

**MEETING OF THE PLANNING, COMMERCE AND ENVIRONMENT (PlaCE) COMMITTEE
OF ABERTILLERY AND LLANHILLETH COMMUNITY COUNCIL HELD ON 28 JUNE
2022 at 6.00 pm in the Council Chamber at Council Offices, Mitre Street, Abertillery.**

PRESENT

Councillors: Rob Phillips (Chair), Peter Adamson, Barrie Page, Josh Rawcliffe, Nick Simmons

Officers: David Cartwright (Clerk)

1. Apologies for absence

None.

2. Declarations of interest or dispensations

None.

3. Minutes – PlaCE Committee 25 May 2022 and 8 June 2022

The Committee **RESOLVED** that the draft minutes were a true and correct record of the meeting of 25 May 2022.

The Committee **RESOLVED** that the draft minutes were a true and correct record of the meeting of 8 June 2022.

4. Budget and Expenditure 2022-23

The Committee noted expenditure against its delegated budget lines in the year-to-date.

5. Paperless meetings – Peter Adamson and Barrie Page

The Committee received a presentation from Peter Adamson and Barrie Page. They noted that meetings of the Full Council generated approximately 4,000 pages of photocopied paper per year at a financial cost of hundreds of pounds to the Council in materials and staff time. The manufacture of the paper and toner was estimated to consume approximately 60,000 watt-hours of energy plus the energy used in shipping and in disposing of the waste paper. The energy used to power a laptop for an hour was less than that required to manufacture one sheet of A4 paper. Therefore, there would be a financial saving to the Council and a considerable benefit to the environment if the Council were to move towards paperless meetings.

The manufacture of a new laptop was estimated to use approximately 350,000 watt-hours of energy, so there would be a considerable disbenefit to the environment if the Council were to buy new laptops for Members. However, if Members used their personal laptops or if second-hand laptops were provided for Members, the Council could reasonably argue that the additional environmental costs would be negligible.

Nick Simmons stated that he believed that potential data protection issues could arise if Members used their personal laptops for Council business and that Members would need to be made aware of these.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to recommend to the Full Council that:

- The Council should support paperless meetings by encouraging Members to use their own laptops, rather than printed paper, in meetings;

- Members unwilling or unable to do so should be offered a second-hand laptop, tablet or e-reader plus any necessary training;
- The Council should authorise the necessary expenditure from the 'Members' IT Equipment' budget.

6. Town In Bloom – Nick Simmons

Nick Simmons noted that £2,500 of the delegated Town In Bloom budget for 2022-23 had been allocated for community involvement. It had been expected that this would be used to support local community groups. However, it had become apparent that some 'community gardens' and other community floral projects were sustained by individuals. Cllr Simmons sought authority to allocate appropriate funding to these individuals.

The Committee **RESOLVED** to authorise that, on the advice of the Town In Bloom Working Group, plants supplied by the Council's Town In Bloom contractor up to the value of £150 may be donated to a private individual as long as the plants will be displayed for the benefit of the community and are not planted on land owned by that individual.

7. Planning

With the Chair's agreement, the Clerk introduced an emergency item regarding a General Permitted Development Order submitted on behalf of EE Ltd to upgrade two mobile phone mast arrays on the roof of the automatic telephone exchange building in Abertillery.

The Committee considered the proposals and the potential benefits to thousands of local households and businesses of the introduction of 5G capability. The Committee decided against submitting any comments or objections to the planning application.

8. Terms of Reference

The Clerk noted that the Committee had discussed a number of important issues and projects over the last year but had yet to progress to formal proposals. The work required to do this for all the issues and projects may exceed the resources available, so it may be necessary for the Committee to establish its priorities.

The Chair suggested that the Committee should set itself a deadline to establish its priorities and to generate firm proposals before the start of September. The Committee agreed that this could be done effectively through informal meetings and email.

The meeting ended at 7.12 pm.

Signed as a correct record by the Chair.....

Minutes produced by David Cartwright, Clerk.