

Minutes of a Meeting of the Policy & Finance Committee of Cwmbran Community Council held on Monday 21 January 2019

Present Councillor SWJ Ashley (in the Chair), Councillors SJ Brooks, AL Bird, PJ Cathcart, M Villars WJ Walker and DH Williams.

Also David Collins (Clerk to the Council)

PF18/064 Apologies for Absence

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

PF18/065 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.

PF18/066 Itemised Schedule of Receipts & Payments (October 2018)

Members considered the above information, including bank reconciliation.

Issues raised by Members included:

- Payment to Newport Locksmiths (code G10)
- Dates of Unpresented cheques (Bank Reconciliation)

Members also noted that income from Torfaen County Borough Council (tenancy), recorded under Code G13 included a Service Charge element which would be shown under Code G14. The overall totals were unaffected.

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

PF18/067 Estimates 2019/20 & Reserves

Members considered draft estimates for the coming year. The estimates also included draft estimates for all committees, to allow Members to see the overall position. Members also considered a detailed report on Reserves and Investments.

Members considered the estimates in detail. Issues discussed by Members included:

- Code C Staffing Costs: NJC Rates and Training
- Code G Premises & Accommodation: (Caretaking & Cleaning Wages)
- Code H Office & Administration (Handbooks and Advertising)
- Code I Policy & Finance Committee
(Furniture, Fittings & Fixtures, Promotional Materials, Core Funding of various bodies. Youth Engagement/Youth Council, Regeneration Projects) Members discussed the contents of a letter dated 7 January 2019 from the Curator of Torfaen Museum Trust.

Policy & Finance Committee 2018/19
Subject to Confirmation by Full Council

- Code L Events & Community Projects Committee (Big Event)
- Code P Twinning

It was **recommended** that

(1) the estimates are approved as follows:

- A: Elections As per draft Estimates
(costs to be funded from Earmarked Reserves)
- B: Members Expenses As per draft estimates.
- C: Staffing As per draft estimates
- G: Premises As per draft estimates
- H: Office & Administration As per draft estimates, (merge H06, H10 and I12)
- I: Policy & Finance Committee Revise as follows:
Congress Theatre £10,000 (I04)
Llantarnam Grange £3,500 (I06)
Torfaen Museum Trust £4,200 (I09)
Regeneration Projects £30,000 (I13)
- K: Grants to Voluntary Organisations As per draft estimates
- Events & Community Projects Committee Revise as follows:
Cwmbran Big Event Contribution £6,180 (L05)
Cwmbran Big Event Participation £200 (L05a)
- M: Task Force As per draft estimates.
- N: Environment, Sustainability & Planning Committee Amended as per recommendations of Environment, Sustainability & Committee.
- O:CCYP As per draft estimates
- P:Twinning As per draft estimates

(2) A sub-committee is established later in the year to review the Codes and Descriptions used for budgeting purposes.

(3) As a medium term planning objective, a minimum General (un-earmarked) Reserve level is retained, based on 3 months Gross Expenditure.

- (4) General revenue reserves are held within a range of three to twelve months of gross expenditure.
- (5) An amount of £15,000 is identified from within General Reserves for Earmarked Reserves for “Events” (to take place immediately)
- (6) Any balance on Budget Head G10 (Premises Maintenance) unspent at year end is transferred to Earmarked Reserves
- (7) £20,000 of the amount identified within Earmarked Reserves for Staffing (£45,000) is identified for Staff Training & Development.
- (8) Subject to the above, the Council’s General and Earmarked Reserves are confirmed.
- (9) A further report is submitted to a future meeting in relation to possible Investment in CCLA’s Public Sector Deposit Fund

PF18/068 Local Councils in Partnership Committee

Members noted that the next meeting of the above would take place on 24 January 2019. Details would be reported to Members following the meeting. The committee would continue to consider ways in which the work of town & community councils could be aligned to the work of the Public Service Board. Members emphasised the importance of strengthening relationships between town & community councils and Torfaen County Borough Council.

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

PF18/069 Community & Town Councils – Welsh Government Areas for Action

Members considered information about Welsh Government’s next steps in implementing its policy approach for the community and town council sector. The policy approach was informed by the cross-party Independent Review Panel’s work findings and the majority of their recommendations were being taken forward in the same way. Members expressed their disappointment that the Welsh Government would not be issuing a detailed response to the Review in the light of the amount of detailed research undertaken by the Panel.

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

PF18/070 2019-20 National Salary Award

Members considered the new pay scales agreed by the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJC) to be implemented from 1 April 2019.

It was **recommended** that these arrangements are approved for all staff.

Signed (Chairman, Cwmbran Community Council)