

COMMUNITY LIAISON COMMITTEE

TERMS OF REFERENCE

INTRODUCTION

In July, 2008, the former Minister for Social Justice and Local Government, Brian Gibbons AM, sent letters and a document entitled "A Shared Community – Relationship Building and Charters for Unitary Authorities and Community and Town Councils" to the Leaders and Chief Executives of Unitary Authorities and to the Chairs and Clerks of Community and Town Councils which strongly recommended that formal relationships be established by the agreement of a Charter between Unitary Authorities and Community and Town Councils with a common goal of improving the well being of the community which the respective Councils share. This was endorsed by the new Minister, Carl Sargeant AM, who again wrote to all the afore-mentioned in the same vein, encouraging closer and more productive relationships within local government.

During the latter part of 2010 and the early part of 2011, Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council and the Town Council of Pontypridd and the Community Councils of Ynysybwl & Coed y Cwm, Rhigos, Hirwaun & Penderyn, Llantwit Fardre, Llantrisant, Llanharan, Llanharry, Tonyrefail, Gilfach Goch, Pontyclun and Taffs Well & Nantgarw agreed to publish individual Charters between the County Borough Council and the respective Town/Community Councils which sets out how we aim to work together for the benefit of local communities.

At the Council Meeting held on the 12th January, 2011, Members of Rhondda Cynon Taf agreed to the establishment of a Community Liaison Committee comprising the Leader and the Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Public Relations and other Cabinet Members and when appropriate and the Chairs of the Town and Community Councils.

Key Purpose and Terms of Reference of the Community Liaison Committee

It's key purpose and terms of reference are to:

“work as equal partners and take joint responsibility, wherever possible, for connecting the whole network of public service in an area whilst at the same time respecting each other’s responsibilities as autonomous, democratically elected statutory bodies”.

The Community Liaison Committee is not a formal decision-making body, courses of action are agreed by the full consensus of the Members of the Committee.

Membership of the Community Liaison Committee

The membership of the Community Liaison Group:

- *Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council:*
 - The Leader of the Council
 - County Borough Councillor M.Webber, Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Public Relations
 - Other Cabinet/Scrutiny Members, as and when appropriate

Officers:

- Mr.P.J.Lucas, Director of Legal & Democratic Services (or any such appropriate Officer as he so nominates)
- Ms.K.May, Democratic Services Manager
- Ms.J.Nicholls, Senior Democratic Services Officer

Any other Officer as and when felt appropriate

- *Town and Community Councils:*
 - The Chairs of the Town and Community Councils

Substitutes: In the absence of any Chair of the Town and Community Councils, substitute Members will be allowed.

Clerks: The Clerks of the Town and Community Councils will be invited to attend meetings of the Community Council as observers

Appointment of Chairman and Vice-Chairman

It is deemed appropriate that the Chairman of the Community Liaison Committee will be the Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Public Relations as her areas of accountability and responsibility include:

- Council Business & Open Government
- Members' Services Champion
- Consultation & Community Engagement
- Communications & Marketing
- Council website

In exceptional circumstances, in the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair will be designated by the Chair.

Meetings of the Community Liaison Committee

Meetings of the Community Liaison Committee will be convened as and when felt appropriate by the Chairman.

Community Liaison Committee
- 18 March 2013

It should be recognised that the meetings should be used not just as networking but also as a wholehearted commitment to raising the standard of services to the public.

Venues

Meetings of the Community Liaison Committee will be held at the Council Headquarters, Clydach Vale unless otherwise stated or agreed.

Voting

As the Community Liaison Committee will generally seek to operate by consensus and in working as equal partners in providing an effective conduit for the citizen voice to be heard, it is felt inappropriate to establish a formal voting process.

Quorum

The quorum of a meeting will be at least three Chairs (or substitutes) of the Town and Community Councils, the Chairman of the Liaison Committee (or designated Chairman). If at any time, there is not a quorum present, then the meeting will be declared adjourned and the items (or remaining items) of business will be dealt with at the next meeting, a time and date to be agreed by the Chairman.

Agenda Items

Members will be given advance notice of the dates and times of the meetings and in terms of openness and transparency will be invited to contribute towards the agenda in respect of strategic issues (operational matters to be dealt with via the Liaison Officer and the Clerks of the respective Town/Community Councils) and participate proactively to the attendance and discussion. The Chairman has the right to refuse any items to be placed on the agenda, if felt inappropriate.

The Council's Liaison Officer

The Liaison Officer duties within the Authority will be carried out by Ms. Julia Nicholls (Tel.No.01443-424081 email: Julia.L.Nicholls@rctcbc.gov.uk) who will be the point of contact between the Authority and the Town/Community Councils.

The Terms of Reference of the Community Liaison Committee will be reviewed periodically.

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