

ABERGAVENNY TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 20th Oct 2021 7PM IN THE COMMUNITY ROOM, TOWN HALL, ABERGAVENNY

Present: Cllr T Konieczny (Chair)
Cllr N Tatam
Cllr M Harris
Cllr R Harris
Cllr S Burch
Cllr M A Brocklesby

Absent without apologies

None.

In attendance:

S Rosser (Town Clerk)
M Hand & G Kinsella – MCC for presentation (via Teams)

No public session

No public in attendance

E 01/21	Receive and approve apologies for absence Apologies were received from Cllrs L Van de Vyver, T Davies, G Jones, & D Simcock, and it was resolved to accept the reasons for absence.
E 02/21	Receive Declarations of Interest Cllr R Harris – Takes no part in consideration of planning applications as sits on MCC Planning Committee.
E 03/21	To receive a briefing from Mark Hand and Graham Kinsella from Monmouthshire County Council on the proposed pilot of a town-wide 20mph zone including parts of the A40. Mark Hand thanked ATC for allowing their attendance remotely to deliver the briefing on the Welsh Government funded project for a town-wide 20mph zone to be implemented in Jan/Feb/Mar 2022. Graham Kinsella delivered the briefing explaining the process leading up to being selected as 1 of 8 pilot areas in Wales, with 2 falling within Monmouthshire, the other being in Caldicot/Magor/Undy. Several areas in the centre of Abergavenny, including the A40, will be reduced to 20mph from early 2022. Air quality monitoring equipment will be installed to monitor air quality before and after the implementation of the pilot. Transport for Wales are delivering a communications package which will be shared shortly, and MCC Comms Team are also designing a more targeted package for residents in particular groups. Speed monitoring will be in place around the town for 5 years. This all leads up

	<p>to the statutory implementation across Wales of 20mph in urban areas by April 2023.</p> <p>Councillors discussed a similar project that had been implemented in Park Crescent and Park Avenue to bring in a 20mph zone, and were pleased to see a reduction in speed of road users in that area. It was noted 90% of residents welcomed this reduction in the speed limit to tackle the issue.</p> <p>G Kinsella said Speed Implementation Devices could be programmed to collect data on the speed of vehicles passing, which would cost more, but could be a worthwhile collaboration project with ATC. M Hand asked what routes ATC would want to have these on, and it was mentioned there are already some around the town that could be upgraded for this purpose.</p> <p>It was discussed about having more Average Speed Check areas on the A40, but this is difficult on residential streets in towns due to there being too many places that vehicles can join the route. Cllr R Harris commented on a new type of sign in Cornwall that flashed up a message with your vehicle reg on it, with a green message thanking you for abiding by the speed limit, or red if you had breached it – a very effective tool to slow road users down!</p> <p>Cllrs asked if the communications being designed would look to try and alter driving styles to stay under 20mph. G Kinsella said there is a distinct change from the historic speed kills and slow down campaigns from previous initiatives. Looking to embrace the more positive impacts of speed reduction, and encourage alternatives like walking, cycling or scooting.</p> <p>Cllrs asked if ‘rat runs’ around the town had been identified for the. Pilot routes. Although usage and speeding on these roads is not constant, they certainly increase at peak times and when there are issues on the A40. It was discussed that other areas where 20mph zones had been brought in were now seeing positive impacts with alleviation of traffic congestion. M Hand responded saying initial responses to 20mph being brought in is that the reduction will increase traffic congestion and make driving more erratic but evidence shows this is not the case. It was acknowledged that the need for enforcement would diminish over time once learned behaviours change with new road markings and signage. Cllrs all congratulated MCC on securing the funding for the pilot project and for the presentation, and agreed to assist in the distribution of the communications once available.</p>
E 04/21	<p>To consider and make recommendations regarding the following planning applications:</p> <p>DM/2021/01343: Single storey rear extension. Melbourne House 48 Stanhope Street Abergavenny Monmouthshire NP7 7DH: Already approved on MCC portal.</p> <p>DM/2021/01055: Proposed two storey side and single storey rear extensions and alterations. 3 Lansdown Drive Abergavenny Monmouthshire NP7 6AW: Recommend approval.</p> <p>DM/2021/01584: Proposed two storey extension to rear of property to provide additional living area to ground floor and new bedroom to first floor. 103 Hereford Road Abergavenny Monmouthshire NP7 6AA: Recommend approval.</p> <p>DM/2021/01578: First floor extension over existing garage. 4 Llanover Way Abergavenny NP7 9JF: Noted that Cllr M Powell from MCC has given endorsement. Recommend approval.</p>

	<p>DM/2021/01544: Single storey home office extension. 44 Park Avenue Abergavenny Monmouthshire NP7 5SP: Recommend approval.</p> <p>DM/2021/01532: Convert old storeroom that is no longer being used into a small hair studio. Auberge, 25 Frogmore Street Abergavenny NP7 5AH: A1 use in A4 business premises. Hairdressing in a drinking establishment. There is no reference to change of use being required in the planning application. Concerned about lack of consultation to change to A1 use in the application. Not clear where this new development will be accessed from: sperate from current business, via street, or by walking through current establishment? Respond stating more clarity and further information will be needed - decision to be deferred for further clarity and information.</p> <p>DM/2021/01548: Conversion of existing detached garage into annex accommodation. Ty Cibi, 6 Chapel Orchard Abergavenny Monmouthshire NP7 7BQ: Recommend approval.</p> <p>DM/2021/00499: Construction of new porch, extension to existing outbuilding and construction of second storey over existing single storey garden room. 79 North Street Abergavenny Monmouthshire NP7 7EB: Already commented on previously but has been resubmitted – recommend approval stands.</p> <p>DM/2021/01326: Two storey side extension. 33 Knoll Road, Abergavenny, Monmouthshire, NP7 7AN: Recommend approval.</p> <p>Planning inspectorate: concerns were raised and discussed around the ongoing Climate Crisis, and how planning applications could be encouraged to incorporate carbon zero future proofing. New regulations due 2024. Suggest discussion is taken to Full Council in November for consideration. As a statutory consultee, ATC need to express their concerns. Phosphate neutrality on the river could be improved by submitting a request to Welsh Government to install a catcher to decrease pollution levels. If this isn't done, the Usk and Wye biodiversity will be permanently damaged.</p>
E 05/21	<p>To consider and make recommendations regarding the following street trading application:</p> <p>STR026 - La Mediterranea Food UK, Cibi Walk Shopping Centre, Abergavenny, NP7 5AJ: Enhances area in Cybi Walk – recommend approval.</p>
E 06/21	<p>To consider the report regarding a request to host the Wales in Bloom Ceremony in 2024.</p> <p>Report received and noted. Cllr Konieczny spoke about the awards he attended this year in Beaumaris, where Abergavenny achieved Gold, missing out on the top award by three points to Denbigh. This shows winning is achievable in future. It's no longer just about the floral displays, there is more consideration given to biodiversity and community engagement. The improvement the judge observed in Abergavenny was such that the National Committee have asked if Abergavenny will host the 2024 awards. A preliminary meeting has taken place with John Woods from Wales in Bloom to receive the expression of interest and checklist of requirements to host the event. It has been held 3 times in Monmouthshire – twice in Usk, once in Chepstow. The last occasion was in 2014. The awards alternate venues between North and South Wales every year. 2022 awards are being held in Talgarth.</p>

	<p>Recommendation – to put to Full Council to accept the invitation to host the event in 2024.</p> <p>Cllrs discussed the costs of hosting the event, and it was explained the majority of the outlay would be covered by sponsorship. Delegates are asked to pay for their ticket to attend the awards ceremony which usually covers the cost of a buffet. We can build on the local support and invite local businesses for sponsorship. It was agreed with the lead in time of 3 years to plan and budget for this would be an excellent opportunity for the town with time to engage various stakeholders like ADTA & MCC Visit Monmouthshire.</p>
E 07/21	<p>To receive a verbal report from Cllr Tatam regarding the rental of a standpipe for the use of watering the planters throughout the town centre.</p> <p>A verbal report was received from Cllr Tatam regarding the rental of a standpipe for enabling easier watering of the planters around the town centre. Up to now, bowsers are being filled in Usk & driven to Abergavenny several times to enable all planters to be sufficiently watered in one evening. We have in the past been offered the facility of filling the bowsers in Llanfoist Depot but the hours the planters are maintained fall outside of the depot opening hours. Cllr Tatam has been quoted the cost of £880 for the standpipe rental, with water being metered at £1.31 per cubic metre. It is provided with a 22mm tap, which it was agreed would take too long to fill a bowser with. The larger tap is 60mm, and costs jump to £3k for this standpipe. It also can interfere with local water supplies and can only be used on particular types of hydrants. There is a middle ground of a coupler to enable faster filling with the 22mm tap from any hydrant. This would be an additional cost of £90. Users need to watch a 20 minute video and complete an online test in order to become a trained user. Recommendation: to budget in 2022 for the rental of the standpipe and coupler at £970, and to discuss with contractors who would need access to the standpipe and when. Town Clerk to discuss with all contractors and newly established Town Team a watering schedule that will work with this equipment, and the effects this will have on the current contracts in place. All in favour. Cllr Tatam was thanked for his research and report.</p>
E 08/21	<p>To consider the revised report on installing a drinking fountain in Brewery Yard.</p> <p>Original report was considered and agreed 27th November 2019. Permission was given by MCC to install a drinking fountain in Brewery Yard. Before the purchase was made and works commenced, Covid hit and has since put a stop to these works being carried out. With the time that has now elapsed, and the changing landscape, it was discussed whether it was still appropriate to install a drinking fountain.</p> <p>Councillors agreed a drinking fountain was not currently a wise option, due to sanitisation of the device. If it is deemed in future that is safe to install we can revisit this. It was also suggested that an alternative place to install the fountain would be Bailey Park. Cllrs will look to promote the national Refill scheme that many local establishments are. Now enabling once more for the public to take their own water bottles in to establishments to be refilled. Recommend to defer until evidence is seen from PHW that it is safe to use. Proposed by Cllr Burch, seconded by Cllr M Harris, all in favour.</p>

E 09/21	<p>To receive an update on progress of the SLA with MCC for the public toilets in Abergavenny.</p> <p>MCC’s Roger Hoggins has been approached regarding the inadequate SLA in place with ATC for the provision of public toilets in Abergavenny. There was no provision for contingencies should they need to close for any reason, which then happened due to Covid, and we were expected to continue paying for services which could not be delivered. Further contributions were then asked for by MCC toward additional cleaning when they reopened, which could be claimed back by MCC from the Covid recovery funds. A draft SLA was sent to Roger Hoggins and Debra Hill-Howells at MCC on 9th March 2021, and to date no response has been received despite requests to meet via Teams to discuss the agreement. As we are approaching the time for budget setting, the recommendation was made that the Clerk contact MCC with a time frame of 2 weeks for a response in order for the draft agreement to be discussed and ratified in order for us to set our budget. This was proposed by Cllr Konieczny, and seconded by Cllr MA Brocklesby.</p>
E 10/21	<p>To consider and review the Strategy and Action Plan and discuss additional actions for inclusion in the action tables.</p> <p>Current plan needs to be updated and addressed in full. Most priorities have now been completed. Some are still in abeyance, for example Give Dog Fouling The Red Card, and a possible PSPO next year. Enforcement of current byelaws such as dogs on leads in Bailey Park can now be investigated as MCC have a full compliment of Enforcement Officers, and the Town Centre Action Group can be reinstated.</p> <p>New priorities are needed. ATC need to take the lead in Environmental Crisis Planning for the town, which will be an agenda item for the next meeting. Cllrs were asked for ideas and proposals for the next round of Local Places for Nature grants to enhance biodiversity, which Rachel Carter from OVW will be presenting on at the next meeting.</p> <p>Sarah Price Landscapes concept designs for raised beds and planting at sites Abergavenny to be included in the updated Plan.</p> <p>It was asked if areas along the A40 route could be looked at and improved as this lets the face of the town down. A40 is controlled by SWTRA who would need to be negotiated with to allow any works to be carried out along any part of the A40. Suggested to look at route and draw up a list of suggestions. Town signage to be looked at and improved.</p> <p>Carbon and Eco Literacy Training is now available for free for councillors and volunteer groups, so should be promoted.</p> <p>Agenda to next meeting to discuss in full.</p>

Due to time the meeting ended at 9:16pm and all remaining business will be rolled over to the next meeting on 24th November 2021

APPROVED AS A TRUE RECORD

CHAIRMAN DATE