

**Minutes of the Severnside Area Committee Meeting  
held at Caldicot Town Council Office  
on Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2015 at 10.00 a.m.**

**PRESENT:** County Councillor D.J. Evans (Chairman)

County Councillors: A. Easson, F. Taylor and P. Watts.

**OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE:**

Mr W. McLean	-	Head of Policy and Engagement
Mrs D. Hill-Howells	-	Head of Community Led Delivery
Mrs D. McCarty	-	Whole Place Officer
Mr C. Phillips	-	Whole Place Officer
Mrs S. King	-	Senior Democratic Services Officer

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from County Councillors P.A. Fox and L. Guppy.

**2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Declarations of interest were noted under the appropriate agenda item.

**3. PUBLIC OPEN FORUM**

There were no members of the public present.

**4. MINUTES OF SEVERNSIDE AREA COMMITTEE**

We confirmed and signed the minutes of the Severnside Area Committee meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> January 2015.

**5. AREA WORKING**

We welcomed officers to the meeting and discussed issues surrounding area working and community engagement, during discussion the following points were noted:

- We were advised that a number of communication methods were already in place. The Whole Place review was undertaken and a review was in process regarding community governance. There was a need for roles to be distinguished between Whole Place and Area Committees.

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- The Community Governance Review was being undertaken by an independent consultant, a number of groups and individuals would be interviewed.
- Expected recommendations, regarding decision making and accountability, would be presented to members, at Full Council, it was anticipated that it would be completed in September 2015.
- We recognised that this was a much needed piece of work and welcomed the outcome of the review.
- The scoping included obtaining an understanding of how all groups are related and how they work within Monmouthshire. The aim of the review was to provide a structure and avenue for the authority to access groups. Currently, a wide range of engagement levels were in place and there was a need for clarity from an external view point.
- Town councils were significant and it was anticipated that one of the outcomes of the review would result in maximised knowledge for smaller groups.
- The committee recognised the importance of the review and highlighted that it was imperative that elected members were aware of and understood local arrangements, so that they could be supported and encouraged.

## **6. WHOLE PLACE, SEVERNSIDE**

We received the Severnside Whole Place Update and noted the following:

- Caldicot Visioning Project – The Board approved, subject to cabinet confirmation, release of £22,000.00 of s 106 funding to the Caldicot Town Team to commission a ‘Visioning Report’ for Caldicot Town Centre.

The work is viewed as essential to provide a ‘statement of ambition’ and purpose for the town centre that is credible, has the support of all stakeholders and will attract retail/development interest and investment in the town.

A report would be considered by Cabinet on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2015.

- Improvements to Caldicot Market - The Board approved, subject to cabinet confirmation, release of £1,410.00 of s106 funding to the Caldicot Town Team to pilot improvements to the existing market offer in Caldicot, by adding specialist market ‘attractors’ - increasing footfall, local business investment and providing a sustainable future for the markets in Caldicot.

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Specifically, it was proposed to pilot an Arts and Crafts Market, Gardening Market and International Food Market in the three months to June 2015.

The first pilot occurred on Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> April with 5 Arts and Crafts stalls supplementing the general market. The next would be held on 22<sup>nd</sup> May, and would be a gardening theme.

- Town Centre Wifi Project - The Board approved, subject to cabinet confirmation, release of £1,800.00 of s 106 funding to the Caldicot Town Team to cover a years running costs incurred by ten businesses in installing superfast broadband equipment. The work will encourage business interest in digital marketing opportunities and provide free, public, wifi connectivity in Caldicot Town Centre.

The project is awaiting signed wayleave agreements from property owners before finalising installation and commissioning.

- Linkage Scheme – A revised proposal (attached) was submitted to the local Planning Authority in February in the names of the two main landlords affected – Monmouthshire County Council and London & Cambridge Properties (LCP). We are not aware of any major objections raised to date and it is hoped that the application will be considered on 5<sup>th</sup> May 2015.

A draft legal agreement to enable the landowner to undertake the bulk of works to the main linkage route utilising s.106 monies was issued at the beginning of April and a formal response is awaited. However the landlord has confirmed that they are finalising tender documents, in lieu of agreement, with a view to issuing shortly.

A quotation to undertake improvements to the pedestrian link between the OSS and ‘the Cross’ in line with the planning application is awaited from the Highways. It is expected that these works will commence before the end of May 2015.

- Additional Town Centre Partnership Activities -The Caldicot Town Team have now taken occupation of a vacant unit in Holman House (above Bargain Booze). Discussions are ongoing regarding the re-use of the portakabin for the Caldicot Food Bank and Street Pastors.

The Town Team’s, incredible edible group has started to increase activity during the spring and commencing by replanting two planter areas in the town centre with the assistance of Gwent Police. Some fruit trees have also been planted at the police station.

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The Caldicot Town Team have also now secured the agreement of ASDA to place a town Map within the vicinity of the entrance to the store. ASDA have confirmed £5k towards the costs.

In addition to progressing these activities, the Town Team is currently reviewing its draft action plan to ensure that outputs and timescales are more defined and measurable.

- Eisteddfod - Following two preliminary meetings in Caldicot at the beginning of the year, a Local Eisteddfod Appeals Committee has been established for the Caldicot and Chepstow area. It doesn't preclude other groups emerging separately over time.

A range of activities and fundraising events are already planned and underway – including a concert in the White Lion Pub, Chepstow, a walking tour, and a competition to create an Eisteddfod calendar.

Donations are already being received, including a contribution of £10k from Caldicot Town Council.

Final preparations are being made for the Proclamation Ceremony on June 27th. The event plan for the day has been drafted and work is underway on essential components such as securing a premises licence for the event.

The Town Team have secured use of empty premises of London and Cambridge Properties and Porton developments for use by schools for the event.

The Whole Place Officer advised that at a previous meeting, money had been allocated to Birbeck Road, pending further information being received. Members were invited to comment regarding whether the amount should be slipped to the current financial year.

It was proposed that the amount was issued from last years funding.

Officers confirmed that they would check deadlines for slippage. We agreed that the decision would be supported, pending slippage.

## **7. WORK PROGRAMME**

We discussed the Severnside Area Committee Work programme and noted the following to be considered by the committee:

- We discussed the £5k used as funding and agreed that a process was needed to ensure money was available for local groups. We noted that

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there were no longer dedicated officers available for the scheme to be administered, this had previously be done by the Area Services Officer.

- Outcome/response on community governance
- Safe routes to school – path Rogiet/Undy. Recognised that specific transport issues raised through the Monmouthshire Strategic Transport group.
- Update on 21<sup>st</sup> Schools – update needed
- Update from events officer
- Whole place and town team

**8. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting would be held on **Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> July 2015 at 10.00am.**

**The meeting ended at 12.10 pm.**