

Policy & Finance Committee

Subject to Confirmation by Cwmbran Community Council

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Policy & Finance Committee held on Monday 13 June 2016**

**Present** Councillor TA Matthews (in the Chair). Councillors SWJ Ashley, S Brooks, D Daniels, M Day, S Evans, M Johnston, R Jones, WJ Walker, DJ Williams and TJ Winter

Also David Collins (Clerk to the Council) & Clare Facey (Administrative Officer)

**PF16/001 Appointment of Chairman**

It was reported that, at a meeting held on 18 May 2016, Councillor TA Matthews was appointed Chairman of this committee for the Municipal Year 2016/17. Councillor M Day was appointed as Vice Chairman.

It was **recommended** that the above arrangements are noted.

**PF16/002 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for Absence were accepted from Councillor WM Howell (illness) and KK Manneh (work commitments)

**PF16/003 Declarations of Interest**

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

**PF16/004 Itemised Schedule of Receipts & Payments and Bank Reconciliation (March & April 2016) and Quarterly Monitor 2015/16 (Quarter 4)**

Members considered the above information.

Issues raised by Members included:

- Task Force materials – Mosswood Industrial Supplies (M04)

*(Clerk's note: This expenditure related to two pairs of work trousers, two pairs of safety glasses, two helmets and two pairs of gloves in readiness for the gardening season.)*

- Pro-copy (photocopier) (H03) and Siemans (photocopier lease) (H03)

The Administrative Officer explained the difference between these items of expenditure. She agreed to include fuller explanations for these transactions in future schedules.

- Newsletter Production (H10)

Members praised the appearance of the new Residents Handbook, which had been launched at the Big Event on 11 June 2016. Members welcomed the use of advertisements from local firms and partners to help offset production costs.

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The Clerk referred to the sum of £3,000 within this Heading for 2016/17. He explained that the new handbook had been funded from this budget. It was proposed to produce a further Handbook in the autumn, to be launched on Remembrance Sunday. He also reported that he had negotiated favourable rates (£795) for a Double Page advert (DPS) to appear in the forthcoming Torfaen County Borough Council A-Z & Street Plan. This would also be financed from within the approved budget for 2016/17 for Newsletter Production (H10).

It was **recommended** that

- (1) the above information is noted.
- (2) the arrangements for future Handbooks and advertising in the Torfaen County Borough Council A-Z are endorsed.

### **PF16/005 Annual Report 2016**

Members considered the draft Annual Report together with a brief covering report. The Annual Report followed the successful format of the 2015 report. It described the Council's achievements and goals.

It was **recommended** that;

- (1) the 2016 Annual Report is approved.
- (2) the following principles, as featured within the report, are adopted to as the Council's long term objectives.

To contribute towards the delivery of:

- A Prosperous Cwmbran.
- A Resilient Cwmbran.
- A Healthier Cwmbran.
- A More Equal Cwmbran.
- A Cwmbran of Cohesive Communities.
- A Cwmbran of Vibrant Culture & Thriving Welsh Language
- A Globally responsive Cwmbran.
- A Competent Council.

### **PF16/006 Annual Pay Policy**

Members noted that, at the One Voice Wales Larger Council's Meeting held on 13 April 2016, consideration was given to a policy statement recently released by the Welsh Government which suggested that the publication of an annual pay policy might be relevant to the larger town & community councils in Wales.

Members considered a statement which had been agreed by member councils who were present and was now submitted for formal approval by the

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Council. The statement would be published to the Council's website which would address the suggestion received from the Welsh Government.

It was **recommended** that the Pay Policy is adopted.

**PF16/007 Local Government Ethical Framework**

Members considered a letter from Welsh Government, Local Government Democracy Division and revised Local Government Model Code of Conduct.

The effect of these documents was to make minor changes to the model code of conduct. For example, responsibility for maintaining the register of interests of members of community councils would transfer from the Monitoring Officer to the 'proper officer' of each community council (i.e. the Clerk.). The Ombudsman would also adjust his guidance on the Code in due course.

The Council was required to adopt the revised Code of Conduct before 26 July 2016.

As soon as reasonably practicable after revising a code, the Council must publish in one or more newspapers circulating in the area a notice which states that it has adopted or revised the code and make it available for inspection etc. A copy must also be sent to the Ombudsman.

Members discussed the implications of the new arrangements on the Clerk's existing workload and responsibility. The Clerk reported that he had arranged to attend a training session about the new framework in the near future. This training would be delivered by the Monitoring Officer of Torfaen County Borough Council

It was **recommended** that

- (1) the revised Code of Conduct is adopted.
- (2) the Clerk is instructed to report back to Members on the detailed implications of the new arrangements, following his attendance at the training session referred to above.

**PF16/008 One Voice Wales Annual General Meeting 2016: Saturday 1 October 2016**

Member considered the arrangements for the submission of motions for debate at the One Voice Wales AGM 2016.

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

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**PF16/009 Seminars & Meetings of Outside Bodies**

Members considered reports in relation to the following seminars and meetings of outside bodies, attended by representatives of the Council:

- |       |   |               |
|-------|---|---------------|
| (i)   | One Voice Wales Larger Councils Network | 13 April 2016 |
| (ii)  | SLCC Gwent Branch                       | 22 April 2016 |
| (iii) | Member Seminar re Torfaen Museum Trust  | 25 April 2016 |

(Members discussed matters which impacted on the financial position of the Trust. Members look forward to receiving further details from the museum about ways in which the Council could support the museum, such as details of specific projects, with full details of associated costs.

Members noted that Councillor DJ Williams had also been present at this meeting.)

- |      |                           |             |
|------|---------------------------|-------------|
| (iv) | WAO Seminar               | 11 May 2016 |
| (v)  | Randomz Committee Meeting | 19 May 2016 |

The Chairman referred to a written request from Councillor Seabourne which asked that Members consider options for further funding of the Friday Night Project. The Leader of the Majority Group described the governance and financial relationships between Randomz and Cwmbran Centre for Young People. The Clerk reported that we was speaking to staff and Randomz to clarify the extent of funding required and the purposes to which any funding would be put. Members emphasised the importance of addressing these questions before being able to consider the allocation of any further funds. Members also discussed other possible sources of funding to help with this project.

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

**PF16/010 Exclusion of the Press & Public**

It was **recommended** that the following item was not for publication because, in accordance with paragraphs 12 & 14 of schedule 12a of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended by the Access to Information Variation Order Wales 2007), it contained information about a particular individual or individuals and information relating to the financial and business affairs of particular persons, including the council and, in all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining exemptions outweighed the public interest in disclosing information.

**PF16/011 Task Force Review**

Members considered a report on various matters in relation to the Task Force, with particular reference to comments expressed by the Council's Internal Auditor.

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It was **recommended** that a new ask & Finish Group comprising Councillors Daniels, Walker, DJ Williams, Ashley, Brooks and Matthews is established to examine these matters in more detail.

**PF16/012      2016 & 2017 Pay Scales & Allowances: NJC Agreement**

It was **recommended** that

- (i) the Council notes that agreement has been reached at NJC level for 1% pay increase for staff up to SCP 49. (Grades 1 to 3 increased by higher percentages.)
  
- (ii) the Council confirms that this 1% increase will also apply to the Clerk to the Council (SCP 48-51) for 2016 and 2017.

Signed.....

(Chair, Cwmbran Community Council.)