



County Hall
Rhadyr
Usk
NP15 1GA

13th March 2014

Notice of meeting:

Lower Wye Area Committee

Wednesday 19th March 2014 at 10.00am*

Village Hall, Mathern, NP16 6JN

N.B. In Line with the County Council's commitment to hold paperless meetings, only those members who have specifically requested a hard copy of this agenda will receive one.

AGENDA

The Council welcomes contributions from members of the public through the medium of Welsh or English. We respectfully ask that you provide us with adequate notice to accommodate your needs.

| Item No | Item |
|---------|---|
| 1. | Apologies for Absence. |
| 2. | Declarations of Interest. |
| 3. | Public Open Forum. |
| 4. | To confirm and sign the minutes of the meeting held on Wednesday 11 th December 2013 (copy attached). |
| 5. | To receive the following reports from the Head of Operations (copies attached): i) Managing our Highways' – Consultation progress ii) MCC Car Park Review |
| 6. | To discuss future of Area Committees and engagement with the Head of Strategic Partnerships. |

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>7.</p> <p>8.</p> <p>9.</p> <p>10.</p> <p>11.</p> | <p>To receive an update report relating to Chepstow Town Entry signs (copy attached).</p> <p>To consider the Various Updates report from the Area Services Officer. (Copy attached)</p> <p>Co-ordinating Board – Feedback from the Chair and minutes of the meeting dated 21st January 2014 (copy attached).</p> <p>To receive the Lower Wye Area Committee Work Programme 2013-14 for information (Copy attached).</p> <p>To note the date and time of next meeting, as Wednesday 11th June 2014 at 10.00am, venue to be confirmed.</p> |
|---|--|

Paul Matthews

Chief Executive

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

CYNGOR SIR FYNWY

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE LOWER WYE AREA COMMITTEE IS AS FOLLOWS:

County Councillors:

D. Batrouni
D.L.S. Dovey
G.L. Down
P. Farley
R.J.W. Greenland
P.A.D. Hobson
P. Murphy
A.C. Watts
A.E. Webb

“Working with the citizens of Monmouthshire”

Strategic Aims

- * Making Monmouthshire Cleaner and Greener
- * Helping People Enjoy Healthier Lives
- * Creating Learning Opportunities for All
- * Stimulating Strong Local Economies
- * Supporting Safer and Stronger Communities
- * Improving the Council’s Effectiveness

Values

- * **Openness:** we aspire to be open and honest to develop trusting relationships.
- * **Fairness:** we aspire to provide fair choice, opportunities and experiences and become an organisation built on mutual respect.
- * **Flexibility:** we aspire to be flexible in our thinking and action to become an effective and efficient organisation.
- * **Teamwork:** we aspire to work together to share our successes and failures by building on our strengths and supporting one another to achieve our goals.

**Minutes of the Lower Wye Area Committee held at
the Meeting Rooms, St Arvans
on Wednesday 11th December 2013 at 10:00am**

PRESENT: County Councillor: A. Webb (Chairman)

County Councillors: D. Batrouni, D.L.S. Dovey, G.L. Down, P.S. Farley, P.A.D. Hobson, P. Murphy and A.C. Watts

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

| | | |
|----------------------|---|---|
| Ms K. Beirne | - | Chief Officer, Regeneration and Culture |
| Mr A. Browne | - | Area Services Officer |
| Ms D. Hill – Howells | - | Estates & Sustainability Manager |
| Mr J. McConnachie | - | Training Lead, Employee Services |
| Mrs E. Tapper | - | Democratic Services Officer. |

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

| | | |
|---------------|---|----------------|
| Mrs M. Davies | - | Local resident |
| Mr B. | - | |

1.APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillor P. Murphy.

2.DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest recorded.

3.PUBLIC OPEN FORUM

The Chairman welcomed members of the public to the meeting and invited them to pose any questions and comments they wished to raise with the Committee. Members of the public agreed to interject as appropriate.

4. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

We resolved to confirm the minutes of Lower Wye Area Committee held on Wednesday 30th October 2013 as an accurate record and were signed by the Chairman.

5. TOTAL PLACE PRESENTATION

We welcomed the Chief Officer Regeneration and Culture to the meeting.

We heard that the relationship between Chepstow town and its environs lacked clear definition and it was intended that Total Place would develop a bespoke approach

**Minutes of the Lower Wye Area Committee held at
the Meeting Rooms, St Arvans
on Wednesday 11th December 2013 at 10:00am**

which recognised the unique features of Chepstow and sought to address the following questions:

What is Chepstow's unique sense of place?
What is Chepstow's welcome message?
What plans are in place for Chepstow?

The Chief Officer, Regeneration and Culture emphasised the need to create a connected plan with a coherent whole place vision to provide Chepstow and its citizens with a renewed sense of purpose and identity. For example, Chepstow could be marketed as the "Gateway to Wales"

A long term approach would be required but which also included "quick wins." We heard that there was a need to understand the intended as well as the unintended consequences of the Total Place Plan.

It was intended that the plan would be shaped by different groups using various means of engagement, including digital and face to face consultation. It was envisaged that the plan would be co – owned and would involve many delivering agents with the Authority acting as facilitator and enabler.

The Chief Officer, Regeneration and Culture identified the key features of Chepstow which could be promoted and utilised to its benefit; the bridges, the river, its port and ship building, Chepstow Castle and its Norman history, the Town Gate, Chepstow Race Course, Tintern Abbey, the Wye Valley and the coastal path. Walking and performing arts appeared to be a growing trend within Chepstow and these activities should be promoted for the benefit of the whole area.

Members felt that the demographic and economic profile of Chepstow could prove particularly challenging. Areas of deprivation such as Bulwark, were identified, where food banks were increasing in numbers in comparison to areas of wealth such as Shirenewton. We received assurance that the Authority would work closely with Housing to identify pockets of disadvantage and where the youth population was particularly high construction apprenticeships could be made available.

We expressed a need to redesign the offer available on Chepstow High Street in order to attract outsiders and to encourage residents of Chepstow to shop in the town rather than travel to Cribbs Causeway.

Members cited Monmouth as an example of a prosperous high street and felt that efforts should be made to attract a leading high street brand into Chepstow town centre. We were advised that it may not be possible to replicate the success of Monmouth high street in Chepstow given the proximity of the town to Bristol and its two large retail offerings. A further Member suggestion was received to attract unique retail offerings to Chepstow.

Mrs M. Davies, local resident, suggested that the Palmer Centre should be utilised as the Senior Citizen Centre rather than the Drill Hall, given its central location and proximity to the high street. The Local Member for St Mary's stated that the condition of the paving would need to be assessed should this suggestion be implemented.

**Minutes of the Lower Wye Area Committee held at
the Meeting Rooms, St Arvans
on Wednesday 11th December 2013 at 10:00am**

Members emphasised the need to ensure that transport infrastructures were of an adequate standard to cope with increased traffic which would result from developments proposed in the LDP such as that at Lydney. Proposals for the construction of a road bridge from Lydney needed to be encompassed within the Total Place Plan. We emphasised the need to continue to exert pressure on Welsh Government to review the Severn Bridge Toll as this was considered to have a negative impact on the economy and prosperity of the town.

We were advised that consideration was being given to how the Fairfield Mabey development could contribute to the Total Place Plan.

It was proposed to hold a "Festival on the Front" to celebrate the town's shipping history. Links could be made to the Mabey Bridge with the construction of a ship like structure and eateries. This would also serve as a tourist attraction and would enhance the tourist experience along with the promotion of cycling and walking.

In transition towns such as Chepstow high speed broadband would be essential given that many people work from home and could use public facilities to access the internet increasing foot fall in the town.

We supported the ideology of Total Place and emphasised the need to progress with the project. Elected Member involvement, local business input, residents and town and community council buy – in would be necessary to ensure that the plan succeeded and ideas from residents of Chepstow and its environs could be pooled.

The Chief Officer, Regeneration and Culture agreed to establish a Task and Finish Group to progress Total Place.

The Committee expressed its thanks to Officers for their attendance.

6. AREA SERVICES OFFICER – VARIOUS UPDATES REPORT

We received the Various Updates report from the Area Services Officer.

- **Chepstow Marketing Group**

The Marketing Group met on 12th November 2013 at which a significant reduction in the perceived costs of facilitating monthly road closures within Chepstow Town Centre was reported.

We welcomed notice that plans for Chepstow Festival 2014 were in progress and an open consultation meeting would be held on 28th January 2014 to consider the most appropriate branding for Chepstow Town Centre.

- **Lower Wye Community Safety Action Team**

The group met on 31st October 2013, no matters requiring Members attention were reported. We were advised that the next meeting was scheduled for 12th December 2014.

- **Joint Rail Transport Working Group**

A meeting of the Working Group was held on 29th November 2013. The minutes of the meeting would be circulated in due course.

**Minutes of the Lower Wye Area Committee held at
the Meeting Rooms, St Arvans
on Wednesday 11th December 2013 at 10:00am**

- **South Monmouthshire Flood Forum**

We were advised that the next meeting of the Flood Forum had been postponed until January 2014.

- **Air Quality Steering Group**

The Air Quality Steering Group met on 20th November 2013. We were informed that Hardwick Hill had been identified as a Noise Action Planning Priority Area in Monmouthshire. It was felt that concerns relating to traffic noise may exert additional pressure on Welsh Government to take action in relation to air quality. The group's next meeting was scheduled for 26th March 2014.

- **Community Liaison Committee (The Charter)**

A meeting of the Community Liaison Committee was held on 7th November 2014. Parties involved were working more positively together to resolve shared issues. It was suggested that Town and Community Councils should also communicate the work of the Community Liaison Committee.

- **MOD Community Covenant**

Members were reminded of the grants which could be made available to local community groups via the Community Covenant.

- **Chepstow Bus Station Toilets**

We welcomed notice that plans were currently being drawn up for the creation of public toilets at 11 Thomas Street. The Local Member for St Mary's expressed appreciation for the financial support provided by Lower Wye Area Committee towards the project.

- **Signage to Chepstow Rugby Club**

Further to several requests for the Authority to provide signage to Chepstow Rugby Club, we received notice that signage could not be provided as it did not meet the required criteria under the Tourism or Highways policy.

We heard that Chepstow Rugby Club had contacted Chepstow Town Council to ask the Area Committee to provide a resolution.

Members felt that signage should be provided given that the Rugby Club attracted many visitors. We heard that the Welcome Monmouthshire Project Officer was in the process of seeking a second opinion as businesses could be considered under the Tourism policy if they attracted other custom.

The Committee requested that the Area Services Officer liaise with the relevant Cabinet Member with a view to providing Chepstow Rugby Club with the requested signage.

- **Environment/Capital Funds**

We received a request for funding of £712 from Mathern AFC as a contribution towards improvement works.

We reviewed the application and the Committee agreed unanimously to support the application.

**Minutes of the Lower Wye Area Committee held at
the Meeting Rooms, St Arvans
on Wednesday 11th December 2013 at 10:00am**

7. TIME AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING

We noted that the next meeting of Lower Wye Area Committee would be held on Wednesday 19th March 2014. We were advised that in accordance with a recommendation from Full Council, future meetings would be held quarterly and Democratic Services support for working groups would be withdrawn.

Members requested clarification from the Head of Improvement and Democracy regarding withdrawal of support, as this would prove particularly problematic when attempting to convene meetings.

The Democratic Services Officer agreed to raise this with the Head of Improvement and Democracy.

The meeting closed at 11:40am

REPORT

SUBJECT: 'Managing our Highways' – Consultation progress

MEETING: Lower Wye Area Committee

DATE: 19th March 2014

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: all

1. PURPOSE

To provide members with an update on the consultation work undertaken so far into options for the future management of street furniture (A boards, displays, tables, chairs etc.) and introducing advertising on the public highway.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That members receive an update on the consultation exercise undertaken by officers to date.

3. KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 Complaints have been received over for some time that MCC is not enforcing its policy on managing obstructions in the highway. Officers have received correspondence and attended meetings when this has been discussed and it is recognized that the existing street furniture policy (referred to 'apparatus or commercial obstruction in the highway') has proven difficult to implement uniformly.
- 3.2 Officers carried out research into alternative methods of managing street furniture and prepared draft proposals that were considered at member/officer working group. It was agreed to prepare a discussions document to be circulated to interested parties prior to any reports or proposals coming to members of Strong Communities Select Committee (document attached – appendix 1).
- 3.3 Feedback has been received from various businesses and other groups already and officers will summarise the comments to date at the meeting.

4. REASONS

- 4.1 the current policy is not being enforced but before doing so members are being given the opportunity to consider alternative management regimes.
- 4.2 The 2014/15 budget assumes income arising from advertising opportunities on the public highway.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

None arising from the report.

6. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT and EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

This is an interim report that simply offers an update on work undertaken to date. No options or recommendations are being presented to members so an Eqia or sustainability assessment has not been prepared at this time.

7. CONSULTEES:

Circulated to interested bodies by Area services officers (including town and community councils, chambers of commerce, disability groups).

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Discussion document attached (appendix 1)

9. AUTHORS

Roger Hoggins, Head of Operations

CONTACT DETAILS: rogerhoggins@monmouthshire.gov.uk

Appendix 1

MANAGING OUR PUBLIC HIGHWAYS: A Discussion Document and Seeking Your Views

ISSUES:

- 1. 'Apparatus'/ commercial obstruction on the Highway**
- 2. Advertising on the Highway**

Introduction

The Council is reviewing current policies and practices surrounding the management of 'apparatus' in the highway. Apparatus or commercial obstruction are terms used as a catchall description of items placed on footpaths and public open spaces such as display/'A' boards, shop displays, sale rails, coffee tables and chairs, benches etc.

The Council is also considering opportunities to create and manage advertising space on the public highway. This will most likely be in verges on approaches to our towns, roundabouts, car parks etc. By doing so businesses will have opportunities to advertise and the local authority will be able to arrange and manage this safely in the public highway.

Below are outlined the proposals that are being submitted to council members for consideration.

This opportunity to discuss and comment is being offered to you now in order that your views can be submitted to members when the proposals are considered.

Written comments are welcomed and officers will be happy to attend any meeting to discuss the matter should you so wish.

1. Apparatus/Commercial Obstruction in the Highway

Policies and procedures already exist to manage the apparatus in the highway. These do not ban items such as 'A' boards, tables and chairs etc. but their strict enforcement could sometimes be interpreted as draconian and unnecessary particularly in difficult trading times when advertising by commercial outlets is an important tool to generate custom.

At present the policy and procedures provide general rules and guidelines that all businesses are expected to comply with irrespective of the nature of the public highway adjacent to or in close proximity to the business(termed highway but often encompasses the road way, footpaths, public areas, pedestrianized areas etc.).

Officers have investigated how other local authorities manage apparatus in the highway and have developed a proposal that would license individual properties to advertise or trade on the highway whilst at the same time maintaining a safe route for highway users (in this instance we are particularly referring to pedestrians, prams and buggies, visually impaired, mobility scooters, wheel chairs etc.). For the purposes of the scheme a safe route would be a minimum of 1.5m of unimpeded walkway. If this cannot be achieved (and some of our pavements are already narrower than this) then no apparatus will be allowed.

If this scheme is approved then each business will be required to enter into an individual agreement with the Council. This will include an agreement about what may be placed in the highway (A boards, tables, display counters, etc.) plus a plan showing the extent of the public highway that the business is licensed to use.

Those businesses that gain a license will be able to display the license to demonstrate that their display is authorised by the local authority. Any businesses using displays in the public highway that are not licensed will be warned and invited to take part in the scheme (assuming they comply with the criteria) but displays will be removed where no license is awarded.

There will be a charge to businesses that are awarded licenses.

No decisions have been taken yet on what the charge might be but based upon research into charges raised by other local authorities that run similar schemes, officers are likely to recommend a one off charge for the initial application plus an annual charge for the license (discounted if a 3 year license is granted).

Officers will suggest that the council adopts the following charges:

‘A’ board – initial charge £ 75, annual charge £50

Chairs, tables, displays etc. charge by sq m:

0 to 6 sq m- initial charge £125, annual charge £120

6-12 sq m- initial charge £125, annual charge £240

12-18 sq m- initial charge £125, annual charge £360

Pitches (stall’s, gazebo’s etc.) – other than through the market management policy

Initial charge £75, annual charge £50 (per site application)

Benches or trees planted in memoriam (typically with a plaque) will be licensed for a one off charge of £75 (the cost of supply and installation are the responsibility of the applicant)

The proposed scheme is more involved and time consuming than the previous policy as it is applied to each business seeking to take up the scheme. However the scheme allows greater scope for the council to arrive at solutions that offer opportunities for businesses to advertise and trade whilst maintaining the needs of other users of the highway; not always an easy task but we believe this offers a pragmatic approach – your comments are welcomed.

1. Advertising on the Highway

Policies already exist that control the display of banners and notices on the highway.

Some changes to the policies are being proposed largely to control the growing practice of businesses advertising events using banners that conform to the policy because a donation is being made to charity (an example might be an advert for a cider festival with donations to a charity). This is being used increasingly to promote a profit making event but the ‘charitable’ element means the advert complies with current policy. It is proposed that only registered charities or charitable events sanctioned by the relevant community or town council will be able to display banners on the public highway (*the display of banners on private property is not covered by a highways policy but would be subject to planning policies in some instances*).

A new initiative being proposed is the availability of display boards, signs etc. on the public highway and in public places where businesses may be offered advertising opportunities.

The sites likely to be included are roundabouts within MCC control (*please note that many around the county on trunk roads are managed by Welsh Government and outside MCC control*), verges on roads leading in to towns and villages, alongside car park ticket machines, close to tourist attractions and similar sites with MCC control. Of utmost importance will be that the signs and display boards do not compromise highway safety. Furthermore some signs may require planning consent and one might anticipate members being conscious that we do not ‘litter’ our county with advertising displays.

As such there is a balance to be struck between providing opportunities for businesses to advertise versus protecting the natural beauty of the county. This scheme will be managed by MCC to provide this control.

Businesses wishing to take advantage of the scheme will incur a charge.

There will be variations in the charge according to position and size but below are some indicative charges being proposed by officers:

There are 2 categories of charges that are developed in conjunction with traffic counts for highway/verge locations, and ticket sales for car parks

Typically for a sign – 750mm X450mm

Highway/Verge Locations -

| 7 day average Traffic Count | Price Category | Sign Value (charged to business per annum) |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------|---|
| <5,000 vehicles | Lower | £1,000 |
| >5,000 vehicles | Higher | £1,500 |

Car park Locations –

| 7 day average Count | Price Category | Sign Value (charged to business per annum) |
|----------------------------|-----------------------|---|
| <50,000 tickets | Lower | £1,000 |
| >50,000 tickets | Higher | £1,500 |

These are indicative. Depending upon the site and size of sign requested there will be variations to these charges agreed on an individual basis.

The charge includes for the provision of the initial sign. However the applicant will be responsible for the cost of any revisions to the sign. All artwork and content will be approved by MCC before erection.

In conclusion this document provides a summary of what is being proposed. Obviously it lacks much of the detail that will be included in any final policies that might be adopted by the Council. However, hopefully this document offers you enough information to be able to comment on the proposals at this time and to provide feedback about the proposals (and any wider comments you may wish to make in association with the subjects) to councillors when the options are discussed and decided upon.

I would also reaffirm that officers are happy to discuss this with yourselves in more detail.

If you would like to discuss these proposals with an officer then please contact Steve Lane (01291 430658), Ryan Pritchard (01633 644752) or Roger Hoggins (01633 644133).

Roger Hoggins, Head of Operations, Monmouthshire County Council

REPORT

SUBJECT: MCC Car Park Review

MEETING: Lower Wye Area Committee

DATE: 19th March 2014

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: all

1. PURPOSE

In relation to communities within Lower Wye, to consider the findings of a report of the options for the future provision of car parking by Monmouthshire County Council, prepared by Parsons Brinkerhoff.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That members receive a presentation by officers of the main proposals within the report.
- 2.2 By reference to the report proposals members scrutinize the report and decide what comments and recommendations they wish to provide to Economy and Development Select Committee in relation to the consultants proposals that may impact upon Lower Wye.

3. KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 On the 20th February the Economy and Development Select committee held a special meeting to consider the findings and proposals for the future management of car parking. The study was undertaken by Parsons Brinkerhoff on behalf of the authority. The report and proposals are available on the Council's website using the following link: <http://www.monmouthshire.gov.uk/meetings/event/special-economy-and-development-select-committee-3/>
- 3.2 The committee considered many of the generic aspects of the report but have referred the report to the area committees to consider those aspects of the report that are specific to towns and communities in each area.
- 3.3 The feedback from the area committees will be provided to a future meeting of the select committee at which time the select committee will prepare its findings for Cabinet.

4. REASONS

- 4.1 The car park management regime that introduced charging was introduced in 1997.
- 4.2 Car park charges were last reviewed in 2007. Since that time the council's revenue budget has assumed an inflationary increase in income year on year. Charges have not been adjusted to keep up with this assumption and usage patterns have altered leading to a budget deficit in recent years.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

There are no resource implications directly as a result of this report. However feedback from the area committee to the select committee will inform decisions of cabinet some of which will have financial implications.

6. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT and EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

AS provided in appendix 3 (EqIA and sustainability assessment) of the report to Economy and Development select committee. Available from the link provided in paragraph 3.1 above.

7. CONSULTEES:

As described within the body of the Parsons Brinkerhoff report

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

Parsons Brinkerhoff Report (appendix 1) and appendices (appendix 2) attached.

9. AUTHORS

Roger Hoggins, Head of Operations

CONTACT DETAILS: rogerhoggins@monmouthshire.gov.uk

SUBJECT: CHEPSTOW TOWN ENTRY SIGNS

MEETING: LOWER WYE AREA

COMMITTEE DATE: 19th MARCH 2014

DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: CHEPSTOW

1. PURPOSE:

As a follow up to the discussions on this item at the meeting last October 2013, to provide some additional information about the opportunity to enhance the four Chepstow town entry signs.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS:

This report is for background information only. It is proposed that the 'Welcome Monmouthshire Project Officer' presents some additional information at the meeting. This will primarily be in the form of further visuals to include other options such as the inclusion of Fairtrade and Transition Chepstow as well as town twinning and Walkers are Welcome. It is anticipated that a decision in respect of the committee's preferred option will be taken.

3. KEY ISSUES:

As committee members will no doubt be aware Chepstow has four attractive 'town entry' signs. Two are located on the A48, one aimed at traffic travelling east at the top of Pwllmeyric Hill, the other aimed at traffic travelling west near the new Wye river bridge. The others are on the B4293 near the racecourse roundabout and on the approach to the High Beech roundabout from the M48. They are constructed of cast aluminum with cast iron posts and are primarily black with gold lettering. There are plates attached to the underside of the main sign face that were added around 2009 which include the Cormeilles town twinning information in Welsh and English. The plates complement the design and colour theme of the main signs and were the subject of much debate at the time. An example of one of these signs is shown in the picture below:



Walkers are Welcome group within the town to acknowledge Chepstow's recently achieved status as a Walkers are Welcome town. The idea was to replace the existing plates with slightly larger plates that would not only include the town twinning information but also the text 'Walkers are Welcome' in Welsh and English plus logo. Following initial consultation with the Area Services Officer and Chepstow Town Council it became apparent that the town is also known to promote itself in other ways such as being a Fairtrade Town and a Transition Town and therefore it was felt important that we seek the views of stakeholder groups in order to help inform a decision as to what additional message or messages, if any, should be included on the signs. There is an obvious practical issue with attempting to include all interests on the signs. Aside from this, there is a basic question as to the branding of the town and therefore it is very much about determining what the lead marketing message should be.

To this end, a short questionnaire was compiled and sent to Area Committee members, Chepstow Town Council, Walkers are Welcome, Transition Chepstow, Chepstow Fairtrade, Chepstow Marketing Group, Chepstow Chamber of Trade and Lower Wye Valley Ramblers.

Members will recall that the questions asked respondents whether they thought new sign plates would be a good idea at this time. If so, they were then given the option of 'voting' for their favoured option such as the retention of the town twinning information plus one other message or messages and what that message or those messages should be. The survey results produced an equal split of those who preferred to see the town twinning information plus 'Walkers are Welcome' and those who wished to see the town twinning information plus more than one other message.

4. REASONS:

To improve the sense of arrival to the town, increase visitor awareness as to the main marketing message and thereby support the visitor economy of Chepstow and district.

5. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS:

The cost of design, production and installation of four sign plates to fit below the existing main town entry signs is estimated at £3K. This would be funded under the town visitor signage element of the tourism related 'Welcome Monmouthshire' Rural Development Plan project.

6. CONSULTEES:

Lower Wye Area Committee members, Chepstow Town Council, Chepstow Marketing Group, Chepstow Chamber of Trade, Walkers are Welcome, Transition Chepstow, Chepstow Fairtrade and Lower Wye Valley Ramblers have been consulted and each sent a link to the online 'Survey Monkey' questionnaire.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None.

9. AUTHOR:

Mark Lloyd **Welcome Monmouthshire Project Officer**

10. CONTACT DETAILS:

Tel: 01633 644865

E-mail: marklloyd@monmouthshire.gov.uk

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL REPORT

Agenda Item 8

| | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| SUBJECT: | Various Updates |
| MEETING: | Lower Wye Area Committee |
| Date to be considered | 19th March, 2014 |
| DIVISION/WARDS AFFECTED: | All |
| 1. <u>PURPOSE</u> | |
| To update the Lower Wye Area Committee Members on the progress of the following issues :- | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chepstow Marketing Group• Lower Wye Community Safety Action Team• Joint Rail Transport Working Group• South Monmouthshire Flood Forum• Air Quality Steering Group• Community Liaison Committee• MOD Community Covenant• Chepstow Bus Station Toilets• Signage to Chepstow Rugby Club• Cycling Events• Chepstow Walking Festival• Flea Market• Consultation Report on Review of Car Parking• Environment/Capital Funds | |
| 2. <u>RECOMMENDATIONS</u> | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ To note all updates○ To ratify funding allocations | |
| <u>REASONS</u> | |
| <u>Chepstow Marketing Group</u> | |
| The Marketing Group most recently met on 4 th March. Members are asked to note the following:- | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The first monthly pedestrianisation of the High Street will now not take place until April.• With a view to promoting the town and itself, The Marketing Group now has its own Facebook page.• A revision of the Town Map is imminent. | |
| <u>Lower Wye Community Safety Action Team</u> | |
| The Lower Wye CSAT most recently met on 6 th March. Members may wish to note the following:- | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• There has been an 8.3% reduction in crime during the current year and the detection rate currently stands at 32.2%.• Shoplifting in larger shops/supermarkets is of particular concern at the moment and the Police are working with store managers/owners with a view to tackling this problem.• The Street Pastors are currently considering a change to their base. There may | |

be an opportunity for them to be based in rooms in the same building in Thomas Street that will house the new public toilets.

- The local Online Watch Link (OWL) recently held the first UK online live chat. It was deemed to be a great success given the new links that were established with individuals within the community. The pilot will be repeated in the near future following a few “tweaks” that are required arising out of lessons learnt during the first event.
- Members of CSAT are considering how best to “piggyback” the cycling events this summer with a view to setting up projects/schemes to assist in the aim of working toward the establishing of safer communities.

Joint Rail Transport Working Group

Members will be aware of arrangements to transform this Group into a countywide strategic transport group. A meeting to discuss/facilitate that transformation will be held on 18th March.

South Monmouthshire Flood Forum

No update available.

Air Quality Steering Group

No meetings of the Air Quality Steering Group have taken place since the previously reported meeting on 20th November.

The next meeting is planned for 26th March however Members may wish to note the following:-

- The findings from the previous mentioned Welsh Government Study have yet to be received.
- The final air quality readings for 2013 final readings should be available by the end of March however the raw data without a bias adjustment factor, indicates that there was a reduction in 2013 at all sites compared to 2012 although 2012 was a very high year across the County. That said, the objective level at Hardwick Hill and possibly Hill House is likely to be exceeded.

Community Liaison Committee

The most recent meeting of the Community Liaison Committee was held on 6th February. Minutes are appended for Members’ attention.

MOD Community Covenant

Members are reminded of the opportunities afforded by the Community Covenant particularly regarding grants which may be available for local community groups which are able to meet the necessary criteria. Further information can be obtained from the Area Services Officers or for comprehensive information (including an application form and guidance), via the following:-

www.gov.uk/government/publications/armed-forces-community-covenant-grant-scheme

In terms of timescales, Members may wish to note the following:-

| Applications in by | Panel Meets on | Application sent to MOD by |
|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 11 th April 2014 | 5 th May 2014 | 15 th May 2014 |
| 15 th August 2014 | 2 nd September 201 | 17 th September 2014 |
| 12 th December 2014 | 6 th January 2015 | 14 th January 2015 |

Chepstow Bus Station Toilets

Members will recall that an amount of £14,028 has been allocated by the Area Committee as a contribution toward the costs of providing public toilets at Chepstow Bus Station. This amount has been held for several years. Given the recent progress previously reported, those funds have now been transferred to the Town Council to facilitate the opening of the Toilets. It is still anticipated that this will be in early April.

Signage to Chepstow Rugby Club

As Members will be aware from the previous meeting, Chepstow Rugby Club has – for a considerable time – been requesting (from the County Council) appropriate signage to its premises.

As previously discussed, the requested signage did not meet the necessary criteria under either the Tourism policy or Highways policy but Members felt the circumstances were appropriate to allow the signage.

Following that decision, Mark Lloyd attended the Club on 10th January to offer advice on completing the application form and provided plans for the Club to indicate their intended sign locations. He also offered further advice by email in regard to a sign that was proposed on the A48 at ‘Bulwark Corner’. The Club has been advised that this road is under the jurisdiction of Welsh Government under the auspices of the South Wales Trunk Road Agency so any proposed signage here would require separate consent. As at the time of writing, no further communication has been received from the Club.

Cycling Events

Monmouthshire will be hosting the National Cycling Championships between 23rd and 29th June this year. Whilst the event will be centred upon Abergavenny, events will be passing through the Lower Wye Area (including Chepstow town) on 29th (Men’s National Road Race) and prior to that, on 28th.the “Sportive” will be taking place. This event gives everybody the opportunity to cycle the same route as the professionals and is expected to attract “thousands” of participants who will start from various points around the County.

On 30th July, the Wales Open Criterium will bring a number of races to Chepstow itself, over the course of a few hours during the evening. This great spectacle will see riders lapping at high speed around the lower part of the town.

Chepstow Walking Festival

The Festival will take place from 12th to 14th April. Further information is appended for Members’ attention.

Flea Market

Planning is underway for a “flea market” encompassing the whole of the town centre on 28th June. Members will be updated as and when further information becomes available.

Consultation Report on Review of Car Parking

Roger Hoggins will be attending the meeting to update Members.

Environment/Capital Funds

To enable the use of the remaining funds within this financial year, Members recently considered the applications that had been received. A decision was made, to reduce all five applications by the same percentage with a view to “fitting” the remaining budget of £2,985. Therefore the following disbursements have been made:-

| | |
|--|-------|
| | £ |
| St Thomas A Beckett Church, Wolvesnewton | 1,317 |
| 1st Bulwark Guides | 395 |

| | |
|-------------------------------------|-----|
| St Arvans Baby and Toddler Group | 286 |
| St Marys Church, Llanvair Discoed | 658 |
| Caerwent Community Centre Committee | 329 |

Members are asked to ratify the earlier decision relating to the above disbursements.

Members are asked to note that a letter of thanks for the funds allocated at the previous meeting, has been received from Mathern Football Club.

Members may also wish to note that an update on the Fryer's Wharf Project (for which the Area Committee provided funding) has been received as follows:-

"I am pleased to inform you that the geotechnical survey and church wall survey for this part of the project has been completed. The bill was a little higher than anticipated but we were able to meet this with your generous assistance together with the match funding from other sources. I attach a short report on this phase of the project together with copies of the invoices. The legal fees for the lease from TCC are ongoing as we await a decision from Welsh Water regarding the design and location for the new pumping station.

Thank you again for helping to fund this stage of the project."

NB a copy of the report (as referred to above) is appended for Members' information.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Within budget.

CONSULTEES

Not appropriate.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

7. **AUTHOR:** Alan Browne, Area Services Officer
CONTACT DETAILS: Tel 07833716715
 Email alanbrowne@monmouthshire.gov.uk

Charter Liaison Meeting

6th February 2014

Usk – County Hall 6pm

1.0 Those Present

Cllrs:

| | |
|---------------------|-----|
| Phyl Hobson | PH |
| Trevor Phillips | TP |
| Peter Clarke | PC |
| Helen Williams | HW |
| Roger Harris | RH |
| Keith Plow | KB |
| Nick Tatam | NT |
| Officers | |
| Sharron Robinson | SR |
| Tom James | TJ |
| Debbie McCarty | DMc |
| Will McLean (chair) | WMc |
| Alan Browne | AB |

Apologies

Martin Blakebrough

Adrian Edwards

2.0 Matters Arising from previous minutes

Previous minutes were agreed and accepted

3.0 Charter Action Plan

The ASO were to raise awareness of the charter with officers/heads of services across the county ASO's have met with over 26 officers discussing the charter and the action plan. AB outlined conversations that had taken place.

It is hoped that this will now improve some of the relationships.

Members of the group hoped that the communication channels will remain open and be much improved

4.0 Update on Community Engagement Sessions

WMc reported that:

Following on from the events undertaken in October 2013 where the challenge that was facing MCC was shared. MCC made a commitment that they would come back to talk to them about the budget process and how this will effect services.

MCC went back out to the community in early January. They held 5 evening events and to capture a different audience 3 daytime events. This altered the dynamics of the engagement and represented views.

The mechanisms around the event were different this time. There was more of an input from Cllr Murphy giving information about the budget and then the audience had a chance to comment

They talked about the 52 ideas from the community. 27 of those ideas were already in the mandate in some shape or form. A further 25 were considered.

- Charging for library usage – this proved to be popular
- Closer relationships with Community and Town Councils – received wide spread support
- Idea of a Monmouthshire lottery – wide support from this.

6 questions were given to the audience.

The approaches to these engagement sessions were overall positively received. There were clearly issues that people wanted to talk about.

A lot of discussion with community and town councils at the events about services and what this involved and could look like. People did like the idea of localisation of services.

Once contentious area was the increase in council tax – genuine surprise amongst officers that some people were happy for the council tax to be increased.

The group discussed the general feelings across the board at all the sessions. WMc said that there were mixed feelings as to the increase. NT shared that he felt there was some confusion on his table as people did not seem to understand how much they paid and the contribution paid to community councils and police etc on top of the figures given on the consultation evenings.

PC said that the police had now agreed to a 2.66% increase

WMc reported that there was good evidence of a round table debate as to whether there should be an increase and what percentage this should be.

People felt that we were making the right decisions but the 2 key issues raised were the William's report and the disparity of funding from WG. Generally people seemed very content with the content. More sessions will be arranged sometime in the future.

There will be other engagement sessions in the future.

AB felt that we needed to try and attract/reach more people to get a greater percentage of the population to engage with us. We need to widen it out to greater numbers of the population.

TP thought the second session at Usk was far better than the first one. They had been carrying out consultations in Raglan but also got poor attendance at the meetings.

HW said that they had been consulting on increasing the precept and those that had responded had been happy to the increase. PH was worried what would happen to Council Tax over the next 10 years due to our aging population.

KP felt that communication could be improved giving examples of how we can miss people given the times of the meetings.

We had a discussion on how to reach the public to get a response.

NT felt that we might run out of volunteers because of the commitment they are being asked to commit to.

SR felt that sometimes people have a fear of commitment and therefore are hesitant to volunteer

KP stated that you need a cross section of people for councillors. We need more business people to volunteer to be on the councils.

WMc said that he takes on board problems engaging with people but they had a fantastic response at the day time sessions in Caldicot compared to the evening meetings they had held.

5.0 Review of Communities and Electoral Arrangements

PH stated that they had just finished this last week a consultations with all the community and town councils. The exercise has been very useful. The tenure is that they are getting a very clear picture from rural areas as opposed to the towns. They were not aware of the range of functions that community councils perform. They are now going to review to make the final recommendations. Some of the community councils have put in counter proposals and MCC agrees that in some cases they have got it wrong based on the criteria they had to work on.

RH added that working out had been done on the criteria they had and they are now getting the sensible information back that means that some of the conclusions they had reached won't work especially in the rural areas. It has shown us how essential the rural community councils are. It has been a very useful consultation.

PH said that the final report will be very different to the draft one that has written. It is so important especially when relating this to the Williams report.

He said that it is likely our recommendations will be for between 31 – 33 community councils which is very near to what we are now which is contrary to what the Williams report states.

MCC will be at the head of the queue to show the Williams report that they have got it wrong. We need the grass roots democracy not more AM's for WG.

PH said that they will be defending the amount of community councils that we have and how important they are. There will be changes for everybody but nowhere near as drastic as those first muted. RH felt that the important thing is that the more information we have the better the decisions can be made. The majority of the community councils have come to the meetings have realised that MCC isn't against them but want to work with them as to the best way forward. TP asked if results were going out to C & T's before it went back to WG. PH said this would be considered.

PC asked if the electoral arrangements would be put on the agenda for the report. He asked how people would know about it in the future.

WMc felt that we could do this. The William's commission had been publicised and the WLGA had met with Paul Williams to discuss his recommendations and put to the first minister that there should be time to respond to the recommendations.

PH felt that it affected the devolution of services. The fear is that the new "Newportshire" will come along and just close a library. They could slap huge increases on us. It could speed up devolution of services.

PC said that we pay a disproportional amount to police funding because of the overall banding we have.

KP sees it as an opportunity for people in Monmouthshire to make their mark.

PH asked that if there was any council or individual who wants to comment on the draft proposal please do so by 20th February. They can also do site visits.

6.0 MCC Complaints Procedures

HW felt that complaints are not dealt within the charter and how do we deal with a complaint if it is not dealt with at the time of the complaint.

DM explained our current complaints procedure that MCC have in place.

Members felt that there was a breach to the charter

WMC – we will discuss how we can include this in the charter – what we do with a complaint

Members of the group can bring complaints to the liaison group.

Action: Add customer care standards as a appendix to the Charter.

7.0 Date 3rd April 6pm Conference room .

Diarise next meetings at 6 monthly intervals. Dates to be discussed a the next meeting

Join us for our

Annual celebration as a Walkers are Welcome town

Chepstow

Walking

Weekend



**Saturday 12th, Sunday 13th,
Monday 14th April 2014**

Join in our programme of taster walks which demonstrate what Chepstow and surrounding area have to offer walkers.

Join our walks showcasing parts of the Wye Valley Walk, Offa's Dyke Path and all of St. Tewdric's Trail with transport to and from start/finish points, plus shorter walks over the 3 days.

Special interest walks include a wildlife walk with Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust, a walk in the footsteps of Romans around Caerwent, Piercefield Walk with the Welsh Society, the Town Trail, walks around Sudbrook and Shirenewton with Local History Society, dog walks, plus much more....

The Town Mayor will officially open our walking weekend, followed by a performance of the Singing Club of Chepstow in Beaufort Square.

Free parking for all those who take part! For more special offers see our web site.

There is a one-off booking fee of £5 to take part. Full programme and bookings from 1st March 2014 at Chepstow Tourist Information Centre on 01291 623772 or via our web site

www.walksinchestow.co.uk

Chepstow Walkers are Welcome



Your starting point for walking in Wales and the Wye Valley

Chepstow was the first town in Monmouthshire to be awarded Walkers are Welcome status and is the perfect walking location with 4 long distance paths: Wales Coast Path, Wye Valley Walk, Offa's Dyke Path and Gloucestershire Way.

The town trail allows you to discover for yourself the oldest Norman castle in Wales, stunning riverside walks and experience the hospitality of our market town.

The variety of walks in the Lower Wye Valley will inspire all those who come to walk in this beautiful area.

Chepstow Tourist Information Centre offers a wealth of information for walkers along with our newly installed lockers, so you're free to explore.

Chepstow enjoys excellent transport links, whether travelling by car, train, coach or bus.

We look forward to welcoming you soon!

**To find out more, visit our website
www.walksinchepstow.co.uk**



FRYER'S WHARF AND SLIPWAY RESTORATION PROJECT

www.tinternvillage/villagegroups.co.uk

Report for Funders Feb 2014

Dear Alan

The phase of the project that your organisation generously funded has now been completed: namely to carry out a geotechnical survey for Welsh Water to enable them to relocate the Sewage Pumping Station and to assess the stability of the adjoining church wall.

The work was overseen by Mann Williams, Civil Engineers under the Direction of their regional Director Mr Pat Ruddock with on-site engineering supervision of Gemma Lockwood. The site works were carried out by Ground Investigations under the supervision of Marc Williams. 'Church and Site Archaeological Services' under the direction of Felicity Taylor provided an archaeological watching brief and as required under the terms of the Church Authority Legal faculty.

Elsa Wood, as chairman of the Fryer's Wharf committee and Jim Hewitt, as consultant surveyor, attended the work at regular intervals.

The work on site was carried out during the week of November 25th -29th. This comprised a window survey close to the church wall in the churchyard and above the slipway. Two 200mm bores were taken to a depth of 4metres in the churchyard and to 6metres above the slipway. A slit trench to a depth of 2m was also dug in the churchyard. The core samples and findings from the trench were analysed by Marc Williams, Gemma Lockwood and Felicity Taylor.

In addition, a trench was dug in the car park adjacent to the slipway to locate the positions of pipes and utilities that serve the existing Sewage Pumping Station. A Welsh Water representative attended site to inspect their underground apparatus.

A larger bore was carried out in the car park in the proposed location for the new pumping station. This bore went to a depth of 10.5m where the bedrock was located. The alluvial material and river gravel core samples were also taken for analysis. Water sampling of the borehole will continue over a period of time.

The work necessitated the closure of the Tintern Community Council car park for periods of time but the Tintern Community Council also local residents were informed well in advance so that alternative provisions for their car parking could be made.

All excavations and boreholes were backfilled and surface damage made good immediately after the work and to the satisfaction of the landowner.

The archaeological report was produced and lodged with the Fryer's Wharf Committee on 7th February 2014.

The technical report from Ground Investigations and the report from Mann Williams were lodged with the committee on 27th January 2014.

These reports will enable Welsh Water to move to the design phase of the new pumping station and allows the Fryer's Wharf Project to move closer to its objective of reopening the slipway.

Copies of the three reports are publically available and copies can be sent to you should you so wish.

We are currently drawing up a schedule of works with costings for the next stage of the project that will include removal of the old pumping station, clearance, repair, and maintenance of the slipway. This phase of project planning could take several months as it will depend on the pumping station design and preparation of the Welsh Water programme of works

The bill for this stage of the project was £11,983.14 which we were able to meet with your grant together with the other match funding. I attach the invoices for your attention.

Thank you again for helping to support this part of the project and I shall keep you informed of the requirements for the next phase of demolishing the redundant Sewage pumping Station and reopening the slipway and assessing any repairs that may be necessary to the slipway or church wall.



Elsa Wood
Chairman FWC





Drill rig in position in the car park



Archaeologist's trench in the church yard against the wall between the slipway and church ground



One of the bore holes in the church yard to 3.5m (approx)



Trench in the car park to trace the services 'pipes' etc.

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
Minutes of the meeting of the Coordinating Board held at
County Hall, Usk on Tuesday 21st January 2014 at 10.00am

PRESENT: Mr. P. Matthews (Chief Executive) (Chair)

County Councillors: D.J. Evans, P. Farley, P.A. Fox, R.G.Harris, M. Hickman, S.G.M. Howarth, R.P. Jordan, J.L. Prosser, S. White, Mr. P.White (Chair, Audit Committee)

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Miss H. Ilett, Scrutiny Manager
Ms. R. Rawlings, Democratic Services Officer

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

County Councillor R.J.W. Greenland and A.E. Webb.

2. MINUTES

Agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 26th November 2014 be approved as a correct record.

3. FORWARD WORK PLAN FOR CABINET AND COUNCIL

Whilst value was being derived from the Cabinet updates and populating items on the Forward Work Plan, work was now underway to create a stronger forward framework for meetings of Full Council.

It was anticipated that there would be a strong political debate on the budget proposals at the forthcoming meeting of Full Council in February. Members raised concerns with regard to various aspects of the recent meeting of Full Council and it was agreed that there would be a discussion at the next Political Leadership Group surrounding the rules of debate so that Leaders could guide their members prior to the commencement of live streaming of meetings, to ensure the correct formal process, a level of respect and rules of debate were adhered to ensure a quality debate.

Due to the length of the last Council meeting it was questioned whether decisions towards the latter part of the meeting were given the same quality of consideration that earlier items had due to a reduced amount of Members being present. It was raised that it may be more appropriate to commence meetings at 10.00 a.m. The consensus was currently for meetings to remain at 2.00 p.m. but if all Members wished there to be a change in the future, this item could be discussed in the first instance at Political Leadership Group to discuss for the next civic year.

Forward Work Programme noted.

**Minutes of the meeting of the Coordinating Board
Dated Tuesday 21st January 2014 continued**

4. SCRUTINY FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME

The work of the select committees during the budget consultation was acknowledged, the time and effort that had been afforded to give this item due diligence had not gone unnoticed. It was hoped that this had ensured that all Members attending Full Council on the 27th February would be cited and knowledgeable on the issues arising, which would ensure that any debate would be based on fact and knowledge.

Members thanked officers for the level of detail which had been presented within the papers.

(a)Children and Young People Select Committee

The Chairman, County Councillor R.P. Jordan updated Members on the current work of the committee which had included budget scrutiny. There was another meeting on Thursday to give consideration to the national adoption service reorganisation which would prove to be very important in delivering the regional and national adoption service which could have fundamental implications for the authority.

The Chairman had been invited to an upcoming EAS meeting. The select committee meeting on 6th February would be inviting secondary head teachers to discuss performance of schools.

Work programme noted.

(b)Adults Select Committee

The Chairman, County Councillor P. Farley updated Members on the current work programme of the committee.

With regard to raising items for joint scrutiny, it may be useful to have a running item to note whether there were any issues arising from the meeting of Scrutiny Chairs.

Work Programme noted.

(c)Economy & Development Select Committee

The Chairman, County Councillor J.L. Prosser updated Members on the current work programme of the committee.

They had considered the budget mandates and offered comments, and had referred to TIC mandate back for further consideration.

The meeting to be held on 28th February 2014 would consider the current arrangements for car parks in the county.

Other upcoming work included scrutiny of the planning function at the meeting to be held on 13th March 2014. Welsh Water and the Brecon Beacons National Park Section 106 Officer had been invited to attend.

**Minutes of the meeting of the Coordinating Board
Dated Tuesday 21st January 2014 continued**

Work Programme Noted.

(d)Strong Communities Select Committee

The Chairman, County Councillor S.G.M Howarth, updated Members on the current work programme for the committee.

The committee had just completed the budget consultation. The work programme was on course and future agendas would revisit public toilets and the monitoring of affordable housing.

The Cabinet Forward Planner was enabling the Chair to ask the committee if they wished to consider items which needed to be scrutinised. It was important to have that integration to ensure relevant items were reported to scrutiny.

Work Programme noted.

5. COMMITTEE WORK PROGRAMMES

Agreed that the following work programmes be noted:

- **Bryn y Cwm Area Committee:** The committee had held a special regarding The Hill College. Issues surrounding the Whole Place Programme were continuing with the town team and a programme board was being formulated in the Town Council. Concerns had been expressed with regard to the closure of the Day Centre and the Chief Officer or a suitable representative had been invited to speak at the next meeting.

At the last meeting, it had been agreed that the Area Services Officer would formulate a group to look at cemeteries, clarification on the current position would be sought.

- **Central Monmouthshire Area Committee:** Concerns were expressed at the proliferation of A Boards within the town at the last meeting and the committee would be focussing on this. Attendance had been poor at the last meeting.

It was raised that there could be future discussions for Members to look at tourism opportunities during the anniversary of Agincourt.

- **Sevenside Area Committee:** The previous two meetings had been held in Magor and had had a reduced number of members of the public in attendance. The location of the next meeting in March would be moved to try to address this.

There was a need for clear guidance for the town team on their remit and role as well as the number of members required. There had been an initial meeting but further dates for meetings were awaited.

- **Lower Wye Area Committee:** Work was to progress on the Total Place Plan and it was hoped that the experience of other areas could be drawn upon. There was a need to have a joined up approach to share experience and best

**Minutes of the meeting of the Coordinating Board
Dated Tuesday 21st January 2014 continued**

practise to maximise outcomes. It was also raised that there needed to be links between groups discussing transport issues within the area.

- **Audit Committee:** The committee met on 12th December 2013 and considered the MCC response to the annual improvement letter as well as debating performance indicators. The item on the Shared Resource Service would be considered at the meeting in February and a report was expected on the Councils Constitution. A large item for consideration planned for the next meeting would be the grants recertification report.
- **Democratic Services Committee:** Concern was expressed with regard to the lack of attendance of officers at the meeting and whilst it was acknowledged that there had been a number of clashes with the committee meetings, it was asked that alternative appropriate officers attend when those circumstances arise.

Members had debated constituency mileage at the last meeting and presented a scheme to Council.

6. WAO SCRUTINY CONFERENCE

The Authority had been reviewed by the Wales Audit Office and had been invited to take part in a conference at Cardiff.

200 people had attended which comprised of a number of Chief Executives and Leaders. Councillor Farley had been invited to sit on a panel during the opening session to talk about a case study on the impact of scrutiny in Monmouthshire. Four Authorities were represented on the Panel, Swansea, Wrexham, Torfaen and Monmouthshire and Councillor Farley was the only elected member on the panel.

The following items were chosen to be discussed which included:

- (1) The scrutiny inquiry which had been chosen which involved a great deal of consultation with the public on Monmouthshire's aging population, with pre decision scrutiny stakeholders talking as part of Budden Crescent,
- (2) The call-in which also included public involvement on the allocation of a site for travellers. An example of how we allowed different stakeholders to speak, how we have engaged with the public and for scrutiny to be a mechanism for people to be involved in the council's decision making.
- (3) Joint scrutiny/collaborative scrutiny – Prosiect Gwrdd, first in wales, quite a role in scrutiny in Monmouthshire.

The Scrutiny Manager had delivered the workshop on successful collaborative scrutiny, using Prosiect Gwyrdd as the case study.

Budget scrutiny across Wales had been discussed. There would be a meeting of all select committees on the 29th January to discuss the entire budget. The Authority had been approached by the WAO and centre for public scrutiny to share Monmouthshire's experience of public engagement and a short resume of the overall process had been well received.

**Minutes of the meeting of the Coordinating Board
Dated Tuesday 21st January 2014 continued**

Feedback received had been very encouraging.

7. COUNCIL BRIEFINGS/SEMINARS

The current programme was noted for information.

8. ITEMS RAISED BY MEMBERS

Williams Review

Members were encouraged to read the summary of the Williams Review, which included the recommendations for public services across the whole of Wales. The main part focussed on the merger of authorities which were aimed at reducing the number of authorities to 12, 11 or 10 with a recommendation that Newport and Monmouthshire would merge.

Paul Williams was recommending that the whole process should be completed within three to five years, however, it was unclear at this point what the First Minister's view of the commission's report was.

It was expected that there would be significant consultation should the Minister decide to proceed with the review's recommendations and it was important to not be distracted at this time but to continue delivering services as normal.

9. REFERENCES FROM COMMITTEES

None.

The meeting ended at 11.48 a.m.

| Item | Background Detail | Reporting Arrangements |
|-------------------------------------|--|--|
| Standard Items: | | |
| Area Update | To receive the Various Updates report from the Area Services Officer | Ongoing |
| Coordinating Board | To receive feedback from the Chairman on referrals from the Coordinating Board | Ongoing |
| Working Groups: | | |
| Flood Forum | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Flood Forum Working Group has been established and will report to both the Lower Wye Area Committee and Severnside Area Committee on flood management and related issues in Lower Wye and Severnside areas, in conjunction with strategies of the Environment Agency and Welsh Water. • Working group was reappointed at the Lower Wye Area Committee meeting on 11th July 2012. <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Members of this Working Group:</u> County Councillors: D.L.S. Dovey G.L. Down A. Easson D.J. Evans R.J. Higginson P. Murphy</p> | Progress will be reported at each Lower Wye Committee and Severnside meeting. |
| Rail Transport Working Group | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Established as Joint Working Group between Lower Wye and Severnside to meet and devise strategy in order to improve train services of three separate franchises. • Working group was reappointed at the Lower Wye Area Committee meeting on 11th July 2012. | Progress will be reported at each Severnside and Lower Wye Area Committee meeting. |

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| | <p><u>Members of this Working Group:</u> County Councillors: D.L.S. Dovey A. Easson P.S. Farley L. Guppy F. Taylor Vacancy (To be filled by Lower Wye AC)</p> <p>D. Flint (STAG) P. Inskip (STAG) C. James (STAG) J. Jenkins (BT4C) M. Youngman – Transport Policy and Compliance Manager</p> | <p>Response to consultation to be prepared by the Transport Policy and Compliance Manager – by end March 2012.</p> |
| New Work Programme Items: | | |
| <p>Vacant Properties</p> <p>Partnership Strategies and the Community Strategy</p> <p>Impact of Changes in Housing Benefit System</p> <p>Chepstow Rail and Bus Interchange</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recommendations regarding Vacant Properties, of the Central Monmouthshire Area Committee, considered by Lower Wye. Further discussions would be held regarding whether Town and Community Councils would be contacted in relation to empty properties. • To host a consultation event regarding the Partnership strategies and Community Strategy. • Information on impact of Changes presented to Lower Wye Area Committee on 20th March 2013. • Regular update report to be on each Lower Wye Area Committee Agenda from July 2013 | <p>Update presented to Lower Wye AC 20th March 2013. Further Updates as and when necessary</p> <p>TBC</p> <p>Further reports as and when necessary</p> <p>Ongoing</p> |

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| <p>Air Quality Management in Chepstow Area</p> <p>Whole Place Plan</p> <p>Chepstow Town Signs</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regular update report to be on each Lower Wye Area Committee Agenda from July 2013. • Further detailed discussion when out come of Welsh Government Study of the A48 through Chepstow (Study scheduled to be completed by the end of December 2013) • Presentation by Will McLean on achievements of plan and its potential for being extended to the Lower Wye Area • Further report and visual presentation by Mark Lloyd | <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Area Committee meeting 29th January 2014</p> <p>Area Committee January or March 2014</p> <p>Area Committee January or March 2014</p> |
|--|--|---|

