

Minutes of the Policy & Finance Committee of Cwmbran Community Council held on Wednesday 28 September 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 5 October 2022.

These minutes are subject to confirmation at the meeting to be held on 17 October 2022

Present: Councillor F Jones (Chair), Councillors A Bird, L Chaney, P Jones, L Lloyd-Tolman & M Villars

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

Also: Clare Facey (Interim Clerk), Councillor L Simmonds

Absent: Councillors R Bennett, M Day, L Johnston, K Manneh, C Morgan & S Morgan

(No Public Participation Session was held at this meeting)

PF22/029 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence were accepted from Councillors R Bennett (personal), K Manneh (personal), C Morgan (illness) & S Morgan (illness).

PF22/030 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.

There were no Declarations of Interest.

PF22/031 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 July 2022 were confirmed as a correct record.

The Vice-Chair signed the minutes.

PF22/032 Community Engagement

Following a presentation from David Leech (Chief Officer at Torfaen County Borough Council) at the last Policy & Finance Meeting, it was suggested that a workshop be arranged for Members to explore community engagement.

It was **recommended** that this item is deferred, following discussion with the Chair of this Committee, who can liaise with David Leech, to provide possible dates for the workshop.

PF22/033 Itemised Schedule of Receipts & Payments (May, June, July 2022)

Members considered the above information, including bank reconciliations. The Acting Clerk confirmed that corresponding statements and reconciliations had been verified by Councillor M Villars, in accordance with financial regulations.

Members suggested that the rates for the room bookings are reviewed at the next Policy & Finance Committee meeting as it has been a while since this has been reviewed.

It was **recommended**:-

- a) that the Itemised Schedule of Receipts & Payments for May, June & July 2022 is noted
- b) that the room bookings rates are reviewed at the next Policy & Finance Committee meeting
- c) that Councillor Villars is thanked for verifying the accounts.

PF22/034 Quarterly Financial Monitoring 2022/23: Quarter 1 (April, May, June 2022)

The Acting Clerk introduced the Quarterly Financial Monitor 2022/23 Quarter 1 to Members.

It was suggested that Members discuss the Council's General Reserves at the next Full Council meeting.

It was **recommended** that:

- a) the Quarterly Financial Monitor 2022/23 for Quarter 1 is noted
- b) Members discuss the Council's General Reserves at the next Full Council meeting
- c) that the position is noted.

PF22/035 May Elections

Following the May Elections, the Council has received an invoice from Torfaen County Borough Council in the sum of £12,182.70 relating to these costs. There is £10,000 in the budget to cover these costs (A01), plus £25,000 in earmarked reserves. (Members noted that the Council is still awaiting the invoice relating to the Vacancy and Election in the Two Locks Ward)

Members approved payment, however, they suggested that a request is made with the Election's Officer at Torfaen County Borough Council for a breakdown of the costs, relating to the May Elections and the Two Locks Ward Election.

It was **recommended** that:

- a) the invoice is approved and paid and a request is made with the Election's Officer at Torfaen County Borough Council for a breakdown of the costs, relating to the May Elections and the Two Locks Ward Election
- b) the position is noted.

PF22/036 Employers Pension Contributions

Members noted that the Council has recently received an invoice for the Employers Pensions Lump Sum 22/23 in the sum of £10,000, which has been budgeted for under code CO1A.

It was **recommended** that the payment is approved and paid.

PF22/037 Council House Matters

- a) Members received a progress report on the external works of the building. The Acting Clerk explained that some repairs were needed to extensive rotten wood to the apex of the building on the front and back, which was not identified until closer examination. This had caused some delays to the work being carried out, however, the contractors were hopeful to be finished in the next week or two.
- b) Internal Alterations to Reception and Main Office area – Members noted that in March 2019 the Council received architectural drawings from Torfaen County Borough Council, however, this was put on hold due to Covid. The Chair to the Council explained that the earmarked reserves for Building Maintenance was the largest amount of money in the reserves.

Discussion ensued and Members were mindful of spending money on non-essential repairs during the cost of living crisis and that money should be planned and prioritised in helping the community. Members were aware that some areas of the building were in desperate need of repair, eg damp issues and that the building should be an inviting, free, warm space for public use.

It was suggested that the Acting Clerk ascertain some quotes for the internal works and repairs and that this item is deferred to the next full Council meeting for further consideration.

- c) Speed Signs – The Acting Clerk reported to Members that she had finally received an update on the installation of the 3 Speed Signs. The Officer at Torfaen County Borough Council had emailed explaining that the delivery of the units were stuck in Germany but he had been assured that they would be delivered in the next 2-3 weeks, once they are received the Council would be their priority.

Members suggested that this item is discussed at the next Policy & Finance meeting to identify future locations of Speed Signs and funding.

It was **recommended** that:-

- i) the external works to The Council House is noted

- ii) the Acting Clerk obtain quotes relating to the internal works and the item is deferred to the next full Council meeting
- iii) the update regarding the Speed Signs is noted and discussed at the next Policy & Finance Committee to identify future locations of Speed Signs and funding
- iv) the position is noted.

PF22/038 Community Alcohol Partnership (CAP) for Cwmbran

This item is deferred to the next meeting.

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

PF22/039 Seminars & Outside Bodies

Members were asked to note the following meetings:-

- (i) The Congress Theatre Management Board – Members received a report from Councillor A Bird who had attended the meeting. Councillor Bird reported that The Congress Theatre is celebrating its 50th Year Anniversary and has organised a concert at the Theatre on Saturday 15th October 2022 and all Members had been invited to attend (the Acting Clerk confirmed that this invitation had been sent on the last Members Matters). He also reported that the Theatre had still been able to maintain a profit, considering the last two years during Covid, whereby some shows had to be cancelled.
- (ii) Friends of Bruchsal Society/Friends of Bruchsal Trust – Councillor Bird also attended these meetings and updated members. He reported that he was the new Chair of the Friends of Bruchsal. Councillor Bird explained that the Society were aiming for a new direction and that they had recently engaged a private consultant to help identify ways in which to improve the Society. The Society were looking at a possible paid employee and looking to create and establish more links with Bruchsal, new projects and a positive way forward. They were also looking to arrange more visits with local schools and choirs.

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

PF22/040 Standing Orders

Members received the Standing Orders and noted that these are a legal requirement and reflect model regulations used throughout the Town & Country sector (based upon NALC Model Standing Orders 2018 Wales).

The Standing Orders were last adopted by Cwmbran Community Council at a meeting held on 15 September 2021 and therefore due for review and adoption.

It was **recommended** that the Standing Orders are adopted.

PF22/041 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.

PF22/042 Staffing Matters

Members noted that interviews and appointment had recently been made for the post of part-time Clerical Officer.

Members noted that the full time Clerical Officer was now in post.

Members noted that the Clerk's position would be reported to the next Full Council meeting.

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

Signed(Chairman, Policy & Finance Committee)