

MINUTES OF A MULTI-LOCATION MEETING OF THE PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE OF PONTYPOOL COMMUNITY COUNCIL HELD ON WEDNESDAY 8th FEBRUARY 2023

In attendance:

Councillor: Nick Byrne# (In the Chair)

and Councillors: Anne Gunter#, Gaynor James#, Jon James#, Richard Overton#, Caroline Price*, Nick Simons* and Nathan Warren#

Officers: Lisa McMail (Clerk)#, Jane Wright (Assistant Clerk)#

* *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
385.	<u>Apologies for absence</u> Apologies from Lynda Clarkson and Matt Ford	
386.	<u>Declarations of Interest</u> Councillors Gaynor James, Jon James, Caroline Price 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 members of Pontypool Community Council.	JW
387.	<u>Biodiversity Action Plan/Working party</u> Cllr NW informed the meeting that they had a quick catch up at the biodiversity meeting before the Planning meeting. He stated that the group are going to put forward Shane, the Pontypool Market Manager for the bee keeping course which is part of the biodiversity plan, not only is he very keen to undertake the course but he wants to get a hive going at the top of the market, so some pollinating planting may need to be undertaken at the same time. He stated that he and Mrs AA had met with Rachel Carter who is the Local Places for Nature Officer at One Voice Wales who had looked at the Council's Biodiversity plan in relation to its statutory obligations. Ms Carter had stated	

	<p>it is over and above what the Council need to achieve in relation to legislation and she gave extremely positive feedback in relation to the plan. He also referred to Nature Wise Training which Cllr AG had attended and said if anyone else wanted to attend this training which was over two mornings to let Mrs AA know as there were spaces available.</p> <p>RECOMMENDED: that the information outlined by Councillor NW in relation to the points raised be noted and acted upon where necessary.</p>	AA
388.	<p><u>Planning Applications</u></p> <p>Members received and considered the list of planning applications on which it was being consulted by Torfaen County Borough Council (TCBC).</p> <p>RECOMMENDED: that the observations (or absence of observations as the case may be) as outlined in the appendix to these minutes be submitted to Torfaen County Borough Council.</p>	CP
389.	<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>RESOLVED: that the planning determinations as outlined be noted.</p>	CP
390.	<p><u>Pontypool Park Play Area</u></p> <p>The Committee received an e-mail from Ms. H. Lucas, Senior Landscape Officer at Torfaen County Borough Council giving an update regarding works to Pontypool Park Play area, and asking if the Council would be able to fund musical stepping stones in the new play area that the Chair of Policy and Finance had referred at Full Council. The Committee unanimously agreed to fund the musical stepping stones at Pontypool Park for £5,395.20 including VAT.</p> <p>RECOMMENDED*: that the Council pay for the Musical stepping stones at Pontypool Park at a cost of £4496 + VAT.</p>	LM/CC

391.

School Environmental (Grant(s))

The committee received and considered awarding a school environmental grant to the following schools who have submitted applications including the amounts applied for:

School	Amount
Ysgol Bryn Onnen	£994.35
Padre Pio	£2,300 (approximately)
George Street Primary	£1,000 (approximately)
Penygarn Community	£1,000
St. Alban's RC	£1,500
West Monmouth	Awaiting application form

The Clerk stated that West Monmouth School had indicated to Mrs AA, Events Officer they would also be submitting an Environmental Grant application.

Cllr NW stated that some schools had asked for more than others and would it be better to proportionate the amount considering there was only £4,000 in the Environmental Grants Budget. The Clerk referred to the Committee Budget Report stating that there was a reserve of unspent money of £3,000 in environmental awards/projects for 2022 so she would recommend that this be added to the £4,000 to give a total amount of £7,000 to be allocated between the six schools.

It was agreed that subject to West Monmouth's application being submitted to Council that the £7,000 be awarded equally between the six schools.

RECOMMENDED*: that £7,000 be split equally between the six schools subject to West Monmouth's Environmental Grant application being submitted to Full Council.

392.

Litter Hub/Keep Wales Tidy

The Committee received a report on the opening of a litter hub in Pontypool. Pre-covid the Council agreed to Pontypool community Council becoming a litter picking

	<p>hub, where equipment is available, unfortunately this did not happen due to Covid. Councillor NW informed the meeting that he and Mrs AA, Events Officer met with Mr Thomas Board from Keep Wales tidy this week as he was unable to attend the January meeting due to injury. Councillor NW stated that Mr Board had provided enough equipment for 10 people to litter pick; stating that the Events Officer would be training the staff on the administrative side in relation to the booking system in order for it to go “live”. Cllr AG informed the meeting that a gentleman had been kind enough to donate snow shovels to her which would be ideal for litter picking as they were lightweight so these could be added to the equipment.</p> <p>Cllr NW added that Mr Board had mentioned a Spring Clean that would shortly be coming up and an activity day in Pontypool Park with the aim of getting people to come along making them aware that the Community Council is now a litter hub so they may be interested in becoming more involved. Cllr NS also indicated that schools in the Pontypool area may be interested in knowing that the Community Council was now a litter hub.</p> <p><u>RECOMMENDED:</u></p> <p>(i) that the litter hub goes “live” this month. (ii) All staff to be trained on the booking process by Mrs AA. (iii) Mrs AA to inform schools that PCC was now a litter hub.</p>	AA
393.	<p><u>Committee Budget</u></p> <p>The Committee received the budget (and reserves) within its remit and the spend to date. The Clerk informed the Committee of where they were in relation to budget line.</p> <p><i>Environmental Awards</i> As discussed in previous item on Environmental Grants.</p> <p><i>Litter/Doggy bins</i> This was an ongoing project with the Council looking to install a few new litter bins and check on the conditions of the current bins to plan a replacement programme.</p> <p><i>Community Notice Boards</i> 4 notice boards had been delivered to the office recently. The Clerk stated that she would speak to Mrs RC, Projects & Events Manager in relation to a query by Councillor AG in relation to a resiting of one of the notice board(s) in the Griffithstown/Sebastopol ward.</p>	

	<p>Spring Flowers Budget unused.</p> <p>Forest Schools This is an ongoing project with the schools.</p> <p>Environmental Quiz This happens once a year and that budget is underspent.</p> <p>Woodland Rent There was nominal amount left over in relation to this budget line.</p> <p>Playground Equipment The Clerk stated that as there was £16,000 in the budget the cost for the musical stepping stones would be able to come out of this budget line rather than reserves; she had spoken with Torfaen to confirm that the Council would not incur any maintenance costs for the stepping stones going forward and Torfaen had clarified they would be responsible for the ongoing maintenance cost for this equipment. Torfaen had also indicated to the Clerk that the Community Council would receive publicity for the funding of this project.</p> <p>Pontypool Regeneration Ongoing Reserve.</p> <p>Public Toilets The Clerk stated that the invoice for this had now been received so the £20,000 would now be paid out from this budget line.</p> <p><u>RECOMMENDED*:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) that the information relayed by the Clerk in relation to the budget lines for Planning & Environment Committee be noted. (ii) that the Musical Stepping Stones be funded out of the play equipment budget instead of reserves. 	LM
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* This is a recommendation to the Council. The Council will make the final decision at a future meeting.

Signed by Chair