

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Policy & Finance Committee of Cwmbran Community Council held on Monday 26 January 2015**

**Present** Councillor WM Howell (Chair), Councillors SWJ Ashley, S Brooks, M Day, S Evans, R Jones, R Kemp, TA Matthews, J Rees and DJ Williams

Also Councillor TJ Winter

Also David Collins (Clerk to the Council)

**PF14/057 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for Absence were accepted from Councillors M Johnston (work commitments) and KK Manneh (personal)

Apologies for absence were also subsequently received from Councillor D Daniels.

**PF14/058 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.

**PF14/059 Itemised Schedule of Receipts & Payments (November & December 2014), Bank Reconciliations and Quarterly Financial Monitoring**

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

Issues raised by members included:

- Buffet for Larger Councils Forum (I07)
- Autobar Coffee Machine (E386)
- "Dimensions" refund – Remembrance (I19)

Members also welcomed the information included in the quarterly financial monitor report relating to variance against budget.

It was **recommended** that the above information is noted.

**PF14/060 Earmarked Reserves**

Members considered the amount held by the Council as reserves and priorities for earmarking reserves for particular purposes.

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Members drew attention to the poor condition of the Council House Annex and discussed the need for its retention and refurbishment in the light of the poor condition of other similar facilities in the local community. Members discussed potential design options for any new building, emphasising the need for any replacement to be disabled friendly. Members also drew attention to a number of potential regeneration projects which the Council could support.

It was **recommended** that the following sums be held by the Council as Earmarked Reserves

Replacement of Council House Annex	£150,000
Regeneration Projects	£35,000
CCYP Building Maintenance	Any monies not claimed by CCYP.

**PF14/061 Replacement of PCs for Council Staff**

Members considered costs which had been obtained from Shared Resource Service for replacement of PCs. Members also discussed other options, such as purchase of laptops. Members noted that expenditure had already been included within current estimates for such items.

It was **recommended** that the Clerk to the Council secure the purchase of suitable replacement IT equipment as soon as possible from within current estimates.

**PF14/062 Internal Audit Review**

The Chairman introduced a review of the council's internal audit arrangements. She emphasized that it was the Council's responsibility to undertake this annual review and asked for members' comments.

Members noted that the review portrayed a generally satisfactory picture of the Council's internal control environment but also highlighted one or two areas for development. Members drew attention to the importance of keeping audit arrangements under continual review by means of reports to members. Members also highlighted the importance of effective induction training for new members.

It was **recommended** that the Council approves the Annual review of Internal Audit and the actions identified.

**PF14/063 Business Risk Register**

Members considered progress against the Council's current Business Risk register, which had been approved in April 2014. Members highlighted the need to keep the register under regular review to help preserve the Council's internal control environment. The Clerk undertook to prepare an Executive Summary of the Register and highlight progress in relation to key risks. A new

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Risk Register would be prepared later in 2015.

It was **recommended** that the progress against the Risk Register, and the actions described above, are approved.

**PF14/064 Vacancies on School Governing Bodies**

Members noted a number of vacancies which currently existed for representatives of the Council on school governing bodies.

It was **recommended** that;

- (1) Councillor DJ Williams is nominated to fill the vacancy on the governing body of Greenmeadow Primary School.
- (2) Any members who are interested in filling any of the other vacancies are requested to contact the Clerk prior to the next Council meeting.

**PF14/065 Armed Forces Day 2015**

Members had previously asked for an opportunity to review arrangements to commemorate Armed Forces Day this year.

Issues raised by members included:

- options to commemorate the anniversary of the incorporation of the Gurkhas into the British Army.
- other opportunities to commemorate key milestones, such as the Gallipoli landings.

Members noted that, following the approval of the Revenue Estimates in January 2015, the budget for “Remembrance” was now held by the Events & Community Projects Committee. The Clerk also referred to key messages arising from a recent seminar he had attended, full details of which would be reported to the Events & Community Projects Committee.

It was **recommended** that the above suggestions are taken forward and the Clerk to the Council, in consultation with Councillor TA Matthews, report future progress to the Events & Community Projects Committee

**PF14/066 “An evening to Celebrate Cwmbran and its Communities”  
Saturday 7 March 2015 at Greenmeadow Golf Club**

Members noted details of arrangements for the above, which had been prepared in consultation with the Chairman of the Council. Details of the provisional guest list and options for entertainment and other activities were reported.

No charge would be made to attend the event but guests would be welcome to make a voluntary donation to the Chairman’s charity. The event would once again carry a St David’s Day “branding” and members suggested that any

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table decorations could be auctioned to raise funds for the Chairman's charity.

It was **recommended** that

- (1) the above suggestions are taken forward and the Clerk to the Council, in consultation with the Chairman of the Council, report future progress to the Events & Community Projects Committee.
- (2) the budget for this event is transferred to the Events & Community Projects Committee.

**PF14/067 Seminars & Meetings of Outside Bodies**

Members considered attached reports in relation to the following seminars and meetings of outside bodies, attended by representatives of the Council.

- (a) Local Strategic Board Tactical Group- 27 November 2014
- (b) TCALC - 2 December 2014
- (c) Local Councils in Partnership Committee (LCP) -16 December 2014 (Members noted that attendance at this meeting by officers from Torfaen County Borough Council was inconsistent)
- (d) Asset Transfer - One Voice Wales Training: "Asset Transfer & Devolution of Services" (1 December 2015) and "Wales Audit Office Seminar: Making Better Use of Public Assets." (14 January 2015 )

It was **recommended** that

- (1) the above reports are noted.
- (2) the Clerk write to the Leader of Torfaen County Borough Council to pay tribute to the officers from Torfaen County Borough Council who support the LCP meetings but express disappointment that more officers are unable to attend.

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