



## CHEPSTOW TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the ordinary meeting of **Environment and Amenities Committee** of Chepstow Town Council held in the Council Chamber and via Zoom on Wednesday, 13<sup>th</sup> March 2024 at 7pm

### Present:

**Chair:** Cllr T Griffiths

**Councillors:** M Griffiths, J MacTaggart, M Perkins, D Rooke, G Rosser (remote), J Rosser (remote), S Tulley-Cade

**Apologies:** M Le Peltier, N Meyrick

**In Attendance:** Mrs L Allen (Town Clerk)  
Miss C Baker (Community Projects Officer)

### 45. **Declarations of Interest in Items on the Agenda.**

None.

### 46. **To Suspend Standing Orders**

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

None present.

### 47. **Minutes**

The Minutes of Environment and Amenities Committee meeting held on Wednesday, 13<sup>th</sup> December 2023 were approved as a true record and signed by the Chair.

### 48. **Matters Arising**

Members received the report on matters arising from the minutes, for information only.

### 49. **Projects Report**

Members received the update report on Environment & Amenities projects and noted the following:

1. Place Plan and Transforming Towns

No action at present.

1a. Transforming Chepstow

Ongoing meetings with Monmouthshire County Council.

3a. The Dell Drinking Water Fountain

Water pipe connected, final work by the restoration company to be carried out w/c 18.3.24.

3b. Riverbank Drinking Water Fountain

Fountain ordered and will be installed on delivery.

4a. Welsh Street raised bed

Members raised concerns regarding the reliance on volunteers to undertake maintenance of all the planting areas in Chepstow, including the barrels. It was suggested that Town Council needs to have the vision for all areas of the town to be attractive.

Consideration to be given to a management plan for a clear all year-round programme with appropriate resourcing so that if there are volunteers available, it will be easier to manage how the maintenance is carried out.

4b. Orchards

Noted that a meeting had been held with Transition Chepstow and Monmouthshire County Council (MCC) regarding the issues of volunteer commitment. There is a need for lead volunteers to undertake the pruning with training provided by MCC.

It was noted that Transition Chepstow requires Town Council to fully organise the pruning days, liaising with the lead volunteers and finding other volunteers to assist.

As per item 4a. above, Town Council needs to have a vision and work programme to responsibly manage the project.

4c. Town Planters

As per 4a and 4b above; a clear strategy with achievable objectives needs to be agreed and consideration given to involving a specialist.

5. Signposting

Noted from the report that Transition Chepstow is discussing with MCC a list of appropriate signage for Active Travel routes.

6a. E-bikes

See below.

6b. Transition Chepstow E-bikes

Notes from Transition Chepstow - E-bike loan scheme has been publicised, outline agreement with Monmouthshire Upcycle to host bikes as well as Bulwark Community Centre registering its interest resulting in more bikes available to hire. A bid, submitted to MCC and backed by Welsh Government, to fund 3 bikes has not progressed further.

Further discussions with MCC suggest that 3-4 e-bikes could be made available from those held in its depot. Data from last year's hires suggest that there was little uptake from residents in Bulwark and therefore, subject to appropriate storage at Bulwark Community Centre, this will be a priority area for Transition Chepstow to promote. Discussions to be held with Bulwark Community Centre regarding feasibility of this.

6c. MCC E-bikes

See above.

7. Waste & Recycling

The Community Projects Officer is continuing to report waste issues to MCC

8. Electric Bus

Members discussed the grant awarded to MCC for the Chepstow Transport Hub.

**Resolved:**

To write to MCC to request that a circular electric bus is considered as part of the bid to enhance existing routes C1, C2 and C3.

**49.1 2a Honeybees: beehive**

Members agreed to remove this project from the list as it is now ongoing and built into an employee's job role.

**49.2 2b Bee Walks**

Members considered the purchase of high-vis vests for community bee walkers.

**Resolved:**

To purchase 12 high-vis vests, advertising that the wearer is undertaking a community nature walk, at a maximum cost of £120.00 plus VAT (LGA 2000, s2).

**49.3 3a The Dell Drinking Water Fountain**

Member considered the wording on the plaque.

**Resolved:**

That the following wording be engraved on a plaque:

*“This drinking fountain was commissioned in 1878 in memory of the Reverend Thomas Jennings by his daughter, and gifted to the community of Chepstow where the Reverend Jennings served as Curate.*

*Initially sited in Bank Square in the town centre then moved to its current location in The Castle Dell in 1919.*

*Restored with care by Chepstow Town Council in 2024.*

*May its waters continue to quench the thirst of generations to come.”*

**49.4 4b Orchards**

Members noted correspondence from Woolpitch Community Orchard regarding ongoing support and the request that these fruit trees become part of the overall orchard maintenance.

**Resolved:**

To invite the community group to a future meeting to discuss what ongoing support they require. In addition, due to volunteer numbers reducing, Council needs to state that it has limited resources to undertake these projects which were originally put in place for the community to be involved in. This message to be communicated to all community groups and -MCC.

**49.5 4c Town Centre Planting**

Members further considered the report detailing current status of the town centre planters. Ongoing support and expertise was highlighted as a major factor during discussion as well as the reliance on volunteers. A strategy needs to be put in place to detail the Council’s requirements.

**Resolved:**

That the Council considers an appropriate green space management strategy for ongoing provision of the town centre planting and explores the cost of appointing an appropriate person to either advise or carry out the work and to include contacting the Horticultural College in Usk.

In addition, Members raised concerns that elected representatives were unaware of funding applications being submitted by MCC officers for projects that effect Chepstow. This to be conveyed to MCC that future projects are presented to the Town Council prior to submission. In the meantime, officers to be invited to the next meeting to provide an update.

**49.6 6a – E-bikes**

See above item 48. Projects Report number 6a and 6b.

**49.7 8 – Electric Bus**

See above item 48. Projects Report number 8.

**50. Carbon Reduction**

a) Members considered detailed objectives based on the ‘green’ and ‘net zero’ aspects of the Town Council’s Vision and how best to record and track progress. Members raised questions as to how it can measure carbon reduction and received a brief outline of how it can be categorised into 3 scopes: 1. Direct fuel usage (gas/fuel); 2. Energy usage but not burnt

directly (electricity, LED lighting, insulation); 3. All other things that do not have a direct impact (paper reduction, how our suppliers provide their services, sustainable cleaning products).

**Resolved:**

To table the changes that the Council has already made for review in September and invite Sustain Wales to the meeting.

b) Members received the Tackling Climate Chaos report compiled by One Voice Wales and Friends of the Earth detailing ideas of what Community and Town Councils can do in the fight against climate chaos and nature destruction.

**Resolved:**

That this is presented to Council at its next meeting for information.

**51. Christmas Switch on 2023**

a) Members discussed the Christmas Switch on event 2023 and noted that whilst it was a successful event there were a number of improvements that could be made.

**Resolved:**

To locate the stage back in Beaufort Square and request better amplification, start the lantern parade later to keep event flowing, have a loud speaker to inform people of the parade arrangements and have a contingency plan for late performance drop outs e.g. carol singing.

b) Members considered correspondence from a business owner in Bulwark regarding the offer of providing Christmas Lighting.

**Resolved:**

To enter into discussions with the business owner but also undertake some social media communications asking if there are any other businesses in Chepstow who would wish to sponsor Christmas lighting.

**52. SpudFest/AutumnFest**

Members considered arrangements for SpudFest/AutumnFest 2024 noting that there are already a number of events planned for this year. Members discussed whether to hold an event and combine apple day and spud fest

**Resolved:**

To recommend to Full Council that, in principle, the committee would like to hold an AutumnFest event but due to the events already planned for 2024/25 it has concerns regarding the viability in terms of resources (staff and Councillors) to be able to allocate appropriate time to its organisation.

**53. Cynnal Cymru**

Members considered renewal of Town Council's annual membership to Sustain Wales.

**Resolved:**

To renew Town Council's annual membership to Sustain Wales at a cost of £300.00 (*LGA 1972, s143*)

**54. Gwent Beekeepers**

Members considered renewal of Town Council's annual membership to Gwent Beekeepers CIO.

**Resolved:**

To renew Town Council's annual membership to Gwent Beekeepers CIO at a cost of £41.00 (*LGA 2000, s1*).

**55. Public Toilet Survey**

Members received the Public Toilet Survey carried out by MCC as part of its annual survey by Environmental Health.

**56. Dog bins – referred from FC 28.2.24**

Members reviewed the frequency of dog waste collections and associated costs for the 41 dog bins in the town and noted the current annual cost of £14,924 rising to £15,990 for 2024-2025 (*referred from Full Council, 28.2.24, item 178*).

**Resolved:**

For Councillors to review the dog bins in their wards and report any concerns of overflowing bins to the office for ad hoc collections and monitoring. Social media communications to be carried out around the ability to use litter bins for dog waste.

**57. Art in the Town – referred from FC 28.2.24**

Members considered art in the town (*referred from Full Council, 28.2.24 – item 181 c*).

**Resolved:**

Not to pursue art in the town due to the Council not owning any suitable buildings.

**58. Items for Next Meeting**

- Invite Town Council’s floral contractor for discussions about sustainable bee friendly planting or 2025.
- Invite MCC officers regarding the litter grant application for Chepstow.

**59. Date of Next Meeting**

Confirmed that the next meeting of the Environment and Amenities Committee will be held in the Council Chamber and via Zoom on a date in June, to be confirmed at the Annual Meeting

**CLOSE: This completed the business of the meeting at 9.05pm**

**Signed: .....**

**Date.....**

**CHAIR**