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MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Bryn y Cwm Area Committee held in the
Council Chamber Town Hall Abergavenny - Abergavennyon Wednesday, 20th April,
2016 at 2.00 pm

PRESENT: County Councillors: D. Jones, S. Jones, M. Powell and J. Prosser

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Matthew Lewis (Countryside)	Countryside Manager
Mike Powell	Rural Programmes Manager
Dan Davies	Events Coordinator
Richard Williams	Democratic Services Officer

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr. P. Baker	-	Costain
Mrs. J. Barnes	-	Bryn y Cwm Community Forum
Mr. P. Johns	-	Abergavenny Town Team
Mr. N. Tatum	-	Abergavenny Town Council

APOLOGIES:

County Councillors D. Edwards, R. Chapman, S. Howarth, S.B. Jones, P. Jordan, K. Williams, Edmondson, Michie and Woodhouse

1. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest made by Members.

2. Public Open Forum

The were no issues raised by the public.

3. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the Bryn y Cwm Area Committee meeting dated 10th February 2016 were confirmed and signed by the Vice-Chairman subject to the following amendment:

County Councillor M. Hickman was in attendance.

Having approved the minutes, the following points were noted:

- The temporary traffic lights on the trunk road were still operational. It was noted that the completion of the works had been estimated to be completed by the end of March 2016.
- Abergavenny Town Council had offered financial support to help retain the four public toilets for a further 12 months. Local businesses will be encouraged to allow members of the public to use their toilet facilities. It was noted that disabled access to toilets needed to be taken into account.

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Bryn y Cwm Area Committee held in the Council Chamber Town Hall Abergavenny - Abergavennyon Wednesday, 20th April, 2016 at 2.00 pm

4. Heads of the Valleys Dualling Gilwern to Brynmawr

We received a presentation by Phillip Baker, representing Costain, regarding the Heads of the Valleys Dualling – Gilwern to Brynmawr.

The Area Committee was provided with a virtual drive through of the proposed works and the likely challenges that Costain will face during the coming stages. Information in respect of the forward plan was also provided.

Having received the presentation, the following points were noted.

- Costain was working with Eisteddfod organisers to minimise disruption.
- The Glanbaiden Roundabout is scheduled to be opened in May 2016.
- A protocol has been agreed with the Brecon Beacons National Park regarding the cladding of the stone pillars.
- The steel used in construction is recycled and locally sourced (within 40 miles of the project).
- Landscaping at Gilwern has yet to be finalised.
- The footbridge at Clydach will be retained with a new bridge being constructed.
- The completion date for the project is August / September 2018. Due to the recent wet winter, Costain has been working weekends in order to remain on target for completion.

On behalf of the Area Committee, the Chairman thanked the Costain representative for providing an interesting and informative presentation.

We resolved that an invitation be extended to Costain to attend the Area Committee meeting in six to nine months to provide the Committee with an update on progress.

5. Team Abergavenny progress to date

We received an update report by Team Abergavenny regarding progress to date. In doing so, the following points were noted:

- The Agri-Urban Project is intended to share knowledge and expertise between a group of ten towns and cities across Europe with a view to developing closer links between the towns and their surrounding rural areas, particularly in the process of local sourcing of food. Over 75 applications have been received and there are 11 towns currently involved. Abergavenny has been asked to join due

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Bryn y Cwm Area Committee held in the Council Chamber Town Hall Abergavenny - Abergavennyon Wednesday, 20th April, 2016 at 2.00 pm

to its association with food, .i.e., the Abergavenny Food Festival. An application has been submitted.

- A local meeting was being coordinated involving societies, agencies and the community with a view to putting a scheme together for the next two years to make Abergavenny sustainable. The minutes of these meetings would be circulated to Members. This will be managed by a Monmouthshire County Council Officer with match funding being provided for two years.

We resolved to receive the report and noted its content.

6. Rural Development Plan (RDP) Funding on the Local Development Strategy

We received a verbal update regarding Rural Development Programme (RDP) funding on the Local Development Strategy. In doing so, the following points were noted:

- Monmouthshire County Council has been awarded £2.79M via RDP streams on a six year programme to support Monmouthshire and the rural wards of Newport.
- 20% match funding to be received from sponsors.
- 160 applications have been received for the complementary capital fund operated directly by Welsh Government (Rural Community Development Fund) with only one coming from Monmouthshire County Council, namely, Llanover Community Council, to look at four village halls with a view to bringing them up to a better standard by providing a multi-functional centre with broadband.
- The RDP Leader Programme consists of five thematic topics.
- The web site for the programme may be found at <http://valeofusk.org>

We resolved to receive the verbal update and noted its content.

7. Update on Events in the Bryn y Cwm Area.

We received an update report on the progress of plans for events within 2016.

Having received the report, the following points were noted:

Monmouthshire's National Eisteddfod 2016

- The events Manager will investigate the feasibility of the Authority taking over the maintenance of the 'Red Telephone Boxes' within the County as they were considered to be a tourist attraction.
- Abergavenny Railway Station will have increased stewardship during the Eisteddfod. All buses will DDA compliant. The entire site at Castle Meadows will be DDA compliant.

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Bryn y Cwm Area Committee held in the Council Chamber Town Hall Abergavenny - Abergavennyon Wednesday, 20th April, 2016 at 2.00 pm

- Disabled access to Castle Meadows will be open by September 2016.
- The Events Manager will investigate the need to provide formal guidance for local people who might be considering letting their houses to visitors during the Eisteddfod.

Velothon 2016

- Concern was expressed that there might be some livestock issues regarding the fields on the Velothon route. The Events Manager stated that he would investigate and clarify this issue.

Abergavenny Festival of Cycling

- It was noted that the event will not affect the Public Realm works as it is anticipated that a workable solution will be agreed.

County Councillor J. Prosser informed the Area Committee that it will be Armed Forces day on 24th September 2016.

We resolved:

- (i) to receive the report and noted its content;
- (ii) that the Events Manager will investigate the feasibility of the Authority taking over the maintenance of the 'Red Telephone Boxes' within the County;
- (iii) that the Events Manager will investigate the need to provide formal guidance for local people who might be considering letting their houses to visitors during the Eisteddfod;
- (iv) that the Events Manager will investigate and clarify this issue regarding concerns that have been expressed that there might be some livestock issues regarding the fields on the Velothon route.

8. The River Usk, Castle Meadows

We received a report regarding the use of the River Usk at Castle Meadows.

The Area Committee was informed that there was one outstanding issue from the Area Committee's previous consideration of the Castle Meadows Management Plan - requests for wider access to the River Usk and for a change of policy to allow canoeing and wild swimming in that section of the river adjoining the meadows where the Council has riparian rights.

MONMOUTHSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Bryn y Cwm Area Committee held in the Council Chamber Town Hall Abergavenny - Abergavennyon Wednesday, 20th April, 2016 at 2.00 pm

The task and finish group had taken the view that further discussions between the canoeing and fishing interest would be necessary to explore if there could be agreement on wider use of the river and it was resolved that officers facilitate further discussion and bring a further report back to the Area Committee, as required.

This process had unfortunately been rather extended but a meeting had taken place between Abergavenny Canoe Club and the fishing club. However, the discussions have not reached agreement on a way forward.

Having discussed the matter the Area Committee resolved that a report regarding this matter should be prepared and presented to a Strong Communities Select Committee with a view to the Committee undertaking pre-decision scrutiny on this matter.

9. Future Work Programme

We resolved to receive the Future Work Programme and noted its content.

10. Next meeting

We noted that the next meeting would be held on Wednesday 13th July 2016 at 2.00pm and that it be held at Llanfair Kilgeddin Village Hall (subject to availability).

The meeting ended at 3.50 pm

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