**ABERGAVENNY TOWN COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF THE ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD**

**25TH OCTOBER 2023 AT 7PM VIA MS TEAMS &**

**IN THE COMMUNITY ROOM, TOWN HALL, ABERGAVENNY.**

**Present:** Cllr C Holland (Interim Chair)

Cllr M Barnes

Cllr K Eldridge

Cllr J George

Cllr G Jones

Cllr D Simcock

Cllr G Wilde

**In attendance**: S Rosser – Principal Officer

J Shipley – Deputy Principal Officer

M Hodges – Keep Abergavenny Tidy

**Public in attendance:** None

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| E106/23 | **Receive and approve apologies for absence.**  Apologies received from Cllrs Bowyer and Wright, and their reasons for absence were accepted. |
| E107/23 | **Receive Declarations of Interest**  No declarations of interest were received. |
| E108/23 | **To receive and approve the minutes from the last meeting on 20th September 2023.**  Cllr Barnes proposed that the minutes be accepted as a true and accurate record, seconded by Cllr G Wilde. All Councillors resolved to accept this proposal. |
| E109/23 | **To receive and note an update on Abergavenny In Bloom.**  As part of the umbrella organisation, Keep Abergavenny Tidy contribute to the Sustainability and Environmental improvements made throughout the year as part of efforts under Abergavenny in Bloom. Mike Hodges had come to give an update on continued efforts and projects around the town. Information was circulated regarding the Litter Free Zones. The first, in lower Cross Street, had 6 sign-ups, and lead to a bin being installed by Monmouthshire County Council which is being well used, by the crossing. Monthly data collection is being carried out. Potential sign-ups were put off by having to input detailed data on the website. Keep Abergavenny Tidy now does this on their behalf. Collection and recording waws straight after the Town Team had completed clean-ps. Minimal difference seems to have been made. Pre and Post Intervention data shows some businesses are cleaning up more, and the bins are well used. Litter continues however, with recurring issues of cigarette detritus outside takeaways alongside takeaway litter. Big increase in vape litter. St Johns Square and Nevill Street are keen to set up a Litter Free Zone. Want to learn from the first zone. Improve coordination between Keep Abergavenny Tidy and Town Team. Data collection – Keep Abergavenny Tidy say 9 businesses are ready to sign up. Representatives from Abergavenny Town Council are sought to assist. Town Team representative to be confirmed, Monmouthshire County Council have nominated Sue Parkinson, and the businesses in the 2nd zone have nominated Ginevra from The Wool Croft, though a rep from each type of business may be useful.  Cllr Simcock asked what the undertaking would be of participants. Mike explained they would clear their own frontage, record what they pick up, and then Keep Abergavenny Tidy will collect this data and input it for the businesses. This creates a database and spots trends. Keep Abergavenny Tidy provide the best data in Wales. Businesses can get a window sticker to show their support and involvement. Cllr G Wilde asked if only businesses get involved – what about schools? Mike said that originally the design of the project was for retail parks, with mixed results. Lots of schools are involved, Primary in particular. Keep Abergavenny Tidy visits King Henry School but this has been disrupted by the works on site currently. Cllr Jones said the shift to create a litter free zone in Nevill Street and St Johns Square is brilliant, as they are a very organised group. Cllr Barnes asked if Keep Abergavenny Tidy speak to businesses that are causing the litter issues. Mike said this is not always possible depending on their opening times. Often those causing issues open in the evening, and some simply won’t engage. Cllr George said that now Royal Mail have purchased the leasehold for the Depot it means the frontage will now see some improvements. Cllr Jones offered to lead on the project with assistance from Cllr Barnes. Emails to be sent on to Mike Hodges to ensure engagement and involvement.  As for Abergavenny in Bloom moving forward from attaining a Gold Award and winning the Sustainable Gardening Award at Britain in Bloom, Cllr George asked that as former Cllr Konieczny was the main driver, and that Abergavenny Town Council currently has no capacity to increase and cover this, does anyone have the know-how going forward. Feedback has been superb this year, and we don’t want to lose that momentum.  Cllr Barnes asked if both could be connected. If groups get together and look at creating a formal umbrella organisation. God way forward. Ask for feedback on the suggestion from organisations currently involved and engaged. Judges report commented on Linda Vista Gardens – maybe expertise from the Media Agency and other businesses to offer support will help, widen the net. Cllr Eldridge asked  would a community group require funding and if so would that impact the proposed idea if they had funding from us? Cllr Holland said this needs to be properly investigated and that the Principal Officer can bring a full report on the possibilities of an stand alone group be set up. Proposed a report be brought to next committee meeting by Cllr George, seconded by Cllr Jones, all resolved to accept this proposal. Cllr G Wilde said the social media coverage has been incredibly positive, with outer organisations picking up on the success. |
| E110/23 | **To receive and note the Principal Officer’s update.**  Report received and noted.   1. Cllr Jones said we have previously submitted group responses and the draft order reflects these. Please can all Councillors submit individual responses and can a full response from the Town Council be considered at Full Council on 8th November. Proposed by Cllr Jones seconded by Cllr Simcock. All approved. 2. Thanks have been received from Sue Parkinson at Monmouthshire County Council for the engagement and support form Abergavenny Town Council on the Dog Fouling Action Day 12th October 2023. |
| E111/23 | **To receive and note the Service Delivery update.**  Report received and noted.   1. No follow up 2. Planters – Cllr G Wilde reported that Promobility said the visually impaired have issues on Lion Street due to placement of the planters by us and businesses. Cllr Holand said Sight Cymru are ken to work on this across the town. Needs items left in one place and not to be moved constantly. Cllr Barnes said the ones on the corner of Lion Street and Market Street which are owned by the café are problematic as it has created a very narrow walkway. Cllr Simcock said vehicles turning out of Market Street also struggle to see any oncoming traffic or pedestrians because of this. Cllr Barnes said the area near the War Memorial is also an issue as not enough space to manoeuvre – can the rusty planter be moved further up the street. Principal Officer will meet with Town Team and do a walk round to assess these areas. 3. CCTV – Cllr George commented on meeting with a local company called Blue Light CCTV who offer lamppost bolt – on cameras powered by solar, which cost £45 and can be installed within 24 hours. |
| E113/23 | **Finance: (a) Receive an update on the Environment Budget headings.** Cllr Jones proposed accepting the finance report as a true and accurate record, seconded by Cllr George, with all Councillors resolving to accept this proposal.  **(b) to receive update and approve cost increase for CCTV from 1st April 2024:** Cllr George confirmed that Monmouthshire County Council have emailed the Principal Officer to sate the 2024 increase will be 2.5% and will come into effect on 1st April 2024 for 12 months. This was noted by all Councillors. |
| E114/23 | **To consider and make recommendations regarding the following planning applications:**  DM/2023/01018 Split 1 flat above retail unit into two separate flats. 6 High Street, Abergavenny, NP7 5RY. <https://planningonline.monmouthshire.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=RY1PGVKY02900> : Cllr Jones said it is a very small proposed second flat, and Cllr Simcock noted the objection by Natural Resources Wales online. Cllr Holland explained there are no material considerations. Recommend approval.  DM/2023/01386 Change of use from offices to private day nursery (no external alterations). Monmouth House, Park Road, Abergavenny, NP7 5TT. <https://planningonline.monmouthshire.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=documents&keyVal=S20D3NKY02P00> : Retrospective planning – already open and trading. No comments or material considerations – planning for change of use note that building control needs to have sight of the application. Recommend approval with comments. |
| E115/23 | **To review and update on relevant items on the Strategy and Action Plan (priorities 1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10,12,14,15,21,23,26,31).**  6. Add in Community Spaces in Nature underway.  15. Public Spaces Protection Order consultation being actioned.  31. Station improvement works underway. – change to Green. |
| E116/23 | **Report from Town Councillors attendance at external bodies relevant to this Committee:**  **• Abergavenny and District Tourist Association: Cllr Simcock:** Cllr G Wilde commented he and the Mayor had attended the AGM on 17th October and that they are looking to improve their social media, recruit more volunteers, change their brochure. Want to include focus on Abergavenny in Bloom. Commented on concerns over Tourist Information Centre funding. Kevin Ford form Visit Monmouthshire was in attendance. Comments were made on a lack of tourist signage. 2023 Tourism Award went to Friends of Bailey Park.  **• CCTV user group: Cllrs George & Jones**  **• Friends of Linda Vista Gardens: Cllrs Wright & Simcock**  **• Friends of Bailey Park: Cllrs Eldridge & Bowyer**  **• Friends of Castle Meadows: Cllrs Simcock & Wright**  **• Monmouthshire CC Planning Committee: Cllr George**  **• Y Fenni Business Community: Cllrs Eldridge & Nicholson** |
| E117/23 | **Report from County Councillors on matters affecting Abergavenny relevant to this Committee.**  None present and none received. |
| E118/23 | **Items for consideration at the next meeting Wednesday 29th November 2023.**  **• Presentation- Cllr Catrin Maby & Hazel Clatworthy Sustainability officer MCC.** |

**MEETING CLOSED AT 8:24pm**

**APPROVED AS A TRUE RECORD**

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