

**Minutes of a Meeting of the Policy & Finance Committee of Cwmbran Community Council held on Monday 10 July 2017**

**Present** Councillor SWJ Ashley (in the Chair), Councillors AL Bird, SJ Brooks, PJ Cathcart, M Day, LG Johnston, R Jones, RD Kemp, KK Manneh, M Villars and WJ Walker.

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

**PF17/015 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were accepted from Councillors Rh Bennett (personal), N Hopkins (sickness) and M Johnston (personal).

Members noted that any apologies for absence should be submitted by the member concerned in advance of the meeting.

**PF17/016 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.

Councillor PJ Cathcart declared an interest in minute PF17/024 (1) below.

**PF17/017 Itemised Schedule of Receipts & Payments (March 2017 and April 2017)**

Members considered the above information.

Issues raised by Members included:

- Payments to Peninsula (I05) – clarification of services received.
- Core funding payments to Cwmbran Centre for Young People – frequency of instalments. (O01)
- Unpresented cheques – the Administrative Officer advised that all unpresented cheques for Core Funding had now been presented for payment.

The Clerk reported that the Council had been invoiced by Torfaen County Borough Council in respect of the Council's approved contribution for Playschemes (L07). He also referred to the forthcoming payment to each Member of £150 Allowance (B02). Any Member who did not wish to accept payment was required to notify the Clerk in writing.

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

**PF17/018 Payroll Services Admin Fees 2016/17**

Members noted that Payroll Services for the Council were provided by Torfaen County Borough Council. This relationship was the subject of a Service Level Agreement. In recent years, there had been uncertainty about the billing arrangements for the service but this had now been regularised. (Minute PF16/071 refers.) The Council was charged annually in arrears, plus VAT.

Members noted that the Council had recently been invoiced in the sum of £527.62 (gross) in relation to fees for running the 2016/17 Payroll.

It was **recommended** that the above sum is paid

**PF17/019 Constitutional and Governance Arrangements**

At the Council meeting held on 17 May 2017, members agreed that the Council's constitutional and governance arrangements are brought forward for review during the year. (Minute CL17/010). To commence this process, a list of current governance matters was presented to Members. The various matters would be brought forward for review over the coming year.

Members made a number of suggestions for improving the way in which access to the various governance documents could be improved. These included indexing the documents as part of a simple Document Management System, producing a library of governance documents for each Member and producing executive summaries. The Clerk undertook to take these suggestions forward as part of the forthcoming review.

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

**PF17/020 Annual Report 2016/2017**

Members considered a draft Annual Report, which reviewed the success of the Municipal Year 2016/17. The Annual Report was expressed in relation to Wales-side sustainability goals. This has been the established format of the Report in recent years and has been the subject of considerable acclaim and recognition. The Report also looked ahead to future challenges and objectives.

The Clerk reported that the Council's Annual Reporting approach had been recognised by the award of an Innovative Practice Award from One Voice Wales in the "Best Annual Report" category. He displayed the award for Members.

Members paid tribute to the work of the Council's staff in producing the Annual Report and establishing the Council as an example of Best Practice. Members suggested that the 2016/17 Annual Report should make reference to the above award.

The Clerk also referred to the incorrect inclusion of some text in Appendix 2 of the report, which would be amended.

It was **recommended** that, subject to the following amendments, the Annual Report is approved:

- (1) the inclusion of a reference in the Introduction to the Annual Report to the Award referred to above.
- (2) the amendment of Appendix 2 of the report by the deletion of reference to the role of a Community Development Officer.

**PF17/021 Vacancies on School Governing Bodies: Community Council Representation**

It was **recommended** that Councillor AL Bird is appointed as the Council's representative on the Governing Body of Maendy Primary School.

**PF17/022 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 County Association of Local Councils (TCALC)  
4 July 2017

Members noted that, at the meeting, Councillor SJ Brooks (Cwmbran Community Council) had been appointed to represent town & community councils on the Standards & Ethics Committee of Torfaen County Borough Council. Councillor S Harris (Pontypool Community Council) had been appointed to represent town & community councils on the Torfaen Public Service Board.

The Leader of the Majority Group (who had attended the meeting) updated Members on proposals to improve the way in which town & community councils met to discuss issues of mutual concern and liaise with Torfaen County Borough Council. The Clerk reported on proposals to update the charter which governed the relationship between town & community councils and Torfaen County Borough Council.

- (ii) One Voice Wales Gwent Valleys Area Committee  
4 July 2017

Members noted that this meeting had not been held as it was inquorate. Members discussed the reasons behind the poor attendance at such meetings and the extent to which they continued to provide an effective means of sharing information.

- (iii) One Voice Wales Larger Councils & Innovative Practice Awards Conference 5 July 2017

The Clerk reported that this event had proved a valuable opportunity to share Best Practice, network, and receive information about developments which impacted on the town & community council sector. He considered that there was considerable advantage to be gained from meeting with other similar sized Councils who faced similar challenges.

The Chairman (who had attended the meeting) referred to the innovative practice of other Councils who had been represented at the meeting. These included Bio Diversity Approaches of Mold Town Council, a not for profit social care initiative set up by Solva Community Council and Best Practice in relation to websites.

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

**PF17/023 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.

**PF17/024 Fire Safety Risk Assessment**

Councillor PJ Cathcart declared a personal interest in item (1) below.

Members considered a report which outlined a series of measures to improve the Council's Fire Safety arrangements.

It was **recommended** that:

- (1) Peninsula Business Services are appointed to undertake the Council's Fire Safety Risk Assessment.
- (2) staff training needs in relation to fire safety are kept under regular review, with training opportunities provided appropriate to their roles.
- (3) the assigning of responsibilities for undertaking routine fire safety checks and inspection to the caretaker/cleaner (under the overall supervision of the Clerk) is supported.
- (4) Councillor PJ Cathcart is appointed as "Member Champion" in relation to Health & Safety.

**PF17/025 Replacement of Council House Annex**

Members considered a report which recommended acceptance of a tender in relation to the above and the allocation of funds to cover additional works which were described in the report. Members were provided with details of all tenders received.

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

*Signed* .....

*(Chairman, Cwmbran Community Council)*