

## MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

**Minutes of the meeting of Bryn y Cwm Area Committee held  
at Gilwern Community Centre, Common Road, Gilwern, NP7 0DS. on Wednesday, 14th  
March, 2018 at 1.00 pm**

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

County Councillors: G. Howard, D. Jones, S. Jones, P. Jordan,  
M. Powell, J. Pratt and S. Woodhouse

Llanelly Community Council: Councillor G. Nelmes  
Llanover Community Council: Councillor G. Thomas

### **OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Owen Wilce	Programme Lead - A County That Serves
Steve Baldwin	Project Engineer (Structures), Highway & Flood Management
Hazel Clatworthy	Sustainability Policy Officer
Richard Williams	Democratic Services Officer

### **ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:**

Ms. C. Watkins	-	GAVO
Ms. M. Moore	-	GAVO
Ms. J. Gillard	-	GAVO
Ms. J. Townley	-	Abergavenny TIC
Mr. P. Johns	-	Team Abergavenny
Councillor N. Tatam	-	Abergavenny Town Council
Ms. J. Lee	-	Town Clerk, Abergavenny Town Council
Mr. A. Edwards	-	Clerk to Llanelly Community Council

### **APOLOGIES:**

County Councillors: M. Groucutt, R. Harris, S. Howarth, S.B. Jones, T. Thomas and  
K. Williams

Councillor P. Simcock (Abergavenny Town Council)

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

There were no declarations of interests made by Members.

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

There were no issues raised.

#### **3. Confirmation of Minutes**

The minutes of the Bryn y Cwm Area Committee meeting dated 17<sup>th</sup> January 2018 were  
confirmed and signed by the Chair.

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### **4. Abergavenny Tourist Information Centre (TIC)**

We received a verbal update from the Manager of Abergavenny Tourist Information Centre (TIC). In doing so, the following points were noted:

- Since the closure of the café, takings have fallen at the TIC.
- Footfall at all of the TICs has fallen. Brecon Beacons National Park is looking into the reasons for the reduction in numbers visiting the TIC.
- The TIC is looking to open seasonally, i.e., Easter to October.
- The TIC is looking for ideas with a view to raising finance and to reduce costs.
- The TIC is looking to highlight tourism to the area.
- The TIC is currently located in the Tithe Barn, Abergavenny and has been at this location for the past four years.
- The working hours at the TIC have been adjusted by sharing with the Holywell Community.
- Funding is received from Abergavenny Town Council, Monmouthshire County Council and the Brecon Beacons National Park. Any profit made goes back into the TIC.
- If local events are held, the TIC can sell tickets.
- Students come into the TIC with a view to improving their language skills.
- The TIC has a positive impact on the surrounding area, as well as the town.
- There is good community spirit in the area. The area is also known for its culture.
- Visitors are encouraged to spend time in Abergavenny and the surrounding area, as well as exploring further afield.
- The TIC helps local businesses to advertise.
- The Team has very good local knowledge and is able to share its local knowledge with visitors.
- The TIC can advise on public transport requirements.
- The TIC helps to keep the town vibrant.

Having received the verbal update, the following points were noted:

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- Bus and train timetables are provided.
- It was noted that booklets with vouchers would be beneficial to visitors. Some TICs in other counties provide this information.
- A winter closure of the TIC would create a detrimental effect, as more people are taking short winter breaks and might require the services of the TIC during this period.
- It was considered that a good location for the TIC would be within the One Stop Shop, Abergavenny, as this would generate additional footfall.
- The TIC had written to community councils within the surrounding area requesting their support. Information relevant to the community councils and their respective areas could be held at the TIC and disseminated out to visitors.
- The TIC could liaise with local businesses with a view to highlighting tourism, which would benefit both the TIC and local businesses.

On behalf of the Area Committee, the Chair thanked the Manager of Abergavenny TIC for her presentation.

#### **5. Engagement with Voluntary Sector Organisations - Presentation by Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations (GAVO)**

As part of the Area Committee's engagement with voluntary sector organisations, we received a presentation by the Gwent Association of Voluntary Organisations (GAVO) outlining what the organisation does.

In doing so, the following points were noted:

- GAVO was established in 1927 and is now the longest-standing and largest County Voluntary Council in Wales.
- GAVO works in partnership with the Wales Council for Voluntary Action (WCVA) to deliver Third Sector Support in Wales.
- GAVO represents the Third Sector at four Public Service Boards across Gwent (in Blaenau Gwent, Caerphilly, Monmouthshire and Newport).
- GAVO is the lead umbrella infrastructure body for the Third Sector in Gwent and offers free membership
- GAVO's vision is a society where communities, individuals, partner organisations and Third Sector work together in a culture of equality, shared ownership, responsibility and support to build a sustainable future.

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**We resolved that the presentation and contact details for GAVO be forwarded to the Area Committee members so that they might champion GAVO in their wards.**

### **6. Update regarding the new pedestrian bridge over the river Usk, Llanfoist**

We received an update report regarding progress in respect of the proposed new pedestrian footbridge at Llanfoist.

#### **Llanfoist Footbridge – Expected Timetable.**

- January 2018 - Welsh Government Capital Transport Grant for the year 2018 / 2019 Submitted.
- February 2018 - Town Planning Application Submitted on 23<sup>rd</sup> February 2018.
- March 2018 – For the year 2018 / 2019, anticipated funding to be confirmed by Welsh Government.
- March 2018 -Tender Issue.
- May / June 2018 - Town Planning application to be approved.
- May / June 2018 - Contractor appointment.
- June 2018 - Discharge of planning conditions.
- June 2018 - Completion of construction of the Environmental Management Plan.
- August - October 2018 - Works in watercourse.
- February 2019 - Completion of works on site.
- February - March 2019 - Final account, Health and Safety File and Maintenance Manual.

Having received the timetable of events, the following points were noted:

- Signing will be updated and improvements to the pathways on the Castle Meadows site will be undertaken to encourage walkers and cyclists to use the footbridge.
- Details regarding the cow gate access are being finalised.
- Stage 2 of the development relates to access onto the pathway. This will be addressed in a separate bid via the Active Travel Grant.

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- In response to a question raised regarding the de-trunking of the A40, it was noted that this would be a matter for the Welsh Government to consider.

We resolved to receive the verbal update and noted the expected timetable of developments.

#### **7. Draft Wellbeing Plan and links to the Bryn y Cwm area**

We received a report regarding the draft Well-being Plan, with extracts from the Well-being Assessment, specific to the Bryn y Cwm Area.

In doing so, the following points were noted:

- The four well-being objectives were identified as:
  - Give children and young people the best possible start in life.
  - Address the challenges of demographic change.
  - Communities and businesses to be part of an economically thriving and well connected County.
  - Protect and enhance our natural environment and minimise the impact of climate change.
- Once the Plan is signed off by the Public Service Board on the 4<sup>th</sup> April, the next step will be to develop an action plan to deliver on these steps.
- Proposing a lead partner on each of these steps with workshops being established to identify what is required.
- The next action will be the planning phase.
- Officers are keen to maintain a conversation with the Bryn y Cwm Area Committee as the action plan is developed.

Having received the report, the following points were noted:

- Concern was expressed regarding the lack of support on mental health being provided to young adults. This matter was noted and would be taken back.
- In response to issues raised such as the impact of the reduction / removal of the Severn Bridge tolls, it was noted that there it will be a challenge to measure the impact of the plan when so many external factors affect wellbeing. It was noted that as action plans are developed, appropriate measurements need to be established to ensure that the plan is having an impact. Welsh Government will also be publishing wellbeing indicators which measure broader issues in comparison to performance indicators.

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- In response to an issue raised regarding tackling obesity in children, it was noted that this matter could be discussed with all interested parties via a workshop, with a view to moving forward on this issue.
- Lead Partners are being asked to convene workshops on a number of issues between now and May 2018. The Public Service Board (PSB) will then prioritise the actions to be taken.

The Sustainability Policy Officer informed the Area Committee that she would take back the comments made at today's meeting.

We resolved to receive the report and noted its content.

#### **8. Social Justice Strategy**

We received a report regarding the Social Justice Strategy before it is considered by Cabinet.

The Area Committee was informed that the draft Social Justice Strategy provides more of the detail about how the Authority will do this and demonstrates its commitment as a Council to address inequality in the county in order to make our society function better. Using the Community and Partnership team as an enabling body, it provides an approach that will help turn lives around by removing barriers and facilitating practical support and solutions to enable all our citizens to realise their full potential.

This is the first phase of an evolving policy and demonstrates the Authority's intention to work as a Council, and in partnership at national, regional and community level, to implement the policy interventions, approaches, support and methods to improve outcomes for people and communities.

The draft Social Justice Strategy sets out the Authority's purpose, intentions and activities for the next four years and the targets by which the Authority will measure its success to ensure that it achieves its goal to put social justice at the heart of what we do in Monmouthshire.

The Communities and Partnership Development Lead provided examples of how support could be provided to community groups at a sustainable level by developing a set of robust sensible measures that could be adopted by the groups. It is anticipated that this approach will help to empower community groups across the County.

Having received the report, it was noted that there was little opportunity for young people to meet up in the Gilwern area. In response, it was noted that officers could pursue this matter by working with volunteers via a community leadership programme with a view to helping young people through youth work.

It was noted that this matter would be added to the strategy as part of the consultation process.

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We resolved to receive the report and noted its content.

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

We received Team Abergavenny's update report on progress to date.

Having received the report, the following points were noted:

- The cemetery at Llanfoist will become full in seven years and it is understood that the cemetery will take back the land currently used by the Llanfoist Allotment Association. Investigations are being made by the County Council's Estates Team regarding the viability of alternative land for the Allotment Association.
- The Environment Group has had a significant influence in the development of Abergavenny town centre and had indicated that it would be willing to provide similar support in the development of Abergavenny town hall.
- Concern was expressed regarding the review of the Local Development Plan (LDP) and inequitable developments proposed for the Abergavenny and Llanfoist areas.

We resolved to receive the report and noted its content.

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

We received a verbal update from County Councillor S. Woodhouse regarding the progress being made at the Strategic Transport Group. In doing so, the following points were noted that arose at the meeting on 7<sup>th</sup> February 2018:

- Abergavenny Railway Station

In considering the letters circulated from the Department for Transport and Welsh Government, it had been questioned why signalling had caused problems relating to the bridge at Abergavenny Railway Station. Support was strong for action to be taken to address the lack of disabled access (and for able bodied with luggage) to cross the bridge. It had been identified that the Authority could apply in the next round of Access for All funding.

It had been reported that Network Rail would attend the next meeting of Abergavenny Town Council to explore the potential for signalling changes to allow the bridgework to proceed.

It had been noted that the Cabinet Member, County Councillor B. Jones, had agreed to send a follow up letter to Network Rail regarding the signalling issues at the railway station.

- Active Integrated Network Maps.

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- Llanfoist Bridge.

**We resolved that an invitation be extended to a representative of Network Rail to attend a future meeting to discuss the footbridge at Abergavenny Railway Station.**

Councillor G. Nelmes provided the Area Committee with an update following a meeting of the Grass Routes Partnership Board.

It was noted that:

- There had been an executive meeting of the Board.
- A new chair had been elected to the Community Transport Association.
- Funding in the sum of £19,000 had been back dated for community transport.
- An agenda item regarding trollies on buses had been deferred to be considered at a future meeting.
- Rural Transport consultation – a pilot scheme in the south of the County regarding car sharing was being introduced. It was considered that Monmouthshire County Council's pool of vehicles could be used more effectively with community transport vehicles.

### **11. New name for the Bryn y Cwm Area Committee**

We considered a temporary change of name of the Area Committee during the pilot.

Following debate, it was proposed and seconded that the Area Committee name be changed to 'North Monmouthshire Area Committee'.

Upon being put to the vote, the following votes were recorded:

In favour of the proposal	-	9
Against the proposal	-	0
Abstentions	-	1

The proposition was carried.

We resolved that the Head of Policy and Governance prepares a report for the next meeting of Full Council outlining the Area Committee's recommendation to Council that it considers a temporary change to the name of the Area Committee during the pilot to the 'North Monmouthshire Area Committee'.



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### 12. Monmouthshire Scrutiny Work Programme

We received and noted the Monmouthshire Scrutiny Work Programme.

### 13. Forward Planner for Cabinet and Council Business

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

### 14. Bryn y Cwm Area Committee Future Work Programme

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

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

- **Update regarding development plans for the Abergavenny Hub.**
- **An invitation be extended to a representative of Network Rail to attend a future meeting to discuss the footbridge at Abergavenny Railway Station.**
- **Update regarding the boundary review of Town and Community Councils within the Bryn y Cwm area.**

### 15. Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Bryn y Cwm Area Committee will be held on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2018 at 1.00pm.

The Democratic Services Officer will investigate suitable venues with wi-fi capability to host this meeting.

**The meeting ended at 3.45 pm.**