



COMMUNITY COUNCIL LIAISON SUB-COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MULTI-LOCATIONAL MEETING HELD IN THE CHAMBER, PENALLTA HOUSE AND VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON 3RD APRIL 2023 AT 6.00PM

PRESENT:

Community Councillor J. Rao - Chair
Councillor A. Hussey – Vice Chair

Councillors:

A. Angel, K. Etheridge, C. Gordon, D. Ingram-Jones, T. Heron, L. Jeremiah, A. McConnell, J.A. Pritchard, L. Whittle.

Cabinet Member N. George

Community/Town Council Representatives

Aber Valley	Apologies
Argoed	Apologies
Bargoed	- H. Llewellyn, Mrs. H. Williams (Clerk)
Bedwas, Trethomas and Machen	- K. Ingram, A. Birkinshaw (Clerk)
Blackwood	- G. Edwards
Caerphilly	- P. Bevan
Darran Valley	- Apologies
Draethen, Waterloo and Rudry	- Apologies
Gelligaer	- Apologies
Llanbradach	- Apologies
Maesycwmmmer	- Ms. J. Rao (Chair),
Nelson	- Mrs. G. Davies
New Tredegar	- Apologies
Penyrheol, Trecenydd and Energlyn	- A. Minton, H. Treherne (Clerk)
Rhymney	- J. Hughes,
Risca East	- Apologies
Risca Town	- A. Davies, B. Campbell (Clerk)
Van	- Apologies

Together with:-

N. Kenny, J. Davies, P. Wallen, G. Richards and T. Llewellyn, and E. Sullivan (Senior Committee Services Officer)

STATEMENT FROM COUNCILLOR L. WHITTLE.

With the approval of the Chair Councillor L. Whittle addressed the committee and formally apologised for a comment he had made that had been inadvertently overheard at the last meeting. He had not been aware of that is microphone was on and the remarks made were not in relation to the meeting or any person participating, however unintentionally made they were not appropriate, and he expressed his regret to the Chair and Committee Members.

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P. Cook, A. Gair, P. Leonard, T. Parry, C. Thomas and J. Winslade and Town and Community Councils as detailed above.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

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

3. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 27th July 2022 were received and noted.

MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

4. BRIEFING NOTE ON MATTERS RAISED BY TOWN AND COMMUNITY COUNCILS

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

UPDATE ON CHARGING FOR EVENTS HELD IN CCBC PARKS

J. Davies (Parks and Countryside Operations Manager) provided an update and confirmed that there would be no charge for the use of Tredegar Park and detailed the bond and ESAG application process and why it was needed.

The Clerk of Risca Town Community Council expressed his deep concern in relation to the content of the update relating to the Beach Party event in Risca Park and the costs of reinstatement that had occurred and wish it to be noted that this had nothing to do with Risca Town Council, he did not know who had provided this information but expressed his unhappiness with what he felt was the implication that this related to the Town Council.

Mr Davies confirmed that he had supplied the information for the briefing note and confirmed that this was in no way related to Risca Town Council, and that Risca Town Council was not mentioned anywhere within the update. The example provided in relation to the Beach Party served only to demonstrate what can happen, and the damage that can be caused and how important it was to complete an ESAG form. Mr Davies emphasised that he sought to ensure consistency and equity for all Town and Community Councils when using CCBC Parks for events and the ESAG facilitate this consistency and helped to manage risk and identify and provide areas of support that may be needed to event organisers in a timely manner.

UPDATE ON CCBC'S PARKING ENFORCEMENT SERVICE

P. Wallen (Civil Enforcement Officer Supervisor) attended in relation to the update on parking enforcement.

Community Council representatives expressed their disappointment that more detail had not been included in the update and had hoped that a greater level of data would be included, they particularly wanted to see figures in relation to the number of enforcement orders issued over a period of time whether that would be monthly or quarterly.

County Council representatives agreed that this would be very useful to have for both County Borough and Community Council Members and queried if this data would be available on a ward basis.

The Officer confirmed that data can be collated from their systems, and it might be possible to capture it, however he would need to go back and investigate how this could best be collected.

Clarification was sought in relation to the vacant posts and how patrols were carried out, the Officer confirmed that there were 2 full time equivalent posts still vacant at this time. Recruitment had been ongoing throughout the year, and he went on to detail the difficulties that the service area had experienced. In relation to patrols, the Officer explained that these were carried out in a combination of on foot and vehicle patrols.

Members felt there were not enough Enforcement Officers to be able to cover the county borough and reference was made to issues experienced and further information was sought into how patrols were planned. The Officer confirmed that patrol areas are broken up into North/South, Central and East and so Officers would be patrolling in the various areas throughout the day at varying times. They also go to schools in the morning and afternoon and then target town centres.

The Officer also confirmed that they respond to over 12,000 service requests a year and the service will target areas where complaints have come in, he urged Members and the public to use the online forms to report any issues and they would ensure Enforcement Officer presence.

A Councillor mentioned the close working relationship that he had with Enforcement Officers in his ward and acknowledged the hard work being done to resolve problems whenever they come forward.

Members agreed they were all experiencing similar issues, particularly in and around schools, zebra crossing etc, and that it would be very useful to have a breakdown of areas and the numbers of tickets issued.

UPDATE ON CCBC'S COMMUNITY SAFETY WARDENS SERVICE

N. Kenny (Community Safety) attended in relation to the update on Community Safety Wardens.

A Member referenced a newsletter recently circulated by Community Safety and placed on record how informative and useful it had been and advised that they had also placed the newsletter on social media.

A Member referenced e-scooters being driven on pavements and how this should be reported. The Officer confirmed that this is illegal and should be dealt with through Gwent Police. The Officer advised that she had put some communication out around this and will continue to do so.

Clarification was sought in relation to the number of fines issued by Community Safety Wardens in the last 12 months and the Officer advised that although she did not have the information to and she could find out and provide the details following the meeting.

STREET LIGHTING REVIEW

T. Llewellyn (Senior Engineer) attended in relation to the update on Street Lighting.

A Member referenced street lighting in the Rhymney area and the Safer Streets initiative, which had resulted in some lights being switched back on. The Officer believed that this initiative was introduced by Gwent Police and as part of it signs, such as 'smart water' had been put up trying to prevent theft and confirmed that a small number of lights had been switched back on. Gwent Police had covered the costs associated with converting the lights to go back to the all-night operation and the energy costs involved were also funded by them.

Community Council representatives expressed the opinion that they would like to see street lighting switched back on but given all the data in the report then it was obvious that a switch back was not going to happen.

Clarification was sought as to the number of lights still to be converted as a Community Councillor in Rhymney was aware of several that still seemed to be the older version in the Pontlottyn area. The Officer confirmed that the switch over had been fully completed, however if the Member wished to forward on the area or if possible, the column number, then these lights could be looked at.

Members expressed concern in relation to public safety and part night lighting, particularly for older and vulnerable people and those that worked at night. Concerns were also expressed that the lights seem to go off earlier or later than they should.

The Officer outlined how the programming of the photocells worked and Members were asked to note that the policy decision on street lighting was that they will be turned off between 12:00am and 5.30am and the lights operated on solar midnight, so the Council does not change the times on the sensors when the clocks go back and forward they re-adjust themselves and this can take approximately 7 days which may lead to the instances referred to.

The Sub-Committee were reassured that should an area have a particular concern or increases in crime or anti-social behaviour then full night lighting can be considered and reintroduced providing this is backed by Gwent Police. Officers emphasised that national and local data has shown there to be no link between the introduction of part-night lighting and increased levels of crime.

The Sub Committee were also made aware of the energy costs savings that have been achieved by the introduction of LED and part night lighting circa £1.1M and with energy increases expected at 170% there would be enormous cost implications to any policy change at this stage. Members were also reminded of their commitment to the climate change emergency and reduction in carbon emissions and the savings that LED lights had made to these targets.

Reference was made electric vehicles and clarification was sought as to the number of charges available in the borough. The Officer confirmed that they were being introduced into CCBC car parks with a further 10 locations going in this year, although this was not his area, so could not provide details.

The Chair thanked all the Officers for their attendance at this evening's meeting and for their contributions.

As the meeting concluded B. Campbell (Clerk Risca Town Council) reminded Members of the deadline for responses to the Boundary Commission review of Community Councils and given the tight timeframe (12th May 2023) urged all Community Councils to respond as soon as possible.

Mr Campbell also referred to the last meeting of the Community Council Liaison Sub Committee and expressed his disappointment that this had not been reflected in some way given that it had convened for 11 minutes.

The Liaison Officer apologised but understood that although convened, the meeting itself could not be heard by remote attendees and that the technical issues had become apparent after this duration and therefore the meeting had to be abandoned as it did not comply with legislative requirements.

The Liaison Officer confirmed that she would update the webpages for this meeting to note that the meeting had been abandoned due to technical issues and this should serve as a formal public notice.

Meeting ended 19:10pm