

## ABERGAVENNY TOWN COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE POLICY AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 15<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2023 AT 7PM VIA MS TEAMS & IN THE COMMUNITY ROOM, TOWN HALL, ABERGAVENNY.

**Present:** Cllr P Bowyer (Chair)  
Cllr M Barnes (Vice Chair)  
Cllr MA Brocklesby  
Cllr S Burch  
Cllr B Callard  
Cllr KJ Eldridge  
Cllr C Holland  
Cllr G Jones  
Cllr T Konieczny  
Cllr B Nicholson  
Cllr M Powell  
Cllr D Simcock  
Cllr A Wilde

#### **Absent without apologies**

Cllr L Wright

#### **In attendance:**

S Rosser (Town Clerk)  
D Fordham  
K Couchman

#### **Public in attendance:**

D Cole  
O Davies

No public session.

PR26/23	<b>Receive and approve apologies for absence.</b>  Apologies were received from Cllrs Groucutt and George, and their apologies were resolved to be accepted by all Councillors present.
PR27/23	<b>Receive Declarations of Interest</b>  Declaration of interest from Cllr Simcock regarding the Melville CA CIC, and Cllr Burch due to MC Cabinet responsibilities regarding public toilets. Declaration of interest from Cllr Burch on any discussion or vote on Toilets due to area of Cabinet Responsibility.
PR28/23	<b>To receive and approve the minutes from the last meeting on 15<sup>th</sup> February 2023.</b>

	<p>Minutes were proposed as a true record by Cllr Konieczny and seconded by Cllr Holland. All Councillors resolved to accept these as a true record.</p>
<p>PR29/23</p>	<p><b>To receive a presentation from Daniel Fordham from MCC regarding Place Making.</b></p> <p>Cllr Bowyer welcomed DF to the meeting. DF went through a presentation to explain the WG initiative and the Placemaking Wales Charter. The headings include People and Communities, Location, Movement, Mix of Uses, Public Realm, and Identity. There has been a provisional allocation of Capital Funding for Abergavenny which can be used on vacant buildings for building grants, small public realm projects smart town technology. Needs to be spent by March 2025. Cllr Jones asked if the regeneration of buildings money could be used for social housing? DF would need to check this. It could be used to create residential in vacant buildings, with a maximum of £250k being allowed for any single project. Cllr Powell asked if any could be used for improvement of the former Post Office Building. DF said its more for vacant areas needing redevelopment, this is a site looking for new tenants at present.</p> <p>Cllr Simcock asked about the March 2025 deadline. DF explained the money has already been allocated, it needs to be spent by March 2025 – a place making plan has to be in development.</p> <p>Cllr Konieczny said he had met with DF previously to look at areas and had circulated a Design Wales document to Councillors to assist when looking at projects. He asked if it would strengthen any application if we show we are working with other community groups? DF said it absolutely would – if it is led by ATC and MCC, broader engagement then strengthens the plan and application.</p> <p>Cllr Burch commented it was a very interesting presentation. How the town looks to people who simply drive through it could be looked at – a large transformation in the central vicinity hasn't reached outer areas. We have an opportunity to change the face of the town along the A40.</p> <p>Cllr Barnes asked about the timescales – is it possible to work with private land and building owners? Or does it have to be an MCC building? DF explained the funding is for the town centre only. The scheme around building grants is based on one used in Caldicot where owners and leaseholders were encouraged to use funds to improve their facades. The grants brought owners and leaseholders into the process. It takes time. Need to start as soon as possible, but useful mechanism to bring along on this.</p> <p>Cllr Powell asked about Horsington's Yard/Tiverton Place and the walk into town from that area and car park. As you look up from here you see the tatty reverse of the buildings on the main street. DF said one of the questions looked at was in principle, money can be spent on an area defined as being 'town centre'. You could target a particular place or allow it to be spent across the whole town.</p> <p>Cllr Konieczny asked when we should start working on this? And at what stage do you want a draft? DF said it can be a lengthy process, can take 6-12 months to get adoptive plan. Working with Monmouth at present. Suggest starting the process to say it is n development and look at projects in parallel. Cllr Konieczny said it would be good to have a timetable if DF can advise us on when we can meet again to look at this. ATC note that Smart Town tech projects could be at an oven ready stage, particularly with the environmental and tourist projects under</p>

	<p>discussion that can fit into projects – they are already in development and could merge with this, as place making and smart towns projects align well. Cllr Bowyer thanked DF for his presentation.</p>
PR30/23	<p><b>To receive a sponsorship funding request from Abergavenny Art Society.</b></p> <p>Cllr Bowyer welcomed Karen Couchman to the meeting and thanked her for the thorough grant application submitted for consideration. KC explained the Society has been going for 20yrs and is based in Abergavenny. They work in schools and were n=behind the WWI quilts that were displayed around the County including from the mezzanine of the Library in Abergavenny Town Hall. This project was achieved working with the five primary schools in Abergavenny. Cantref and OLSM are working with the Society on this new Coronation project and the aim is to display the finished items once again from the Mezzanine of the Library. Cllr Bowyer asked if all Councillors had read through the application and asked for any questions – Cllr Simcock commented he had been present at the unveiling of the quilts project which was very impressive. No questions were received. Cllr Powell proposed awarding the £1000 requested for the project, and this was seconded by Cllr Simcock. All Councillors resolved to award the grant in full.</p>
PR31/23	<p><b>To receive a funding request alteration from the Abergavenny Arts Festival</b></p> <p>The Town Clerk read through the request received form the outgoing Chair of the Abergavenny Arts Festival Committee requesting the £4500 agreed for 2023 be split to cover £1000 for a smaller one day event in 2023, and then roll over the £3500 to 2024 for the new incoming committee to utilise for the bigger festival that is hoped to be held next year.</p> <p>Cllr Konieczny said that groups can't roll over funding like this if it isn't being used. Entitled to come back to ATC again, but can't guarantee the roll over. We should ask them to come back to look at a new renegotiated agreement with the new committee.</p> <p>Cllr Nicholson agreed with this, asking how we need to proceed – can we ask the Town Clerk to send a template agreement to them outlining the suggestion? Town Clerk agreed to email the template agreement to the outgoing Chair. Cllr Nicholson proposed ATC award the £1000 of the remaining £4500 as requested for this year, seconded by Cllr Jones. All Councillors resolved to accept this proposal.</p>
PR32/23	<p><b>To receive an update on revising the current agreement with Melville Centre for the Arts.</b></p> <p>Cllr Konieczny on behalf of the Chair and Town Clerk explained to Councillors there had been several meetings with the Melville CA CIC Directors. The cooperation agreement was falling short from what we wanted to get out of it, and it was not helping them develop as a centre. There was a range of deliverables and we talked about a way forward. A new Annex 4 has been written and looks at using funding to get a full site survey for the viability of the centre, a design brief for their website and social media, branding, enhanced kerbside presentation. Put in as deliverables – more useful going forward. Cllr Barnes asked if the Directors</p>

	<p>and Centre Manager are happy with this proposed new Annex? Town Clerk explained this was all worked on collaboratively and agreed every step of the way. Cllr Barnes proposed to adopt Annex 4 and approve payment of funds as per the agreement. This was seconded by Cllr Nicholson. All Councillors participating in the vote resolved to accept and support this proposal (Cllr Simcock did not take part).</p>
PR33/23	<p><b>Finance Report months 10 and 11 and virement request</b></p> <p>Cllr Konieczny said there were areas with significant overspends but the budget going forward takes into account the changes to costings going forward. It does look untidy, but we've carefully estimated increases going forward. Not huge sums.</p> <p>Cllr Konieczny proposed the reports for Months 10 and 11 be accepted as accurate and true records, seconded by Cllr Holland. All Councillors resolved to receive these accounts. These were then signed by Cllr Bowyer.</p> <p>Virement: £9000 to be taken from General Reserves to cover the BBNPA agreement for £10000 as only £1000 was allocated in error at the start of the financial year. Proposed by Cllr Wilde to accept this virement request, seconded by Cllr Eldridge, all Councillors resolved to accept and approve this request.</p> <p>ACE: Cllr Konieczny is aware that ATC agreed to a new cooperation agreement but that this had not yet been signed as we had not had a full update or report. Cllr Jones said ATC had requested a stakeholder meeting as ATC are the biggest contributors and we need to insist on this. Proposed ATC pay the £10000 for year one of the new agreement, and to pursue with ACE the stakeholder meeting with clearer understanding of support and reports that are expected as part of the agreement. Proposed by Cllr Nicholson, seconded by Cllr Eldridge. All Councillors resolved to accept and approve this proposal.</p> <p>One Voice Wales – Membership: The renewal had been received and circulated to Councillors. Proposal to renew the membership for 23/24 for put forward by Cllr Holland and seconded by Cllr Konieczny. All Councillors resolved to approve renewing the membership as proposed.</p>
PR34/23	<p><b>To receive a draft Co-option Policy for adoption and approval</b></p> <p>Cllr Bowyer explained to Councillors that in the case of no election being required when a casual vacancy occurs, we would be faced with a co-option, which we at TC did not have a policy for. Cllr Konieczny explained a draft policy outlines the procedure if no election is called. It is transparent and clear to explain how this would work. The decision to anonymise process was taken at the last occurrence of a co-option at ATC. Councillors saw the documents and were asked to vote for the candidate they wanted. This explains all eventualities, both for us as Councillors, and the public. Cllr Jones proposed accepting the draft policy and adopting this into our policies and procedures, and this was seconded by Cllr Eldridge. All Councillors resolved to accept and adopt the policy.</p>
PR35/23	<p><b>To decide on a date for an Extraordinary Meeting on the ATC Strategy and Action Plan.</b></p>

	<p>Cllr Bowyer asked if Councillors would be able to attend an Extraordinary Meeting if called on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> April 6pm - 8pm to complete the Strategy and Action Plan. Those on MCC Cabinet requested the time be 7pm – 9pm. Proposal from Cllr Jones to hold an extraordinary meeting on Wednesday 5<sup>th</sup> April 2023 7pm – 9pm to finalise the Strategy and Action Plan, seconded by Cllr Konieczny. All Councillors resolved to accept and approve this proposal.</p>
PR36/23	<p><b>Civic Award Submissions for consideration:</b></p> <p>Cllr Bowyer explained that a policy for the Good Citizens Award had been adopted but this is the first time we have been asked to consider nominations. Nomination 1 was discussed in full based on the written application received, and it was agreed that the application meets the criteria to be considered for such an award. Proposed by Cllr Konieczny to approve the award nomination, seconded by Cllr Powell, with all Councillors resolving to accept this nomination and approve the award.</p> <p>Nomination 2: Cllr Konieczny pointed out the policy states that nominees must be resident in Abergavenny. There is no allocation for past residents, or indeed those that are recently deceased. We need to look to include a time limit which we don't currently have. As it stands, we can't consider this second nomination. Cllr Bowyer said the rules are clear, they weren't made that long ago and were passed unanimously, however we can look to alter the policy once it comes up for re-adopting. Cllr Brocklesby agreed the policy is there to change and this can be done in October 2023. As the community dinner will hopefully be an annual event, it is possible to make the amendment to the policy and then suggest resubmitting the nomination for consideration under the revised policy. Cllr Konieczny agreed, that we didn't consider the flexibility being needed, and it's only now that it has come to our attention. Appropriate to include a new strand by altering and re-adopting, then can invite nominations again next year.</p> <p>Proposal to review and alter the policy in October 2023, by Cllr Nicholson, seconded by Cllr Wilde, with all Councillors in favour and resolving to accept this proposal.</p>
PR37/23	<p><b>To receive a report from the Media Agency on Website redesign and hosting proposal.</b></p> <p>Cllr Bowyer introduced the proposal which had been circulated to all Councillors. Cllr Nicholson said it looks good but wanted to know more about the process. How does it meet the public needs, what will be the public consultation, and how do we test it? Cllr Bowyer said we can ask for this and if we can have your input it would be really useful. Cllr Konieczny explained our current website is hosted on UMBRACO which is very coding heavy. When we talked about this to The Media Agency they explained that ATC don't need something like that. We talked about the management of the site, and they felt ATC need to be able to manage it. If we use WordPress, it will be much easier. Huge variety of applications can be more interactive and easier to use. Current is very clunky. New version can also have a Welsh version built. Already do this for Griffiths Construction. Build time would be 3 months from draft and design phases to consultation on what to include. Ongoing hosting is £125py going forward. Cllr Barnes asked if Cllr Nicholson could be ATC's liaison at every step of the way? Needs setting up properly. Cllr</p>

	<p>Barnes formally proposed Cllr Nicholson be the chief liaison for ATC, and this was seconded by Cllr Konieczny, with all Councillors resolving to approve this which was accepted by Cllr Nicholson.</p>
PR38/23	<p><b>To consider the returned draft Toilet SLA from MCC</b></p> <p>Draft SLA had been circulated to all Councillors and also run past a Solicitor for checking. Clause 3.4 has no annual % uplift included which leaves ATC open to any increase being imposed. Cllr Konieczny proposed to return this to MCC and ask for either 2.5% or CPI to be included in clause 3.4. This was seconded by Cllr Barnes. All Councillors resolved to accept this proposal to be carried out by the Town Clerk. Cllr Burch abstained due to Cabinet responsibility for this area.</p>
PR39/23	<p><b>To receive a proposal from MCC on refurbishment and ongoing maintenance costs for White Horse Lane Toilets.</b></p> <p>The Town Clerk's report was noted. Cllr Konieczny explained that reserves are less than what the proposed sum required to put WHL toilets right so it's a non-starter. Cllr Barnes asked why ATC can't ask MCC to get a public loan for the works. ATC could then cover this with certain conditions. It's a possible route. Still need something on this site. Need toilets this end of town, this may be a better solution. Cllr Jones agreed we need a provision that end of town, but why pay £165k and we don't then own it? Not in any place to consider this request. Cllr Eldridge asked if Cibi Walk would be able to take on something like this. Cllr Burch explained that Place Scrutiny Committee agreed to look at WHL and other toilet provisions. Cllr Callard asked why MCC were closing WHL. Cllr Burch asked officers to investigate and look at provisions, including redevelopment. Cllr Bowyer reminded Councillors ATC are being asked to cover cost of refurbishment. Proposal to write to MCC to explain ATC are not in a position to cover this cost of refurbishment at this stage. Proposed by Cllr Konieczny seconded by Cllr Simcock, all Councillors resolved to accept this proposal (Abstain from Cllr Burch due to Cabinet responsibility).</p>
PR40/23	<p><b>Earmarked Reserves: Project Proposals Report</b></p> <p>Cllr Bowyer invited Cllr Konieczny to explain this report. Cllr Konieczny said that within Environment Committee we had an Environmental Improvement Plan for 4 areas which was costed in 2019. £15k is needed for the Bus Station Improvements. ATC commissioned Sarah Price Landscapes for scope and proposals. Consider using some reserves for completing these improvements. May be able to get grants to help with some areas. Would need to re-look at costs for phase 3 and 4 to bring back to Council for consideration. Cllr Bowyer said there are no proposals for making any firm commitments at this stage. Simply to look at costs and take these to various committees. Proposal for each committee to look at any suggestions for EMR proposals, proposed by Cllr Nicholson, seconded by Cllr Simcock, with all Councillors voting to approve this proposal resolving to accept this.</p>
PR41/23	<p><b>To receive reports from Councillors attendance at external bodies which are relevant to this Committee:</b></p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Abergavenny Eisteddfod – Cllrs Jones and Simcock</b> Childrens Eisteddfod 25<sup>th</sup> March at KHS – rep needed to attend for award to be given out as Mayor and Deputy Mayor are unavailable.</li> <li>• <b>Borough Theatre MCC / ATC Collaboration – Cllrs Groucutt and Konieczny</b> Cllr Konieczny and Cllr Eldridge attended the Schools matinee sponsored performance that was jointly funded by Abergavenny Round Table and Abergavenny Rotary Clubs. Great experience for all the children that attended.</li> <li>• <b>Mind Monmouthshire - Cllrs Groucutt and Jones</b> - no report.</li> </ul>
PR42/23	<p><b>Report from County Councillors on matters affecting Abergavenny relevant to this Committee.</b></p> <p>Cllr Brocklesby was happy to report that the budget had now been passed by MCC.</p>
PR43/23	<p><b>To consider items for the next meeting on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2023:</b></p> <p>Cllr Bowyer asked Councillors to email agenda items to the Town Clerk by 12<sup>th</sup> April 2023.</p>

**Meeting ended at 8:55pm.**

**APPROVED AS A TRUE RECORD**

**CHAIR .....** **DATE .....**