

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**Minutes of the meeting of Central Mon Area Committee held
at Conference Room - Usk, NP15 1GA on Wednesday, 30th January, 2019 at 10.00 am**

PRESENT: County Councillor M.Feakins (Chairman)

County Councillors: R.John, P. Jones, R.Roden, V. Smith, B. Strong
and J.Treharne

Also in attendance County Councillor(s): P. Murphy and S.B. Jones

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Nicola Perry	Senior Democracy Officer
Mark Hand	Head of Planning, Housing and Place-Shaping
Paul Keeble	Group Engineer (Highways and Flood Management)
Rachel Lewis	Planning Policy Manager
Graham Kinsella	Traffic And Road Safety Manager

APOLOGIES:

Councillors D. Blakebrough, P. Clarke, R. Edwards and L.Jones

2. Declarations of interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3. Public open forum

We welcomed Mr. H. Cullen-Jones of Transition Monmouth, and Mr. D Farnsworth.

4. Budget Consultation Engagement

The Cabinet Member for Resources provided a presentation on the 2019/20 budget proposals.

Presentation: [Budget Consultation](#).

Comments made following the presentation:

Income from parking fines when MCC take over responsibility from the police will be put back in to frontline services. The same will occur for litter fines. The service will be self-financing.

In terms of recouping unpaid car parking fines, this goes through our normal recovery process. The outstanding amount was requested, which officers agreed to feedback on.

With regards to Town and Community Council provision in the County, they are being increasingly asked to take on services. In terms of bringing in contractors for services, this would be acceptable as long as they meet requirements, but MCC would rather enter into discussions first.

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A Member stated disappointment to see the Abergavenny Tourist Centre still empty, adding there is great scope for a joint enterprise there. She also suggested looking to the old Rechem site in Pontypool where a new enterprise is expected to open.

Members agreed that these were stark figures, and the unfairness of funding was apparent. It is time Welsh Government revised their funding formula. It was noted that the Barnett Formula had been set in 1978, and not changed since.

Mr. Cullen-Jones referred to accessibility and engagement, stating that the organisation structure chart is not representative, and should include email addresses and contact numbers. This would be passed to the Communications Team.

Mr. Farnsworth wished to highlight the following comments regarding engagement. He considered it excellent that MCC are trying to engage the public but it is not effective due to:

- The complexity of the business.
- The vast amount of paperwork attached to the budget proposals.
- The language used in reports.
- If trying to engage with members of public MCC need to produce choices.

Mr. Farnsworth asked if the increase in income of £90,000 from car park charges would be counter-productive when implemented, particularly when high streets are already in crisis. The Cabinet Member explained that an exercise is underway to test the viability of the market.

Members referred to the desperate need for a solution to parking problems in Usk and Monmouth.

Mr. Farnsworth questioned if the suggested day closures of recycling centres would be a good idea in relation to fly-tipping.

The £16m capital spending on property acquisition was questioned, and we heard this would provide an ongoing return on £400k per year.

The Chair highlighted that the budget proposals would be presented to a Joint Select Committee on 18th February, Cabinet 20th February and Council on 7th March.

5. Monmouthshire Replacement Local Development Plan Draft Issues, Vision and Objectives

The Head of Planning, Place Shaping and Housing presented the next stage of the LDP process, in order to seek the views of Severnside Area Committee on the Draft Issues, Vision and Objectives Paper in relation to the Monmouthshire Replacement Local Development Plan.

Members referred to bus services, and Officers explained that they need to look at how future growth feeds into services.

It was recognised that the lack of objective referring to population and growth was an oversight, but it is important not to pre-empt the next stage of the process. It is likely that these objectives will be revised for the next stages.

Mr. Farnsworth stated there should be a more explicit objective to reduce levels of commuting by car and make housing more sustainable in terms of transport.

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He also stated the objectives should make reference to high streets and retailing.

Mr. Cullen-Jones remarked on the omission of a carbon reduction policy.

Members discussed incorporating town plans into the policy, but were referred to the statutory timeline in place.

The Chair added that it is important to consider the effect the increase in housing will have on the footfall in towns.

Councillor Roden highlighted the importance of driving the County forward with additional higher level education.

Councillor Smith asked that all areas of Central Monmouthshire are taken into consideration, not just the denser areas of Monmouth.

The Committee resolved to accept the recommendation:

To note the contents of the Draft Paper. This is not a formal consultation stage, however, views are sought on the draft issues, vision and objectives. Comments received will help inform the final issues, vision and objectives which will be set out in the Replacement LDP Preferred Strategy.

6. Speed Management Strategy

The Committee were presented with a report to consider the Monmouthshire Speed Management Strategy. The policy will set out the Councils approach to speed management within the County and will form part of the overall Monmouthshire Road Safety Strategy.

It was clarified that flashing signs are being replaced by signs that show speeds, and this is being rolled out across the County.

Councillor Strong referred to an ongoing issue in Maryport Street, Usk, which will be followed up by officers.

Mr Cullen-Jones was disappointed at the lack of appeals procedure, and questioned if this would present legal issues.

The Committee resolved to agree the recommendation:

That the Area Committee(s) endorse and approve the Monmouthshire Speed Management Policy.

7. Presentation from the Community and Partnership Development Team - Delivering the Social Justice Plan

Item deferred – to be communicated via email.

8. Ward Matters

It was agreed ward matters would be discussed at the next meeting.

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Councillor Richard John welcomed Members', and their constituents' views on the catchment review.

9. To confirm the minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 21st November 2019 were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

10. To note the date of next meeting at Wednesday 1st May 2019

Noted.

The meeting ended at 1.00 pm