



CHEPSTOW TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of **Environment and Amenities Committee** of Chepstow Town Council held via Zoom on Wednesday, 15th March 2023 at 7.00 pm

Present:

- Chair:** Cllr T Griffiths
- Councillors:** M Griffiths, J MacTaggart, J Rosser, S Tulley-Cade
- Apologies:** Cllr M Le-Peltier
- In Attendance:** Mrs L Allen (Town Clerk)
Miss C Baker (Community Projects Officer)

49. Apologies

See above.

50. Declarations of Interest in Items on the Agenda

None.

51. To Suspend Standing Orders

Standing Orders were suspended for the following items:

a) Public Open Forum (15 minutes at the discretion of the Chair)

None present.

b) Repair Café Wales

Members received a presentation from Repair Café Wales.

c) Christmas Lighting

Members received a presentation from Lumin Events Ltd in regard to the Christmas Lighting for 2023.

Standing Orders were re-instated.

52. Minutes

The Minutes of the Environment and Amenities Committee Meeting held on 11th January were approved as a true record and will be signed by the Chair following the meeting.

53. Matters Arising

None.

54. Projects Report

Members considered the report on Environment & Amenities Projects and noted the following progress:

1. Place Plan

- 1.1 MCC has employed a consultant to carry out an audit of town centre shops to ascertain which buildings are empty, and to contact owners to find out what the influencing factors in this are for each property (e.g. dilapidated building/rent too high etc.).

The Clerk and Community Projects Officer had been invited to accompany Sadie Beer (MCC Regeneration Project Manager) and the consultant on a walkabout to see buildings first hand and discuss. This was due to take place late February but has been postponed until late March.

1.2 The next Transforming Towns meeting will take place on 28th March 2023.

1.3 Arrangements to be made for the next Place Plan meeting – dates to be circulated.

2. Beehives

All kit and resources have been ordered, training completed and a suitable transect has been chosen and surveyed. This transect will be registered with the Bumblebee Conservation Trust and will be live on the website.

3. Carbon Reduction / Energy Study

3.1 Insulation has been fitted at the Old Library.

3.2 Requested that a Smart Meter be installed at the Old Library.

3.2 Arrangements to be made for the next Energy Working Party meeting – dates to be circulated.

4. The Dell Water Fountain

No further progress. Start date has been pushed back from March. Gathering information on the history to be engraved on a plaque – wording to be brought to the next meeting.

5. Riverbank Water Refill Station

Awaiting MCC authority for works.

6. Green Roof shelter

Investigate relocation of the shelter in one of the orchard spaces as a secure beehive site. Make enquiries with Transition Chepstow and Gwent Beekeepers as to the suitability of the orchards for Beehives.

7. Railway Station Accessibility

Members noted the email from Network Rail Senior Sponsor who advised that Chepstow Station is one of 15 stations included in their nominations list for funding after April 2024. At present there are no outline designs however it is suggested that it would comprise of 2no. lifts and stairs connected by a single span footbridge at the northern end of the platform. It is suggested that the Council contact again after May 2023.

8. Wales Coastal Path / Seating

8.1 There are hold-ups with obtaining consent to install benches (issues between MCC departments as to who needs to provide authorisation – Highways, Countryside or Public Rights of Way). The Community Projects Officer met and walked the coast path with MCC officer Duncan Thompson on 7th March. As a result, Duncan is going to:

a. Feedback the proposed bench locations to MCC Highways to request permission for installing these.

b. Get costings for fencing along the steepest section where previous wooden fences have rotted and fallen away, with a view to carrying out this work (although not guaranteed).

c. Get costings for clearing the wide section of path of leaves etc. with a view to carrying out this work (although not guaranteed). This could potentially come from the active travel funding to improve routes.

8.2 Barratt Homes quarry boundary fence – a safety consultant has been investigating this for Barratts. An assessment has been carried out and we are awaiting further information.

9. Wikipedia Page

Information gathering taking place.

10. Community Growing Space

Project successfully continuing thanks to the volunteers leading. Continue to support by way of funding purchases (seeds, soil, etc.).

Unfortunately, many of the Rainbows involved in the planting have moved on to Brownies so a presentation evening would not be possible for them. However, the Rainbows leader can ensure that badges are given to those girls who worked on this.

Resolved:

For Cllrs T Griffiths and S Tulley to work with the Community Projects Officer to arrange a Youth Forum and badge presentation session in the Chamber for the youth groups involved in the projects this year.

11. Queen's Green Canopy

Still awaiting confirmation from Barratt Homes as to whether the 4 Scots Pine trees for the Queen's Jubilee can be planted at the new housing estate.

12. Nature Spaces – Bulwark Wildlife Garden

Project complete.

2023-2024 Potential Projects

Members agreed for the Community Projects Officer to complete the proposal forms and progress the proposed projects to include:

- Working towards net zero in Chepstow;
- Chepstow Repair Café – see below;
- Signposting – see below;
- E-bikes – see below;
- Pollinator / green walls.

55. Christmas 2023

Members discussed the Christmas Lighting for 2023 and noted the approximate funding available.

Resolved:

To request that the contractor consider and price the following:

- a lighting display in a suitable position to draw visitors to the town
- lighting the trees in the Dell
- a number of banners at the start and end of each festoon run
- additional display in Bulwark

56. Signposting and connectivity across the town

Members discussed signposting and connectivity across the town and noted that whilst there are many signposts around the town the appearance of some of them were not effective.

Resolved:

For the Community Projects Officer to carry out an audit of the signposts in the town to produce a photographic report detailing locations, existing wording and ideas with costs to replace the signposts.

Members to provide the Community Projects Officer with any photographs of signposts that they wish to draw particular attention to.

57. Repair Café

Members discussed the provision of a Repair Café in Chepstow and noted the support available from Repair Café Wales.

Resolved:

To advertise for a volunteer organiser to run the Repair Café and for the advert to stipulate that applicants will need to have a passion for re-use, and are able to commit to the amount of time required. (Time commitment to be confirmed with Repair Café Wales and this to form part of the advertisement). A location to be considered once an organiser has been sought.

58. Electric bike project

Members discussed an electric bike project for Chepstow. Also discussed was the Transition Chepstow scheme. Members highlighted an apparent lack of knowledge in the community of how to access the e-bike scheme. It was stated that further details on this was required in order to promote the scheme within the town.

Within the Transforming Towns project it was suggested that an electric bike scheme would cost approximately £500k.

Resolved:

That a brief report be written and sent to organisations that run e-bike schemes in larger towns and cities to see if there is an interest in running a smaller scheme in Chepstow.

In addition to investigate the existing scheme that Transition Chepstow are running.

59. Noticeboard – Mount Pleasant Ward

Members considered a request to install a noticeboard for Town Council and community group information at a location to be agreed in Mount Pleasant Ward.

Resolved

To approve the installation of a notice board in Mount Pleasant Ward at a cost of approximately £850 plus VAT for a 8 x A4. Funding from the Earmarked Reserves budget head where there is currently £4,000 (*LGA 1972, s142*).

60. Items for Next Meeting

61. Date of Next Meeting

The next ordinary meeting of the Environment & Amenities Committee will take place at a date to be arranged in June 2023.

CLOSE: This completed the business of the meeting at 8.50pm

Signed:
CHAIR

Date.....