

Minutes



Liaison Meeting with Community Councils

Date: 25 June 2015

Time: 6.00 pm

Present: G Price (Head of Law and Regulation) (in the Chair), and A Jenkins (Democratic Services Officer)

Together with the following representatives from Community Councils:

R Caston, N Mountain, S Davies & A Whitfield (Graig), Councillor T Bond, V Dudley, A Gunn & S Bowen (Rogerstone), A Whiting & J Davies (Bishton), B Morgan & J Lawrence (Penhow), G Hancock & W Routley (Langstone), A Cox (Nash), B Miles & J Foster (Wentlooge) L Williams & L Allen (Llanvaches)

In attendance:

Mr N Woollard, Head of Local Engagement, Tidal Lagoon Power

1 Apologies for Absence

P Gregory (Graig) and J Toleman (Rogerstone).

2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting of 26 March 2015

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 26 March 2015 were submitted.

Agreed:

That the minutes of the meeting were a true record.

Matters Arising:

The Langstone Community Council representative said that Langstone were extremely disappointed with the lack of consultation from Llargardere, the Welsh Government and Newport City Council in relation to the Velothon which took place on 4 June.

Langstone Community Council weren't consulted at any stage. Flyers to residents and local businesses were promised at the previous meeting by Llargardere and none of this materialised before the event.

Residents of 450 houses in Langstone were trapped for 8 hours. No local businesses were consulted on the road closures and money was lost in the local garden centres and restaurants. either, such as the local garden centres. It was promoted as an investment for Newport however local businesses lost a lot of money on the day. The road closure times that Llargardere provided for local businesses were not correct.

The community councillor was concerned that the lack of information from Newport City Council was not compliant with the charter

When Langstone Community Council tried to contact the organisers to express their disappointment no explanation was received and they were advised by the Welsh Government to contact their local council for information regarding compensation.

The Chair clarified Newport City Council's position on the event, which was that the council were not consulted any more than Community Councils were. The whole event was organised between Llargardere and the Welsh Government. The council's only involvement was to manage the safety aspect and traffic management hence the presence of the Civil Contingencies Manager and the Festival and Events Officer. The route was pre-selected by organisers and Welsh Government, all the council could do was safety manage. The council only had traffic management plans two days before the event took place. All aspects of the event and decisions taken were by Welsh Government.

The Chair would provide feedback on this discussion to the relevant officers in preparation for next year's event. The council have already put forward their complaints to Llargardere and Welsh Government.

D Davies MP was contacted by Langstone community council and would take this up with the Welsh Government.

The Chair also informed those present that local businesses were contacting the council for compensation, however they needed to contact Welsh Government and organisers as we couldn't provide compensation. The council had no choice in the matter with regard to the running of the event or provision of compensation but business have been told to contact their local MPs.

Langstone Community Councillor also referred to previous meeting where Llargardere guaranteed that signage would be in place and leaflet drops would be carried out in plenty of time, however this was not the case. Communication with the local authority and community councillors needed to improve, especially as there Velothon would run for four more years.

Councillor Bond broadly supported what was said, however suggested that with the future Velothons in place for the coming years, it could be good for the local economy. If organisers were to liaise earlier with local authorities, community councillors and businesses, community events could coincide with the event to boost the local economy.

Councillor Bond also utterly condemned those people that put out tacks and nails along the road, which could have caused serious permanent injury to cyclists. All community councillors were in agreement that the behaviour was unacceptable.

A representative for Wentlooge made reference to the one stewards within their area that acted with common sense and opened the road for short periods of time for local farmers and businesses. This might be a consideration for organisers at next year's event.

The overall consensus was that the first Velothon was a steep learning curve and that lessons needed to be learned and early engagement with local communities be sought in advance of the next event in June 2016.

3 Tidal Lagoon Project

Neil Wollard, Head of Local Engagement and colleague, Tidal Lagoon Power gave a very informative and innovative presentation on the proposed Swansea Tidal Lagoon.

Some of the community councils had already received the presentation and Tidal Lagoon Power was eager to ensure that all community councils were able to see the presentation and were willing to attend community council meetings to engage with all community leaders.

Further information was provided on two further proposed projects within Cardiff and Newport.

The size of the tidal lagoon for Swansea was 9km, Cardiff 22km and Newport 15km.

The Head of Local Engagement for Tidal Lagoon Power stressed the importance of consultation with community leaders at the early stages of each project and suggested attending a future meeting next year to discuss progress.

Questions raised by Community Councils:

- A representative of Graig Community Council asked from where would the sand be dredged to build the barrier for the lagoon. A standard harbour wall design would be used.
- There was concern from Graig Community Council that the high volume of sand being used to create the barrier would affect the coastline. Whilst Tidal Lagoon Power were unable to give a detailed response, coastal process modelling would be undertaken as well as an application for a marine licence to carry out marine research to find out the environmental impact on the coastline.
- Most of the materials delivered and would be carried out by sea, however construction would take place on land.
- Bishton Community Council representative asked why the lagoon would only generate electricity 14 hours a day and not 24 hours. It was hoped that once all the lagoons were in place, they would be strategically placed around the British Coastline to generate 24 hours of electricity.
- Tidal Lagoon Power was committed to assembling most of the components and turbines mainly in Britain and Wales. Some of the parts however, would have to be manufactured elsewhere as there wasn't the ability within Britain to manufacture the parts. The turbines would be 7m in diameter and would be of a bespoke design.
- A representative of Rogerstone Community Council enquired as to whether Tidal Lagoon Power would be willing to present the project to local schools. There was an education outreach programme in South Wales and a South East Wales programme was also starting. Further information would be provided by A Jenkins.
- Graig Community Council representative referred to mudflats within the local area that dry out and whether this be a similar problem for the lagoon. Tidal Power will do everything possible to mitigate the impact on the environment but needed to understand and give consideration to possible environmental impact and then minimise it. There would be a lot of possible factors that could cause a risk to the coastline and all aspects would be looked into.
- A representative of Bishton Community Council asked would the lagoons be dredged regularly. Whilst a definite figure couldn't be provided it was approximated that dredging might take place 15 years after 'power on' then every three years. Exact figures could be provided but not at the meeting. If maintenance dredging was costly it might impact on whether it was viable. They were looking to iron out these issues.
- Rogerstone Community Council representative was concerned about the impact on marine mammals and whether the pressure from the turbines might be extremely harmful. Audio and visual deterrents would be in place to ensure that sea life did not go too near the turbine blades. The environment impact assessment team could get in touch with the Community Councillor if she wanted further information.

- Wentlooge Community Council was concerned about where the lagoons contacted land and the environmental impact on local nature and the environmental foot print. Whilst a definitive response couldn't be provided, it was reiterated that extensive research and consultation was paramount to ensure that no damage could be caused to the local environment, which was why Tidal Lagoon Power thought it imperative to engage with the local leaders. At some point in the future public consultation would be carried out and as much information on the local areas where the lagoons were being developed was required to provide a picture for a thorough environmental impact assessment to be undertaken.

4 Update on Concurrent Expenditure

The Head of Finance was unable to attend the meeting as he was at a conference.

Lengthy discussion ensued at the outset and the Chair stressed that there was no general consensus that all community councils could agree upon.

All the councils wanted to move forward with the debate. Some Community Councils were of the opinion that the Cabinet Member for People and Business Change take the decision on the next concurrent expenditure, however, as it was clear that an agreement would not be reached by the majority, it was suggested that a resolution period be set for November 2015.

It was noted that in the supporting papers, seven of the community councils preferred option 1, which was based on the tax base, however not everyone agreed with the second and third options in order of preference.

An opportunity for community councillors to submit further comments and information by early September in readiness for the next liaison meeting, including the suggestion of a minimal allowance of £2,000 for small councils, and information about the services they provided.

A representative of Langstone Community Council suggested offering Rogerstone the opportunity to put together a fourth option to bring to the next meeting.

Many of the same issues were raised as in previous meetings and it was decided that the next meeting be set aside again for the sole purpose of discussing the concurrent expenditure with the Head of Finance present.

5 Charter Update

A representative of Wentlooge community council raised serious concerns over recent dealings with the Council's planning services. Consultations were hit and miss when responses were received by planning. Wrong applications and wrong names were put against Wentlooge community council's responses. Consultees were noted twice, applicants were sent consultees letters and labelled as community councillors. Wentlooge community council have pointed out where applications were incorrect to planning offers and had to pull them up on planning law. Officer error was disconcerting to Wentlooge community councillors and they felt there were major training issues to be addressed.

The Chair would feed this back to the Head of Regeneration, Investment and Housing and an invite to a future meeting.

Bishton community council also experienced the same problem as well as lack of consultation. The Chair advised that planning officers didn't consult on screening opinion.

Langstone community council would like to recognise the assistance received from Richard Woods, Landscape Architect, Street and City Services and Mike McGow, Parks and Outdoor Recreation Manager, in the establishment of a war memorial in Langstone.

Planning Aid Wales had provided a date for community councillors to attend free planning training at the Civic Centre at 5.30pm in committee room 1 on Monday 13 July. There were plenty of spaces, if community councillors could notify A Jenkins if they would like to attend.

Wentlooge community council also asked if Code of Conduct training would be provided in the near future. The Chair advised that it would be looked into.

6 Date of the next meeting

Thursday 24 September 2015 at 6pm in Committee Room 1.