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MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Economy and Development Select Committee held at The Council Chamber, County Hall, Rhadyr, Usk, NP15 1GA on Thursday, 22nd November, 2018 at 10.00 am

PRESENT: County Councillor P. Pavia (Chairman)
County Councillor A. Davies (Vice Chairman)

County Councillors: J. Becker, D. Dovey, M. Feakins, R. Roden and B. Strong

Also in attendance: County Councillors D. Evans, J. Higginson, S. Howarth, P. Jordan, M. Powell, V. Smith and S. Woodhouse.

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Frances Williams	Chief Officer, Enterprise
Cath Fallon	Head of Economy and Enterprise
Ian Saunders	Head of Tourism, Leisure, Culture and Youth
Tim Lewis	Events and Special Projects Manager
Rachael Rogers	Monmouthshire Museums Manager
Hazel Ilett	Scrutiny Manager
Richard Williams	Democratic Services Officer

APOLOGIES:

Councillors

1. Declarations of Interest

County Councillor M. Feakins declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest pursuant to the Members' Code of Conduct in respect of agenda item 4 - Abergavenny Outdoor Structure.

County Councillor A. Davies declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest pursuant to the Members' Code of Conduct in respect of agenda item 5 – Caldicot Regeneration Scheme.

2. Public Open Forum

There were no members of the public present.

3. Pre-decision scrutiny of the Abergavenny Outdoor Structure

Context:

To scrutinise the proposed Abergavenny Castle Events Pavilion.

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Key Issues:

- In October 2017 the Museums Service attended the Select Committee to seek comments regarding the Abergavenny Events Pavilion and to seek a loan towards the building costs.
- At this meeting the Committee requested further information on the following issues:
 - Costings of the build.
 - That Abergavenny Town Council be approached for funding towards the project.
 - Confirmation that the lease with the Nevill Estate would continue beyond 2020.
 - Projected income generation.
 - Consideration of the installation of permanent toilets.
 - Clarification of the advantages of a permanent structure over a marquee and the issues that would arise if it was not installed.
 - The value to tourists as well as the local community.
 - The potential for the structure to be used as a wedding venue.
 - Opportunities for local businesses, volunteers and Monmouthshire Ambassadors to be involved in the project.

Member Scrutiny:

- The grant that has been requested in the sum of £120,000 has not yet been secured. This is a significant sum of money. This is a two stage process and the Authority has been invited to go forward to the second stage of the process. If the £120,000 is not secured then the Authority will need to pause and re-assess how this project can be taken forward.
- In the first two to three years, the project will be relying on grant funding, one of which has been secured. The area for review if the grants are not secured would be around the events coordinator and whether there was an opportunity to provide this in house.
- With regard to the figures that relate to each of the activities, activities that have been carried out previously, such as re-enactments and outdoor theatre, the figures are based on many years of data accumulated.

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- The newer events, such as weddings, other local providers have been looked at to ascertain what they are charging for events. Estimations have been kept low initially so that ambitions are not being overstretched.
- In terms of advertising and marketing costs, the Authority has a good record in utilising free and low cost advertising and makes good use of social media.
- Measures have been put in place to deter people from congregating at the site when the building is not in use.
- The twilight sessions figures are based on having two events per year in the first year showing income where 50 people would be attending. In year five there will be four events per year with 200 people attending.
- With regard to schools activity at the site, figures are based on two schools a day initially with a school attending in the morning and another in the afternoon, from Monday to Friday. This will eventually rise to two schools in the morning and two in the afternoon by year five. An admission charge will be implemented.
- Consultation has been undertaken with Cadw. Cadw will officially comment as part of the planning application process.
- The building will be located near to the gates on the left hand side on entering but set back so that it would not have a visual impact to visitors on arrival. This is Cadw's preferred area.
- With regard to the grant application that has been secured via Monmouthshire County Council, appropriate agreements would need to be agreed between Monmouthshire County Council and the new body.
- It is good that the potential for the site is being investigated. Residents and neighbours need to be consulted and their views taken into consideration. Conditions will need to be provided to ensure that the events do not have a detrimental impact on the surrounding area.
- In response, it was noted that neighbours have been consulted. The planning application will have suggested conditions regarding the time that events should finish. However, the type of events being proposed are not likely to finish late into the evening.
- When Abergavenny Food Festival uses the site they provide their own marquees and cover the costs for this. The proposed structure is a similar size to one of the marquees used by Abergavenny Food Festival. There will be no need for the Food Festival organisers to hire a marquee but make the appropriate fee to the Authority to hire the structure.
- In response to a question raised regarding whether the structure should generate a separate Council Tax demand, it was noted that this matter has been raised

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but an answer has yet to be received. Depending on the answer, the business plan will be revised accordingly.

- With regard to events currently being run, there tends to be a drop in income during inclement weather. However, the new structure will mitigate against such a drop in income for these events.

Committee's Conclusion:

- The proposed structure is an important community asset.
- The proposal has great potential to enhance the Castle's offer and services provided.
- The business plan has to be sound. Therefore, costings and financial benefits of the project need to be scrutinised.
- Grant revenue was at stage 2 but had yet to be secured.
- Contingency planning has been undertaken. However, if the substantial grant is not secured then the proposal may need to be re-evaluated.
- Tourism and leisure services is a non-statutory service and has been realising substantial savings for the Medium Term Financial Plan. The Alternative Delivery Model is therefore being explored as the existing model is unsustainable.
- There are still some concerns regarding the financial element of the proposal.
- Assurances have been given that the proposed structure will be secure and anti-social behaviour at the site will be deterred.
- Cadw will have an opportunity to officially comment of the proposal at the planning application stage.
- In terms of grant funding and moving to the proposed new structure, this will become an asset and also a liability for the Alternative Delivery Model.
- The proposal can become an additional revenue stream.
- Residents and neighbours' views need to be taken into consideration in terms of how this project develops.

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The recommendations outlined in the report are:

- (i) To endorse the Business Case for the Outdoor Events Pavilion at Abergavenny Castle.
- (ii) To endorse the Abergavenny Castle Events Feasibility Study.

It was proposed that recommendation (i) be amended as follows and that recommendation (ii) remain unchanged:

- (i) To endorse the Business Case for the Outdoor Events Pavilion at Abergavenny Castle and that there be no financial input from Monmouthshire County Council. If the Alternative Delivery Model (ADM) is implemented, the proposed outdoor structure will fall within the remit of the ADM proposal.
- (ii) To endorse the Abergavenny Castle Events Feasibility Study.

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

In favour of the proposal	-	6
Against the proposal	-	0
Abstentions	-	1

The proposition was carried.

We recommended that the Authority endorses:

- (i) the Business Case for the Outdoor Events Pavilion at Abergavenny Castle and that there be no financial input from Monmouthshire County Council. If the Alternative Delivery Model (ADM) is implemented, the proposed outdoor structure will fall within the remit of the ADM proposal.
- (ii) the Abergavenny Castle Events Feasibility Study.

4. Presentation regarding Caldicot Regeneration Scheme (as part of Cardiff Capital Region City Deal)

Context:

To scrutinise the Caldicot Regeneration Scheme (as part of the Cardiff Capital Region City Deal).

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Key Issues:

- To maximise a strategic funding opportunity that had come via the Target Regeneration Investment Fund – TRIP.
- This equates to a £100M fund with £45M earmarked for South East Wales. The Intervention rate of 70% is strong for Monmouthshire County Council.
- The priorities are addressing social issues, job creation, provision of affordable housing and ensuring the well-being of communities.
- Section 106 match funding already exists in Caldicot.
- The total project value for Caldicot equates to £10M with £7M coming from the TRIP funding.
- Cabinet approval was obtained on 5th September 2018 for the wider Cardiff Capital Region Regeneration Plan and Submission of the Project Development Funding Application in the sum of £117,000, which was approved by Welsh Government in October 2018.
- Finalised design works and costings for the Cross Destination Space and the Church Road extension to include a submission of the bid to the Local Transport Fund in the sum of £369,000.
- Cabinet approval has been received for the submission of applications to Welsh Government for Cross Destination Space, in the sum of £1M, Enterprise Space in the sum of £200,000 and Urban Centre Property Enhancement (UCPEF) in the sum of £1M submitted to Welsh Government for consideration on 20th November 2018.
- Community consultation for Cross Destination / Church Road is underway with a view to starting works before March 2019.
- Simultaneously continue on-going negotiations with Newport Road property owners; develop detail of the UCPEF to include a Design Manual, block planning consents and grant application process.

Member Scrutiny:

- As part of the Local Transport Fund, funding has been requested to look at how a scheme might address issues within the Church Road area. It has become clear that there are a number of issues in this area that need to be addressed.
- With regard to maximising the shared work space at the Hub, plans have been drawn up with a view to providing ten desks. However, there are options to look at working with private companies.

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- In terms of the grants scheme, it equates to a 70% - 30% split. Private sector landlords would be required to put in 30% themselves.
- In terms of the car parking strategy, this will enable the Authority to draw in further funding. However, evidence is required.
- The Caldicot Regeneration Scheme is a model that could be used elsewhere in the County.
- It was noted that Monmouthshire County Council owns land to the rear of Castle Park School. It is feasible for this ground to be used as staff car parking and a drop off area for parents which would alleviate some of the road traffic congestion that currently exists on Church Road around school opening and closing times. It is understood that the school is in the process of looking into this matter as a potential option for staff car parking and a drop off area. However, this matter would be investigated further with the Corporate Director for Children and Young People.
- In terms of the Cross Space, there is a need to identify the demarcation between vehicles and pedestrians. Officers are discussing this matter with the local access group. The provision of the on street loading area on Chepstow Road will also be looked at.
- Officers are looking to meet with representative of Grey Hill Surgery to look at how health provision can be built into the wider scheme.
- In terms of branding, internal conversations are to be held in the coming weeks.
- With regard to the future of the high street, conversations with the private sector are being held.
- The Town Team has been successful regarding the development of Pop Up Shops, which has led to some pop up shops taking on premises.
- The night time economy of Monmouthshire's high streets also needs to be looked at, e.g., a premises could be an art shop during the day and a wine bar at night.
- The 70% intervention rate is making a significant positive difference.
- Town centre re-purposing needs to be looked at by identifying the unique selling point of each town. A strategic approach to each of the towns will be undertaken, going forward.
- The creative space needs to be retained.
- The current car parking strategy across the four towns will be reviewed in a holistic fashion with a view to understanding the issues that are arising in each of the towns.

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Committee's Conclusion:

- A framework is being developed which can be used in other towns across the County.
- Highways improvements are required at Church Road, Caldicot.
- Shared workspace is being developed. Councillor Becker has agreed to share his experience of working in this environment.
- Grant funding in relation to private landlords (70:30 ratio) provides benefits to private landlords.
- Car parking is a significant issue in all of Monmouthshire's towns.
- Access to public transport needs to be addressed.
- Engagement with disability groups is being undertaken.
- The importance of enhancing primary care services was identified with work being undertaken with Aneurin Bevan University Health Board.
- Residential development needs to be multi-faceted and needs to appeal to a broad socio-economic demographic.
- The development of a creative space needs to remain flexible, going forward.

5. Presentation regarding Events: New methodology for events and lessons learned

Context:

To scrutinise the new methodology for future events.

Key Issues:

A presentation was received in which the new methodology for future events was outlined.

Member Scrutiny:

- The Select Committee was pleased with the progress that had been made and recognised the need for a strategic plan, going forward, with regard to the potential for holding future events at Caldicot Castle.

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- The pricing structure for the Caldicot Fireworks event was in keeping with other similar events that had been held. The event that was provided in 2018 is very different to the event that was provided five years ago, as the 2018 event was on a much bigger scale with customers receiving more value for their money. The ticket price remained the same as last year with a view to keeping the event affordable for families to attend.
- The events team agreed to offer its services regarding the Christmas lantern parade in Monmouth for 2019.
- It was acknowledged that the Events Team was very good at putting on events within the County. However, it was considered that a marketing company should be employed to sell the Authority's marketing of events.
- The Authority is looking at how it can cross market / cross promote opportunities internally via directorates working together.
- The events team will remain as part of the Authority. However, discussions are being held in terms of joint ventures and promotions with a view encourage income generation.
- Potential venues around the County are being assessed and a number of green spaces of varying size have been identified where community events happen on a regular basis. These spaces are being centrally logged for potential use in the future.
- Training for volunteers needs to be more accessible with some sessions being held outside of working hours and the Council Chamber being used to facilitate a webinar for volunteers who are unable to attend these sessions.
- Notification has been received that Velothon Wales will no longer continue as an event. The Velothon organisers have offered to attend a special meeting of the Select Committee on 18th December 2018 regarding the return on investment of previous events.

Committee's Conclusion:

- The Authority should continue to deliver a strong range of events which will provide community benefit but also provide a financial return for the Authority.
- A robust methodology is now in place to provide events within the County.
- On behalf of the Select Committee, the Chair thanked the Events Team for their hard work.

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6. Confirmation the following minutes:

6.1. Joint Select Committee (Adults and Economy and Development Select Committees) dated 7th September 2018

The minutes of the Joint Select Committee (Adults and Economy and Development Select Committees) dated 7th September 2018 were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

6.2. Economy and Development Select Committee dated 27th September 2018

The minutes of the Economy and Development Select Committee dated 27th September 2018 were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

7. List of Actions arising from the Economy and Development Select Committee meeting dated 27th September 2018

We received the list of actions arising from the Economy and Development Select Committee meeting on 27th September 2018. In doing so, the following points were noted:

Superfast Cymru 2 Broadband Procurement and Future Plans

The Superfast Cymru 2 tender has been finalised and the successful bidder was BT Openreach. An invitation will be extended to Welsh Government with a view to inviting them back to a Select Committee meeting in the New Year.

Performance and Evaluation Framework for MonLife

The Alternative Delivery Model (ADM) workshop has been delayed to allow the new Chief Officer for Enterprise to review the process. The Select Committee should have some input in shaping the ADM Workshop. County Councillors Pavia and Davies, with the Chief Officer for Enterprise and the Assistant Head of Finance will meet to discuss this matter further ahead of the implementation of the ADM Workshop.

8. Economy and Development Select Committee Forward Work Programme

We received the Economy and Development Select Committee Forward Work Programme. In doing so, the following points were noted:

- A Special meeting of the Economy and Development Select Committee will be held on 18th December 2018 at 2.00pm. the agenda items will be:
 - Re-provision proposals for Outdoor Education.
 - The Velothon Impact Assessment regarding the return on investment from the Velothon 2018 and its impact on Monmouthshire.
 - The procurement initiative.

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9. Council and Cabinet Forward Work Programme

We received the Council and Cabinet Business Forward Plan.

10. Next Meetings

Special Meeting of Economy and Development Select Committee dated 18th December 2018 at 2.00pm.

Ordinary Meeting of Economy and Development Select Committee dated 10th January 2019 at 10.00am.

The meeting ended at 12.48 pm.

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