

Minutes of the Meeting of Cwmbran Community Council held on Wednesday 27 October 2021 at 6.00 pm.

Venue: The meeting was held remotely and at the Council House, Ventnor Road, Cwmbran NP44 3JY in accordance with the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021

These minutes are subject to confirmation at the Council Meeting to be held on 15 December 2021

Present: Councillor SJ Brooks (Chairman), Councillors SWJ Ashley, AL Bird, LJ Chaney, M Day, LG Johnson, KK Manneh, S Morgan, LM Ryan, M Villars, WJ Walker, DH Williams and LE Williams

(Councillors Ashley, Chaney and Villars participated in the meeting via remote means)

Also: David Collins, Clerk to the Council and Clare Facey, Administration Officer

Absent: Councillors RhM Bennett, JS Davenne, M Johnston, F Jones, J Rees and RD Kemp

(No public participation session was held at this meeting)

CL21/078 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were accepted from Councillors RhM Bennett (personal), JS Davenne (personal), M Johnston (sickness), F Jones (personal) and J Rees (work commitments)

CL21/079 Declarations of Interest

Members were asked to declare any personal and/or prejudicial interests they had and give details of the nature of their interest.

Councillor SWJ Ashley declared a non-prejudicial interest in Minute CL21/097 below (Request for Funding: Llantarnam Grange & Arts Centre) as a relative of a member of staff. He remained in the meeting.

Councillor SJ Brooks declared a non-prejudicial interest in Minute CL21/097 below (Request for Funding: Llantarnam Grange & Arts Centre) as a Board Member. He remained in the meeting.

Councillor SWJ Ashley declared a non-prejudicial interest in Minute CL21/093 below (Torfaen Replacement Local Development Plan) as a Member of Torfaen County Borough Council. He remained in the meeting during the discussions. He would reconsider the nature of the interest matters at County Borough Council level taking into account all relevant evidence and representations.

CL21/080 Voting

It was **Resolved** that the manner of any voting at this meeting would be by calling each name alphabetically with a response of “for” or “against” or “abstain”.

CL21/081 Chairman's Announcements & Vice Chairman's Announcements

The Chairman reported that he had attended the following events:

National Association of Councillors AGM 2-4 October 2021

There were no announcements from the Vice Chairman.

It was **Resolved** that:

- (i) the information is noted.
- (ii) the attendance of the Chairman and Vice Chairman at events is approved.

CL21/082 Public Question Time

In accordance with the Council's Standing Orders the opportunity for public questions was included as an item on the agenda for the meeting.

No questions had been submitted.

CL21/083 Gwent Police Update / South Wales Fire & Rescue Service Update

The Chairman welcomed Inspector Aled George to the meeting.

Inspector George outlined plans in relation to forthcoming events and celebrations such as Halloween, Guy Fawkes' Night and Christmas. Some use of dispersal powers was anticipated in view of a small rise in recent incidents. He also provided a brief overview of recent crime statistics.

Inspector George also referred to discussions about the possible establishment of a Community Alcohol Partnership (CAP) locally. This multi-agency group could help reduce under-age drinking and related anti-social behaviour and support educational and diversionary activity. Councillor S Morgan referred to a discussion she had held with Gwent Police and explained the role of CAPs to Members. Inspector George indicated that he would develop proposals for further consideration.

The Chairman also welcomed Station Commander Matthew Lewis of South Wales Fire & Rescue Service to his first meeting. Station Commander Lewis participated in the meeting by remote means and indicated his willingness to participate in future meetings to report on current initiatives. The Clerk agreed to provide him with details of the information the Council would find useful.

It was **Resolved** that Inspector George and Station Commander Lewis are thanked for their willingness to participate in the meeting.

CL21/084 Council Meeting 15 September 2021

The Chairman introduced the minutes of the above meetings.

In relation to Minute CL21/060 (2) (Council Meeting 21 July 2021), the Clerk drew attention to information provided to Members about the Draft Local

Elections (Principal Areas) (Wales) Rules 2021 and draft Local Elections (Communities) (Wales) Rules 2021.

It was **Resolved** that, subject to the addition of the word “he” after the words “confirmed that” in the third paragraph of Minute CL21/060 (Council Meeting 21 July 2021) the minutes of the above meeting are confirmed.

(The Chairman signed the minutes as a correct record)

CL21/085 Delegated Powers

Members noted matters dealt with under delegated powers granted to the Clerk, namely the purchase of audio-visual equipment to assist with meetings.

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

CL21/086 Receipts & Payments August and September 2021

Financial Regulations required details of receipts & payments and comparisons of expenditure against budget to be reported to the Council's Policy & Finance Committee. The regulations also required that bank reconciliations are verified by a member (Councillor M Villars) and that details are reported to the Council's Policy & Finance Committee. (Financial Regulations 4 and 2 refer.) Councillor Villars had verified and signed the information.

Due to the current Covid-19 outbreak, Council was recommended to confirm the suspension of these regulations to allow these matters to be reported direct to Council. This avoided the risk of the activity not being reported to Members in a timely manner. The risk of not doing so would cause a delay and a risk accountability, sound financial management and effective scrutiny.

- (i) Itemised Schedule of Receipts & Payments August 2021
- (ii) Itemised Schedule of Receipts & Payments September 2021

The Clerk advised that a Smart meter had been installed which would improve the way in which the Council's fuel bills were managed (E167. Code G09). He also drew Members' attention to progress in relation to the Council's website which was now live. (E182. Code H05).

It was **Resolved** that the information is approved.

CL21/087 Quarterly Financial Monitor

Members considered quarterly monitoring information of expenditure against budget for Quarter 1 (April, May, June 2021) and Quarter 2 (July, August, September 2021)

It was **Resolved** that the information is approved.

CL21/088 Transfer of Funds

In accordance with Financial Regulations, funds had been transferred from the Council's Monmouthshire Building Society Account to its Co-operative Bank Account. A transfer of £100,000 would take effect on 28 October 2021.

A similar transfer would take place on 29 October 2021. This would provide sufficient funds to enable payments to be paid to the Council's usual partners, as set out in the approved Estimates.

It was **Resolved** that the transfer of funds is noted.

CL21/089 Internal Audit

On 1 September 2021, the Council's internal auditor, Mr Lyn Llewellyn, announced his retirement from undertaking the audit of larger councils. Arrangements were being introduced to identify a successor. Details would be reported to a future meeting.

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

CL21/090 Independent Remuneration Panel Draft Annual Report 2022

Members noted that the above report had now been published for consultation and was available online. Section 13 related specifically to Community and Town Councils. Some payments were mandatory and some were discretionary. Members considered draft determinations for 2022 – 2023. For the period 1 April 2022 to 8 May 2022, all the determinations contained in the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales' Annual Report 2021/2022 would continue to apply in respect of principal councils and community and town councils.

With effect from 9 May 2022, the determinations set out in the Report would apply to principal councils and community and town councils. Observations were due 26 November 2021.

It was **Resolved** that Members consider the draft report and forward any observations to the Clerk.

CL21/091 Governance Documents: Investment Strategy

Members considered a draft Investment Strategy.

The Clerk agreed to provide Members with details of the interest rates on the various accounts used by the Council.

It was **Resolved** that the draft Investment Strategy is approved.

CL21/092 Risk Register 2021/2022

Members considered a draft Risk Register and Executive Summary.

Members considered the potential to undertake an Impact Risk Assessment of Council services. This would allow the impact of services to be measured, benchmarked and improved.

Members also suggested that a list of key services and events is eventually published as an appendix to the Register.

Members also identified a typing error required to the Register (Para 4.4)

It was **Resolved** that:

- (1) the Business Risk Register 2021/22 is approved.
- (2) Councillors SWJ Ashley, DH Williams and S Morgan liaise with the Clerk to develop the Risk Register to reflect risks around impact.
- (3) the Council confirms that satisfactory and current arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insurable risks are in place.

CL21/093 Torfaen Replacement Local Development Plan.

Councillor SWJ Ashley declared a non-prejudicial interest in this matter as a Member of Torfaen County Borough Council. He remained in the meeting during the discussions. He would reconsider the nature of the interest matters at County Borough Council level taking into account all relevant evidence and representations.

Members had recently been invited to participate in an Online 'Green Issues' Workshop re the Torfaen Replacement Local Development Plan (RDLP).

Members noted that Torfaen County Borough Council had been asked to ensure that Members are provided with details of other opportunities to make observations on matters relating to the RDLP. (Minute CL21/066 refers). Members emphasised the importance of receiving regular reports on current planning issues.

It was **Resolved** that the information is noted.

CL21/094 Planning Consultations

Members considered details of recent planning applications from Torfaen County Borough Council, which had been circulated separately.

It was **Resolved** that Members forward any observations on outstanding applications and other consultations to the Clerk so that any response can be submitted.

CL21/095 Cwmbran “Virtual” Big Event 18 September 2021

Members considered a report which reviewed the success of the above event. The report described various activities which had contributed to the event and provided statistics about the level of interaction and engagement on the day. Members noted that the event had been particularly successful in demonstrating how the Council collaborated with its key community partners.

It was **Resolved** that the success of the Virtual Big Event 2021 is noted.

CL21/096 Christmas Lights Switch on Ceremonies

Members considered a report on the arrangements for tree lighting ceremonies at Pontnewydd (1 December 2021) and The Council House (3 December 2021).

It was **Resolved** that the arrangements are endorsed.

CL21/097 Request for Funding: Llantarnam Grange & Arts Centre

Councillor SWJ Ashley declared a non-prejudicial interest in this matter as a relative of a member of staff. Councillor SJ Brooks declared a non-prejudicial interest in this matter as a Board Member. They remained in the meeting.

Members considered a request to help fund a Living With dementia Project at Llantarnam Grange & Arts Centre.

It was **Resolved** that consideration is referred to the Grants to Voluntary Organisations Committee.

CL21/098 Informal Resolution Protocol

Members considered an amended version of the Model Local Resolution Protocol for Community and Town Councils for adoption. The amendment made to the existing protocol is that low level and frivolous complaints should now be considered for informal resolution. Members discussed the importance of dealing with any complaints fairly and impartially, including the potential for collaborating with other Councils to handle complaints.

It was **Resolved** that consideration is deferred to receive further information about complaints handling processes.

CL21/099 Installation of Traffic Speed Signs (“Speed Indicator Devices”)

Members considered information provided in relation to areas of most concern in relation to speeding. (Minute CL21/074 refers.) The Clerk apologised for omitting to circulate full details of information submitted by Councillor AL Bird.

It was **Resolved** that:

- (1) further consideration is deferred to allow circulation of all relevant information.
- (2) the installation of Speed Indicator Devices at Llantarnam Road, Station Road and Blenheim Road is supported in principle.

CL21/100 Dates of Next Meetings

Members considered a provisional programme of meetings. Each meeting would commence at 6.00 pm at the Council House, Ventnor Road, Cwmbran NP44 3JY. The Grants to Voluntary Organisations Committee would meet at 6.45 pm. Members of the Council, members of the press and the public may attend in person. The meetings would also take place remotely using a video conferencing facility in accordance with the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

Members also discussed arrangements for forthcoming events such as Remembrance Sunday. The Clerk undertook to publish details.

It was **Resolved** that:

- (1) the schedule of meetings is approved. Each meeting to be held in person and remotely using a video conferencing facility in accordance with the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.
- (2) Standing Orders are amended to confirm that meetings may take place in hybrid form, as described above.

CL21/101 Exclusion of the Press & Public

In view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, it was **resolved** that the following matters be considered in private and that the power of exclusion of the public under Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act, 1960 be exercised.

CL21/102 Renewal of Lease: Task Force Vehicle

Members considered a quotation to extend the lease on the above vehicle BT18 WGA.

It was **Resolved** that

- (1) As an exemption to Financial Regulations and Contract Standing Orders, the lease on the Council's existing vehicle is extended for a further six months based upon the above quotation.
- (2) the Clerk is instructed to continue to examine longer term options, including electric vehicles and chargers and report back to Members.

CL21/103 Staffing

Members noted that the vacant post of Cleaner/Caretaker had recently been advertised. Candidates would be interviewed by the Clerk and Administrative Officer on 28 October 2021. Details would be reported to a future meeting.

It was **Resolved** that the position is noted and approved.

Signed..... (Chairman, Cwmbran Community Council)