

ABERGAVENNY TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 9TH MARCH 2022 AT 7PM ON MS TEAMS, & IN THE COMMUNITY ROOM, TOWN HALL, ABERGAVENNY.

Present: Cllr M Groucutt (Chair)
Cllr T Konieczny
Cllr M Harris
Cllr R Harris
Cllr G Jones
Cllr T Thomas
Cllr M A Brocklesby
Cllr S Burch
Cllr N Tatam
Cllr T Davies
Cllr M Hickman
Cllr P Simcock
Cllr D Simcock
Cllr F Morgan

Absent without apologies

Cllr L Van De Vyver

In attendance:

S Rosser (Town Clerk)
Sharon Hobday – Tindle News
Gina Robertson – Tindle News

No public session

Public in Attendance: J Shipley, B Kelly, L Proctor, C Holland.

PR 21/22	Receive and approve apologies for absence None received.
PR 22/22	Receive Declarations of Interest None received.
PR 23/22	To approve the minutes from 16th February 2022. Cllr Tatam clarified his comments on 4 th line of page 2 of the minutes and this clarification and alteration was agreed. It was then proposed by Cllr Konieczny to approve the minutes with this alteration, and this was seconded by Cllr Thomas, with all approving.

PR 24/22

To receive a presentation and funding request from Sharon Hobday & Gina Robertson from The Chronicle on the Community in Kindness Awards.

Sharon Hobday had met with the Mayor and Town Clerk a few weeks back to discuss a new initiative that The Chronicle are launching in April 2022. Sharon has worked for Tindle News for the last year looking at the different industry sectors, and prior to this had worked for 18 months in the NHS. This changed her outlook – the empathy of others, people going above and beyond for each other. Doing shopping for neighbours, picking up prescriptions, etc. Tindle wanted to champion this, look for those unsung heroes. There are some amazing people out there, and they wanted to celebrate this. This will be all about Abergavenny – those mainstays of our community. The Chronicle is embracing the digital age, and their online presence is growing.

The Community in Kindness nominations will run from April to June for 12 weeks. There will be a hefty and rigorous marketing campaign. The awards cover a range of categories, and individual categories will have their own sponsors, all of which will be advertised throughout this period. The sponsor then chooses the recipient of the award from the nominees. There will be an afternoon award ceremony in mid-July where winners will be awarded their trophies and certificates. Tindle are putting together a 12 week plan across the paper and online platform. Fantastic artwork already put together for this. Sharon and Gina would like ATC to be involved as a main sponsor. Gina joined the paper just 4 weeks before the 1st lockdown of the pandemic and the paper has had to change – they ran 4 titles between 2 staff, and throughout this period received lots of inspiring stories covering tough times. This was fantastic, but they couldn't feature all of these, but now staffing is increasing more stories can be covered and shared. The Chronicle rely on ATC for regular input, as had been put in place with the previous Clerk. They want to promote the town more. Gina asked ATC for feedback on what's right, what's wrong etc and of course more local news and events, to remind people we are here and in the community.

Cllr Groucutt sympathised and recognised how difficult it is to run a local paper. Cllr Konieczny explained that ATC used to have annual community awards so the precedent has already been set to acknowledge people so it will be good to support this in some way. You are banging on an open door. Gina had already spoken to the previous clerk about this kind of collaboration.

Cllr Thomas agreed with Cllr Konieczny. Looking at the demographics of the readership, you assume its mainly older people, and the Chronicle keeps in touch with it all both online and in print. He recognises the Chronicle's importance through the pandemic in connecting people. Very sure there will be a large number that will come forward in nominations. Normally there would be a community dinner so anything ATC can support is good as will local businesses – its 2 way highway of support.

Cllr R Harris asked if the awards are monetary or if they were looking for sponsors for the 11 categories. Sharon said they would like ATC to be the main sponsor of the whole Community in Kindness Awards, reiterating there will be rigorous marketing, drop boxes for nominations across the community. Already visited a lot of local businesses, but there is potential for ATC to be the overarching sponsors, for £1800 in total. Sharon will share a list of what this will give ATC across the 12 weeks (£150 per week). Coverage will be 12 weeks from beginning of April to end of June, then the awards themselves mid-July. Gina

	<p>said every week the nominees will be listed in the paper along with the sponsors plus some editorial. Sharon explained the different ways people can make a nomination: either by a coupon into a drop box, and there will be a digital tab on the website, making it easy to enter a nomination. Cllr M Harris said for an amazing project, £1800 seemed very good value for money, for all generations. Superb idea and good to support.</p> <p>Cllr Konieczny asked Councillors to wait for the underspend info and then make a decision on the expenditure in April, taking it in to the next financial year. Not a question of whether we want to do it or not, simply that if we had General Power of Competence we'd have more freedom so its important to get it right. Not being obstructive, just look at when the payment can be made. Sharon said the payments would be invoiced monthly in April, May and June at £600 per month.</p> <p>Cllr Burch requested the information pack online to look over – it was agreed to send this via email to the 4 Councillors attending virtually.</p> <p>Cllr Groucutt summarised that as there were no comments against, that there were all positive comments, and that ATC would look forward to this partnership with The Chronicle, congratulating them on their electronic readership, and for attending the meeting.</p>
PR 25/22	<p>To consider a small grant application from Eisteddfod Y Fenni.</p> <p>Councillors read through the application, and Cllr Thomas spoke in support of the Eisteddfod Y Fenni application as this has been off for a year due to Covid. They aren't holding the event in full, - no models as in previous years. It goes across all year groups and involves every school in Abergavenny. It would be good to kick start this again.</p> <p>Cllr Konieczny – point of info: have we enough funds in the Small Grant pot to cover this request? The Town Clerk confirmed that there is funding available to cover this.</p> <p>Cllr R Harris spoke in favour of this grant.</p> <p>Cllr M Groucutt said all Councillors seem happy with this application and asked for all to show their hands if they are in favour of this application. All agreed to accept this grant application.</p>
PR 26/22	<p>To consider the suggested Climate Crisis Policy from the Environment Committee.</p> <p>Cllr Konieczny explained that part of the Environment Committee's Strategy and Action Plan we felt we should be including short term goals in response to the Climate Crisis. The sub group met to look at this, and as a minor Council with limited resources we had to think about the role of this with and for the community. We have created a Policy and Mission Statement, and are bringing this to Council for approval going forward as a Climate Crisis Policy. Cllr Tatam expressed a debt of gratitude for all the work that had gone into this. Councillors have worked hard on this. It has been hard going at times with a lack of support. We are shoehorned in to not taking on assets etc, and in danger of not being braver than we should be. What you as a Council have landed on us over the last 5 years is pitiful.</p> <p>Cllr Jones explained that everyone on the subgroup were invited to contribute,</p>

	<p>and we have now got something we can consider.</p> <p>Cllr Thomas commented that when this is put in the context of MCC with 4000+ staff, plus vehicles and assets, ATC have very little – there is a lease vehicle which the Town Team access and that is diesel. MCC cover the utilities of the building we are housed in, but in future we may be able to take an active measure of this.</p> <p>Cllr Groucutt proposed the annual review of the policy is carried out at the March meeting of Policy and Resources Committee in future.</p> <p>Cllr Konieczny rebuked Cllr Tatam’s bleak analysis. He pointed out the 4th bullet point, for ATC to continue working on development of allotments, which will involve land purchase in future. ATC are not bereft of desire to get into obtaining property or land. If we do find an opportunity to do this, we will. All Councillors are welcome to contribute to the Strategy and Action Plan across all headings. If anything, anyone could put forward suggestions which would lead to borrowing against for obtaining a community asset, but they haven’t. If Cllr Tatam felt that passionately about it, no-one would fail to support you. To impugn Councillors is below you.</p> <p>Cllr P Simcock asked if we can look at an electric vehicle for the Town Team, and if we can forward our policy on to MCC to say we believe we can convert to electric when collaborating on such projects.</p> <p>Cllr Groucutt suggested this be sent to Matt Gatehouse as they are trialling electric vehicles across the fleet – distance has been an issue but MCC are actively looking into this.</p> <p>Cllr Brocklesby endorsed what had been said and policy says we’ll encourage and empower – the next Council can decide what that needs. It is laid out in policy so it can be spelt out in the next Strategy and Action Plan, and that is the beauty of the policy – it is flexible enough to do so, extend it to other groups that the new council can use to create new partnerships. It is an active and living document, how we are working together can make this more resilient.</p> <p>Cllr Groucutt moved to the vote on the Climate Crisis Policy as proposed by Cllr Konieczny, seconded by Cllr Thomas. Cllr Tatam opposed the proposal, all other Councillors voted in favour of adopting the Policy.</p>
PR 27/22	<p>To receive a report from the Town Clerk on a virement request.</p> <p>Omission from Clerk when ATC voted on the Youth Cabin when they approved the £15k match funding for MCC. This wasn’t forecast within the budget for the year, and the former clerk should have sought to vire the request from General reserves for this decision. We now show a significant overspend in the Larger Grants budget heading as the new Clerk paid the grant from here, so now needs to vire the money from General reserves to cover this.</p> <p>Cllr Konieczny proposed the virement from General reserves to the Larger grants Budget for £15k, seconded by Cllr Groucutt. Unanimous approval.</p> <p>NB: New youth cabin has now opened, Cllr Jones pointed out the photo and report didn’t acknowledge ATC and Cllr Thomas’s support. Clerk to write to MCC Comms to rectify this. Cllr Groucutt reiterated ATC were happy to go in with MCC as partners and Cllr Thomas confirmed this was a jointly funded</p>

