

**MINUTES OF A MULTI-LOCATION MEETING OF PONTYPOOL COMMUNITY
COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY 27 JULY 2022 AT 6.30PM**

In attendance:

Councillor: Matt Ford* (in the Chair)

and Councillors: Lynda Clarkson*, Gaynor James#, Jon James#, Nick Jones*, John Killick#, Rose Matthews#, Richard Overton#, Nick Simons* and Nathan Warren*

Officers: Richard Gwinnell (Acting Clerk)# and Cindy Challenger (Projects and Events Manager)*

Guests: Caitlin Gingell#, Curator, Torfaen Museum

* Attending remotely via Microsoft Teams

Attending physically in the Council Chamber

The meeting was recorded for minute taking purposes as agreed by Members.

Min. no.	Subject and decision	Action
120.	<u>Questions from the public</u> No public questions were received.	
121.	<u>Apologies for absence</u> Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Nick Byrne, Anne Gunter (received after the meeting), Jon Horlor, Lizzie Hunt, Jonathon Martin and Caroline Price.	
122.	<u>Declarations of Interest</u> Councillors Lynda Clarkson, Gaynor James, Jon James, Rose Matthews and Nick Simons declared personal and non-prejudicial interests in any agenda items relating to Torfaen County Borough Council (TCBC) as they were members of TCBC, as well as being members of Pontypool Community Council. Councillor John Killick declared a personal and prejudicial interest in agenda item 6 (adopting the minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee held on 6 July 2022 including grants to other organisations) as he was Chair of Torfaen Citizen's Advice Bureau and Secretary of Torfaen Opportunities Group (TOGS).	CP/ JW CP/ JW

123.	<p><u>Engagement with Torfaen Museum Trust</u></p> <p>Councillor Richard Overton arrived at this point.</p> <p>The Council welcomed Caitlin Gingell (CG) (Museum Curator) to the meeting. Caitlin introduced herself and explained her background, before giving a presentation on the Museum; its past, its present and its potential future. CG referred to a recent community engagement study and several funding bids and emphasised the need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • connect and engage better with people from different age groups, in particular young adults, children and families • update the Museum offer and its collections, declutter and focus on local characters and their stories • better reflect the history and stories of Cwmbran and Blaenavon (as well as those Pontypool) • review “locked away” collections and open up the boxes • connect better with local schools, so the Museum can be an extension of the classroom • modernise and invest in new initiatives, events and facilities (including a proposed new glass atrium in the courtyard, a better café and better events and shop spaces) • create a real heritage and cultural hub in Pontypool; a new destination, tying into the Levelling Up Fund bid proposals • get out into the community and (for example) use “pop up” museum events to attract more people. <p>Members commented (in summary) that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CG was a breath of fresh air and was doing great work • the plans for the Museum were very good, very welcome and very exciting • members wished the Museum every success • it was hoped the plans would bring in more young people • the Chair of the Events Committee would visit CG to discuss upcoming PCC events and more collaboration • the Museum could hold events in the market too; the Leader would help connect CG and the Market Manager • the Museum had been stagnant for many years and was only focussed on Pontypool; it needed stories from Cwmbran too (e.g. of famous local sportspeople) • the Museum should create allies in other areas, such as the Play Service, which already had a very good reputation; this 	

	<p>could help attract more young people and their parents to the Museum in future</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • good reputations were very hard to win and very easy to lose • PCC was here to help in any way it could • the Leader undertook to visit the Museum again soon. <p>CG responded (during the above Q&A session) that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • she was already collaborating with other local attractions, such as Llanyravon Manor, Llantarnam Grange and the World Heritage Centre, to improve collective promotion • she was working with Head4Arts and was planning to work with Torfaen Play Service and Torfaen Sports Development on events in the park for example • she had met the Pontypool Market Manager and presented to Cwmbran Community Council and Blaenavon Town Council already and was looking for more local stories from those places; this work was ongoing • she was looking to host more community support groups in the Museum (for example a Ukraine families support group had been held); these needed to grow • the Museum was happy to partner with anyone and accept any help available. <p>CG was thanked and left the meeting at this point.</p>	
124.	<p><u>Council – 22 June 2022 – minutes</u></p> <p><u>RESOLVED:</u> that the minutes of the above meeting be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.</p>	
125.	<p><u>Policy and Finance Committee – 6 July 2022 - minutes</u></p> <p>Councillor John Killick reiterated his personal and prejudicial interest in adopting the recommendations contained in these minutes (including grants to other organisations) as he was Chair of Torfaen Citizen’s Advice Bureau and Secretary of Torfaen Opportunities Group (TOGS). He left the meeting for the decision to approve the minutes and, before he left, he drew members’ attention to the committee’s decisions on reserves. He answered queries before he left.</p> <p>Members discussed the current cost of living crisis, the importance of funding foodbanks (such as the Trussell Trust and other local foodbanks including the Garnsychan Partnership) and of finding out which foodbanks offered what services to which client groups.</p>	

	<p>Members also discussed the need to consider helping with funding for community hardship issues generally (not just foodbanks) and, on a motion from Councillor Nick Jones, Council:</p> <p>RESOLVED: (1) that the minutes of the above meeting be approved and the recommendations of the committee be adopted (except insofar as (2) below amends part of the recommendation in minute 94 (2)) and (2) that £10,000 (of the £11,117 moved from earmarked reserves into general reserves) be moved (from general reserves) into a new line in the Council’s budget entitled “community hardship fund” (which is not restricted only to foodbanks).</p> <p>Councillor John Killick returned to the meeting after the above decisions were made.</p>	<p>LM</p> <p>LM</p>
126.	<p><u>Planning and Environment Committee – 13 July 2022 – minutes</u></p> <p>RESOLVED: that the minutes of the above meeting be approved and the recommendations of the committee be adopted.</p>	
127.	<p><u>Twining: Peter and Paul Festival 1 to 3 July 2022</u></p> <p>The Leader referred to the papers attached to the agenda, the good hospitality in Bretten, the speech she made at the event and the importance of keeping PCC’s international partnerships going.</p> <p>RESOLVED: that the update be noted.</p>	
128.	<p><u>Twining: Youth Conference 2 to 4 September 2022</u></p> <p>The Chair reported that he could not attend the Youth Conference after all, due to work commitments, and sought nominations for an alternative representative. The Leader nominated and Council:</p> <p>RESOLVED: that Councillor John Killick attend on behalf of Pontypool Community Council, along with a guest.</p> <p>Councillor Killick informed members that he and his guest would be in the Bretten area at the time of the conference, so he would not need a flight or transfer.</p> <p>Councillor Killick requested that the other twinning partners be asked to present details of what they had done since the last conference (to fulfil the pledges they made last time). The Acting Clerk undertook to communicate this to the organisers.</p>	<p>RG</p> <p>RG</p>

129.	<p><u>Twining: Youth Festival 29 August to 4 September</u></p> <p>The Acting Clerk updated members in relation to the plans being put in place for the Youth Festival and Conference. He displayed an action plan and progress, with further progress to follow soon and team meetings taking place twice weekly at present.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED:</u> that the update be noted.</p>	
130.	<p><u>Knowledge Partnership</u></p> <p>Councillor Gaynor James volunteered and Council:</p> <p><u>RESOLVED:</u> that Councillor Gaynor James be nominated to serve on the Knowledge Partnership on behalf of PCC.</p>	RG
131.	<p><u>Planning Applications</u></p> <p>Members received and considered details of planning applications submitted to TCBC, on which the Community Council was being consulted. No observations were raised on any of the applications.</p> <p><u>RESOLVED:</u> that the observations (or absence of observations, as the case may be) outlined in the appendix attached to these minutes be submitted to Torfaen County Borough Council.</p>	CP
132.	<p><u>Financial Management and Governance</u></p> <p>The Chair commented that PCC had been insular for many years and needed to go out into communities, and engage with people and groups, to find out what people want from PCC. This was important and exciting work and needed everyone's involvement.</p> <p>Councillor LC referred to the new national Financial Management and Governance Toolkit, which would be very helpful in informing PCC of the priorities it should focus on in the period ahead. Staff could help with the health-check (of what was in place now) but it was down to all members to decide, organise, engage and deliver. Two key areas were (a) PCC's mandate; engaging with people and communities to find out what they want and (b) member training. A questionnaire could be designed, for members to go out into their communities, sports clubs, local shops, schools etc and the Chair had offered to support and train members on community engagement. It was crucial that all members read the documents circulated by the Acting Clerk and got themselves involved in this</p>	

	<p>key activity, which would bring PCC into the 21st century and move the Council forward significantly, with a genuine mandate.</p> <p>The Chair informed members that a meeting of the Governance Working Group (GWG) would be held on 24 August at 6.30pm, which all members were encouraged to attend.</p> <p>Comments were made generally by members in summary:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some members already interacted with people in their communities every day • other members were not so involved • every ward was different in terms of its shape, population, needs and wants • One Voice Wales might be able to help with a template questionnaire • the questionnaire needed to be Pontypool-specific • a small group of members (e.g. the current GWG) was not sufficient; this needed to be the role of all members • community consultation should be issue-specific as well as location-specific • all committees should be considering, at every meeting, what money they were spending and whether they were spending money on the right things • members could discuss this further on 24 August and come up with ideas. <p>RESOLVED: that this work be progressed further, starting with the GWG on 24 August.</p>	<p>All members + RG</p>
<p>133.</p>	<p><u>Pontypool Party in the Park – letter</u></p> <p>The Council received a letter from Rt Hon Nick Thomas-Symonds MP, thanking everyone involved for making Pontypool Party in the Park on 9 July 2022 such a success and thanking the whole team for all their hard work on behalf of local communities. Members commented that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the letter was welcome • Pontypool Party in the Park (PIIP) was a fantastic event and reflected the excellent work of the staff involved • the 2022 PIIP was the best ever; better than other similar events in the area and no easy task to organise and deliver • All staff involved were thanked. 	

	<p>RESOLVED: that the letter be noted and the Council's thanks be conveyed to all staff.</p>	RG
134.	<p><u>Torfaen Male Voice Choir – funding request</u></p> <p>The Council received a funding request from the above. Members debated and commented on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the amount to be granted • the need to consider this application now, as the Policy and Finance Committee (which normally considered such applications) would not meet until September • the need to be consistent with grants given to other groups • the need to review the amounts given to groups, as the standard amounts had not changed for many years • the need for the Policy and Finance Committee to review grants policies generally and not set a “standard” amount, as every application should be judged on its merits • the need to spend PCC funds on more deserving causes. <p>RESOLVED: that £250.00 be granted to the Torfaen Male Voice Choir.</p>	LM
135.	<p><u>EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC</u></p> <p>NB prior to excluding the press and public, members discussed arrangements for the 28 September meeting, including the start time and who to invite to the meeting.</p> <p>RESOLVED: By virtue of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public were excluded from discussions on the following items on the basis that disclosure thereof would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.</p> <p>The Acting Clerk left the meeting at this point, as he potentially had personal interests in the following three agenda items.</p> <p>The recording of the meeting was stopped.</p>	
136.	<p><u>Establishment Committee – 13 July 2022 – confidential minutes</u></p> <p>RESOLVED: that the confidential minutes of the above meeting be approved and the recommendations of the committee be adopted.</p>	

137.	<p><u>Clerk – job description and recruitment process</u></p> <p>Members thanked Councillor JK for his help in producing the job description and person specification. Following discussion and comments from various members, Council:</p> <p><u>RESOLVED:</u> (1) that the job description and person specification attached to the agenda be adopted (subject to being checked first with One Voice Wales for adequacy) (2) that the job be advertised as soon as possible, for 3 weeks (3) that the Chair, Vice Chair and Leader be on the interview panel.</p>	<p>CC</p> <p>CC</p> <p>CC</p>
138.	<p><u>Acting Clerk – contract extension</u></p> <p><u>RESOLVED:</u> that the Acting Clerk’s contract be extended to 30 September 2022.</p>	<p>CC</p>

Chair

Appendix to the minutes of Full Council – 27th July 2022

Planning applications commented on

1	<i>Plan Number</i> 22/P/0417	<i>District reference</i> Aberyschan and Cwmavon	<i>Site reference</i> 65 Wellington Road, Pontypool	<i>Other reference</i>
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PROPOSAL: Single storey front side extension

OBSERVATIONS FROM PONTYPOOL COMMUNITY COUNCIL: None

2	<i>Plan Number</i> 22/P/0450	<i>District reference</i> Pontypool	<i>Site reference</i> Pontypool Park Estate, Maesderwen Road, Pontymoile	<i>Other reference</i>
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PROPOSAL: Fell 4x corsian pine, 5x sycamore, 4x beech, 1x elm, 1x ash

OBSERVATIONS FROM PONTYPOOL COMMUNITY COUNCIL: None

3	<i>Plan Number</i> 22/P/0460	<i>District reference</i> New Inn Lower	<i>Site reference</i> 22 The Walk, New Inn, Pontypool	<i>Other reference</i>
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PROPOSAL: Demolition of existing side extension and front porch. New single storey rear extension and replacement front porch. New drive way to front of property

OBSERVATIONS FROM PONTYPOOL COMMUNITY COUNCIL: None

4	<i>Plan Number</i> 22/P/0467	<i>District reference</i> Sebastopol East	<i>Site reference</i> 47 Open Hearth Close, Griffithstown, Pontypool	<i>Other reference</i>
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PROPOSAL: Two storey side and single storey rear extension

OBSERVATIONS FROM PONTYPOOL COMMUNITY COUNCIL: None

5	<i>Plan Number</i> 22/P/0476	<i>District reference</i> Griffithstown West	<i>Site reference</i> 3 St. Mary Street, Pontypool	<i>Other reference</i>
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PROPOSAL: Demolition of a rear extension and construction of a new rear extension

OBSERVATIONS FROM PONTYPOOL COMMUNITY COUNCIL: None

6	<i>Plan Number</i> 22/P/0480	<i>District reference</i> Pontypool	<i>Site reference</i> Cartref, Malthouse Lane, Pontypool	<i>Other reference</i>
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Proposed two storey rear house extension

OBSERVATIONS FROM PONTYPOOL COMMUNITY COUNCIL: None