

**Minutes of the Central Monmouthshire Area Committee meeting
held at County Hall, Usk.
on Wednesday 10th June 2015 at 2.00 p.m.**

PRESENT: County Councillor S. White (Chairman)

County Councillors: D. Blakebrough, E.J Hacket Pain, P. Jones,
R.J.C. Hayward, V.E. Smith, B. Strong and A.M. Wintle.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr. R. Hoggins	-	Head of Operations
Mr. I. Saunders	-	Head of Tourism, Leisure and Culture
Mrs. N. Perry	-	Democratic Services Officer

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

County Councillor S. White was elected as Chairman of the Central Monmouthshire Area Committee.

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

County Councillor P. Clarke was appointed as Vice-Chairman.

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillors P.R. Clarke and R. Edwards.

4. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

5. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME

There were no members of the public present at the meeting.

6. MINUTES

The minutes of the Central Monmouthshire Area Committee meeting dated 29th April 2015 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Clarification was requested regarding the coach parking at the Portal Road development site. A further update was expected to be brought to the next meeting.

A Member requested an update on the proposed slip road on the A40 at the Old Dixton Road roundabout in order to reduce the congestion at the traffic

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lights. We were informed that funding had been received to carry out a feasibility study for the extra lane at Wye Bridge.

A Member raised concerns regarding the ongoing speeding issues in Gwehelog, following a fatality, suggesting that officers look into introducing double white lines. The matter would be brought to Strong Communities Select Committee to discuss further.

Members discussed the disruption due to be caused by the Velothon on the forthcoming weekend. The following points were made:

- Emergency measures were in place.
- Road closures had been put in place correctly.
- Debriefing sessions would be conducted following the event.
- The event was planned to go ahead for the following 4 years, but routes not yet confirmed.
- It was felt that there could have been better information provided to the public of Monmouthshire.
- The order had been put in place correctly and there were not resolutions for temporary road closures.
- Any gain economically was thought to centre around Cardiff, being the start and finish area.
- Costs incurred would be captured and providing to detail to Welsh Government.
- An update would be presented at full Council.

7. UPDATES:

i. One Stop Shops, Library and Community Hubs

The Head of Operations updated the committee as follows:

- The process of recruitment was underway, and interviews for the posts in Community Hubs had been carried out that day, with further interviews next week.
- In Monmouth, the resolution was to create a Hub in Rolls Hall, but in the longer term the Authority would look at assets more widely.
- The Cultural Review would be looking into other areas, including museums.
- We were continuing to work towards a September launch date.
- Savings associated with the Hubs were £300,000 in terms of reduced salaries.
- The interviewing process was in line with the Councils Employment Protection Policy.
- Staff not placed in a post would be served notice of redundancy, often a 3 month period.

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- In the event of a post not being filled internally the post would be advertised externally.
- The projected date for the Hub at Usk was 6th July 2015.
- Suggestions of new names for the Hub would be considered.

A Member queried if the issue of the Hubs moving could result in travel and relocation costs. We were informed that in circumstances where an individual was at risk and placed in post further afield and for less salary they would receive a disturbance allowance. Any person new to the authority would not be entitled to disturbance allowance, which would be detailed in their contract. Any disturbance allowance was limited to 2 years, and set at 15 pence per mile.

ii. A Boards and displays

We heard that following a report to Cabinet in December to seek approval of a new policy, Managing Obstructions in the Highway, the decision had been deferred to take further consultation.

Meetings had taken place with stakeholder groups organised through the communications team to discuss the placement of A boards and display tables in streets. The consultations were now complete and the report would be taken to Strong Communities Select Committee prior to Cabinet. The existing policy intended to manage the safe passage for pedestrians but allowed no discretion for businesses to display appropriately. Feedback from the workshops indicated that many members of the public enjoyed the displays, and the new policy would mean that the Authority could work with individual businesses. Costs would be incurred by businesses which would then be invested into advertising within the town.

It was noted that the existing policy had not been enforced correctly so there could seem that there was currently a degree of discretion.

It was noted that safety should be a priority within the policy.

8. PROPOSED USK CYCLE ROUTE

We were informed by the Head of Tourism, Leisure and Culture that officers were taking every effort to ensure the issue would progress. Conversations had been held with the college, and officers were working with various departments. The Chief Executive had attended a meeting with the Chamber of Commerce to discuss the route. There had been complications due to the adoption of land.

A Member questioned if there had been progress on the approach at the Usk Island area, and raised concerns that the main route may be overlooked. We

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were informed that the Active Travel Review was looking into mapping areas, including development areas for cycling.

It was confirmed that the proposed route was along the old railway line. County Councillor V. Smith offered to walk the route with officers, which may be beneficial.

We heard that the Usk Trail Access Group were very passionate about the route.

9. FUTURE WORK PROGRAMME

The Chairman requested that all Committee Members be contacted via email to obtain suggestions for the next agenda.

10. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

We noted the next meeting of the Central Monmouthshire Area Committee will be held on Wednesday 16th September 2015 at 2.00pm.

The meeting terminated at 3.10 pm.