Bargoed), Ms J. Dalton (Bedwas, Trethomas and Machen), J. Hold (Blackwood), G. Williams (Darran Valley), D. Gronow (New Tredegar), G. James (Risca East) and B. Campbell (Risca Town).

## **4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Community Councillor J.A. Pritchard declared a personal but not prejudicial interest in Agenda Item No. 7 – Budget 2019/20 details are minuted with the respective item.

## **5. MINUTES – 11TH JULY 2018**

The minutes of the meeting held on 11th July 2018, (a copy had been sent to each member) were received and noted.

## **6. MATTERS ARISING**

In relation Public Services Board (PSB) and Community Council representation (page 3, minute no. 6) clarification was sought in relation to the decision taken by the Public Service Board not to allow said representation at the present time. Members were advised that the PSB discussed this issue at its last meeting and it was felt that as it was still fairly new, with a lot of work to be done, its membership would not be widen at this time however this position would be considered further next year.

In relation to Decriminalisation of Parking (page 5, minute no. 8) clarification was sought with regard to traffic management arrangements and whether they would delay the process. Members were advised that an assessment was currently being undertaken to ensure that road markings, double yellow etc. were up to the required standard to allow a prosecution to take place and this would form part of the civil parking process, however given ongoing budget constraints this work would be prioritised. It was also noted that Gwent Police would

continue to provide support for a further period of time until the authority is in a position to take over.

## **TOWN AND COMMUNITY COUNCIL LIAISON COMMITTEE**

With the agreement of the Chair and Committee it was agreed that the PETRA presentation and Independent Remuneration Panel reports be brought forward on the agenda.

Consideration was given to the following items raised by the Town and Community Council Liaison Committee: -

### **7. PETRA (PARENTS ENGAGING TO RAISE ASPIRATIONS)**

M. Jones introduced the presentation which detailed the origins and continuing work of the PETRA initiative and how they worked with parents and illustrators to produce children's books. Members were introduced to Tracy and Ffion Wallbank who had been involved with the project from the beginning.

It was noted that the books centred on a specific issue and with the help of illustrators, parents brought the story to life. The impact of the process on the self esteem, confidence and literacy skills of the parents was highlighted and how this was then being reflected back on to their children explained. The change of mind-set in the appreciation of books and the importance of reading was incredible with families becoming more engaged and developing for the first time a genuine love of books.

Members were advised of a recent project undertaken by Gelligaer Community Council and projects at Green Hill Primary School and Ysgol Penalltau. Books were now being produced bilingually and since its inception 52 different titles had been published.

In conclusion Ms Jones invited Community Councils to become involved in this very unique project and take up the opportunity to take their own book forward for their community. PETRA would ideally like to see the project spread across the whole of the Borough and then across Wales. Although there is a cost to the process in the impact that that the project has on parents, children and communities cannot be underestimated and at PETRA they feel magical.

The Chair thanked Ms Jones for her presentation and to Tracy and Ffion Wallbank for their attendance and participation in the meeting. Members' questions were welcomed.

Clarification was sought in relation to bilingual books and whether there were any Welsh first language titles and it was noted that the language used is driven by the funders and although the majority of the titles had been produced in English they were still very much Welsh books. It was explained that they were written in the context of the community writing the story and so captured the local language feel of the area.

### **8. INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL FOR WALES (IRP)**

G. Owens (Vice Chair) and S. Willey from the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales (IRP) presented the draft Annual Report for 2019/20 as it related to payments to Members of Community and Town Councils and sought the views of the Liaison Committee as part of the consultation process.

In presenting their draft findings it was noted that the IRP recognised the wide variation in geography, scope and scale across the 735 community and town councils in Wales, for this reason 3 bands had been recommended as detailed within table 8. A Member of a Town and Community Council is entitled to receive payments as a matter of course; however an individual may decline to receive all or part of the payment if they wish. To do so the Member wishing to decline must write individually to the Proper Officer, usually the Clerk, to prevent payment being made. This year the Panel is mandating a payment of £150 for all Community and Town Council Members including those that are included within Group C (Determination 37).

Members were then referred to Determinations 38 and 39 in relation to senior roles and Determinations 40 and 41 in relation to travel and subsistence costs, it was noted that mileage allowance followed HMRC regulations and all claims should be receipted. In terms of Civic Head and Deputy Civic Head duties an additional payment of up to a maximum of £1500 can be paid.

In concluding the presentation Members were assured that the IRP's intention was to provide an affordable and acceptable framework for remuneration; so that individuals who wish to receive a payment for the roles and responsibilities undertaken have the right to do so.

Clarification was sought in relation to the Panel's view on appropriate mechanisms for Clerks to make said payments. G. Owens advised that this would be a matter for the individual Clerks but they would need to be compliant with payroll and HMRC regulations and it was noted that for some Town and Community Councillors there could be benefit implications.

Members felt that mandating a payment could deter those on lower incomes or retired from taking up the role rather than encouraging them. Members were assured that the intention was to ensure fair remuneration for all and the individual retained the right to refuse all or part of the payment.

Further discussions on the payments ensued with concerns raised by Clerks that making a single lump payment could have a negative on benefit thresholds but a small monthly salary would require a payroll system which smaller Councils would find difficult to implement and maintain. Members were advised to seek further assistance from Once Voice Wales as the method in which the payments were made would be the responsibility of the individual Council.

Clarification was then sought in relation to Members choosing to make a charitable donation with their allowance and how this could be done. It was noted that the payment would have to be made to the individual in the first instance; the way in which that money was used following the payment, including its donation to a charity would be matter for the individual.

Concerns were also expressed in relation to the change to Band C Councils, who had previously been able to decline payments as a whole Council decision. It was reiterated that going forward this would be a matter for the individual Councillor to advise the Council Clerk if they wish to decline the payment.

Members were reminded that they could leave comments on the draft report on the IRP Website and were encouraged to give feedback on the determinations.

## **9. BUDGET 2019/20**

Community Councillor J.A. Pritchard declared a personal interest as Treasurer of Hengoed Community Centre.

S. Harris (Interim Head of Business Improvement Services) introduced the report which detailed the draft Budget proposals for 2019/20 and sought Members comments as part of the consultation process.

Mr Harris outlined the headline issues of the provisional settlement and savings required in order to deliver a balanced budget. It was noted that the impact of the savings detailed within the report had been categorised in terms of public impact as nil, low, medium or high. The consultation process was outlined and the Liaison Committee were encouraged to forward comments either through the Community Council Liaison Officer or the CCBC Website.

Councillor D.V. Poole (Leader of Council) confirmed that there were very challenging times ahead in order to deliver the level of savings required.

Concerns were expressed in relation to the proposed closure of certain Civic Amenity Sites and the negative impact this would have on communities, it was felt that fly-tipping incidents would increase as a result. It was felt that the Penallta facility should remain open due to its tonnage usage.

Reference was made to the proposal for Community Centres to take over the Caretaker salary costs and concerns were raised in relation to the impact that this would have on smaller centres.

Concerns were also raised in relation to cuts to the Voluntary Sector and in particular the Barnardo's contract. Serious concerns were also raised in relation to the removal of Community Safety Wardens and the introduction of a charge for the treatment of rats. Community Councils were also disappointed to see proposals to cut funding for the events programme.

In terms of the Community Safety Wardens it was noted that there may be opportunities for staff as part of the Civil Parking Enforcement plans coming forward. Reference was made to Leisure Centre closures and it was emphasised that the report did not contain any references or proposals for Leisure Centres.

Subsidised Bus Services were queried and how they would be affected and it was noted that further consultation on this would take place with Community Councils as part of the process.

Members agreed that public toilet provision for larger communities and town centres should be retained.

Mr Harris thanked Members for their comments and questions and asked that any further comments be sent via Mrs Sullivan who would forward them on.

## **10. EVENTS PROGRAMME AND FUNDING**

Due to time constraints it was agreed that Community Councils would email Mr. Paul Hudson with their comments on the proposed levels of funding and the contribution that they could make.

## **11. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES FOR COMMUNITY COUNCILS**

Due to time constraints it was agreed that this item be deferred to the next appropriate Liaison Committee meeting.

## **12. CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL – LOCAL TOILET STRATEGY**

Mrs C. Edwards (Manager, Environmental Health) provided an update on the strategy and the consultation process to be undertaken.

Concerns were raised with regard to the formatting of the online questionnaire and in particular the size of the print and boxes used. Mrs Edwards confirmed that she would look into box size and see what improvements could be made.

Members asked if it would be possible to give the strategy a more prominent place in the Newslite publication and were advised that this would be a matter for the Communications Team.

Members were advised that hard copies of the strategy and consultation questionnaire would be made available by the Policy Unit on request or via the Liaison Officer.

### **13. CAERPHILLY COUNTY BOROUGH – WASTE STRATEGY 2019/20**

The Community Council Liaison Officer provided a verbal update and confirmed that there was currently a cross party working group reviewing waste service provision. The outcomes of the review would be subject to a report to the Regeneration and Environment Scrutiny Committee which would be circulated to Community Councils.

Following this report and in noting the lateness of proceedings discussions commenced on changing the start time of future meetings to 6.00pm. As not all Community Councils were present it was agreed the Liaison Officer would email all Councils to ascertain whether or not this would be acceptable and provide feedback on the response. If agreeable this change be implemented for the next meeting.

The meeting closed at 9:00pm