



COMMUNITY COUNCIL LIAISON SUB-COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MULTI-LOCATIONAL MEETING HELD IN THE CHAMBER, PENALLTA HOUSE AND VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS ON 24TH JULY 2023 AT 6.00PM

PRESENT:

Community Councillor J. Rao - Chair

Councillors:

A. Angel, K. Etheridge, A. Gair, C. Gordon, T. Heron, L. Jeremiah, P. Leonard, A. McConnell, L. Whittle.

Cabinet Member N. George

Community/Town Council Representatives

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| Aber Valley | Apologies |
| Argoed | Apologies |
| Bargoed | - H. Llewellyn, Mrs. H. Williams (Clerk) |
| Bedwas, Trethomas and Machen | - K. Ingram and A. Thomas |
| Blackwood | - G. Edwards |
| Caerphilly | - P. Bevan |
| Darran Valley | - Apologies |
| Draethen, Waterloo and Rudry | - Apologies |
| Gelligaer | - C. Mortimer |
| Llanbradach | - N. Hewer, C. Mortimer |
| Maesycwmmmer | - Ms. J. Rao (Chair), |
| Nelson | - Mrs. G. Davies. A. Gray (Substitute Member) |
| New Tredegar | - B. Griffett |
| Penyrheol, Trecenydd and Energlyn | - H. Treherne |
| Rhymney | - Apologies |
| Risca East | - P. Leonard, |
| Risca Town | - A. Davies, B. Campbell (Clerk) |
| Van | - Apologies |

Together with Officers:-

L. Lane, K. Peters, V. Doyle, H. Delonette, M. Jacques, E. Sullivan, J. Thomas, and A. Jones

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors P. Cook, D. Ingram-Jones, A. Hussey, J.A. Pritchard, C. Thomas, and J. Winslade and Town and Community Councils as detailed above.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

C. Councillor G. Edwards declared a personal and prejudicial interest in relation to Agenda Item No. 5 – Update on the Community Empowerment Fund as he is currently involved in a dispute over the fund process and would leave the meeting when the item was discussed.

3. MINUTES – 3RD APRIL 2023

A matter of accuracy was raised by Community Councillor G. Davies, the Community Council Liaison Officer advised that as C. Councillor Davies had not actually spoken on the matter in question during the meeting of the 3rd April 2023, then her comments now, could not be taken as a matter of accuracy, as the minutes can only reflect what was said whilst the meeting was in progress.

Community Councillor A. Gray wished it noted that although she had been present at the meeting she was not listed in the attendees, subject to her inclusion the minutes of the meeting held on 3rd April 2023 were received and noted.

4. MATTERS ARISING

B. Cambell – Risca Town Council advised the Liaison Sub Committee that the Kings Coronation Spring Event had gone very well and expressed his thanks to all those who had helped to make it such a success.

5. UPDATE REPORT ON THE COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT FUND

Consideration was given to the report which updated the Community Council Liaison Sub Committee on the operation of the Community Empowerment Fund and provided a summary of the funding allocated by ward and outlined minor changes to be made to the 2023/24 grant year. The report also highlighted some of the issues experienced in the delivery of the grant.

It was noted that each member was allocated £4,490 in 2022/23 to support community-led initiatives and so wards with more Members would have a higher allocated pot that can be pooled or used individually. Projects must be managed by a non-profit organisation based within the county borough and must be sponsored by one or more Members.

Members were referred to section 5.5 of the report which highlighted the type of projects and activities that can be funded and Appendix 1 which highlighted the projects approved in the first year of the grant. The Officer confirmed that any underspends from the previous year would be added to the new 2022/23 allocation.

The Sub Committee noted the amount of awareness raising that had been done and the impact of the Local Government Elections and Boundary changes had on the allocation of funds. Officers highlighted a minor change to the 2023/24 allocation whereby all community groups would be able to bid to the Community Empowerment Fund in consecutive years but only for a maximum of 3 years.

Clarification was sought as to whether an individual can make an application to the fund and Officers confirmed that this was not possible, only community organisations could do so.

In relation to wider community benefits, a Member requested further information as to how an approved application for a 'stadium rota mower' had a wider community benefit. The Officer confirmed that the mower purchased by Aberbargoed Buds Football Club for use of their pitch had a wider benefit through the upkeep of playing fields that could be accessed by not only their players, but other young players, as well as visiting teams and would therefore have a positive impact on the health and well-being of young people in that and surrounding communities.

The Officer outlined how community benefits were considered and assessed during the fund application process, which included whether they would increase physical or mental wellbeing, or have an environmental impact, for example reducing the carbon footprint through the installation of solar panels to a community venue.

Reference was made to a toilet facility owned by a Cricket Club and whether this would be eligible for support from the fund. The Officer confirmed that the association would need to have a conversation with the Local Ward Member and if they met the criteria then an application could be made.

Reference was made to the Local Toilet Strategy and the possibility of reopening public toilets through the fund. The Officer advised that as she was not involved in the Strategy, she could not comment, however given that toilets were owned by lots of different organisations, some of which were profit making it was unlikely that they would meet the funding criteria.

The Chair thanked the Officers for their attendance and the report was noted.

6. TASK AND FINISH REVIEW OF THE RESIDENT'S PERMIT PARKING POLICY

Consideration was given to the report which sought the views of the Community Council Liaison Sub Committee as part of the evidence gathering process for the Task and Finish Review of the Resident's Parking Policy.

The Officer outlined the remit and terms of reference for the Task and Finish Group and the various stages of the review. The Sub Committee noted that a survey of eligible residents had been drawn up and would run from the 3rd of July 2023 to the 4th August 2023, and as well as being available on line, printed copies would be sent to residents on request.

As part of this consultation and evidence gathering process the views of Town and Community Councils would be welcomed and would form part of the final analysis and outcome report to Scrutiny and Cabinet.

The Sub Committee noted the deadline for responses was the 4th August 2023 and that any comments should be forwarded to Mark Jacques, Scrutiny Officer via the Community Council Liaison Officer.

7. 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.

The Sub Committee received a presentation which outlined the Gwent Public Services Board Wellbeing Plan.

The Officer detailed the path that the Plan had taken so far and outlined the partnership landscape that it drew from. Members noted that the objectives of the plan were to create a fairer, more equitable and inclusive Gwent for all, a climate ready Gwent where the environment is valued and protected, benefitting wellbeing now and for future generations.

The steps needed to achieve these objectives were highlighted and were noted to include actions to reduce the cost-of-living crisis in the longer term, to provide and enable the supply of good quality, affordable and appropriate homes. To take action to reduce our carbon emissions, to help Gwent adapt to climate change, and protect and restore our natural environment. The Wellbeing Plan would also seek to take action to address inequities, particularly in relation to health, through the framework of the Marmot Principles and enable and support people, neighbourhoods, and communities to be resilient, connected, thriving and safe.

It was noted that effectively working together, communication and engagement, Welsh Language and Culture and performance management were the Plan's overarching principles. The Officer went on to detail the Marmot Principles for the Sub Committees information and these were noted as the principle to give every child the best start in life, enable all children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives. Create fair employment and good work for all and ensure a healthy standard of living for all. The Marmot Principles also included the need to create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities, strengthen the role and impact of ill-health prevention, tackle racism, discrimination and their outcomes and pursue environmental sustainability and health equity together.

In concluding the presentation, the Officer confirmed the timeline for the Well-being Plan and explained how the Local Delivery Group would interact with the regional landscape and how Members would see lots of initiatives on a local level coming forward.

The Chaired thanked the Officer for the presentation and Members requested that a copy of the presentation be circulated to all Town and Community Councils for information. The Officer confirmed that she would be happy to forward this to the Liaison Officer for circulation. Members also requested that a copy of the full Wellbeing Plan once published, be circulated to all Town and Community Councils and if possible, a hard copy of the document also be provided.

The Officer confirmed that the final plan could be circulated electronically, however she was not sure how many printed copies would be available, but she would follow-up with the Liaison Officer should there be any.

UPDATE ON CCBC'S PARKING ENFORCEMENT SERVICE

The Sub Committee welcomed the data circulated by the Liaison Officer and reference was made to data in relation to Market Close, Nelson, where a 1-hour limited wait was in place. The Member highlighted that this area had several businesses such as hairdressers, and a dental surgery where appointments could easily exceed the 1-hour time limit and queried whether this could be extended.

The Liaison Officer confirmed that this would be a matter for Highways Infrastructure, however she would pass on the concerns raised.

A Community Councillor went on to raise a concern in relation to Parking Enforcement Officers using unmarked cars on patrol and was of the opinion that an Enforcement Officer covering Nelson area had not been actively pursuing their duties on several occasions.

The Liaison Officer advised that the Council took very seriously concerns in relation to staff conduct and competency and if the Community Councillor had such concerns, then they should be raised with the Council/Head of Service/Corporate Director at the time of the alleged incident, so that it could be appropriately investigated not only in terms of the service provision but also to safeguard the member of staff subject to an allegation.

STREET LIGHTING REVIEW

The update was noted.

GRASS CUTTING REGIMES AND BIODIVERSITY

The Community Council Liaison Officer confirmed that this item would be added to the agenda of the next Sub Committee meeting, to allow relevant Officers to be attendance.

Members welcomed the opportunity to have Officers present as they had a number of concerns in relation to grass cutting, and reference was made to overgrown roundabouts and the impact on visibility and overgrown grass and hedgerows that had been dried out by recent warm weather and presented a real risk of fire.

To ensure that appropriate the information could be made available at the meeting the Liaison Officer requested that any questions from Town and Community Councils be forwarded to her in plenty of time so that Officers would have data to hand for presentation to the Sub Committee.

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

Meeting ended 19:10pm