

Minutes of the Policy & Finance Committee of Cwmbran Community Council held on Monday 27 November 2023 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 13 December 2023.

These minutes are subject to confirmation at the meeting to be held on: 22 January 2024

Present Councillors R Bennett (Chair), A Bird, & W Walker

(Councillors L Chaney, M Day, L Lloyd-Tolman, C Morgan, S Morgan, P Seabourne & M Villars participated in the meeting via remote means)

Also Gareth Davies (Clerk), Andy Smith (RFO/Deputy Clerk),

Absent Councillors SWJ Ashley, L Johnson, F Jones, P Jones & K Manneh

(No Public Participation Session was held at this meeting)

PF23/039 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence were accepted from Councillors SWJ Ashley (illness)

PF23/040 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.

PF23/041 Minutes 16 October 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 October 2023 were confirmed as a correct record of the meeting and are approved and actioned therein.

Councillor R Bennett signed the minutes.

PF23/042 Itemised Schedule of Receipts & Payments (September 2023) and Bank Reconciliation for September 2023

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

It was **recommended** that:-

- a) that the Itemised Schedule of Receipts & Payments and Bank Reconciliation for September 2023 are noted.
- b) that Councillor Villars is thanked for verifying the accounts.

PF23/043 Finance System

The RFO updated members on the progress of the new finance system. Staff have now received training and are using the system, and a deadline has been set for the system to be up to date by the end of December 2023. Staff have also received training for Asset Manager and Admin+.

Councillor Villars enquired when reports would be available to look at and the RFO confirmed that the April reports will be ready next week.

Members asked when the planning would be available and the RFO confirmed that training for staff would be taking place soon.

It was **recommended** that:

- a) the position is noted.

PF23/044 Council House Matters

The Clerk confirmed that he is waiting for the quote from the architect on the internal reconfiguration work to the building. Glass panels in the windows were replaced last week with more thermally efficient glazing.

Councillor Villars enquired if Torfaen Access Forum had visited the building to assess the disability access of the building, the Clerk will make contact.

It was **recommended** that:

- a) the Clerk contacts Torfaen Access Forum
- b) the position is noted.

PF23/45 Seminars & Outside Bodies

Councillor S Morgan updated members on the Torfaen Museum & Trust which is temporarily closed due to administration issues. Recruitment is taking place and they should be open again soon.

Councillor Chaney attended the Torfaen Aids for the Disabled and Torfaen Transport meetings and reported to members that all is going well.

Councillor Bird informed members that Rev Harald Thomas has stepped down as Secretary of the Congress Theatre after many years of service. The Theatre has a master plan of improvements to the Theatre, and they will be looking to apply to the Regeneration & Major Grants Committee for funding towards the costs.

It was **recommended** that:-

- a) the position is noted.

PF23/046 Exclusion of the Public & Press

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

PF23/047 Staffing Update

The Clerk asked members to consider a contribution towards the cost of a Christmas meal for the staff. Members approved the request.

It was **recommended** that:-

- a) the contribution to the staff meal is approved.
- b) the position is noted.

PF23/048 Reserves 2023/24 as at 15 November 2023

The RFO updated members on the Reserves for 2023-24 and members considered the report.

It was **recommended** that:-

- a) the position is noted.

PF23/049 Budget 2024/25

The RFO reported to members that although the Council Tax base had not yet been received from Torfaen CBC. The reports are available for members to review to allow plenty of time for budget planning, in preparation for February 2024 when the budget will be formally approved.

Members discussed the reports and amendments to the budgets.

Members had a discussion on the Youth Engagement/Youth Council funding and agreed that it is an area that needs to be promoted and discussed in more detail at the next meeting.

The RFO has been tasked with contacting all core funded groups to report back to the Council on the use of the funding to assess the level of funding required for 2024/25.

It was **recommended** that:-

- a) Youth Engagement/Youth Council is added as an item to the next Policy & Finance Agenda.
- b) the RFO to amend the budgets.
- c) the RFO contacts Core Funded Groups.
- d) the position is noted.

Signed(Chair, Policy & Finance Committee)