

ABERGAVENNY TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 7TH SEPTEMBER 2022 AT 7PM ON MS TEAMS & IN THE COMMUNITY ROOM, TOWN HALL, ABERGAVENNY

Present: Cllr G Jones (Chair)
Cllr B Nicholson (Vice Chair)
Cllr K Eldridge
Cllr J George
Cllr S Burch
Cllr M Strong
Cllr A Wilde
Cllr M Barnes

Absent without apologies

None

In attendance:

S Rosser (Town Clerk)
Lucy Hywel – Y Fenni Business Community
Mike Hill – South Wales Fire Service

No public session

No public in attendance

PC 31/22	Receive and approve apologies for absence Apologies were received from Cllrs Powell and Simcock, and it was resolved to accept the reasons for absence.
PC 32/22	Receive Declarations of Interest None received.
PC 33/22	To approve the minutes from 6th July 2022. Minutes of the last meeting proposed as a true record by Cllr Nicholson and seconded by Cllr Jones, all resolved to approve.
PC 34/22	To receive a verbal update from Y Fenni Business Community on plans for Christmas 2022 Cllr Jones welcomed Lucy Hywel to the meeting online. Cllr Jones asked Lucy for an update from the Y Fenni Business Community regarding plans for Christmas 2022. Lucy explained this is the first week back after summer trading

	<p>and the next meeting of the business community is due to be held on the 29th September. Lucy has spoken to Ginevra at the Wool Croft about plans for Christmas. Cllr Jones said he had spoken to Chris Jones from Nevill Street and also William Griffiths from The Angel with the Town Clerk. It is proposed to hold an online meeting to plan for Christmas for the whole town. Lucy said the sponsorship received for just Nevill St last year and not including the whole town was not received well by the business community and would like to look at having area designations whilst also being inclusive. Cllr Jones said the designation of different areas and inclusion had also been reflected by others he had spoken to.</p> <p>Cllr Nicholson asked Lucy how many or what percentage of local businesses do the Y Fenni Business Community have connection with? Lucy explained that MCC attempted to push through a BID 10 years ago which independent business is stopped in its tracks and the business community was set up as there was no voice in the town. The constitution says anyone in the NP7 post code area can be a member. Currently there are over 200 members, there is no fee, and they rely on the sales of a calendar to raise funds. Lucy as secretary sends out all communications to these members. There is regular interaction with Abergavenny Town Council through the Town Clerk.</p> <p>Cllr Barnes asked if there are many small businesses experiencing financial troubles and how will this affect the business community? How can we help? Lucy is a great believer in being different. Cities have no difference where we are independent. Lots of cafes are a cause for concern, there is a high saturation of these, an example of this would be having a gift shop situated between two cafes that struggles to get noticed due to the abundance of street furniture. There is also concerns and issues around access for those with disabilities. Abergavenny does well and it is acknowledged we need a mix of all trades and businesses but we are on the cusp of it tipping over. Going forward it is the business community's aim to be proactive and helping to keep Abergavenny up and above others in the area and the UK. The business community are not sure that MCC are listening or that they have got it right.</p> <p>Cllr Wilde asked if there is still an appetite for there to be Christmas lights? Lucy said that families will want that and they're not worried about this their bigger concern is what will happen in January onwards. Businesses are investigating shorter hours, less staff, but they can't be negative. We must be upbeat and positive about the town.</p> <p>With there be no further questions Cllr Jones thanked Lucy for attending and she left the meeting.</p>
PC 35/22	<p>To discuss plans for the Remembrance Day Parade on Sunday 13th November 2022 and elect a sub-committee to work on plans for the event.</p> <p>Remembrance Day Parade is due to be held on Sunday 13th November. Road closure notifications have been submitted to MCC. The town clerk advised that we will need a working group to assist with the planning for this event. The Abergavenny branch of the Royal British Legion have agreed to assist. Cllrs Powell, George, and Wilde volunteered to join this working group, and it was discussed to invite Matt Lane to attend who provides the PA system for this service. Meeting to be booked week commencing 19th September.</p>

PC36/22	<p>To discuss plans for the Christmas Light Switch On Event for 19th November 2022 and elect a sub-committee to work on plans for the event.</p> <p>Cllr Jones explain to ATC that the choice of venue was between the end of Frogmore St which would prove very costly with regards to road closures and stewarding plus staging and that they preferred option would be to use the town hall. Volunteers were asked for in order to create a working group and Cllrs Nicholson, Jones and Eldridge volunteered. Matt Lane has been booked to provide the PA for this event and is to be asked for ideas and suggestions. The staging which is kept at the town hall is not able to be used at present due to clamps, steps and handrail needing to be purchased in order to make this safe for use. The technical manager of the Borough Theatre has advised that these items have been out of stock for some time with their usual suppliers, and there's no delivery date or availability elsewhere within the UK. To this end Cllr Jones suggested whether we consider using the mezzanine level of the library and then have a procession around the town to include all areas in the form of a Lantern parade. The half term holiday could be utilised to run activity days for children to make lanterns for this event. The proposed date for the Christmas light switch on is Saturday 19th of November. The town clerk will set up a provisional meeting for the working group in the next two weeks.</p>
PC 37/22	<p>To receive and note the Town Clerk's update.</p> <p>Town clerks report was received and noted. Councillors discussed the Abergavenny Pride event and how it was well represented by all groups and organisations. It is hoped the committee well approach ATC for sponsorship or support for their 2023 event.</p> <p>Mike Hill from Abergavenny Fire Station joined the meeting remotely to discuss their recruitment drive. Abergavenny Fire Station set up is run as an on call station with personnel covering via an alerter to attend the station when necessary. It is a key station due to its demographic and location. It requires 24/7 cover. It is operating currently on 50% personnel as a large amount of lost over the last 18 months for various reasons. South Wales Fire Service contacted ATC and other groups for assistance. Cllr Jones asked if ATC can come to the station and visit possibly on their work nights. Mike advised these are usually on a Wednesday between 6:30 and 8:30 but other times can be looked at and arranged. Cllr Eldridge asked about the recruitment demographics. Mike explained that you must work all live within 5 minutes of the station and this does limit the number of applicants. Cllr Burch said she is happy to plug this on her newsletter the current recruitment drive. We could also do the same on our Facebook page and website. Have you reached out to one life leisure centres? Mike explained that MonLife are already advertising. Cllr Nicholson said she has looked at the recruitment pack online and wanted to clarify the on-call hours? Is it correct that it is 42 hours per week? Mike said there is a 2 hour drill every Wednesday evening and the rest of the hours are then on-call. It is a minimum contract and can go up to 100 hours depending on circumstances. It does seem a lot and it is a massive commitment, and we understand that to give those hours is a big ask. Certain areas find it very easy</p>

	<p>to recruit, but we always struggle. The town clerk asked if there is an incentive for employers to release staff? Mike responded but at this time it is simply under the heading of community volunteering. Cllr Jones thanked Mike Hill for joining our meeting.</p> <p>Cllr Jones explained to Councillors that it is a high risk job and they have been offered a 2% pay rise. Cllr Jones asked the town clerk to investigate if other Councillors would like to go along on their drill night on a Wednesday and to invite the Chronicle along as well as Cllrs Powell and McConnell and the entire ATC. Cllr George pointed out that currently Abergavenny Station has crews coming from other manned stations to provide adequate cover.</p> <p>Cllr Wilde said that in attending various events with the Rotary's from both Abergavenny and Poland the request was received to consider twinning between the two represented towns as they have such good relationships. Cllr Nicholson asked if other than visiting the two towns what else does twinning involve? Cllr Jones explained he had visited Beaupreau and stayed with host families and reciprocated visits and Abergavenny. The football twinning is instrumental in this continuing as the sport links go back over 30 to 40 years. Cllr Jones asked Cllr Wilde to check with Abergavenny Rotary if there would be a possibility or interest in a meeting to discuss the possibility of twinning in future and said it was amazing to see the activities from the visit of see Jaroslaw Rotary club.</p> <p>Changing places: date my day my life facility on children street is the only facility with a changing places toilet. MCC have this under review along with the green fingers site at the Melville. The old tourist Information Centre at the bus station is being repurposed as a well-being hub but this would have been an obvious place for a changing places facility. MCC owns the relevant equipment and knows that this needs to be accessible. Discussions around the amount we spent on the toilet provision and whether a changing places facilities should be included were had, as well as discussing areas where something like this could be facilitated. Councillors asked if we could add a changing places facility to our strategy and action plan at our away day in October. The town clerk will e-mail information on the changing places discussions held up to this point to Cllr Burch.</p>
PC 38/22	<p>Finance Report – to receive and approve the budget report for specific budgets allocated to this committee.</p> <p>The town clerk pointed out at one budget heading is now at 143% the Platinum Jubilee so the town council provided 2 community events and there is an outstanding £250 donation to come in from the business community for the AR platinum jubilee trail which was provided for the town. Cllr Eldridge asked if energy efficient lights could be added to the tender process for the Christmas lights when this is looked at in the next 12 months. The Finance Report was proposed to be accepted by Cllr Eldridge and seconded by Cllr Jones with all approving.</p>
PC 39/22	<p>Report from Councillors attendance at external bodies relevant to this Committee:</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abergavenny Community Trust – Cllrs Barnes and Jones - meeting soon • Abergavenny Eisteddfod – Cllrs Jones and Simcock- invited to next meeting • Abergavenny Relief In Need Charity – Cllrs Simcock and Wilde - invited to next meeting • Abergavenny Community Enterprise (ACE) – Cllrs Groucutt and Brocklesby – no report received • Beaupreau Twinning Association – Cllrs Jones and Simcock – no report received • Borough Theatre A4B – Cllrs Eldridge and Simcock - staff undertaking safeguarding training at present. Maybe they can assist with forthcoming events. • Mind Monmouthshire – Cllrs Groucutt and Jones – no report received • Monmouthshire CAB – Cllrs Barnes and Simcock – rescheduled to October • Ostringen Twinning Association – Cllrs Simcock and Nicholson – no report received
PC 40/22	<p>Report from County Councillors on matters affecting Abergavenny relevant to this Committee.</p> <p>Cabinet member Cllr Burch was in attendance and was asked for any updates from MCC. The summer play schemes were a success. Work is now underway at King Henry School though management of traffic and building works is causing issues. Football clubs have been in discussions with MonLife and she is impressed with the lengths that MonLife went to in order to accommodate these sports clubs throughout the winter months. There is still some discussion on portable lighting for these clubs. The priority of the build is the safety of the children. Lower Meadow will possibly need to exclude dog walkers for the health and safety of the children using that pitch. There is an A40 meeting tomorrow. SWTRA Consultant didn't send information to all town councils regarding various options for the future management of the trunk road. The former TIC at the bus station received various proposals for its use and it is now being turned into a well-being hub, not sure what services it will provide when it opens.</p> <p>Cllr George asked if Cllr Burch was aware what the door in the skate park fence was for, or why is it there and where does it go? Was this work carried out by MCC? It is a brand new addition and just wondered why it had appeared? Cllr Burch was not aware of this work.</p> <p>Lastly Cllr Burch had just received notification that the Borough Theatre was not likely to open until January 2023.</p>
PC 41/22	<p>Items for consideration at the next meeting 2nd November 2022</p> <p>Cllr Jones asked the town clerk to invite Judith Langdon to give an update to people and communities committee on the cost of living crisis and what MCC were doing to help the community. Cllr Nicholson said she had read a lot about</p>

	<p>something called warm hubs? There are collective spaces that are not easily heated and a sense of what is available in the town is needed. Cllr Burch said the cost of living crisis is a big focus for MCC, they are increasing things like the mileage allowance for staff particularly for health and social care workers. There is an anti-poverty and inequality steering group who discuss money and debt advice, energy efficiency support, and warm hubs. MCC can't pay for community centres to open longer and need to focus on libraries and leisure facilities. There are difficult decisions to come. There will be a cost of living summit in each town. Cllr Strong said this needs to be looked at by MCC very carefully and if they can look at ideas or keeping areas warmer for people. There are great community rooms available need to promote these as meet and greet spaces and think about the messaging. Cllr Burch said this is practical and we'll build on what's happening with support for the community and the messaging being non stigmatising. We will publicise what's already there as well as information on income concessions and special deals. Items for next meeting's agenda will include updates from the working groups on plans for both the 13th and 19th of November respectively.</p>
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Meeting ended 8:46pm

APPROVED AS A TRUE RECORD

CHAIR..... DATE