**ABERGAVENNY TOWN COUNCIL**

**MINUTES OF PEOPLE AND COMMUNITIES COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 10TH JANUARY 2024 AT 7PM ON MS TEAMS &**

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

**Present:** Cllr G Jones (Chair)

Cllr K Eldridge (Vice Chair)

Cllr M Barnes

Cllr S Burch

Cllr J George

Cllr B Nicholson

Cllr M Powell

Cllr D Simcock

Cllr A Wilde

Cllr G Wilde

**Absent without apologies:** None

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

J Shipley – Deputy Principal Officer/Deputy RFO

PC Thompson and PCSO Bonnici – Gwent Police

**Public in attendance**: None

No public session

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| PC01/24 | **Receive and approve apologies for absence.**  None received, all in attendance. |
| PC02/24 | **Receive Declarations of Interest.**  No declarations of interest were received. |
| PC03/24 | **To receive and approve the minutes from the last meeting on 1st November 2023.**  Cllr Powell proposed the minutes from the meeting on 1st November 2023 should be accepted as a true and accurate record, seconded by Cllr G Wilde. All councillors agreed and it was resolved to accept this proposal. Minutes were signed by Cllr Jones. |
| PC04/24 | **To receive a report from PS Thompson and CSO Bonnici and discuss reporting going forward.**  Cllr Jones welcomed PC Thompson and PCSO Bonnici to the meeting. PC Thompson went through the monthly report circulated to Councillors on neighbourhood incidents reported in December 2023. The gate at Fairfield car park is now being left open. Working with King Henry VIII School on the issue of older youths selling vapes to younger children. Smart Water and support packs are being supplied to victims of crime where burglaries have been reported. A two day operation has been carried out to combat shoplifting in the run up to Christmas, with excellent results.  Cllr Jones thanked them for the update. Cllr A Wilde asked if the shoplifting operation was down to intelligence received? PC Thompson said they picked a weekend in December as it would be particularly busy. It is hoped this will be repeated on a regular basis. Offenders will be less likely to commit shoplifting offences if this is a regular operation, and this will improve neighbourhood policing.  Cllr Powell asked about Fairfield Car Park. She had received a call from a resident in her ward about being unable to access the scout hall to pick up her child, and others also found this an issue. PC Thompson said a work around was being looked at, so when issues occur the gate can be locked but still enable those who need to be able to have access to do so safely.  Cllr Jones asked if it would be useful for Councillors emails and ward areas to be shared with the neighbourhood team. PC Thompson said that this would be useful and that they are also hoping to reinstate their surgeries again.  Cllr Nicholson asked if ther was any chance of more context on the figures provided in the reports received, to give an idea if there was any improvement or not. PC Thompson said that over time comparative data will be able to help provide more context.  Cllr Burch asked if sharing safety advice would be useful, especially for those with elderly relatives or neighbours. PC Thompson said they have just dealt with a potential rouge meter reader so tackled this by spreading safety advice in a targeted area.  Cllr Eldridge asked if the Crime Prevention Panel can be reinstated? PC Thompson said this is more likely to fall under the remit of the Police and Crime Commissioners remit now.  Cllr Barnes asked about figures relating to online crime, either targeted at younger or older people? PC Thompson said these figures and crimes would be reported and recorded in different ways, focussing more on community impact crime.  Cllr Eldridge asked what types of crimes needed tackling within the town. PC Thompson said that anti-social behaviour has shown there is a gap in how to deal with these who don’t get tackled by the courts. Strike letters build up evidence for early intervention clinic, then acceptable behaviour contracts are drawn up to tackle this. Crime is more around burglaries. These are difficult to progress without forensics, like CCTV or doorbell footage.  Cllr G Wilde asked if Neighbourhood Watch Groups still exist, but PC Thompson said he wasn’t aware of any.  Cllr Powell asked if home burglaries had dropped now more work from home? PC Thompson said that daytime incidents have dropped but this is not the case at night, particularly out-buildings.  Cllr Simcock asked when the new police station is likely to open, PC Thompson said it is likely to be sometime in April 2024.  Cllr Jones hopes we will be able to provide help and support to the team, and thanked them both for their attendance at the meeting. |
| PC05/24 | **To receive a report on the Events held in Abergavenny in 2023 and proposals for 2024.**  Report received and noted. Cllr Burch said the issue around feinting teens not used to standing for such occasions were dealt with by the Baptist Church who provided them with somewhere to sit plus drinks and biscuits to help their recovery. Cllr Nicholson asked for more information on what protesters had been present, which the Principal Officer clarified. Cllr Jones said it is great to be building relationships with the veteran community and how we work with them in the town. Cllr Nicholson queried our capacity, and can we identify the ones we are directly involved with, and those we support? Cllr Burch said it is great to amplify and support these events and suggested a Victorian Themed Concert as a way of celebrating our 125th birthday. Cllr Simcock asked why the Abergavenny Eisteddfod dates weren’t on the list, but the Principal Officer has not yet received any information on this.  Cllr Jones asked for a date for hosting the next online events meeting. Thursday 22nd February 2024 at 5pm on Temas will be set up and circulated to all Councillors and the events mailing list held. |
| PC06/24 | **To receive and note the Principal Officer’s update.**  Report received and noted.  War memorial – Cllr Nicholson said there are grants which could help with costs of renovations. Cllr Jones said discussions need to be had with all groups who cold contribute in some way first to see what costs can be covered then look to see what the next steps will be. |
| PC07/24 | **Finance:**   1. **To receive and approve the budget report for specific budgets allocated to this committee.**   Cllr Simcock proposed the finance report be accepted as a true and accurate record, seconded by Cllr A Wilde. All Councillors agreed to approve the proposal and it was resolved to accept this proposal.  **(b)To receive a report on the tender proposal for Christmas Light Provision.**  Cllr Jones explained to Councillors that the current contractor has provided an excellent service up to now, but that contract has now expired. Cllr Eldridge asked how the reduction in the budget for the light provision has been received. Cllr Jones said that we had received comments on the provision in St Johns Square being underwhelming. We have reduced the budget form £25k down to £18k, and he feels we can get a good service and provision for this cost.  Cllr G Wilde asked if it is felt the current provider could meet this proposal? Cllr Jones said they will be asked to stick to this amount along with other Christmas light providers. Cllr G Wilde felt it was wrong to agree to work to something that hasn’t yet been voted on regarding the budget.  Cllr Barnes asked if there has been any feedback on the Augmented Reality Trail. Can the lighting company be asked to provide something different to this.  Cllr Jones said features can be asked for within the tender proposals. Cllr Nicholson said we should leave the tender open to see what they can provide.  Cllr Burch said the wrapped trees in St Johns Square might benefit form an alteration, and Cllr Jones said a feature can be looked at for St Johns Square. |
| PC08/24 | **To receive any updates from Councillors for the Strategy and Action Plan (priorities 2, 11,12, 13, 16, 18, 19, 20, 22, 24, 25, 27, 28, 29, 30, 32, 33, 34, 35, 37, 38, 39, 41, 42).**  11: Outdoor market event support. Business Communication: Meeting to be held with Cllrs Jones and Nicholson and the Principal Officer to look at how this moves forward.  16: Cllr A Wilde and Cllr Barnes have met with the Fairtrade group and they would like to come to present to the Committee.  18: Promobility Group have lots of ideas, Cllr Barnes to link in with Cllr Holland on this action point.  20: New Agreement with 7Corners.  24: Andy’s Man Club promotion.  32: Update on participation with Remembrance and Christmas Light events. Can this now go to Green?  33: 7Corners Integrated Youth Event Festival, and lights provided for the football training in Bailey Park.  34: Statement from Town of Sanctuary Group received for the website. Promotion via Mayors Charities, Monmouthshire now a County of Sanctuary. Involvement in Remembrance Parade and other town events.  35: Engagement with Andy’s Man Club.  37: STEM project kits delivered to primary schools in November.  38: Regular monthly meetings held.  39: Mayor and Consort delivering STEM project kits to schools.  41: 2024 event to be confirmed.  42: Cllrs Barnes and Eldridge going to Beaupreau in April 2024, Cllrs A and G Wilde visited in August 2023. Cllr Callard to visit Ostringen in May/June 2024. |
| PC09/24 | **Report from Councillors attendance at external bodies relevant to this Committee:**  **• Abergavenny Community Trust – Cllrs Barnes and G Wilde**  **• Abergavenny Eisteddfod – Cllrs Simcock and Jones:** Meeting Monday 15th January 2024.  **• Abergavenny Relief In Need Charity – Cllrs Simcock and A Wilde:** Cllr Simcock said they are reviewing the referral process.  **• Abergavenny Community Enterprise (ACE) – Cllrs Jones and Eldridge:** Christmas event went well, Mayor’s toy Drive provided 30 additional gifts. Meeting to be requested via the Principal Officer with Norma Watkins as soon as possible.  **• Mind Monmouthshire – Cllrs G Wilde and A Wilde** |
| PC10/24 | **Report from County Councillors on matters affecting Abergavenny relevant to this Committee.**  Cllr Burch reported that Monmouthshire County Council’s Draft Budget report is now available. Consultations will be held from next week. Cllr Powell said that covid monies given out meant there is now less available to meet the current crisis. Cllr Jones thanked them both, and recognised that it is a very difficult time for unitary authorities. |
| PC11/24 | **Items for consideration at the next meeting 6th March 2024.**   * SHIFT project update to be requested. * Fairtrade town presentation * 125th Birthday Celebrations |

**Meeting ended at 8:36pm**

**APPROVED AS A TRUE RECORD**

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