

ABERGAVENNY TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE MEETING HELD 27th NOVEMBER 2024 AT 7:00PM ON MS TEAMS & IN THE COMMUNITY ROOM, TOWN HALL, ABERGAVENNY.

Present: Cllr A Wilde (Chair)
Cllr M Barnes
Cllr P Bowyer
Cllr J George
Cllr C Holland (Vice Chair)
Cllr G Jones
Cllr D Simcock
Cllr G Wilde
Cllr L Wright

In attendance:

Sandra Rosser – Principal Officer / RFO
Jay Shipley – Deputy Principal Officer / Deputy RFO
Anthea Fairey - Chair of Friends of Castle Meadows

Absent without apologies Cllr Eldridge

E112/24	Receive and approve apologies for absence. No apologies received.
E113/24	Receive Declarations of Interest for items on the agenda. Cllr Wright - RLDP; Deputy Principal Officer – Friends of Castle Meadows – not present for presentation.
E114/24	To approve the minutes from 30th October 2024. Cllr Jones proposed the minutes from the meeting on 30 th October 2024, be approved as a true and accurate record, seconded by Cllr Wright. All councillors resolved to accept this proposal.
E115/24	To receive a presentation & request for funding from Friends of Castle Meadows. The Chair welcomed Anthea Fairey, Chair of Friends of Castle Meadows. Anthea delivered a Power Point Presentation regarding essential maintenance work on what is known locally as the Big Pond which has recently achieved special conservation status as a priority pond in the UK from Freshwater Habitats Trust. Lots of work has been undertaken to reinstate the pond over the last 12 years. All work so far has been thanks to grant funding. Stabilisation of the edge has been achieved by using pre-planted rolls though major thefts of the first delivery caused a delay in this.

	<p>Dipping platform now makes area totally accessible to carry out pond dipping and water testing.</p> <p>The green gunge on the surface in on the move, and is now causing eutrophication which is stopping plant growth, and increasing the bacteria levels. The number of invertebrate has dropped both in types and amounts. The pollution causing this comes in from the reens and also flood water. The algal blooms are duckweed. This can cause the pond to die. The pipe from the Cybi which was topping up the pond is now blocked. Electrical conductivity is very high. The only option is to dredge the pond, and remove the duckweed into one of the lagoons on the meadows. Photos show the spread between July and now. Financial assistance is required to enable the work to be carried out. Friends of Castle Meadows can provide £1500 but the total cost is £3500 so an additional amount of £2000 is being sought after from the Town Council. This is just the first part of the project – in total, with all the works required to keep the pond healthy, including the works to reinstate the reens, will come to £14500.</p> <p>The dredging is needed to save the habitat, and to carry on working with the surrounding primary schools, scout groups, and families. The area is very popular and engaging. As the meadows are farmed organically, it is not fertiliser causing issue. The Flood Plain Meadow Partnership would not allow fertiliser to be used. The cattle that are there are not given anything that would contribute to the issues.</p> <p>Cllr Barnes asked if there is a long-term plan that will stop the need for dredging again in future. Dredging would need to be part of a 5 year cycle, and this is the first time it has been needed since the re-establishment of the pond. Water from the Cybi is clean – freshwater shrimps are currently thriving in there. Dredging will also help combat the flooding issues.</p> <p>Cllr Jones said the interpretation board recently installed is bilingual and the reports we receive are always high value in their data. It is a part of the council’s Strategy and Action Plan to improve biodiversity.</p> <p>Cllr Wright proposed the report be accepted and the funding requested be agreed to in principle, upon receipt of a grant application form being received. Seconded by Cllr Jones, and all councillors agreed to accept this proposal.</p>
E116/24	<p>To confirm Public Space Protection Order (PSPO) signage required for wards.</p> <p>‘Spray day’ awareness raising walkabout (26/11/2024) with MCC; children from local school; ATC office staff. Positive engagement with public. Residents and dog-walkers requested enforcement of PSPO. All parks have been allocated signage. Principal Officer to</p>

	<p>request additional signage for Town Centre and streets where fouling is an ongoing issue. Once installed recommendation that ATC/Environmental Health hold a walkabout and further 'spray day'. To gauge effectiveness of PSPO. Next Dog Fouling Day on-line in February 2025.</p>
E117/24	<p>To consider and offer comment regarding the Revised Local Development Plan.</p> <p>The Chair referenced comments made regarding the look of the finished buildings, and that trying to merge the builds with the surrounding landscape may detract from each other if there are different builders and architects working on the various projects proposed. Cllr Jones commented that Monmouthshire County Council are holding a wide range of consultation events, giving opportunity for everyone to submit individual responses. Cllr Holland asked that if larger sites go ahead would there be any Section 106 money for the council to make use of. Cllr Wright responded that this is not likely as so many are to be social affordable housing.</p> <p>All Councillors encouraged to respond individually online and send in collective responses for inclusion with Town Council as soon as possible.</p>
E118/24	<p>Finance:</p> <p>Report on the Environment Budget headings received and noted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) Cllr Holland proposed the finance report be accepted, seconded by Cllr Simcock, all Cllrs resolved to accept this proposal. (b) To consider a grant application – protecting and enhancing the natural environment - from Library Square Community Garden Group. Proposal to accept by Cllr Wright, seconded Cllr Jones, all Cllrs resolved to accept this proposal. (c) Friends of Castle Meadows - protecting and enhancing the natural environment – Match funding proposal to accept in principle Cllr Wright seconded Cllr Jones, all Cllrs resolved to accept this proposal. Friends of Castle Meadows to submit a grant application form for final agreement. <p>Request from Cllr Barnes for a breakdown of costs associated with Abergavenny in Bloom.</p>

E119/24	<p>To receive and note the Principal Officer's update.</p> <p>Report received and noted.</p> <p>1 River Gavenny Partnership/Keep Wales Tidy/KAT and Town Council litter pick successful if poorly attended. Mattress, Chair retrieved from river and disposed of. Location of 3 Trolleys noted for spring retrieval. 2nd event in May 2025.</p> <p>2 Speaker from NRW has been agreed to present to Council on the River Usk for early in the New Year.</p>
E120/24	<p>To receive and note the Service Delivery update.</p> <p>1 Town Team still understaffed. The continuing issue means that planned projects are not able to commence. Team Leader has requested of MCC that an 'apprentice' be employed to help future-proof the team as well as bring them back up to strength.</p> <p>2 Town Team would need street sweeper/jet wash to tackle dog fouling in the Town Centre. The equipment is available however, the trained operative is on long term absence.</p> <p>3 Toilet SLA : remaining as it is for now.</p>
E121/24	<p>To receive a report on the Municipal Planting Contracts.</p> <p>1 Greenfinch have sourced an electric bike and trailer now need town centre storage space and water sources- preferred use of rainwater harvesting. Survey of businesses to be approached by Town Council to consider installing a water butt on guttering down-pipes. Possibly as part of an Abergavenny in Bloom initiative.</p> <p>2 Planters rescheduled for delivery post-Christmas. Installation postponed because of the fire in Frogmore Street.</p>
E122/24	<p>To receive a report on Abergavenny in Bloom.</p> <p>Judges' comments distributed and noted. Accolade that Abergavenny has been asked to represent Wales again in Britain in Bloom. Business' meeting 20th November poorly attended. Business community to be invited to attend Volunteer's Meeting 5th December. All Cllrs welcome to attend. Business' meeting recommended entering Britain in Bloom as success brings benefits to businesses and tourism. Opportunity to accept invitation to be put to Volunteers groups as well. Decision required by 13th December 2024. Exciting Smart Tech citizen science project</p>
E123/24	<p>To consider and make recommendations regarding the following planning applications:</p>

	<p><u>DM/2024/00845 Proposed rear extension and front porch extension. 4 Tanglewood Close Abergavenny Monmouthshire NP7 5RJ</u></p> <p>1 ATC noted return of application further noted appeal of planning's split decision. No change of initial approval of proposal. 2 Bannau Brycheiniog Local Development Plan-Supplementary Planning Guidance. For information</p>
E124/24	<p>To receive updates from Councillors on the Strategy and Action Plan.</p> <p>Pleased to report updates in points: 1: Christmas Light Switch-on branding Abergavenny – Cllr Jones proposed a vote of thanks to Staff/Veterans/Round Table/Security and events management/et al who worked to make the event so successful . 2: New planters for Frogmore Street and KAT litter pick before and after the Switch-on. 3: Approval of grant applications and invitation to take part in Britain in Bloom. 4: The Gavenny Corridor litter pick. Strategy and Action Plan to be updated accordingly. 6&7 Castle Meadows Big Pond/conservation status maintenance and Library Square Gardens. 11: KAT</p>
E125/24	<p>To receive reports from Councillors attendance at external bodies which are relevant to this Committee:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abergavenny and District Tourist Association: Cllrs A Wilde and D Simcock – no recent meeting to report • CCTV user group: Cllrs George & Jones – no recent meeting to report • Friends of Linda Vista Gardens: Cllrs Wright & Simcock – AGM brief report circulated. To promote Linda Vista Gardens further request to offer them a web-page under ATC Abergavenny in Bloom section. Principal Officer to enquire if a 3D map (and costs) is a possibility? Possibility of Media Project with 7 Corners. • Friends of Bailey Park: Cllrs Bowyer & English – AGM Monday 4th November. Proud of In Bloom achievements. Park is a key feature of Abergavenny's green spaces. Concern over age profile of volunteers. Going forward, what will the Council do to maintain gardens if there is a decline in volunteers? • Friends of Castle Meadows: Cllrs Simcock & Wright – This evening's presentation. • Monmouthshire CC Planning Committee: Cllrs Holland & George – no report • Greener Abergavenny – Cllrs Barnes & A Wilde – no

	report.
E126/24	<p>To receive reports from County Councillors on matters affecting Abergavenny relevant to Environment Committee.</p> <p>Cllr Wright: Active Travel Castle Meadows bridge and pathways contract out to tender. Query over possible design changes to bridge. Frogmore Street fire – demolition has started.</p>
E127/24	<p>Items for the next meeting on 18th December 2024</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Abergavenny in Bloom – agenda item. 2. Municipal Planting Contracts to be added as agenda item.

Meeting ended 20:47 pm

APPROVED AS A TRUE RECORD

CHAIR A. White DATE 18/12/2024