

**MINUTES OF PONTYPOOL COMMUNITY COUNCIL PLANNING &
ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER
OF PONTYPOOL COMMUNITY COUNCIL OFFICES
WEDNESDAY 21st OCTOBER 2020**

In attendance:

Councillor: Mrs G. E. James (In the Chair)

Councillors in attendance: Miss L. Clarkson, Mrs E. Chilcott JP, J. Killick,
Mrs R. Matthews

Also in attendance: Councillors R. Overton, Mrs N. P. Parrish

Officers: Mrs R. Tucker, Ms J Wright, Mrs A. Ambrosen, Mrs R. Cronin

434.	<p><u>Apologies</u></p> <p>Apologies received from Councillors Mrs J. E. Jones, N. Simons, and Mrs J. Taylor</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>RECOMMENDED:</u> that the apologies be recorded.</p>	
435.	<p><u>Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>Councillor Mrs G. E. James declared an interest in any item on the agenda relating to Torfaen County Borough Council.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>RECOMMENDED:</u> that the declarations of interest be recorded.</p>	JW
436.	<p><u>Planning Applications</u></p> <p>Members received and considered Torfaen County Borough Council Planning Applications. It was noted that a few of the planning applications had more time to be commented on.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><u>RECOMMENDED:</u> that observations as outlined be submitted to Torfaen County Borough Council.</p>	AA

437.	<p><u>Planning Determinations</u></p> <p>Members received and noted Torfaen County Borough Council planning determinations including reasons for approvals or refusals.</p> <p><u>RECOMMENDED:</u> that the planning determinations be noted.</p>	AA
438.	<p><u>Plenary Powers</u></p> <p>Members received planning observations made in conjunction with the Clerk.</p> <p><u>RECOMMENDED:</u> that the Plenary Power observations be noted.</p>	AA
439.	<p><u>Amazing Tree</u></p> <p>The Committee received a comprehensive report from the Events Officer Mrs RC regarding the current status in regard to a specialist tree survey report on the Old Sweet Chestnut.</p> <p>At the Full Council meeting on 26th February it was resolved that Mr Luke Steer of Treescape Consultancy be commissioned to carry out the tree survey on the Old Sweet Chestnut. Due to travel restrictions because of Covid 19 Mr Steer was unable to attend on the scheduled date, however the visit was rescheduled to Saturday 5th September where he met with the Chair of Council and the Vice-Chair of Planning. Councillor Clarkson said there wasn't a huge amount to say except that when Mr Steer produces his report he would not be recommending trimming or shortening the limbs of the tree however he would be recommending to remove the sampling around the tree in order to give the tree more natural sunlight. There was no health and safety risk involved. Councillor Clarkson added that Mr Steer was very impressed with Pontypool Park as a rule and said there were a large number of unusual plant and tree specimens in the park which would be well worth cataloguing in order to attract tourists to the area.</p> <p>It was therefore agreed that as soon as the report is received that a copy is sent to Torfaen's Ecologist and Biodiversity Officer with a recommendation that they contact Torfaen Scouts and any other voluntary organisations that may be</p>	

The Chair of Events referred to minute 86 of the July Planning & Environment minutes last year which she confirmed the Clerk was present at in that requests had been received from the Task Force boys to purchase some items of task force equipment and members may wish to consider whether this is acceptable. It was agreed at that meeting that any equipment purchased before 2014 be offered to them free of charge, however any equipment purchased after 2014 be valued at present day rate, and that they be informed that before they obtain/purchase any equipment they would need to show the Council they had the appropriate insurance and risk assessments in place and would have to sign an indemnity form and a letter to this effect be sent to them. Firstly, she asked the Clerk were the Task Force boys written to in relation to their request and what was their reply. The Clerk said that she didn't think they were written to but they were verbally asked if they wished to look at the equipment and to this effect a meeting was arranged at the unit, however none of them turned up. Subsequently she took advice from One Voice Wales as she was uncertain whether the Community Council would be able to action this request, however they were contacted again but gave a lukewarm response.

The Chair of Events added she was therefore extremely surprised to see in the report presented that there is no mention of any follow up of the recommendations made at that Committee last year, as a further recommendation agreed at that meeting was that any remaining task force equipment be used for sport and community facilities within the community council wards, therefore she asked the Clerk why was the decision made for the equipment to go to auction without it ever coming back to a Council/Committee meeting for approval or that minute being rescinded. The Clerk stated that as the Task Force Unit had to be emptied of all the equipment as a matter of urgency before handing it back to Torfaen she felt that the two things went hand in hand and therefore contacted the Leader and Deputy Leader and Chair. Councillor Overton asked for clarification if the equipment had been sold at auction to which the Clerk confirmed that was the case. It was therefore unanimously agreed that the Clerk produce a more comprehensive report on all the actions that had been undertaken in relation to the Task Force Equipment and Unit to be brought back to the next meeting.

RECOMMENDED: that the Clerk produces a further report on the actions taken in relation

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	to the Task Force Equipment/unit as outlined above to be brought to the next meeting.	
442.	<p><u>Toilets</u></p> <p>The Community Council received notification via the Council's website from a member of the public stating how grateful she and others were for keeping the toilets opposite the civic centre open all through lockdown and stated other towns have kept theirs closed and this deters people from going out, causing further problems with mental health and loneliness. Councillor Clarkson stated that when she saw this item on the agenda she was extremely pleased as it showed that the different types of social media being used by Pontypool Community Council are working. It was unanimously agreed that Mrs A.A. send a letter of thanks from the Community Council to the lady who had kindly sent the comments to the Council. The Chair of Policy & Finance also added that it was good to see that the money the Community Council had allocated to keeping the toilets open in Pontypool was benefitting the community.</p> <p><u>RECOMMENDED:</u> that the Council welcome the information from the member of the public and that Mrs A.A write back to the lady thanking her for sending in her comments.</p>	AA
443.	<p><u>Doggy/Litter Bins</u></p> <p>The Committee received a report on Doggy Bins noting that there is £7000.00 in the budget. It was agreed that the doggy/litter bins at the locations specified in the report be approved which are a total of 20 bins requested at a cost of £296.00 including bin and installation (£246.00 for bin and £500.00 for installation). In relation to the 3rd doggy/litter bin request on the list it was pointed out that the exact site for the location of the bin is junction of Cross Street and Bailey Street leading to Earl Street. In relation to the bin on the Canal Towpath the Chair of Policy & Finance said that this bin is constantly overflowing with bags also left on the ground around the bin so it would be extremely beneficial to have two bins at this location as a number of residents in her ward constantly ring her regarding this issue.</p> <p>To this effect it was agreed that the Clerk sends the information to Ms S. Watkins at Torfaen in relation to the locations of where doggy/litter bins are to be sited, stating although there is already a bin sited on the Canal towpath at Crownbridge in Sebastopol a second bin is required at</p>	

	<p>the same location for the reasons outlined. It was further agreed that the Clerk asks Ms Watkins, Team Leader, Street scene at Torfaen to ask if her team would be kind enough when they empty doggy/litter bins to produce a list of the sites where they feel bins are underused and overused for future reference.</p> <p><u>RECOMMENDED:</u></p> <p>(i) that the Committee approve all the doggy/litter bins requested at a cost of £296.00 each totalling £5920.00.</p> <p>(ii) that the Clerk sends the information to Mrs. S. Watkins as outlined above.</p> <p>Chair of Planning & Environment</p>	<p>RT/CP JW</p>
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