

## MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**Minutes of the meeting of Bryn y Cwm Area Committee held  
at The Council Chamber, Town Hall, Cross Street, Abergavenny, NP7 5HD on  
Wednesday, 26th September, 2018 at 2.00 pm**

**PRESENT:** County Councillor: M. Powell (Chair)

County Councillors: G. Howard, P. Jordan, M. Lane, J. Pratt, T. Thomas, K. Williams and S. Woodhouse

Llanover Community Council: Councillor G. Thomas

### **OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Roger Hoggins	Head of Operations
Paul Keeble	Group Engineer (Highways and Flood Management)
Rob Davies	Assistant Engineer
Owen Wilce	Community and Partnership Development Lead
Carl Touhig	Head of Waste and Street Scene
Mark Cleaver	Environmental Officer
Richard Williams	Democratic Services Officer

### **ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:**

A. Harwood	-	Abergavenny Lido Group
T. Davies	-	Abergavenny Lido Group
R. Tyler	-	Abergavenny Lido Group
E.A. Hunt	-	Abergavenny Lido Group
D. Haswell	-	Team Abergavenny
A. Michie	-	Team Abergavenny
H. Candler	-	Team Abergavenny
N. Tatam	-	Abergavenny Town Council
J. Lee	-	Clerk, Abergavenny Town Council
M. Prys-Williams	-	Royal British Legion
Mr. J. Prosser		

### **APOLOGIES:**

County Councillors: M. Groucutt, R. Harris, D. Jones, S.B. Jones and S. Jones  
Councillor P. Simcock

#### **1. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

#### **2. Public Open Forum**

There were no issues raised by members of the public present at the meeting.

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### **3. Engagement with Voluntary Sector Organisations - Abergavenny Lido Group**

We received a report by Abergavenny Lido Group in which it outlined its aim to bring back an outdoor swimming facility to Bailey Park, Abergavenny that is fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and can be differentiated from other facilities locally, across Wales and neighbouring English counties.

At this early stage the Abergavenny Lido Group wants to apply for funding, but it requires permission from the landowner, Monmouthshire County Council. The Abergavenny Lido Group is therefore approaching Monmouthshire County Council to obtain this permission which, if granted, will allow the Group to apply for funding. The Group indicated that it was not looking for funding from the local Authority, only that it required the Authority's permission, as landowner, to allow the Group to seek funding elsewhere.

It was suggested that the Abergavenny Lido Group liaises with the Friends of Bailey Park group, as this group was already looking to obtain funding for projects within the park.

**We resolved to support Abergavenny Lido Group in seeking written permission from the County Council to allow the Group to continue to raise funds for its campaign to provide an outdoor swimming pool facility in Bailey Park.**

### **4. Abergavenny Public Realm Improvements Phase 3**

We received a report by the Group Engineer – Highways and Flood Management, regarding Phase 3 of the Abergavenny Public Realm improvements. In doing so, the following information was noted:

- The section between Whitehorse Lane and the Baker Street junction is now traffic free and provides a substantial open space which is being developed in a similar style to St. John's Square. This will provide opportunities for businesses such as cafes restaurants and public houses to develop outdoor activities. It will also provide a significantly improved open space for the cultural and sporting events held in the town.
- The Baker Street / Frogmore Street junction will be a transitional area between the pedestrianised public open space and a conventional footway / carriageway split in Upper Frogmore Street. The detail design of this area is still being developed.
- Upper Frogmore Street will be reconstructed with a traditional footway / carriageway arrangement with kerbed edges.
- The width of the carriageway will be reduced to the minimum possible allowing the footways to be extended. The material pallet for this section is proposed as traditional tarmac for the carriageway with the footways being styled in the

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fashion of St John's Square with a mixture of penant slabs and `suresett` bound gravel.

- It is proposed to make a `no left turn` for motor vehicles into Baker Street from Frogmore Street, allowing cyclists to continue to use this route. This will allow the provision of some disabled parking spaces to be located at the end of Baker Street to compensate for lost spaces elsewhere.
- It is proposed to introduce a contraflow cycle lane along Lion Street from the shared space at the junction of Market Street to allow a safe cycle access from the A40. This will be subject to detail survey and design.
- The whole project has been developed in consultation with the Abergavenny Town Team.
- Works to Phase 3 are scheduled to commence in early January 2019 and be completed in June / July 2019.
- Phases 2 and 3 of the project have been funded by a combination of Section 106 funding and Welsh Government Local Transport Fund (LTF). The LTF funding has been split over three years. The current year grant is £320,000 which is fully committed. It is assumed that the final phase of the bid (£330,000) will be approved for expenditure in 2019/20.
- There has been an over spend on Phase 2 of approximately £280,000 which has been reported to Welsh Government in the hope that additional funding will be made available. This is still being considered by Welsh Government. The additional costs have arisen predominantly from alterations to the Project to accommodate changes to the bus routes and bus stops and strengthening the foundation of the road in Frogmore Street. Since Phases 2 and 3 overlap, there is scope to allocate some of the Phase 3 funding to reduce the over spend. This will result in less funding available for Phase 3.
- Alun Griffiths will be appointed to complete the works in accordance with the existing Contract for which an extension has been approved.
- Members of the Abergavenny Town Team have expressed a desire to relocate the Cenotaph either to a new site adjacent to Tesco or to the public open space in Baker Street.

This idea has been considered within the scope of Phase 3 of the Abergavenny Public Realm Improvements.

The location of War Memorials has historically been in a high profile position with the intention of it becoming a focal point for Remembrance Services. The requirement for road closures reinforces the impact of the Services and allows the area in the vicinity of the Memorial to become tranquil for the period of the Service.

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The funding for Phase 3 is entirely Welsh Government Local Transport Fund which is specifically allocated to improve transport, travel, air quality and road safety issues. In terms of these issues, the current position of the Memorial provides the splitter island to safely disperse traffic from Frogmore Street onto the A40 with minimum queueing times. There is no justification for moving the Memorial in achieving the objectives of the LTF grant funding.

The physical movement of the Memorial is high risk, as it may be quite fragile. There are no available records of its foundations and plinth and how these are connected. It is difficult to quantify this risk and the associated remedies and costs to repair any damage that occurs.

Taking all these factors into account Phase 3 of the project will be designed on the basis that the Cenotaph will remain in its current location.

Having considered the report, the following points were noted:

- Team Abergavenny is holding a meeting with Monmouthshire County Council Highways officers on 16<sup>th</sup> October 2018 at 10.00am regarding Abergavenny Public Realm Improvements Phase 3. Area Committee Members are invited to attend.
- In response to a question raised regarding some confusion by members of the public regarding the locations of temporary bus stops due to the highways works being undertaken, the Group Engineer stated that he would liaise with the Welsh Government and the Passenger Transport unit informing them of these issues.
- Some disabled parking spaces will be lost. However, the re-alignment of Baker Street will allow for the creation of four disabled parking bays in Baker Street.
- Mr Michael Prys-Williams, representing the British Legion, stated that the British Legion wanted the Cenotaph to remain in its current position.
- The costs to potentially move the Cenotaph are currently unknown. If the Cenotaph was moved, this would have an impact on the completion time of Phase 3 with additional funding and permissions being required.
- Consultation with taxi firms is being undertaken. It was considered that the taxi spaces could be moved to accommodate disabled parking.
- It was considered that a more flexible approach could be considered with regard to parking provision. Loading bays could be used for parking outside of loading hours.

We resolved to receive the report and noted its content.

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### **5. Progress report by Team Abergavenny**

We received a presentation by Team Abergavenny regarding Abergavenny Public Realm Improvements - Phase 3. In doing so, the following points were noted:

- There is an opportunity to improve the setting of the Cenotaph for the next 100 years.
- Seeking to improve the final part of Frogmore Street Public Realm.
- The contractor is on site for the Public Realm and therefore has the capacity and appropriate machinery to re-position the Cenotaph.
- A dignified setting for the Cenotaph has been lost.
- The war memorials located within the town hall are a part of the town's history. With the refurbishment of the town hall, one of the war memorials will require relocation. The two war memorials could therefore be relocated to a new site with the Cenotaph.
- A larger civic space could be created by relocating the Cenotaph.
- Four options for the relocation of the Cenotaph were outlined by Team Abergavenny:
  1. Leave the Cenotaph in its current position.
  2. Improve the setting by relocating the Cenotaph in Frogmore Street.
  3. Create a new Drill Hall Square location for the Cenotaph on Baker Street.
  4. Locate the Cenotaph at the southern end of the existing refurbished St. John's Square.
- Monmouthshire County Council is the landholder for all four sites. However, there was some doubt as to whether it was the asset holder for the sites. This matter would need to be investigated.

Having received the presentation, the following points were noted:

- Parking controls such as bollards might be required on Frogmore Street.
- Civil parking matters will be the responsibility of the Highways Department from April 2019.
- An independent company has assessed the Cenotaph and confirmed that it is safe in its current position and had advised that it not be moved.

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- If the war memorials were to be moved to an outdoor location, they would need to be assessed to ascertain whether they would be weather proof or whether they would require weather proofing.

The four options were considered and the Committee voted as follows:

In favour of option 1	-	5 votes
In favour of option 2	-	3 votes
In favour of option 3	-	0 votes
In favour of option 4	-	1 vote

**We resolved to support option 1 - Leave the Cenotaph in its current position.**

In addition to the presentation by Team Abergavenny, the following items were also raised:

- Publication by Monmouthshire County Council Highways in the Abergavenny Chronicle and other public information outlets as soon as possible of all proposals for new bus routes, positions of new bus stops, new timetables and when these will come into operation.

It was noted that the Authority was working to address the public transport issues.

- Consultation with traders on particular proposals for zones for trader street furniture in Frogmore Street from Whitehorse Lane to the A40 needs to happen as soon as possible.

It was noted that the Strong Communities Select Committee had met with traders regarding street furniture location. Street Trader representatives were invited to attend the Select Committee meeting. The Authority has a countywide policy regarding this matter with flexibility built in.

- Confirmation is needed that signage for joint usage of delivery bays (after 4.00pm before 10.00am the next morning) by disabled blue badge holders (10.00am - 4.00pm) can occur in Frogmore Street western end by 16<sup>th</sup> October 2018.
- The considerable increase in proposed planters in the Phase 3 scheme demands extensive consultation with the Town Council and those managing Abergavenny in Bloom with the full implications for future funding and method of implementation of maintenance explored and resolved by 16<sup>th</sup> October 2018 ideally and at the latest by January 2019.

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### **6. Litter on trunk roads**

We received an update regarding existing provision for cleansing the trunk road network in light of a forthcoming litter strategy. The Authority is developing a litter strategy which will be scrutinised by the appropriate Select Committee, in due course.

The Committee was informed that over the last five years there has been an increase in complaints regarding litter along the main arterial routes through Monmouthshire in line with the rise in popularity and distribution in number of “on the go” food and drinks outlets.

Under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 the responsibility for keeping the highways clear of litter is Monmouthshire County Council. Trunk roads have remained an area that is not as clear as it could be and most local authority cleansing departments rely on SWTRA maintenance schedules to provide the cleansing service. SWTRA is the responsible body for the maintenance of the majority of arterial routes running through Monmouthshire.

The A465, A40, A48 and A4042 have historically been maintained by SWTRA including litter picking prior to grass cuts and safety cuts. The trunk road verges were mown several times per year for maintenance and SWTRA was committed to cleansing prior to mowing. In recent years the reduction in budgets in Welsh Government to SWTRA and the drive to increase biodiversity along the trunk road network, the mowing regime has been reduced to one full cut and one safety cut per year.

A reduction in mowing schedules to increase verge-side biodiversity and reduce maintenance budgets means litter build-up is greater between cuts and winter die-back exacerbates the issues further. The trunk road network does not have the monopoly on this issue and there has been a substantial increase in roadside litter along the B4246 and B4269. The cleansing of the verges between cuts has fallen to local authorities.

SWTRA is supporting the Council in keeping the trunk road network clean but budget pressure means that it is looking at ways of reducing costs. The removal of litter bins and the re-designation of lay-bys is causing concerns for local authorities. That said, the deployment of litter bins in lay-bys can cause as many issues as they solve and in many cases create more litter than they collect. The disposal of domestic waste and fly-tipping have been seen in laybys where bins are present and not in adjacent lay-bys.

The Authority will continue to keep the network clean but budget pressures and agreements for road closures are a constant challenge.

The Authority is working with litter groups to tackle litter through community clean-ups and more recently, a proactive approach and promotions campaign is being discussed. A recent survey indicated that proactive campaigns with increased enforcement is widely supported by residents.

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Having received the report, the following points were noted:

- SWTRA contracts the County Council to undertake maintenance work and maintain the road network.
- The Welsh Government litter policy has not been updated in five years. It was noted that Welsh Government was waiting until after Brexit before reviewing this policy.
- Litter champions are keen to provide their support.

We resolved to receive the report and noted its content.

#### **7. Verbal update regarding the Wellbeing Plan specific to the Bryn y Cwm area**

We received a verbal update in respect of the Wellbeing Plan. In doing so, the following points were noted:

- Each 'step' or action being taken forward is being led by a member of the Public Service Board (PSB).
- They will be bringing together groups of individuals to develop solutions that will aid in delivering the well-being objectives.
- The Head of Policy and Governance arranges for a list of those projects to be circulated when it is updated ahead of the PSB Select Committee which is being held on 10th October 2018. There may be a number of topics that would benefit from involvement by town and community council's or where it may be pertinent for the Area Committee to receive an update or host a discussion.

Topics likely to have an area dimension are:

- Readdressing the supply and mix of housing stock to ensure suitable and affordable housing is available to all demographic groups. (Lead – Monmouthshire County Council).
- Promoting active citizenship through volunteering, time-banking, person to person skill swap and corporate social responsibility. (Lead - GAVO).
- Developing networks for all ages that support people's well-being in their local communities, including social prescribing. (Lead – Monmouthshire County Council).
- Improving the resilience of ecosystems by working at a larger scale (landscape) to manage biodiversity and maximise benefits such as natural flood risk management. (Lead – Natural Resources Wales (NRW)).



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- Enabling active travel and sustainable transport to improve air quality and give other health benefits. (Lead – Monmouthshire County Council).
- Working with children and young people to improve their awareness, understanding and action for sustainable development and make them responsible global citizens of the future. (Lead – South Wales Fire and Rescue).
- Exploring the potential for specialist centres of excellence in Monmouthshire, for example, food / hospitality, agriculture, tourism and technology. (Lead – Monmouthshire County Council).

A meeting will be held on 3<sup>rd</sup> October 2018 at 9.30am at County Hall Usk, regarding ways of joining up volunteering services in Monmouthshire. A workshop will be delivered by a representative of GAVO. Members were invited to attend the session by informing Owen Wilce, Community and Partnership Development Lead, of their availability.

We resolved to receive the update report and noted its content.

#### **8. Verbal update by County Councillor S. Woodhouse regarding progress in respect of the Strategic Transport Group**

We received a verbal update by County Councillor S. Woodhouse. In doing so, the following points were noted:

- Rosemary Corcoran had joined the Strategic Transport Group as a representative of Friends of the number 65 bus. This service links up six villages.
- Pedestrian and traffic issues on the A40 were discussed. The Strategic Transport Group had resolved to write again to the Minister asking that if the current route is not being de trunked then could additional signage be introduced on the trunk road network to direct large vehicles away from the current route.
- Hugh Evans (Wales Border Franchise) is visiting Abergavenny Town Council this evening (26<sup>th</sup> September 2019).
- Further funding for the pedestrian bridge at Llanfoist was being made available via Welsh Government's active travel grant.

Having received the update the following points were noted:

- It was noted that the number 53 bus which travels through Llanover is regularly 20 minutes late. The Head of Operations would investigate this matter.

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- In response to a question raised regarding where the funds come from that rescued the number 65 bus, it was noted that this matter would be investigated by the Head of Operations.

#### **9. Confirmation of Minutes**

The minutes of the Bryn y Cwm Area Committee dated 25<sup>th</sup> July 2018 were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

#### **10. Forward Planner for Cabinet and Council Business**

We received and noted the forward planner for Cabinet and Council Business.

#### **11. Bryn y Cwm Area Committee Future Work Programme**

We received the Bryn y Cwm Area Committee future work programme.

**We resolved that the following item be added to the work programme:**

**An invitation be extended to Inspector Damian Sowrey to attend the next Area Committee meeting to provide an update on the closure of Abergavenny Police Station and subsequent arrangements to maintain an effective policing service within the town and surrounding areas.**

#### **12. Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Abergavenny, subject to availability, on Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> November 2018 at 2.00pm.

**The meeting ended at 4.05 pm.**