

TOWN & COMMUNITY COUNCIL FORUM - MONDAY, 15 JULY 2019

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE TOWN & COMMUNITY COUNCIL FORUM HELD IN COUNCIL CHAMBER, CIVIC OFFICES ANGEL STREET BRIDGEND CF31 4WB ON MONDAY, 15 JULY 2019 AT 16:00

Present

Councillor HJ David – Chairperson

S Aspey	SE Baldwin	JPD Blundell	N Clarke
P Davies	Cllr D Evans	RM Granville	Hyde
C Jones	D Jones	RL Penhale-Thomas	B Sedgebeer
CE Smith	JH Tildesley MBE		

Apologies for Absence

N Alderton, H Bennett, MC Clarke, Cllr R Davies, Cllr S Dendy, Cllr L Desmond-Williams, Cllr P Gwilliam, Ciaron Jackson, Cllr P Jenkins, Jones, B Jones, T Lyddon, A Mckay, KL Rowlands, SG Smith, MC Voisey, W Willis and RE Young

Officers:

Mark Galvin	Senior Democratic Services Officer - Committees
Sian Hooper	Waste and Cleaner Streets Manager
Zak Shell	Head of Neighbourhood Services

179. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

180. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the meeting of the Town and Community Council Forum dated 26 February 2019, be approved as a true and accurate record.

181. PRESENTATION BY CHIEF SUPERINTENDENT ALUN MORGAN OF SOUTH WALES POLICE ON POLICING IN THE COUNTY BOROUGH

The Chairperson commenced this item by introducing Chief Superintendent Alun Morgan to Members. Chief Superintendent Morgan was present before the Forum today, to give a verbal presentation on local policing matters.

He stated that he would share some of the issues going forward, as well as outline some of the problems the police faced and of course how they intended dealing with them.

He gave an overview of the current issues and of the desire to be as efficient as possible in the current climate and to identify the most appropriate resources to police in the correct areas, all supported by data and technologies to assist us in that service delivery.

He praised the Council for its desire to work with the police on local issues such as homelessness, drug supplying/misuse and anti-social behaviour and then declared the five policing priorities that the force had formally adopted, namely domestic abuse, knife crime, 'county lines,' rape and serious sexual offences as well as the need to prevent and respond to terrorist and extremist threats.

Chief Superintendent Morgan then gave a more detailed explanation of a 'county line' that involved a situation arising whereby, drug gangs from big cities expand their operations to smaller towns, often using violence to drive out local dealers and exploiting the vulnerable to sell drugs. These dealers will use dedicated mobile phone lines, the 'county lines' to undertake their business.

The greater focus on these five priorities would see, perhaps like never before, a more joined-up focus from the police, committing more specialist resources to combat and reduce these priority issues.

He added that there was a process now in place in the police, that allowed for new probationer officers and transferee opportunities, as well as a direct entry scheme for investigators.

All these changes will look to deal more effectively with the more serious calls for service, which were on the increase. Such reinforcement would be implemented, particularly in response to incidents of anti-social behaviour over the anticipated summer months, when such incidents increased in light of the nicer weather.

A Member asked if there was any proposal to reduce the number of police stations, and in particular, Porthcawl Police station.

Chief Superintendent Morgan confirmed that the police estate was constantly being reviewed with no immediate concerns for this station, adding that a merger, like the one to take place in Llantwit Major imminently, could be attractive to Porthcawl, with the caveat that any change would not see policing of the area compromised by any such review. He further advised that the Llantwit Major model sees a new four blue-light partnership with fire, as well as ambulance and coastguard.

Chief Superintendent Morgan then discussed Operation Red Dragon. This was a crackdown by the police with regard to the supply of Class A drugs with the insertion of an undercover police officer actively patrolling the streets of Barry and Bridgend from July to October 2018, in order to obtain some intelligence and evidence to arrest the perpetrators. This resulted in a very successful operation, which resulted in over 70 arrests, a considerable number of which led to terms of imprisonment.

This would alleviate rather than stem the problem however and he urged those present and constituents of the County Borough, to notify the police if they had any suspicion whatsoever of drug supply/use at any location in their area.

Chief Superintendent Morgan then gave an overview of the Roads Policing Department and advised that efficiencies would see more use of police motorbikes as well as police cars, with a more modern rota system to better meet road demand.

He then added that the police were also becoming increasingly involved with other stakeholders, including BCBC, with supporting those suffering with mental ill-health issues as well as looked after children (LACs). Issues relating to both were potentially serious and came with a certain element of risk that had migrated over time, from the originating agency to the police. This too would have to be reviewed he further.

On more generic seasonal problems, the summer at Trecco Bay, the fairground and Newton Green etc, reassurances were given by Chief Superintendent Morgan that plans were in place to look to negate or minimise any anti-social behaviour within these 'hot spot' areas.

He assured those present, that the police were already heavily planning for this year's Elvis concert, to manage the anti-social behaviour associated with the event. He expressed his concerns that no payment was made for the policing services attached to the event, that ran into several tens of thousands of pounds, though he accepted that one venue did offer some financial support towards partnership schemes, such as ambulance triage and lost children.

He also raised the Homeless MARAC in Bridgend, where the vulnerable, particularly in the colder months at the mercy of inclement weather, have support. He added however, that there should be more partnership facilities provided where those sleeping rough could take shelter in a safer environment, as opposed to being out on the streets.

He then gave an overview of localised issues of drug abuse and parking in Porthcawl town centre, before he was challenged further on the power of BCBC Enforcement Officers to assist with local issues such as car parking and dog fouling. It was explained that Council Officers did have the power to fine people for illegal parking through the issuing of Penalty Notices, which would assist matters locally. It was more difficult however, to fine dog owners for not picking up their animals mess after them in public places, as this offence had to be witnessed in order for a Notice to be successfully issued and the owner fined.

Chief Superintendent Morgan then alluded to Operation Sceptre. This was something that had been ongoing for some time, and had been initially set-up to deter knife related crime. It was important he added, to recognise that arresting our way out of the problem was not the solution, but that he preferred a fuller, partnership engagement programme through schools, youth service and any other agency to reinforce the message that it's not 'cool to carry.'

A Member asked the Officer if he felt that the 101 service of the Police was inadequate in terms of the speed of a substantive response to such calls, by the public.

Chief Superintendent Morgan advised that South Wales continued to enjoy above average performance with around 86% of calls answered in the required timescales. He added that this issue was also clouded, due to the fact that some members of the public, being unable to properly distinguish the difference between 101 and 999 calls and he gave examples of misuse of the system for the benefit of Members.

A Member asked if PCSO's could issue Fixed Penalty Notices.

Chief Superintendent Morgan replied that PCSO's had very limited powers and this did not extend to issuing Fixed Penalty Notices for a host of offences, as they had no powers to detain the public.

This concluded the presentation by the police representative, and the Leader thanked the Chief Superintendent for his submission, which he was sure Members found both interesting and informative.

RESOLVED: That Town and Community Council Forum noted the above verbal presentation.

182. PROGRESS OF ACTIVE TRAVEL IN BRIDGEND

The Team Leader – Policy, Development and Transport submitted a report, the purpose of which, was to provide the Forum with an update on active travel in Bridgend, that was presented to the Clerks of Town and Community Councils on 28 June 2019.

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By way of background information, he confirmed that the Active Travel (Wales) Act 2013 came into force in September 2014 and since then, the Welsh Government has been supporting councils in Wales through grant funding, to deliver the active travel programme identified in individual council's Integrated Network Maps. Each year, councils are invited to submit proposals to implement routes that promote active travel including routes that compliment schemes implemented under safe routes in communities or to schools, also funded by Welsh Government (WG). Where appropriate and applicable, the Council also implements sections of the active travel network through developer contributions.

The Team Leader – Policy, Development and Transport then proceeded to give a presentation, the main thrust of which, was to inform Councillors of the extent of progress and to explain the processes that the Council Officers undergo to determine and assess schemes.

The presentation addressed the following principal points and themes:-

The main purpose of the Act, was to make walking and cycling the preferred way of getting around over short(er) distances.

An Active Travel network map was submitted for approval by WG in October 2017. The network covers:-

- Existing Routes Map (ERM)
- Integrated Network Map (INM)
- Map to be made available to the public

Progress in Bridgend

Active Travel integrates with wider transport policies:-

1. Local Development Plan (LDP)
2. Local Transport Plan (LTP)

Active travel infrastructure improvement and funding

- Schemes to be identified in the INM and the LTP
 - Schemes to be associated with and complement safe routes in communities/to schools
 - Such schemes to be identified in school travel plans or community access plans
 - Schemes to be developed and funded through the land-use process as part of:-
1. 21st Century Schools programme
 2. Residential developments
 3. NHS/Trust developments
 4. Town Centre regeneration
 5. Transportation infrastructure development.

The presentation then gave information regarding WG funding for 2016/17 – 2018/19, together with that for 2019/20:-

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Programme	Scheme	Grant (£'000)
Local Transport Fund	Penprysg Road Bridge	240
	A4063 Sarn – Maesteg	50
	Bridgend to Coychurch	750
Sub Total		1,040
Local Transport Network Fund	Bus Corridors	150
Safe Routes	Coity Higher	218.3
	Newton Ph. 2	243
Sub Total		461.3
Active Travel Fund	Core development funding	316
	Brackla to Bridgend	717
	Pencoed to Technology Park	898
Sub Total		1,931
Grand Total		3,582.30

Active Travel and wellbeing goals

- Prosperity
- Resilience
- Healthiness
- More equality
- Community cohesiveness
- Cultural vibrancy
- Global responsibility

Promotion of Active Travel journeys, through:-

Long term planning, e.g. land-use development;
Prevention, e.g. reducing car dependency, cycle training in schools, cycle to work schemes in the workplace;
Integration, e.g. intermodal and land-use integration;
Collaboration, e.g. with communities, schools, etc;
Involvement, e.g. transport users, pedestrians, cyclists, etc

Active Travel and the planning process

The development planning process plans for:

1. Integration and co-ordination of land-use planning and transport
2. Accessibility for all (a widened choice)
3. Reducing the need to travel
4. Prioritising active travel and public transport provision
5. Support for ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEVs)

The development control process delivers:

- Design and layout of streets
(Manual for streets)
(Active travel design guide)
(Other urban design principles)
- Transport assessments
- Amelioration of transport impacts
- 'polluter' pays principle

The Team Leader – Policy, Development and Transport, then shared with Members, land-use developments that have benefited from developer contributions for active travel schemes for the period of 2014 – 2018.

As this concluded the presentation, the Leader (and Chairperson) thanked the Officer for his submission.

A Member from Coity Higher aired his disappointment that despite the Coity Higher Community Council putting in a bid which at first was unsuccessful. The Community Council then subsequently put in a further bid for a Safe Routes to School scheme, but they did not receive all the grant money they thought they were entitled to. A Member of Coychurch Higher also added that a bid by the Community Council was also unsuccessful in terms of cycle route provision at Heol-y-Cyw into neighbouring areas such as Pencoed, particularly as there was little in the way of retail outlets in the Heol-y-Cyw area.

The Team Leader – Policy, Development and Transport advised that bids have to satisfy certain criteria, in order for them in turn, to be successful. This was dependent upon the layout of housing developments; land use criteria (in accordance with the Local Development Plan (LDP)). Transport accessibility also needed to be looked at in terms of serving a development. A Network Group would then look at settlement boundaries between and joining-up communities, in order to see if cycle routes and Safe Routes to Schools could be introduced in the vicinity of the area. Before funding was fully realised a type of Business Case needed to be introduced, whereby WG could be satisfied that routes such as those mentioned above, would be used by the public and school children etc.

He added in response to both the above Members queries, that the Community Councils' requests had also been hindered in terms of providing the official routes over and through the sections of land they referred to, as a result of land use/ownership problems.

He further added, that in respect of the area of Coity Higher, he had received a considerable number of suggested crossing point schemes and therefore he asked Coity Higher Community Council to list these in order of priority and to, in turn, return this list, as there was insufficient funding to proceed with an exhaustive list in one particular location of the County Borough.

The Leader concluded debate on this item, by advising that it had been estimated that there would be an increase of 500 houses a year built in different areas of the County Borough, as a result of the construction of new housing developments and therefore, the theme of Active Travel would very much continue as long funding was available from WG. This form of travel would also go towards reducing the use of vehicular traffic and the resulting pollution that is emitted into the atmosphere from this form of transport.

RESOLVED: That the contents of both the report and the accompanying presentation be noted.

183. STREET CLEANSING

RESOLVED: At the direction of the Chairperson and following the agreement of Members, the Forum deferred this item to the next scheduled meeting.

184. URGENT ITEMS

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None.

The meeting closed at 18:27