**TALYBONT ON USK COMMUNITY COUNCIL**

**Cyngor Cymuned Talybont ar Wysg**

**MEETING HELD ON 17th November 2022**

**at Henderson Hall commencing at 12.00 Noon**

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| **ITEM NO** | **NOTES** | **ACTION** |
| **1** | **In Attendance**  Cllr. S Baldwin ( Chair), C Burdon , R. Jones, E.Moorman, and, J Short.  Members of the Community Council Working Group- Fiona Goodsell, Phil Darbyshire and Alastair Mackeown.  Welsh Government Officals- Gerwyn Evans, Haydn Fitchet and Dai Baker.  Also, in attendance Mrs. K Bender (Clerk) |  |
| **1a** | **Apologies for absence**  Cllrs. G Thomas, C Parry and G. James. |  |
| **2** | **Declarations of Interest**  None |  |
| **3** | To consider the exclusion of press and public from the meeting in line with section1 subsection 2 of the Public Bodies Act 1960.  To exclude the press and public from the meeting on the grounds that it is a complex subject with time constraints, resulting in the need to be focused. The Chair asked for a show of hand, all were in favour with the exception of Cllr. Moorman who asked for it to be recorded that she was not in support of the resolution. The resolution was carried. |  |
| **4** | To receive a report from Welsh Government Officials in response to questions put to Welsh Government by the Community Council, concerning the purchase of Gilestone Farm and subsequent lease to the Green Man Organisation.  Mr Gerwyn Evans opened with an apology for the length of time it had taken to respond to the Community Council stating he and his colleagues were dealing with a huge amount of correspondence concerned with the purchase of Gilestone Farm.  He explained the Welsh Government had been in conversation with Green Man for 4-5 years , the purpose being not to relocate the Green Man Festival but to grow the Green Man Brand. This included a food and drink element along with creative industries.  The Welsh Government had received an outline strategic case from Green Man in October 2021.  Due diligence was carried out on the purchase of Gilestone Farm.  This being an economic development purchase to drive economic growth in Rural Wales and Powys in particular.  Following a question on the price paid for the Farm, it was explained the price had been provided by an independent valuation, the farm had never been put on the open market and the Government did not pay over what it was worth.  It was also stated the Welsh Government would not be allowed to do anything to hurt the ecology or environment of Gilestone Farm or its surrounding areas.  A new farm tenancy lease agreement had been put in place until October 2023 for the farm to continue to be properly managed.  The tenant is Charles Weston, and the short-term arrangement will be managed by Cooke and Arkwright.  The short-term lease has been agreed on a commercial deal basis.  The Welsh Government has the full Business Plan in front of it and is now in a position to bring it to a public meeting.  If the Welsh Government decides to go ahead with the Green Man business plan, only then will the terms of the lease be agreed and will not come into force until September 2023. It is understood the lease will be signed by Cwningar Ltd, a company set up in February 2022 by Fiona Stewart.  Concerning the plans , Gerwyn Evans said there is very little change to the activities that are operating at the moment, with the exception of possibly creating a brewery and bakery, but that will totally depend on obtaining the relevant planning permissions and licenses. He also said that up to 3 gatherings a year are in the plans with a potential of 1-3 thousand attendees, however it is not about building up another music festival venue, it’s about having an area to develop the Green Man brand.  A member of the Community Councils Working Group stated the fundamental issue was the concerns around mass tourism events and the impact on the ecology and environment. The Welsh Government responded they would not allow their decisions to impact on the site in a negative way.  A follow-up question was asked if the farming community wanted to put forward outline alternative proposals, how would it be received. The response was the Welsh Government would need to complete its discussions with the Green Man before any alternatives would be considered.  Another member of the working group stated that not everyone was against the prospect of the Green Man coming to Gilestone, as many people in the village are waiting to see the proposals, coupled with the fact many jobs were lost to local people when Buckland Hall closed, this may be an opportunity for job creation, and believed that it was not all doom and gloom with people interested in what impact the proposals could make.  A Councillor asked if flood management and the opportunities of tree planting had been considered. The response was the Welsh Government had done so but that it now has more time to look at all issues for any future proposals for the farm.  The Welsh Government will look to secure all existing businesses operating at the farm along with the Community Orchard and will continue to operate as a positive and responsible Landlord.  A Councillor asked about White Labelling, where others produce the goods which are then marketed under the Green Man label and if this would have a positive effect on job creation. The response was the ethos of white labeling would be supported by the Green Man.  Following a question around assess routes, the response was there was no intention to open up alternative access routes.  A question was asked if the business plan would be available for all to see, the response was that relevant points in the business plan will be available to relevant organisations.  He then went on to explain the timeline going forward.  During the next two weeks the Welsh Government will formally meet with BBNP & Powys CC, informal meetings had already taken place with Catherine Meeling- Jones of BBNP and Nigel Brinns of Powys CC.  A decision is anticipated by the Welsh Government before Christmas, to determine if the Green Man opportunity will proceed.  When the meeting takes place with Fiona Stewart of the Green Man, the Welsh Government will be in attendance. This meeting may take the form of a public meeting.  Welsh Government said it was now the time to bring all partners together. The Clerk to liaise with Welsh Government on dates for the next meeting. | **Clerk** |

**Date of next Ordinary Meeting 21st November 2022 At Henderson Hall commencing at 7.15pm as a hybrid meeting**