

Minutes of a Meeting of the Policy & Finance Committee of Cwmbran Community Council held on Monday 7 July 2014

Present Councillors WM Howell (Chair), Councillors S Brooks, M Day, R Kemp, M Johnston, TA Matthews, J Rees, WJ Walker and DJ Williams.

Also Councillor TJ Winter

Also David Collins (Clerk to the Council)

PF14/013 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence were accepted from Councillors SWJ Ashley (personal), LJ Chaney (medical) and S Evans (holiday).

PF14/014 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.

PF14/015 Itemised Schedule of Receipts & Payments (April and May 2014)

In considering information reported to the committee on 16 June 2014, members asked to receive further information in relation to some of the transactions reported. The following information was therefore provided:

- Peter O'Neill Gas Central Heating & Maintenance £198 (G05)

Expenditure occurred in April and May in relation to gas central heating service & maintenance. The council paid £198 for the annual service of each its two boilers, one payment being made in April and the other in May. Further expenditure was not therefore anticipated this year for servicing and maintenance. Later in the year, enquiries would be made to see if better value for money could be achieved in relation to service and maintenance of the boilers for 2015/16.

Members referred to long standing problems which the Council had experienced in relation to the heating system.

- Pension Fund £11,300 (C01)

This spending arose due to the result of the 2013 actuarial variation on the Pension Scheme, which resulted in the Council's contributions increasing to 18.7% of the payroll, which was already going through the payroll. This left an additional one-off sum of £11,300 for the current year. This expenditure was approved by the Policy & Finance Committee at a meeting held on 28 April 2014 (Minute PF13/087 refers).

It was **recommended** that:

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- (1) the information is noted
- (2) the Clerk to the Council is instructed to engage a different contractor to service the boilers next year.

PF14/016 Itemised Schedule of Receipts and Payments

It was reported that, due to the timing of the meeting this month, it had not been possible to include information for June on the agenda.

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

PF14/017 Remembrance Update

Councillor TA Matthews and the Clerk to the Council reported orally on a meeting of the World War One Centenary Co-ordination Group they had attended on 3 July 2014.

Key issues for the Council included:

- 4 August 2014: Torfaen County Borough Council Playschemes would be supporting the church service at St Cadog's. The Clerk was discussing the way in which children from Cwmbran Community Council's Playschemes (Maendy) could take part in the service at Holy Trinity (Pontnewydd). There was no service currently planned at St Gabriel's.
- Torfaen County Borough Council's Heritage Officer had agreed to provide the Council with use of World War One (WW) exhibition material at the Senior Schools Choral Festival 2014. Schools were being encouraged to adopt a WW1 theme for the evening. The possibility of featuring the festival in Torfaen Talks was also being examined.
- A request had also been submitted to the Heritage Officer to use Torfaen County Borough Council's interactive "living history" exhibition van at Armed Forces Day 2015. This would add colour and interest to the event.
- A national "Lights Out" activity had been planned for 4 August 2014. The Clerk had circulated information separately to members.
- Mr. Stuart Cameron was compiling a list of those who had lost their lives during the First World War. Members asked for further advice about any way in which the Council could support him in this research and help publicise the results.

It was **recommended** that:

- (1) the above information is noted.
- (2) the Clerk to the Council invites Mr. Stuart Cameron to present information to members about his project and potential ways in which the Council could lend its support.

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PF14/018 Code of Conduct Complaints

In conducting a recent review of the Council's Standing Orders, members had asked that consideration was given to the development of a local protocol to encourage dialogue and early resolution of complaints. Members noted that a similar protocol was already in place at Torfaen County Borough Council.

The Clerk to the Council reported that he had held initial discussions with the Monitoring Officer at Torfaen County Borough Council about introducing a similar protocol at Cwmbran Community Council. However the procedure was particular to Torfaen County Borough Council and the Monitoring Officer had advised that she did not have the resources to deal with community council complaints through this process. The Clerk to the Council confirmed that he would therefore continue to look into this matter to see if there were any aspects of the protocol which could be easily adapted to suit the needs of the Council.

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

PF14/019 Support to Croesyceiliog & Llanyrafon Community Council

Members noted that, as reported at the Full Council meeting held on 25 June 2014, this Council was currently providing temporary, short-term support to the above Council following the resignation of its Clerk. The support would be provided by the Council's Administrative Officer, Clare Rowles. The details of these arrangements were currently being finalised but the Clerk elaborated on the way in which the arrangement was expected to work, including the likely financial arrangements.

The Leader of the Majority Group confirmed that, during this time, the work of Cwmbran Community Council and the delivery of the Summer Playschemes in particular, would remain the priority of the Administrative Officer. He also confirmed that the arrangement would be closely monitored.

Members welcomed this latest example of collaboration between the two councils.

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

PF14/020 Staffing Support

Members noted that, following the return to work on a part time basis of Carly Newman, following maternity leave, the Council had now taken on a new member of staff to cover the days when Carly did not work. Abbie Gillard, who also worked at Cwmbran Centre for Young People (CCYP), had joined the Council for the time being to provide this additional cover and ensure that the quality of service was maintained. If the arrangement proved successful then there was scope to formalise matters into a more long-term arrangement.

Members also noted that further discussions were being held with an existing apprentice at CCYP (Level 2 Business/Administration) to provide further clerical support. This arrangement would also provide the member of staff concerned with valuable work experience. The Clerk to the Council confirmed

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that he would give priority to finalising these arrangements as soon as possible.

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

PF14/021 Seminars & Meetings of Outside Bodies

Members considered reports in relation to the following meetings

- (a) Torfaen County Association of Local Councils (TCLAC). AGM & Ordinary meeting.

Members noted that the seminar held to discuss the future management of Community Halls would take place on 22 September 2014 at the offices of Cwmbran Community Council. Other "TCALC" Councils would be invited to attend. The Clerk to the Council confirmed that he would make particular enquiries to ensure that the date was convenient to members of Croesyceiliog & Llanyrafon Community Council.

- (b) Local Councils in Partnership Committee (LCP) AGM & Ordinary Meeting.

Members expressed their concern that neither the Leader of Torfaen County Borough Council nor the proposed Chairman (Councillor Daniels) had been present at the AGM, which would therefore be reconvened in September.

It was **recommended** that;

- (1) the reports are noted.
- (2) the Clerk to the Council, in consultation with the Leader of the Majority Group, is instructed to write to Torfaen County Borough Council expressing the Council's concerns that no members of Torfaen County Borough Council had been present at the LCP AGM.

PF14/022 Grant Application from Royal British Legion Pontnewydd Branch

At a meeting held on 30 June 2014, the Council's Grants to Voluntary Organisations Committee had considered an application from the above organisation. The Committee referred the application to the Policy & Finance Committee with a recommendation that the application be granted and that payment be made from the Council's Regeneration budget, which was managed by this Committee. The grant had been requested in order to erect a flagpole.

It was **recommended** that

- (1) a grant of £972 be paid to the above organisation to purchase a flagpole,

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the payment to be made from the Council's Regeneration budget (I13)

- (2) an item is included on the agenda for the September meeting of the Policy & Finance committee to consider the establishment of a sub committee to manage the regeneration budget, with responsibility for agreeing criteria for schemes to support.
- (3) Torfaen County Borough Council is invited to send officer along to meetings of this sub committee to advise on potential schemes.

Signed (Chair, Cwmbran Community Council)