

REPORT FROM THE NORTH MONMOUTHSHIRE LIAISON COMMITTEE

MARCH 2019

Background

The North Monmouthshire Liaison Committee (NMLC) is a meeting of Community & Town Councils. Each Community & Town Council can send a councillor and the clerk. To date meetings have taken place quarterly with changes a foot to meet prior to the North Monmouthshire Area Committee.

The purpose of the NMLC is to:

- Provide the opportunity for local councils to share good practice
- Discuss issues that affect all or some local councils including the impact of decisions made by the principal council Monmouthshire County Council and if appropriate agree a course of action
- Provide mutual support
- To consider and act upon opportunities for joint working including joint commissioning of services
- To strengthen the voice of the sector in North Monmouthshire
- To provide feedback from relevant meetings such as One Voice Wales Area Committee

The Chairmanship and Secretariat are undertaken on a rota basis.

Current Action

Training on Local Plan Preparation - The NMLC has recently been successful in receiving a £5000 from WG aimed at increasing collaboration between community & town councils. The NMLC specifically applied for the funding for training of Community & Town Councils and community organisations on Local Development Plan Preparation. The training was delivered by Planning Aid Wales at four venues in North Monmouthshire - Gilwern, Pandy, Abergavenny and Llanddewi Rhydderch. A further event has been arranged for 16th March. At this event issues raised during the four training sessions will be reported back and further work undertaken on developing the issues and how best to engage with the local planning authority.

Dog Waste – Discussions are at an early stage on whether there are different options available for dealing with the issue of dog waste. Currently most of the Community & Town Councils in the North Monmouthshire area use the same supplier as there is only one supplier offering the service in this area. There is a risk to service continuity should

a problem arise with the sole supplier. MCC officers are willing to work with Community & Town Councils on this matter and the support of Councillors would be welcomed.

Future of the sector - At the last meeting a WG official from the LG Partnerships Team attended and reported back on some of the immediate actions arising from the Independent Panel Review on the Community & Town Council Sector. Immediate actions include

- looking at how C & TCs find working together with their Principal Councils and the WG.
- Training bursaries will continue to be offered to strengthen the sector, and WG will continue to work with One Voice Wales to deepen the core training package for councils.
- WG are looking to understand how councils use social media and digital technologies to communicate with residents.
- Will be a survey to Clerks asking how they / the Council operate so that WG can be more helpful to the sector, possibly by providing case studies / best practice.
- WG are also working with OVW and Welsh Local Govt. Assoc. reviewing how services can be maintained, and the relationships between C & TCs and Principal Councils, to improve collaborative working.
- Training is also being reviewed. WG is interested in what is important to Councillors – should some training be mandatory? On-line provision is also being considered.

Training – Community & Town Councils can access training through One Voice Wales and other organisations. Also when approached MCC officers have given training to community & town councils and this is greatly appreciated. It is hoped that future requests will be met with the same positive response. Community & Town Councils share opportunities for training so that the MCC officer is not inundated with requests from across the County. For example, recently Code of Conduct training held in Abergavenny included councillors from Usk and Monmouth as well as North Monmouthshire Community & Town Councils.

Floral planters – Many Community & Town Councils fund floral displays in their community. Placing planters on a trunk road is not a simple matter as it requires liaison with SWTRA. Discussions are ongoing with SWTRA regarding the siting of planters in Abergavenny and Pandy.