

]Minutes of the Policy & Finance Committee of Cwmbran Community Council held on Monday 6 June 2022 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

The recommendations below will be submitted to the Council Meeting to be held on 22 June 2022.

These minutes are subject to confirmation at the meeting to be held on 11 July 2022

Present: Councillor R Bennett (Chair), Councillors SWJ Ashley, A Bird, L Chaney, L Johnston, F Jones (Vice-Chair), P Jones, L Lloyd-Tolman, KK Manneh, C Morgan, S Morgan, P Seabourne, M Villars

(Councillor L Chaney participated in the meeting via remote means)

.Also: Clare Facey (Interim Clerk)

Absent: Councillor M Day

(No Public Participation Session was held at this meeting.)

PF22/001 Appointment of Chair and Membership

At the Annual General Meeting of Cwmbran Community Council held on 18th May 2022, Councillor Rh Bennett was appointed Chair of this Committee for the Municipal Year 2022/23. Councillor F Jones was appointed as Vice Chair. Membership was appointed as referred to above.

Terms of Reference for the Committee were also agreed at the above meeting.

PF22/002 Apologies for Absence

There were no apologies for Absence.

PF22/003 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.

Councillors R Bennett and S Morgan declared a non-prejudicial interest in Minute PF22/010 below (Community Alcohol Partnership (CAP) for Cwmbran) as an employee of a company who funds the Partnership and an independent director of Community Alcohol Partnerships respectively.

They remained in the meeting during the discussions.

PF22/004 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 28 February 2022 were confirmed as a correct record.

The previous Chair signed the minutes.

PF22/005 Itemised Schedule of Receipts & Payments (February & March 2022)

Members considered the above information, including bank reconciliation. The Chair confirmed that corresponding statements and reconciliation had been verified by Councillor M Villars, in accordance with financial regulations. No issues were referred to the committee as a result of this process. Councillor Villars was thanked for his continued dedication to this role.

It was **recommended** that the Itemised Schedule of Receipts & Payments for February and March 2022 are noted.

PF22/006 Quarterly Financial Monitoring 2021/22: Quarter 4 (January, February & March 2022)

Members considered quarterly monitoring information of expenditure against budget for Quarter 4 (January, February & March 2022).

A further discussion took place regarding the Council's level of reserves and ways in which the Council could look at future projects to help alleviate the current cost of living crisis, by looking at various ways the Council could support the community. It was therefore suggested that members discuss this in greater detail at a future Group meeting.

It was **recommended** that:-

- a) the Quarterly Financial Monitor for 2021/22 (January, February & March 2022) is noted
- b) that the Council's levels of Reserves are discussed at a Group meeting, together with identifying future projects to help with the cost of living crisis in some way.

PF22/007 Transfer

Members noted that funds were transferred from Monmouthshire Building Society to the Co-operative Bank in the sum of £100,000, on 9 May 2022. (Minuted as per Financial Regulations)

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

PF22/008 Annual Return For The Year Ended 31 March 2022

Members considered the following reports:-

- (i) Annual Return & Accounting Statement
- (ii) Financial Statement
- (iii) Report of Internal Auditor
- (iv) A Management Response to the audit report

Issues raised by Members included:-

- That the Annual Return & Accounting Statements and Financial Statements are approved, subject to the points raised in minutes PF21/026 Financial Reserves: Review & Risk Assessment, relating to the Financial Statement wording being amended in 2022/23.

Members noted that the Annual Return and Financial Statement must be approved by Full Council. Any audit recommendations should also be addressed by Full Council. These matters would therefore also be reported to the next Council meeting.

It was **recommended** that:-

- a) the Annual Return & Accounting Statements and Financial Statements are approved subject to the points raised in minutes PF21/026 Financial Reserves: Review & Risk Assessment, relating to the Financial Statement wording being amended in 2022/23
- b) the report of Internal Auditor and the Management Response are received.

PF22/009 Council House Matters

- a) Members were pleased to note that the defibrillator at the Council House had now been moved to the outside of the building, where it will be more of an asset to the community.

The new cabinet that was obtained has now been installed and a local electrician has installed power to the cabinet and defibrillator. Members noted that costs would be met from Code G10 (Premises Maintenance & Asset Replacement).

Members also suggested that the Council look at Defibrillator training for members and staff to undertake.

- b) Members received a quote from GB Painting & Decorating Services to prepare & paint fascia boards, walls, downpipes, windowsills & woodwork to The Council House. The cost is £9,995. As per Financial Regulations 1.14 – The Council must approve any grant or single commitment in excess of £6,000. Members suggested that the Council should try obtaining two more quotes, however, if suitable quotes/contractors were unobtainable, the Council would appoint the original contractor to undertake the work. As the work is considered as routine maintenance for the upkeep of the Council House, it is therefore essential maintenance that needs to be carried out.

It was **recommended** that:-

- 1) the change of position of the defibrillator is noted and training opportunities are identified
- 2) more quotes are obtained if possible before carrying out essential maintenance work to the upkeep of the Council House.

PF22/010 Community Alcohol Partnership (CAP) for Cwmbran

Councillors R Bennett and S Morgan declared a non-prejudicial interest in (Community Alcohol Partnership (CAP) for Cwmbran) as an employee of a

company who funds the Partnership and an independent director of Community Alcohol Partnerships respectively.

They remained in the meeting during the discussions.

A meeting took place remotely on 25 May 2022 to discuss the above. Matthew Knight, Regional CAP Coordinator attended along with representatives of Cwmbran Community Council, Henllys Community Council, Torfaen County Borough Council and Gwent Police.

Councillor Sue Morgan reported that CAP would be officially launching at Cwmbran Big Event on Saturday 11th June 2022 at 1 pm, giving members of the public a good opportunity to visit the stall and identify what CAP do. The Chairman confirmed that he would be opening the official launch of CAP and making a speech.

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

**PF22/011 Installation of Traffic Speed Signs (Speed Indicator Devices):
Llantarnam Road, Station Road and Blenheim Road**

Members received a report on the Installation of Traffic Speed Signs (Speed Indicator Devices) at the three locations listed above.

It was previously recommended (PF21/049 refers) that the decision of the Council is noted and implemented (Highways Act 1980 s274a) and that the installation of the Speed Indicator Devices is supported. The Acting Clerk reported to members due to a slight increase in the installation costs. The total costs being approximately £13,000 (Regeneration Code I13, budget of £25,000).

Members considered publicity opportunities, and this would be highlighted on all Cwmbran's social media platforms, to highlight the work of Cwmbran Community Council.

It was **recommended** that the decision of the Council is noted and implemented. (Highways Act 1980 s274a)

PF22/012 Seminars & Outside Bodies

Members received reports on the following meetings:-

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|------|---------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| (i) | Gwent Valleys Area Committee | 19 April 2022 |
| (ii) | Larger Local Councils Committee | 20 th April 2022 |

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

PF22/013 Health & Safety Evaluation Report

Members received a detailed report following a recent visit from Peninsula, the Council's Health & Safety Advisors, in relation to health and safety compliance and best practice.

The report confirms that at the time of the visit, the standard of health & safety management appeared to be generally satisfactory, although it identified some actions that were necessary to improve safety management. The

Acting Clerk outlined the improvement that needed to be made to members, as described in the report.

It was **recommended** that the Acting Clerk look at the actions required and report back to members at a future meeting.

PF22/014 Exclusion of the Press & Public

In view of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, it was agreed 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.

PF22/015 Staffing Matters

Members considered a report to extend the existing arrangements relating to the hours worked by two members of staff. (Minute CL21/077 (2) refers.) This was necessary until the appointment of a fulltime Clerical Officer (who left the Council during lockdown). Members agreed that the arrangements would be continued from 30 June to 30 September 2022.

Members considered that the Council was now in a position to start the process of reviewing the post and advertising for a fulltime Clerical Officer to replace SR, and, thereafter, start the process of advertising for a fulltime Clerk.

It was **recommended** that the arrangements described above are confirmed.

Signed (Chairman, Policy & Finance Committee)