

Policy & Finance Committee

Subject to Confirmation by Cwmbran Community Council

**Minutes of the Meeting of the Policy & Finance Committee held on Monday 23 January 2017**

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

Also Councillor LJ Chaney

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

**CL16/067 Apologies for Absence**

None

**PF16/068 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.

**PF16/069 Itemised Schedule of Receipts & Payments and Bank Reconciliation (November & December 2016)**

Members considered the above information.

Issues raised by Members included:

- Cwmbran Centre for Young People (Code 001) (Frequency of payments)

The Clerk advised that details of quarterly expenditure for the year up to 31 December 2016 were also available for Members to consider at the meeting and would be formally reported at the next meeting.

The Clerk also referred to provisions within the Council's Financial Regulations that a Member, other than the Chairman or a cheque signatory, should be appointed to verify bank reconciliations. (Financial Regulation 2.2). Councillor Johnston had agreed to undertake this role and had inspected and signed the appropriate documentation as required. Details were therefore reported to the committee.

It was **recommended** that

- (1) the information is noted.
- (2) the appointment of Councillor Johnston to undertake the role referred to above is confirmed.

**PF16/070 Greater Gwent (Torfaen) Pension Fund Triennial Actuarial Valuation as at 31 March 2016**

Members noted that the purpose of the above valuation was to assess the overall funding level of the Fund to ensure that there were sufficient assets in the Fund to cover the pension benefits due to members and set the employer Contributions for the three year period commencing on 1 April 2017. The

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Valuation had been completed and had resulted in an increase in the level of the Primary Contribution Rate for future service required for the three year period commencing on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 from 18.7% to 19.1% of pensionable pay. In addition the Secondary Contribution cash amount in respect of the deficit will increase from £12,300 per annum to £28,000 per annum on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 for the year 2017/18, £29,000 in 2018/19 and £30,000 in 2019/20.

It was **recommended** that the above payments are approved.

**PF16/071 Payroll Services: Service Level Agreement and Administration Fees**

The Clerk reported the receipt of invoices issued on 6 December 2016 from Torfaen County Borough Council for running the payroll for 2013/14, 2014/15 & 2015/16. The total value amounted to £1897.50. Members noted that these costs could be met from within the available budget of £3,000 allocated for Staffing Contingency Costs (C04).

The Chairman expressed his disappointment that the Council had only recently been billed for these historic costs and the Leader of the Majority Group referred to instructions which he had given to the Clerk to ascertain the circumstances which had given rise to the invoices. The Clerk referred to a detailed explanation provided by Torfaen County Borough Council, which centred on the need to establish arrangements in relation to VAT. He confirmed that, having established the costs to charge and that VAT was to be charged, the Council would receive these invoices in April in future.

It was **recommended** that;

- (1) the payment of the invoices referred to above is approved.
- (2) the Clerk is instructed to seek clarification as to whether the payment to be requested in April 2017 would be for payment in advance or in arrears.
- (3) the signing of a Service Level Agreement for 2016/17 for Payroll Services for 2016/17 is noted.

**PF16/072 Governance Matters**

Members considered a minor amendment to the Council's Contract Standing Orders. Standing Order 5.1 (e) stated that tendering procedures need not be followed where " the value of the work to be executed, goods or materials to be supplied is less than £50,000 in which case the procedures in Financial Regulations, paragraph 12 must be followed." This should read "paragraph 11."

Members noted that copies of all the Council's governance documents were available from the Clerk. Certain documents could also be viewed [on line](#). All key governance documents would be reviewed following the 2017 elections.

It was **recommended** that Contract Standing Orders are amended as described above.

**PF16/073 Review of Charges 2017**

Members considered a report which reviewed charges for various matters such as room hire and photocopying with effect from 1 April 2017.

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It was **recommended** that the charges are approved.

**PF16/074 Publication Scheme**

Members considered the adoption of a model scheme. The Clerk explained some of the administrative arrangements which sat alongside the adoption of the scheme, such as the need to publish details, including charges.

Members suggested that the Clerk look into the possibilities of copyrighting the Council's logo etc.

It was **recommended** that the Model Scheme is adopted.

**PF16/075 Torfaen Public Services Board: Well Being Assessment**

Further to a presentation to Members about the above on 19 September 2016, Members noted that Torfaen Public Services Board had developed a draft assessment of well-being for Torfaen as required under the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015. The Board was consulting on the draft assessment between 4 January and 23 February 2017 and consultation comments and feedback would be taken into account for the final assessment which would be published in May 2017. The assessment would inform the development of the Well-being Plan during 2017/18 and there would be further opportunities to engage during that period.

Councillor DJ Williams, who represents town & community councils on the Board, encouraged Members to attend one of the forthcoming consultation events, details of which were provided.

The Well-being Plan would be published in May 2018. Following its publication, Cwmbran Community Council would be required to report annually detailing its progress in meeting the objectives of the local plan.

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

**PF16/076 Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales: Remuneration Framework for Town & Community Councils**

Members considered nominating representatives to attend a workshop in Abergavenny on 15 February 2017 on behalf of the Council. The Council could send up to two representatives.

It was recommended that Councillors Brooks and DJ Williams attend the above event.

**PF16/077 Torfaen County Association of Local Councils (TCALC) & Local Councils Partnership Committee (LCP)**

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Members noted that town & community councils across Torfaen had met colleagues from Torfaen County Borough Council to discuss administrative arrangements relating to TCALC and the LCP. There was consensus that these meetings still represented useful networks for sharing information and ideas were shared about potential ways forward.

Further discussions were planned so that ideas could be worked up into firmer proposals for sharing with Members.

Members referred to the new Leader of Torfaen County Borough Council's commitment to maintaining a dialogue with town & community councils and underlined their support for continuing to hold regular meetings.

The Clerk reminded Members that they were also welcome to attend the weekly Members Seminars hosted by Torfaen County Borough Council.

It was **recommended** that

- (1) the position is noted.
- (2) the Clerk is instructed to write to the Leader of Torfaen County Borough Council to underline the Council's continued support for regular meetings and dialogue.

#### **PF16/078 Council House Annex**

The Leader of the Majority Group and the Clerk updated Members on the progress of the replacement of the Annex. Drawings were being revised to provide a "like for like" replacement as far as possible though there would be a need to accommodate disabled access etc. A proportion of the rear garden area would also require removal.

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

#### **PF16/079 Seminars & Outside Bodies**

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

- (i) Torfaen Voluntary Alliance (TVA) AGM 8 December 2016  
  
(Members commended the work of TVA. The Leader of the Majority Group outlined future pressures facing TVA and funding arrangements. The meeting had been attended by the Deputy Police & Crime Commissioner and Members noted that an application for funds to assist with a forthcoming Residents Handbook had been submitted to the Commissioner.)
- (ii) Welsh Government Engagement Event: 9 December 2016  
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(iii) One Voice Wales Gwent Valleys Area Committee 10 January 2017

(The Chairman drew attention to the amount of internet based crime highlighted by the Police & Crime Commissioner, who had spoken at this event. Members also discussed the police precept.)

**PF16/080 Exclusion of the Press & Public**

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

**PF16/081 Internal Audit Matters**

Members considered a confidential report on the appointment of a new internal auditor.

It was **recommended** that Mr Lyn Llewellyn is appointed as the Council's Internal Auditor for a three year period.

**Pf16/082 Staffing Matters**

Members considered a confidential report on the outcome of trial arrangements to allow the Administrative Officer to work condensed hours and a Member of the Task Force team to also fulfill the post of caretaker/cleaner. Both arrangements had proved extremely successful.

It was **recommended** that above arrangements are made permanent.

Signed.....

(Chair, Cwmbran Community Council.)