

Minutes of a Meeting of the Policy & Finance Committee of Cwmbran Community Council held on Monday 15 April 2019 at 6.00pm in the Council Chamber, Cwmbran Community Council, Ventnor Road, Cwmbran NP44 3JY

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

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

PF18/090 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were accepted from Councillors N Hopkins (illness), M Johnston (personal) and KK Manneh (work commitments)

PF18/091 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.

PF18/092 Torfaen Public Services Board

The Chairman welcomed Sue Browne, Partnership and Policy Manager, Torfaen County Borough Council. She updated Members on the work of the Torfaen Public Services Board (PSB), explaining that information was currently being collated for inclusion in the PSB's Annual Report, which would be published in July 2019.

The Report would indicate progress towards the seven Well-being objectives of the PSB and illustrate how the bodies which made up the PSB were implementing the objectives. A short film would be produced as part of this work. Councillor SJ Brooks, who represented town & community councils on the PSB was assisting with this work and taking part in the film.

Sue Browne explained how the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015 set a common agenda for public services in Wales and brought together community partners. The partners had begun to build and develop relationships, helping to understand one another's challenges and constraints. There were also opportunities to share resources and risks.

The PSB had engaged Dr Liesbeth Beeckman (PSB graduate) who was working with the PSB partners in a "critical friend" capacity. An Implementation & Innovation Panel had also been established. Sue Browne also referred to arrangements put in place to ensure effective scrutiny of the work of the PSB through the creation of a PSB Overview & Scrutiny Committee. The committee had highlighted the need for improved publicity for the work of the PSB and the importance of engaging citizens. The committee had also called for the PSB to address mental health issues as part of an approach to Well-being. Sue Browne explained how objectives such as tackling poverty and developing economic resilience could help improve mental well-being.

Councillor Brooks echoed Sue Browne's comments about the work of the PSB, explained that the Torfaen PSB was unique in the way in which it included the voice of town & community councils. The Clerk indicated some of the means by which Cwmbran Community Council already aligned its work to reflect PSB objectives, through its Annual Reports and Residents Handbooks. Councillor Brooks underlined the progress made by the Council and explained how PSB meetings had evolved into a "workshop" format, which helped to build consensus.

Issues raised by Members included:

- Timeframes for delivery of objectives and measures of success (Sue Browne explained that the objectives were long term (30 years) and that measures of success had not yet been set.) Members also asked how long the PSB partners had been working towards the objectives.
- the impact of climate change. (Sue Browne confirmed the importance of examining measures to mitigate the impact of climate change and what steps could be taken to adapt to global climate changes.
- the need to engage with children and young people

Members expressed their gratitude to Sue Browne for explaining the work of the PSB. The Chairman also thanked Councillor Brooks for his attendance.

It was recommended that:

- (1) Councillor Brooks and Sue Browne are thanked for their participation and their willingness to answer questions.
- (2) Cwmbran Community Council's forthcoming Annual Report is used to highlight the progress made by the Council in helping to deliver the Well-being objectives referred to above.

PF18/093 Itemised Schedule of Receipts & Payments (December 2018, January 2019, February 2019)

Members considered the above information, including bank reconciliation.

Issues raised by Members included:

- Payments to Total Gas & Power and British Gas (Code G05)
- Gateway Credit Union (code K01)
- Monmouthshire CC - Laptop & Keyboard (Code H05)
- Cheque 10747 (unpresented) SSCF – Croesyceiliog School.
- General – payment by BACS transfer/cheques.
(Members asked that payment is made electronically wherever possible)

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

PF18/094 Identification of Earmarked Reserves (EMR)

It was **recommended** that the transfer to EMR of any balance on the following Budget Headings unspent at the year-end 2019/20 is approved.

G10 Premises Maintenance/Asset Replacement.
H02 Furniture, Fixtures & Fittings.
I13 Regeneration Projects (including Community Events)
L07 Playschemes
O02 Cwmbran Centre for Young People Building Maintenance Fund

PF18/095 Outstanding Debts

Members considered writing off any bad debts as part of the preparation of the Council's accounts 2018/19. There were currently two such debts which totalled £30.00 and which related to work undertaken by the Task Force. The Clerk explained the action taken to try secure payment but, despite repeated attempts, both debts remained outstanding. The debtors would not be allowed to use the Task Force again as a result of failure to make the payment.

It was **recommended** that the above debts are written off.

PF18/096 Internal Audit 2018/19

Members noted the arrangements for Council's internal auditor to undertake his audit on 1 May 2019.

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

PF18/097 Investment Strategy

Members considered a draft strategy.

It was **recommended** that the draft Investment Strategy 2019/20 is approved.

PF18/098 CCLA Public Sector Deposit Fund

Members considered the potential to invest in the above fund.

It was **recommended** that further consideration is deferred for a more detailed report, with particular reference to ethical implications of the Fund.

PF18/099 Annual Business Safety Inspection

Members noted that the above inspection was undertaken by the Council's Health & Safety consultants (Peninsula) on 18 February 2019. An Inspection report had subsequently been submitted, which was circulated. Members noted arrangements to address issues raised by the Report and proposed arrangements to improve external lighting at the rear of the Council House.

It was **recommended** that

- (1) the report of the Inspection is noted.
- (2) the actions taken to address the issues raised and improve external lighting are endorsed.

PF18/100 Vacancies on Governing Bodies

Members noted current vacancies on the Council's representation on the Governing Body of a number of local schools. Expressions of interest had been received from two persons interested in the vacancy at Henllys Church in Wales School. Details were reported.

It was **recommended** that

- (1) no objection is offered to either individual who had come forward in respect of the vacancy at Henllys Church in Wales School and that the school is invited to select one of the two individuals.
- (2) Councillor M Day is appointed to the vacancy on St David's RC Primary School.
- (3) Olwen Elizabeth Natalie is appointed to the vacancy on Our Lady of the Angels RC Primary School.
- (4) the Clerk is instructed to enquire about the Council's representation on the Governing Body at Maendy Primary School.
- (5) the question of vacancies on Governing Bodies is kept under review with regular reports to Members on current vacancies.
- (6) the Clerk is instructed to utilise the Council's existing publicity and communications networks to raise awareness of vacancies on the Council's representation on School Governing Bodies and encourage people to come forward to fill the vacancies.

PF18/101 Dates of future Meetings

Members considered a schedule of meetings for the coming year, including the date of the proposed Annual Meeting of 15 May 2019.

The Clerk apologised for a typing error in the schedule, explaining that the date of 14 November 2019 (Full Council) should read 13 November 2019

It was **recommended** that

- (1) the dates of meetings for 2019/20 (as amended above) are approved.
- (2) the Clerk is instructed to implement improved publicity arrangements for the dates of forthcoming meetings.

PF18/102 Seminars & Outside Bodies

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

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| (i) | Local Councils in Partnership Committee | 24 January 2019
& 7 March 2019 |
| (ii) | One Voice Wales innovative Practice
Annual Awards Ceremony | 28 March 2019 |

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

PF18/103 Exclusion of the Press & Public

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.

PF18/104 Staffing Matters

Members considered a report in relation to current staffing matters and options to deal with current pressures.

It is **recommended** that

- (i) the arrangements reported are noted and confirmed.
- (ii) the contract of the officer providing temporary maternity cover post is extended to 31 August 2019.
- (iii) a flexible approach in relation to annual leave to accommodate holidays already booked during this time is approved should this prove necessary, in relation to the contract of the officer providing temporary maternity cover post.

Signed
(Chairman, Cwmbran Community Council)