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MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of North Monmouthshire Area Committee held at Little Mill Village Hall, Berthon Road, Little Mill, NP4 0HJ on Wednesday, 20th November, 2019 at 1.00 pm

PRESENT: County Councillor M. Powell (Chair)

County Councillors: M. Groucutt, G. Howard, M. Lane, T. Thomas, K. Williams and S. Woodhouse

Abergavenny Town Council: Councillor T. Konieczny
Llanely Community Council: Councillor G. Nelmes
Llanover Community Council: Councillor G. Thomas

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Deb Hill-Howells	Head of Commercial and Integrated Landlord Services
Poppy Harris	Landlord Services Project Officer
Graham Kinsella	Traffic And Road Safety Manager
Cheryl Haskell	Community Hubs North & Libraries Strategic Lead Manager
Richard Williams	Democratic Services Officer

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr. H. Candler	-	Team Abergavenny
Mr. N. Tatam	-	Abergavenny Town Council
Mr. N. Pearce	-	Aneurin Bevan University Health Board
Mr. C. Davies	-	Aneurin Bevan University Health Board
Mr. J. Miles	-	Stagecoach
Mr. D. Owen	-	Stagecoach
Ms. M. Burford	-	Well-being Lifeboat Project
Mr. M. Pritchard	-	Mind Monmouthshire

APOLOGIES:

County Councillors: R. Harris, S. Jones, P. Jordan and J. Pratt
Ms. J. Lee – Abergavenny Town Clerk

1. Declarations of Interest

County Councillor M. Powell declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest pursuant to the Members' Code of Conduct in respect of agenda item 7 - Mind Monmouthshire, as she is a governor of King Henry VIII Comprehensive School.

County Councillor S. Woodhouse declared a personal, non-prejudicial interest pursuant to the Members' Code of Conduct in respect of agenda item 7 - Mind Monmouthshire, as she was a founder member of Mind Abergavenny, but is not a current member.

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2. Public Open Forum

There were no members of the public present.

3. The Redevelopment of Abergavenny Hub

We received an update report regarding the Abergavenny Hub redevelopment. In doing so, it was noted that the building programme has encountered some challenges over the past few months. However, the following has been achieved:

- All demolition through walls has been completed in the basement, first floor and ground floor theatre area.
- Mechanical & Electrical first fix is currently being undertaken in the basement, ground floor theatre area and first floor.
- New plastering has been completed in all active areas.
- Lime plastering on old walls is in progress.
- Painting of walls has commenced on the ground floor theatre area.
- The lift pit has been excavated and is currently being filled for underpinning.
- Steelwork has commenced and is progressing for the mezzanine.

The next phase of work will include the One Stop Shop, Gwent Police area and Tourist Information Centre moving into the ground floor theatre area to be able to commence work in the ground floor One Stop Shop / Police area.

The projected finishing date for the overall programme is currently March 2020.

Having received the report the following points were noted:

- The main entrance will be opened on 2nd December 2019.
- Footfall to the market will continue to be monitored with a view to ensuring that trade within the market returns to normal as quickly as possible.
- A number of questions had previously been raised regarding the redevelopment of Abergavenny Hub. Officers present stated that these questions had been responded to directly with the Vice-Chair of Abergavenny Civic Society.
- The priority was to redevelop Abergavenny Hub before addressing the Baker Street site (former library).

We noted the report.

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4. Highways issues at Nevill Hall Hospital

We met with representatives of Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB), Stagecoach and Monmouthshire County Council's Highways Department to discuss highways issues that are occurring at Nevill Hall Hospital on a daily basis in which buses are being prevented from accessing and departing the site on time due to inappropriate parking on the site. A number of options were raised as a way of potentially addressing this matter.

We resolved that Monmouthshire County Council's Highways Department liaises with Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB) and Stagecoach with a view to identifying a way forward to address these issues.

5. Update by County Councillor S. Woodhouse regarding progress in respect of the Strategic Transport Group

The following items were identified in which the Area Committee requested the Strategic Transport Group to consider, going forward:

- Inappropriate parking on the Nevill Hall site leading to buses being delayed from leaving the site. Also, lack of parking provision for out-patients / visitors to the hospital.
- Health and safety issues for track workers relating to trains travelling on the Abergavenny line that are still using open flush toilets.
- The new trains, when implemented, will not provide toilet facilities.
- Network Rail needs to address the parking issues at Abergavenny Railway Station to prevent vehicles having to park in adjacent streets when the carpark becomes full.
- The negative effects created by the changes to the X3 bus service i.e., the removal of the early morning bus service which has caused issues for residents trying to get to college / work on time.
- A bus route within the Llanellen ward is currently not gritted. The local Member, County Councillor G. Howard, would like this to be added to the gritting route for safety reasons.
- A solution is still required to address the need for a bus stop in Park Road, Abergavenny near Tesco.

We resolved that the Highways Department / County Councillor S. Woodhouse raise these issues at the next meeting of the Strategic Transport Group.

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6. Engagement with Voluntary Sector Organisations - The Well-being Life Boat Project

We received an update by Marcia Burford regarding the Well-being Lifeboat Project.

In doing so, the Area Committee was informed that:

- The Project is a small group of professional therapists, counsellors, teachers, holistic therapists and creatives, giving their time to aid the well-being of the community.
- Four years ago, it had been identified that there was a lack of informal support for people in the community experiencing a variety of difficulties in their respective lives, which were impacting on their mental health.
- Monmouthshire County Council had provided a base for the organisation at Mardy Park Resource Centre, Abergavenny.
- Volunteers are not paid expenses. Services are free to ensure community inclusion.
- The Project provides counselling, Reiki, Reflexology, Holistic massage, Mindfulness, creative activities and support to access other agencies and community groups.
- There are economic, social, environmental, educational and cultural benefits being provided by the Project.

Having received the update, the following points were noted:

- The services being provided are for adults aged 18 and over.
- Next year, the project is hoping to provide a service for under 18 year olds.
- The Project has links with Public Health Wales and Maudsley Hospital.
- The Project covers the Monmouthshire Area.

We noted the update.

7. Mind Monmouthshire

We received an overview of the support being provided by Mind Monmouthshire. In doing so, the following information was noted:

- Mind Monmouthshire is an independent local Mental Health Charity formed over 40 years ago supporting the people of Monmouthshire, providing free quality services to those in need.

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- The charity has a partnership with National Mind, and gains good support, but is very much a local independent charity.
- The Charity is supported / funded by two main contracts namely, Monmouthshire Council's Supporting People division & Aneurin Bevan University Health Board (ABUHB).
- The offices and staff are based at Monk Street, Abergavenny and work across the County.
- The local charity delivers a wide range of free services which include: counselling, tenancy support, information advice and assistance, 1-1 recovery, psychoeducational / recovery courses, a walking group, campaigning, supported living, welfare rights support and the charity has recently started a farmers' project to support those in need.
- Funding via ABUHB, in the sum of £140,000 per annum, will not be renewed for the financial year 2020/21, which could result in the closure of some services being provided, going forward.
- The Farming Pilot Project ends in March 2020. However, numerous complex referral cases are currently being received.
- It was noted that ABUHB is under financial pressure. However, if the services of Mind Monmouthshire were reduced due to financial constraints, this would create a negative impact on those who require these vital services.
- Mind Monmouthshire was advised to write to the town and community councils within the County outlining their financial constraints as these councils are currently reviewing their precepts for 2020/21 and might be able to provide some financial support.
- Mind Monmouthshire has secured funding over the last two years providing much needed additional mental health and well-being support to secondary school pupils. Due to funding issues this service has now stopped. However, there is clearly a need for this service. Mind Monmouthshire has worked with King Henry VIII School to write a joint bid with a view to hopefully secure some funding.

We resolved:

- (i) that a representative of the Gwent Transformation Service be invited to attend a future meeting of the Area Committee to discuss mental health service provision within Monmouthshire, in particular, to receive an update on Gwent Transformation Projects and Children's mental health provision via the new Iceberg Programme.**

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- (ii) that Monmouthshire County Council's Scrutiny Manager be notified of the financial constraints that Mind Monmouthshire will be facing in the 2020/21 financial year and request that an invitation be extended to Mind Monmouthshire to attend a Select Committee meeting with a view to discussing this matter further.

8. Progress report by Team Abergavenny

We received and noted the report by Team Abergavenny on progress to date. However, the Area Committee did not discuss the report as the County Council had entered into the Pre-Election Period in respect of the forthcoming General Election on 12th December 2019 and it was considered that some of the content of the report might be construed as being politically sensitive during this period.

9. Update by North Monmouthshire Liaison Committee

We received and noted the report by the North Monmouthshire Liaison Committee.

10. Confirmation of Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the North Monmouthshire Area Committee dated 25th September 2019 were confirmed and signed by the Chair subject to the following amendments:

Minute 1 – We elected County Councillor M. Powell as Chair.

Minute 8 – Abergavenny Town Council asked County Councillor Woodhouse to keep the Town Council updated regarding Abergavenny Railway Station.

11. Monmouthshire Scrutiny Work Programme

We received and noted the Scrutiny Work Programme.

12. Forward Planner for Cabinet and Council Business

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

13. North Monmouthshire Area Committee Work Programme

We received and noted the North Monmouthshire Area Committee future work programme. In doing so, the following item was added:

- that a representative of the Gwent Transformation Service be invited to attend a future meeting of the Area Committee to discuss mental health service provision within Monmouthshire, in particular, to receive an update on Gwent Transformation Projects and Children's mental health provision via the new Iceberg Programme.

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14. Next Meeting

Wednesday 22nd January 2020 at 1.00pm.

The meeting ended at 2.45 pm.

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