

## MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Extract of draft 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 18<sup>th</sup> February, Cabinet 20<sup>th</sup> February and Council on 7<sup>th</sup> March.