

MEETING OF THE PLANNING, COMMERCE AND ENVIRONMENT (PlaCE) COMMITTEE OF ABERTILLERY AND LLANHILLETH COMMUNITY COUNCIL HELD ON 16 MARCH 2023 at 6.00 pm in the Council Chamber at Council Offices, Mitre Street, Abertillery and via videolink (Zoom).

PRESENT

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

Officers: David Cartwright (Clerk)

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

None

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST OR DISPENSATIONS

Nick Simmons declared a personal interest in Item 8 as he had submitted private proposals to the Blaenau Gwent Local Development Plan consultation process in 2020.

3. MINUTES – 19 DECEMBER 2022 AND 8 MARCH 2023

The Committee **RESOLVED** that the minutes were a true and correct record of the respective meetings.

4. BUDGET AND EXPENDITURE 2022-23

The Clerk reported that the Committee's Town in Bloom budget was now overspent by nearly £1,000 as the Committee appeared to have omitted VAT from its calculations when submitting proposals to the Council's budget-setting meeting in January 2022. This would have a negligible impact on the Town in Bloom initiative as the financial year had only a fortnight to run but it would preclude the Committee from authorising further expenditure from that budget during the meeting.

5. MYNYDD LLANHILLETH WIND FARM

The Clerk noted that the Committee meeting of 19 December 2022 had asked him to enquire about community funds arising from the proposed wind farms at Mynydd Carn y Cefn and Mynydd Llanhilleth. He had contacted the developer, Pennant Walters, and had been told that they would not be in a position to discuss even outline arrangements until the planning process had progressed further. At this stage, the company could not even give guesstimates as to timescales let alone the sums of money that would be involved or how they would be distributed.

Nick Simmons suggested that the Council should explore acting in partnership with Pontypool Town Council regarding Mynydd Llanhilleth wind farm as the proposed development straddled the two community council areas. The Clerk advised that any such discussions should involve at least two Members and that it would be advisable for an officer to be present to offer guidance on not overstepping the Members', or the Committee's, authority.

The Committee asked the Clerk to approach Pontypool Town Council with a view to arranging preliminary, outline discussions about a joint approach to the administration

of community funds arising from the proposed wind farm at Mynydd Llanhilleth and that Barrie Page and Nick Simmons should be invited to attend any such discussions.

6. TOWN IN BLOOM

The Clerk circulated a draft letter to local groups stating the outline terms under which the Council would pass custodianship of floral planters and other displays to community groups. The Committee suggested that the Clerk add a sentence stating that the Council anticipates that its support for such arrangements will be long-term.

The Committee **RESOLVED** that the custodianship of up to up to eight floral planters in Cwmtillery should be transferred to Cwmtillery Litter Pickers.

7. COMMUNITY TRANSPORT

The Committee agreed to a suggestion from the Chair that a working group of all Members of the Committee should meet to consider how the Committee should determine the parameters of its proposed feasibility study and to make recommendations to a future meeting of the Committee.

The Clerk offered to provide a summary of the parameters set by other organisations that have commissioned similar feasibility studies.

8. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Chair stated that he and Nick Simmons had been involved in the consultation process of the Blaenau Gwent Local Development Plan in 2020. He recommended that the Committee should ensure that at least two Members attended any consultation event as he had learned from experience that local knowledge could yield a number of opportunities for constructive engagement in the process.

The Committee asked the Clerk to contact Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council to request that the community council be kept abreast of all consultation opportunities and to ensure that the Chair and Nick Simmons were invited to contribute.

9. A467 UNDERPASS MURAL

The Chair reminded the Committee that officers of Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council had reacted positively to a site visit in November 2022. However, he was still waiting for Blaenau Gwent Council officers to report back. Peter Adamson suggested that the Committee needed to be realistic about Blaenau Gwent Council's ability to support environmental projects given the council's recent budgetary cutbacks.

The meeting ended at 7.16 pm.