

ABERGAVENTNY TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 5TH OCTOBER 2022 AT 7PM VIA MS TEAMS & IN THE COMMUNITY ROOM, TOWN HALL, ABERGAVENTNY.

Present: Cllr T Konieczny (Chair)
Cllr P Bowyer
Cllr K Eldridge
Cllr J George
Cllr C Holland
Cllr G Jones
Cllr D Simcock

Absent without apologies

Cllr L Wright

In attendance:

S Rosser (Town Clerk)

No public session.

No public in attendance.

E 88/22	Receive and approve apologies for absence Apologies were received from Cllrs Barnes and Strong and it was resolved to accept the reasons for absence.
E 89/22	Receive Declarations of Interest Cllr Holland declared an interest in planning application 21381/FUL as this is a neighbour of his.
E 90/22	To receive and approve the minutes from the last meeting on 27th July 2022. Cllr Simcock requested that the surnames for the representatives who attended the meeting for friends of the earth be added. He also asked for clarification on the progress following their presentation. Cllr Konieczny said that ATC had agreed to be enablers and a conduit, but no follow up e-mail has been received to date. Cllr Jones suggested that Cllr Barnes may be able to follow this up as he has contact with the group once he is well enough. The Town Clerk requested that the absence listed for councillor Holland at the last meeting be changed to an apology due to the Internet connection difficulties he suffered that evening. Texts explaining this were only seen by the Town Clerk after the meeting but had been sent in good time. With these alterations, the minutes were proposed to be accepted as a true record by Cllr Bowyer, seconded by Cllr Konieczny, and it was resolved to accept these by all Councillors present.

E 91/22	<p>High Street Regeneration Seminar - A Vibrant Destination: Abergavenny's story – presentation from Cllr Konieczny</p> <p>A PowerPoint presentation from councillor connexion was delivered to ATC. The High Street heritage online conference was held by Carmarthen County Council on the 8th of September 2022. This event was of some interest two ATC and Cllr Konieczny wished to show Councillors what we were saying about Abergavenny to other county councils across England and Wales. Councillor Jones thanked Cllr Konieczny for a great presentation and that it was good to see positive promotion of town. Cllr George asked if we can use this PowerPoint presentation to produce a video in order to promote the town? Cllr Konieczny explained we did a Christmas video last year to promote the town which gave a flavour of what the town had to offer. If we are successful in setting up a Business Resilience Hub we can look at branding in conjunction with all in the town. Good to promote the town, good for employment, compared to other nearby towns that are now vastly empty. We have only a few empty units – one town shared how they get landlord permission to display town vinyls in vacant shop windows to advertise the town, and make the frontage more attractive. We could look to do this with Richards on Frogmore Street, and display the Story of Abergavenny. Cllr George agreed, saying we can make good use of this presentation, and create vinyls showing Abergavenny through the years. The Power Point will be shared with all ATC by the Town Clerk.</p>
E 92/22	<p>To receive a report on Abergavenny in Bloom</p> <p>The Town Clerk explained to ATC that the tenders are now due on the contracts for the planters throughout town. ATC have gone from a £15k budget in 2017 to £25k across two providers (£16k and £9k respectively). Cllr Konieczny explained the pedestrianisation/public realm works by MCC included planters which MCC only looked after for 1 year, then ATC took these on – this is the ‘rusties’ on Frogmore Street, and metal square planters on Lion Street/ St Johns Square. ATC need to assess the budget for these going forward and how the town presents itself in future. We get extremely good value for money thanks to all the volunteer hours which go into the various areas around the town so this also needs to be considered – ATC could be looking at £50 - £60k if we didn’t have that. To compare, 2017 saw Usk TC pay £30k for their Usk In Bloom budget. Cybi Walk pay £10k for their summer displays. Need to look at the benefits to the local economy, it may seem a lot but it is considerably less than many. Tender process may be the best way to proceed.</p> <p>Cllr George asked for reasons behind going to tender. The Town Clerk explained if a contract is valued at £10k or more, there is a requirement to advertise this via Sell2Wales to follow Welsh Government Procurement guidelines. It would enable other providers to submit a tender for the contract/s. Cllr Bowyer asked if we need to look at putting either one or both contracts out to tender. The Town Clerk explained one is over the threshold as it stands, the other is just under but very close to the threshold. One covers plantings and maintenance of 36 planters, the other is for the municipal plantings and the watering contract. This could be divided up further. Cllr Eldridge asked if breaking down this further would make it more difficult to manage. Cllr Konieczny explained other organisations do this to allow scope to expand or contract individual breakdowns. It would be good</p>

	<p>governance to open this up on Sell2 Wales but in reality using local providers may be easier to control and enable us to stick with what we want regarding plantings and watering. Cllr Konieczny recommended that we split the contracts further to enable other local providers to be approached by ourselves and offer them to submit tenders to take on certain aspects of the plantings and / or watering contracts. This was seconded by Cllr Bowyer. It was resolved by all councillors present to accept this recommendation.</p>
E 93/22	<p>To receive and note an update from the Town Clerk</p> <p>Rivers response: Cllr Konieczny explained that the Mayor of Usk had invited him to attend a meeting highlighting pollution levels in the River Usk but it clashed with the Away Day.</p> <p>Cycling in pedestrianised areas: Cllrs questioned if it was legal to encourage this and if it would be a good mix. Not sure on the legal standing so Town Clerk to seek clarification, before offering comment on the request regarding Active Travel changes to the town. Cllr Jones said in Cardiff they have signs showing 'No Cycling' so its best that we check this first.</p> <p>Cllr Eldridge asked about pollutions affecting proposed housing developments and what is happening with regard to a response from MCC. Cllr Konieczny said NRW have put in planning restrictions for any major developments in the catchment of the rivers Wye and Usk. Phosphate capture issue as this is a big cause of the pollution. Combined storm/sewage overflows see raw sewage go directly into the rivers which is legal but should be tightly regulated. Discharges are happening illegally. RLDP is being looked at again so ATC should be putting consistent pressure on MCC about this issue. ATC could invite Cllr P Griffiths to ATC to talk about the RLDP – it would be useful to invite him to full council to talk about this, and how the new administration are going to tackle it. After this we can ask Cllr Maby to talk about environmental impacts.</p> <p>The proposal by Cllr Konieczny was seconded by Cllr Bowyer to invite Cllr Griffiths to Full Council to talk about how MCC are revisiting the RLDP proposals. It was resolved by all councillors present to extend this invitation.</p> <p>Cllr Eldridge asked if Cllr Burch can be asked to bring an update on the active Travel proposals for Castle Meadows. Cllr Jones said the Promobility Group had been told the proposed gate for trialling had been delayed.</p>
E 94/22	<p>To consider and make recommendations regarding the following planning applications:</p> <p>DM/2022/01303: LBC: This was already approved at P&R last week, but another consultation letter had been received and relisted – ATC happy to recommend approval once again.</p> <p>DM/2022/01116: Cllr Holland said the alteration was more like a new build rather than an alteration to an existing structure. It changes the character of the building and recommends refusing this application. Cllr Konieczny agreed – the proposal sees 2 holiday 'lets' from one garage with amenities in both. The drawings show a single skin structure, and is lacking in heating, insulation, solar, rainwater capture; it would be different if only proposing 1 holiday let in this space. Huge expense as not on mains sewerage so a septic tank and foul water treatment is needed which will all end up in the River Usk. Proposed to recommend refusal of</p>

	<p>the application by Cllr Bower, seconded by Cllr Jones, and resolved by all to follow this recommendation.</p> <p>BBNPA application 21381/FUL: Substantial development – not aware of any special planning guidance on this. No objections on this locally. Residential improvements and very ambitious. Falls in Cllr Holland's ward. Cllr George proposed that we recommend approval, and this was seconded by Cllr Simcock. All resolved to accept this recommendation.</p>
E 95/22	<p>To receive and note the Service Delivery update</p> <p>ATC resolved to accept the report received.</p>
E 96/22	<p>To receive and approve a Finance update on the Environment Budget headings</p> <p>Proposed by Cllr Holland to accept the report and seconded by Cllr Bowyer. Resolved by ATC to approve and accept the report.</p>
E 97/22	<p>Report from Town Councillors attendance at external bodies relevant to this Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abergavenny and District Tourist Association: Cllrs Konieczny & Simcock: Cllr Konieczny reported he had attended a meeting of ADTA. ATC give £1800 towards a paper brochure which is produced every year. Big debate on if this works, no idea how many visits or bookings come from this. Very good website but very little social media presence. Suggested investing in employing someone to manage a digital presence, and a proposal to ATC is to follow. • CCTV user group: Cllrs George & Jones: Cllr George reported all cameras are now working in town. They have been re-routed through a new transmitter at the Town Hall, giving a better signal and response. CADRO North Monmouthshire have offered a walk around – Town Clerk to enquire when this can happen. New software has now been installed to enable Police to see livestream footage from CCTV on their mobile devices. <p>No other reports received, and no other meetings attended.</p>
E 98/22	<p>Report from County Councillors on matters affecting Abergavenny relevant to this Committee.</p> <p>None received.</p>
E 99/22	<p>Items for consideration at the next meeting 26th October 2022.</p> <p>Please let the Town Clerk know of any issues or items for the agenda. Cllr Holland will deliver an update on the Drop Bear Brewery development in Llanwenarth Citra.</p> <p>Cllr Eldridge said FoBP had expressed concerns regarding the Lido – there is a public meeting due to be held on 9th November but this clashes with the next Policy and Resources committee meeting.</p>

	<p>Town Clerk to invite Cllr Griffiths to the next Full Council to talk about the RLDP.</p> <p>Town Clerk to invite Mark Hand and Paul Keeble to ATC to give updates on the A40 bus stop and 20 mph zone.</p>
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Meeting ended at 8:48pm.

APPROVED AS A TRUE RECORD

CHAIR **DATE**