

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Policy & Finance Committee of Cwmbran Community Council held on Monday 16 June 2014**

**Present** Councillors WM Howell (Chair), Councillors SWJ Ashley, LJ Chaney, D Daniels, S Evans, M Johnston, R Jones, R Kemp, TA Matthews, J Rees, DJ Williams.

Also Councillor TJ Winter

Also David Collins (Clerk to the Council)

**PF14/001 Appointment of Chairman**

Members noted that, at a meeting held on 21 May 2014, the Council appointed Councillor WM Howell as Chairman of this committee. Councillor TA Matthews was appointed Vice Chairman.

**PF14/002 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for Absence were accepted from Councillors M Day (work commitments)

**PF14/003 Declarations of Interest**

Members were asked to declare any personal and/or prejudicial interests that they may have and sign the Interests Sheet to give details of the nature of the interest.

**PF14/004 Itemised Schedule of Receipts & Payments (April and May 2014), Bank Reconciliation and Quarterly Financial Monitoring (Quarter 4)**

Members considered the above information. Background papers relating to the schedule of receipts and payments were available to allow members to interrogate any transactions in more detail.

Members noted that all transactions were now given a reference, which improved the presentation of the information.

Issues raised by members included:

- Personal Postage £39.72 (HO3)
- Grant funding for Playschemes from Children In Need £1,250 (L07)
- Peter O'Neill Gas Central Heating & Maintenance £198 (G05) (members asked to receive a further report on this monthly expenditure)
- Pension Fund £11,300 (C01) (members asked to receive a further report on the reasons for this expenditure (*note Minute PF13/087 refers*))

Subject to confirmation by Cwmbran Community Council

- Bank Reconciliation (Unpresented Cheques) (members asked for the dates of cheques to be included on the information reported to the committee. )

It was **recommended** that

- (1) the schedule of receipts and payments, bank reconciliation details and quarterly monitoring information is noted.
- (2) the Clerk to the Council take forward the points raised by members as referred to above.

#### **Pf14/005 Internal Audit Report**

Members noted that the Council's Independent Internal Auditor had completed her audit and drawn the Council's attention to issues arising. She had recommended improvements to the format of the Council's Asset Register to provide a clearer audit trail, but overall she had been satisfied with the Council's internal control environment and the documentation she had examined.

The auditor had highlighted the amounts the Council held in reserves and made observations in relation to money earmarked for CCYP, utility bills and IT support. She had also drawn attention to the need for the Council to be satisfied that it wished to continue to subsidise the Summer Playschemes and Task Force.

The Chairman highlighted the need to set aside further funds within reserves to refurbish or replace the community centre. She also referred to work which the Council already had in hand in relation to the Task Force.

It was **recommended** that the report of the internal auditor is accepted and the comments and recommendations contained therein are taken forward.

#### **PF14/006 Statement of Accounts 2013/14 and Annual Return**

Members considered the Annual Statement of Accounts 2013/14 and Annual Return for the Year Ended 21 March 2014. The Clerk to the Council explained that the Annual Return would be presented at the next full Council and sent to the Council's external auditor along with any requested documents.

It was **recommended** that the position be noted and the accounts are approved, subject to the inclusion of Councillor TA Matthews' name on the list of elected members.

*(Councillor Brooks left the meeting during the discussion of the above item)*

Subject to confirmation by Cwmbran Community Council

**PF14/007 Standing Orders Sub Committee**

At the last meeting of this Committee, members noted that the Sub Committee established to review Standing Orders etc. had almost completed its work. The Sub Committee had now completed its review and members considered a revised draft set of Standing Orders which the Sub Committee had prepared. Members paid tribute to the work of Councillor Kemp for his detailed work in helping to review the Standing Orders.

It was **recommended** that the draft Standing Orders are approved.

**PF14/008 Governance Arrangements**

Arising from the above review of Standing Orders etc., members had indicated that it would be helpful to compile a complete list of the Council's policies in relation to governance, to include dates on which those policies were due for review.

Members therefore considered a list of current governance documents, noting the date of which the various policies had been approved and the dates when they were due for review.

It was **recommended** that the list of governance documents be noted and kept under review.

**PF14/009 Publication of Statutory Notice in Respect of Proposal to Remove Surplus Secondary School Places in the South of Torfaen.**

(Councillors Ashley, Chaney, Evans, Daniels, Kemp, Rees and Williams declared an interest in this item)

Torfaen County Borough Council had decided to proceed with the above mentioned proposal and had published this proposal by way of a Statutory Notice. Members considered the contents of the Statutory Notice and noted that anyone wishing to make an objection to this proposal was required to do so within 28 days of 2 June 2014.

It was **recommended** that the position is noted.

**PF14/010 Pensions Policy**

Members noted that the Council was under a statutory obligation to publish a Pensions Policy by 30 June 2014 and considered a draft policy. The policy followed discussion with officers of the Greater Gwent Pensions Scheme and benchmarking with other similar sized community councils. Members asked about the relationship of the Council's scheme to Torfaen County Borough Council's scheme and also drew attention to the need to keep up to date with forthcoming legislative changes.

It was **recommended** that the policy is adopted.

Subject to confirmation by Cwmbran Community Council

**PF14/011 Remembrance Update**

Members noted that the flagpoles and memorial plaque were now in place and that arrangements were in hand to commemorate Armed Forces Day on 28 June 2014. An Order of Service would be prepared and distributed in advance of the event. Members discussed the role of the clergy in relation to the ceremony and noted that an ecumenical approach had been taken to the arrangements for the service.

Members suggested that, in time, there may be scope to purchase a Cwmbran Community Council flag and discussed the arrangements for the flying of flags.

It was **recommended** that the above arrangements are noted.

**PF14/012 Seminars & Meetings of Outside Bodies**

Members considered reports in relation to the following meetings

- (a) Local Councils in Partnership Committee 29 April 2014.
- (b) Torfaen Museum Trust 27 May 2014.

Members drew attention to the importance of receiving information from senior officers of Torfaen County Borough Council in relation to the future of Community Halls.

It was **recommended** that the reports are noted

*Signed .....* (Chair, Cwmbran Community Council)