

Minutes of the Policy & Finance Committee of Cwmbran Community Council held on Monday 22 January 2024 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 31st January 2024.

These minutes are subject to confirmation at the meeting to be held on: 4 March 2024

Present Councillors A Bird, R Bennett (Chair), F Jones, P Jones, M Villars & W Walker

(Councillors SWJ Ashley, M Day, C Morgan & S Morgan participated in the meeting via remote means)

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

Absent Councillors L Chaney, L Johnston, L Lloyd-Tolman, P Seabourne & K Manneh

(No Public Participation Session was held at this meeting)

PF23/050 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for Absence were accepted from Councillors L Chaney (illness), L Lloyd-Tolman (Personal) & K Manneh (Personal)

PF23/051 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.

PF23/052 Minutes 27 November 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 November 2023 were confirmed as a correct record of the meeting and are approved and actioned therein.

Councillor R Bennett signed the minutes.

PF23/053 Itemised Schedule of Receipts & Payments (October 2023 & November 2023) and Bank Reconciliation for October 2023 & November 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 October 2023 & November 2023 are noted.
- b) that Councillor Villars is thanked for verifying the accounts.

PF23/054 Seminars & Outside Bodies

Councillor Bird updated members on the success of Pantomime held at the Congress Theatre and he also attended the Local Councils Partnership Committee with discussions on the Community based approach and levelling up funding which requires a lot more clarity as to who is doing what.

Councillor S Morgan reported to members that the Torfaen Museum Trust had now resolved the banking issues.

Councillor Villars updated members on the John Fielding VC Service, held at Llantarnam Church.

It was **recommended** that:-

- a) the position is noted.

PF23/055 Cwmbran Wellbeing Project

The Clerk informed members of a request received from a local singing group for people with injuries, to use the Annex for meetings initially on a free of charge basis.

Members discussed the use of the annex and groups with clear links to Wellbeing using the Annex free of charge during office hours. Members also discussed room hire being free of charge for groups receiving Core Funding and representation from the Council. Members agreed that room hire will be provided free of charge for organisations with clear links to wellbeing and supported by the Council.

The Clerk to produce a report to formalise the schedule of fees for Room Hire.

It was **recommended** that:-

- a) the Clerk produces a report to formalise the schedule of fees for Room Hire.
- b) the position is noted.

PF23/056 Community Review

Members discussed the first Community Review Consultation and the recommendations from the task and finish group.

Members agreed that the other smaller Community Councils would be welcome to join Cwmbran Community Council and agreed that it should be up to the residents to decide. Councillor P Jones would like to see Two Locks Ward remain as part of Cwmbran Community Council rather than join Henllys Community Council.

Members also discussed the suggested boundary changes and Councillor Bird was concerned about the proposed changes to the Northville Ward with the boundary moving from the River to the Railway line, which would remove approximately 80 houses from the ward and Cwmbran Community Council.

Councillor Bennett suggested members speak to residents in the community to make them aware of the proposed changes.

Members asked the Clerk to draft the recommendations to be considered at the full Council meeting.

The Clerk informed members that Torfaen CBC had given notice to terminate the hire of the upstairs offices in The Council House. Members discussed the options for the hire of the upstairs offices, with the possibility of organisations using the offices for community based services who could add value to the Council. Members also discussed the option of new business opportunities for start up businesses. Members agreed to explore the opportunities focusing on Community Services.

It was **recommended** that:-

- a) the Clerk drafts the recommendations for the Community Review for the full Council meeting.
- b) The position is noted.

PF23/057 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.

PF23/058 Staffing Update

Members received a staffing update from the Clerk.

It was **recommended** that:-

- a) the position is noted.

PF23/059 Budget 2023/2024

Members received an update from the RFO on the 2023-2024 budget reports, members considered the reports.

It was **recommended** that:-

- a) the position is noted.

PF23/060 Budget 2024/2025

Members discussed the 2024-2025 budget. Members enquired about the payments to core funded groups and the RFO will be contacting groups to put in place a formal agreement to assess the funding requirements for each organisation taking inflation into account and creating a clear baseline to interpret information.

Members also suggested looking at the grant recipients to consider if an organisation would be suitable for core funding.

The RFO will produce a report for the next meeting with recommendations on what the Council will be asking the groups to provide, members agreed that this should be proportionate to the organisation.

It was **recommended** that:-

- a) the RFO produces a report with the recommendations.
- b) the position is noted.

Signed(Chair, Policy & Finance Committee)