

**Minutes of the Meeting of Cwmbran Community Council held on Wednesday 27 January 2021 at 6.00 pm.**

**Venue: The meeting was held remotely in accordance with the Local Authorities (Coronavirus) (Meetings) (Wales) Regulations 2020**

**Present** Councillor AL Bird, (Chairman). Councillors SWJ Ashley, RhM Bennett, SJ Brooks, LJ Chaney, JS Davenne, M Day, LG Johnson, F Jones, KK Manneh, J Rees, M Villars, WJ Walker and DH Williams

Also, David Collins (Clerk to the Council)

**Absent** Councillors PJ Cathcart, PM Johnston, RD Kemp, LM Ryan and LE Williams,

*(No Public Participation Session was held at this meeting)*

**CL20/122 Apologies for Absence**

Apologies for absence were accepted from Councillors LE Williams (personal).

**CL20/123 Declarations of Interest**

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

Councillors SWJ Ashley and F Jones declared a non-prejudicial interest in the following items as members of Torfaen County Borough Council. They remained in the meeting during the discussions. They would reconsider the nature of the interest matters at County Borough Council level taking into account all relevant evidence and representations.

- Minute CL20/128 (4) (Council Meeting 16 December 2019 - Torfaen County Borough Council's Cleaner Communities and Prosperous Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee. Development of a strategic vision for the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal.) (Councillor Ashley is a member of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.)
- Minute CL20/135 (Planning Consultations) (Councillors Ashley and Jones are members of the Planning Committee of Torfaen County Borough Council.)

**CL20/124 Voting**

It was **Resolved** that the manner of any voting at this meeting would be by calling each name alphabetically with a response of "for or against":

**CL20/125 Chairman's Announcements & Vice Chairman's Announcements**

The Vice Chairman of the Council announced that he had participated in the following on-line activities:

New Year Greetings	31 December 2021
"World Cup of UK Post-War New Towns"	1 January 2021
Holocaust Memorial Day	27 January 2021

There were no announcements from the Vice Chairman of the Council.

It was **Resolved** that:

- (1) the information is noted.
- (2) the Chairman's attendance at events is approved.

**CL20/126 Public Questions**

In accordance with the Council's Standing Orders the opportunity for public questions was included as an item on the agenda for the meeting.

No questions had been submitted.

**CL20/127 Police and Fire & Rescue Update**

No representatives of Gwent Police or South Wales Fire & Rescue were present.

Station Commander Paul Simmons was unable to attend as he was attending a training event. He had advised that there was no further update from the fire service since the last meeting and that he would participate in the next meeting.

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

**CL20/128 Council Meeting 16 December 2020**

Councillors SWJ Ashley and F Jones declared a non-prejudicial interest in the following item as members of Torfaen County Borough Council. They remained in the meeting during the discussions. They would reconsider the nature of the interest matters at County Borough Council level taking into account all relevant evidence and representations.

- Minute CL20/128 (4) (Council Meeting 16 December 2019 - Torfaen County Borough Council's Cleaner Communities and Prosperous Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committee. Development of a strategic vision for the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal.) (Councillor Ashley is a member of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee.)

The Chairman introduced the minutes of the Council meeting held on 16 December 2020.

In relation to Minute CL20/107(3) (Reserves), Members considered the use of £20,000 from approved Earmarked Reserves for maintenance at Cwmbran Centre for Young People (CCYP) towards match funding which will enable CCYP to secure Welsh Government funding to upgrade, renovate and maintain certain areas of the Centre. This would also bring the Centre up to date with health & safety and disability regulations. (*Local Government (Misc. Provisions) Act 1976 s 19*)

In relation to Minute CL20/011 (Torfaen Replacement Local Development Plan: Consultation on Preferred Strategy) Members noted that the Members' seminar arranged for 13 January 2021 would be reconvened due to low attendance and the extension of the consultation period due to Covid-19 restrictions. A new date would be agreed. A presentation about the Plan

2020/21

would be sent to Members in advance. Members were encouraged to submit any questions to the Clerk in advance of the seminar. A presentation made to the seminar on 13 January 2021 about the Torfaen Economy & Skills Strategy had been forwarded to Members. Members were encouraged to submit any questions or observations to Dave Leech [david.leech@torfaen.gov.uk](mailto:david.leech@torfaen.gov.uk) by 31 January 2021.

On 4 February 2021 Torfaen County Borough Council's Cleaner Communities and Prosperous Communities Overview & Scrutiny Committees would scrutinise a report on the development of a strategic vision for the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal. The Council had been invited to provide comments on the report via email. The Council had received a copy of the report along with a series of questions the committee would like answers to. Members noted the Clerk's action in agreeing the above arrangements under delegated powers. (Minute CL20/022 (3 refers.) Observations were due by midday on Monday 1 February 2021.

It was **Resolved** that.

(1) The minutes of the meeting held on 16 December 2020 are confirmed.

*(The Chairman authenticate the minutes of the above meeting.)*

(2) £20,000 from approved Earmarked Reserves (Maintenance at Cwmbran Centre for Young People (CCYP)) is provided towards match funding to enable CCYP to secure Welsh Government funding to upgrade, renovate and maintain certain areas of the Centre. *(Local Government (Misc. Provisions) Act 1976 s 19.)*

(3) delegated powers granted to the Clerk remain in place until the next Council meeting. (Note: under this delegation any reference to a specific statute includes any statutory extension or modification or re-enactment of such statute and any regulations, orders or bylaws made there under.)

(4) Members forward any observations on the development of a strategic vision for the Monmouthshire and Brecon Canal to the Clerk by 29 January 2021 in order that a corporate response to the above scrutiny exercise could be submitted.

*(The Chairman authenticate the minutes of the above meeting.)*

#### **CL20/129 Receipts & Payments November 2020.**

Financial Regulations required details of receipts & payments and comparisons of expenditure against budget to be reported to the Council's Policy & Finance Committee. The regulations also required that bank reconciliations were verified by a member (Councillor M Villars) and that details are reported to the Council's Policy & Finance Committee. (Financial Regulations 4 and 2 refer.) Councillor Villars had verified and signed the information. Members welcomed the format of the information provided.

Due to the current Covid-19 outbreak, Council confirmed the suspension of these regulations to allow these matters to be reported direct to Council for the foreseeable future. This avoided the risk of the activity not being reported to Members in a timely manner. The risk of not doing so would cause a delay and a risk accountability, sound financial management and effective scrutiny.

It was **Resolved** that:

- (1) the suspension of Financial Regulations to allow these matters to be reported direct to Council for the foreseeable future is approved.
- (2) the financial information report is approved.

**CL20/130 Annual Review of Internal Audit and Audit Plan 2020/2021**

Members considered a draft Audit Plan and annual review of internal audit. The plan and review had been the subject of consultation the Council's internal auditor. Members were satisfied with the Council's systems of internal control.

It was **Resolved** that:

- (1) the Council approves the Annual Review of Internal Audit and Audit Plan and the actions identified.
- (2) Internal Audit fees for 2020/21 are approved.

**CL20/131 Fees & Charges 2021/22**

Members considered provisional fees and charges for the forthcoming year. Members also considered proposed fees and charges for the 2021 Big Event. Members discussed the future use of the Council House and measures to ensure that its unique character and appearance was preserved.

It was **Resolved** that:

- (1) the fees and charges are approved.
- (2) the fees and charges for the Big Event 2021 are approved, should the event take place.

**CL20/132 Estimates 2021/22**

Members considered the Council's Revenue Estimates and Precept for the forthcoming year. Members also considered information which indicated expenditure against budget up to 31 December 2020. Expenditure in relation to Staffing (C01) was likely to be lower than anticipated due to staff changes which had occurred during the year. Some Members had not taken up their allowances (B01A and B02). Other expenditure and income had not reflected estimated budgets due to Covid-19. Members also approved adjustments in relation to anticipated income from Tenancies & Room Hire (G13 and VAT Refunds or Repayments (V01)

Members approved the budget, including the use of General Reserves to help fund non-recurring items. Members also considered the use of s137 Local Government Act 1972 in relation to certain expenditure.

**Resolved** that:

- (1) the 2021/22 Estimates are approved.
- (2) the Precept for 2021/22 is confirmed as £650,425.(13432 = Band D £48.42)

(3) any underspend relating to Events & Community Projects (L). Computer, Website & IT Support (H05) and Grants to Voluntary Organisations (K01) is set aside as Earmarked Reserves at year end.

(4) in pursuance of the power conferred by Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) and being of the opinion that the expenditure satisfies the requirements of that section, the following expenditure is approved:

(a)	Hospitality	up to £1,000	(code I07)
(b)	Promotional Material	up to £3,000	(code I12)
(c)	Grants to Voluntary Organisations	up to £13,250	(code K01)
(d)	Remembrance	up to £2,500	(code L10)
(e)	Community Dinner	up to £3,500	(code L11)

**CL20/133 Governance Documents: Standing Orders 2020/21 & Contract Standing Orders 2020/21**

Members considered draft Standing Orders and Standing Orders Relating to Contracts. There were no significant changes to the existing arrangements. The Standing Orders would ensure compliance with statutory requirements in relation to procedures at meetings, approval of committee minutes etc.

It was **Resolved** that:

- (1) Standing Orders 2020/21 & Contract Standing Orders 2020/21 are approved.
- (2) the Clerk is instructed to report to a future meeting to summarise current arrangements in relation to Council meetings, with particular regard to restrictions arising from Covid-19, Standing Orders and any other significant considerations.

**CL20/134 Health & Safety Inspections**

Members noted that Risk Assessments had recently been undertaken in relation to General Health & Safety, Fire Safety and Legionella. The results of all three were reported to ensure a joined-up approach to any actions required. (Minute CL20/110 refers). The Clerk outlined measures which would be introduced in response to the Inspections. The Deputy Leader confirmed the extent to which such matters were kept under regular review.

It was **Resolved** that:

- (1) the results of the inspections are noted.
- (2) the responses to the matters raised are endorsed and works identified are approved.

**CL20/135 Planning Consultations**

**Declarations of Interest**

Councillors SWJ Ashley and F Jones declared a non-prejudicial interest in the following item as members of Torfaen County Borough Council. They remained in the meeting during the discussions. They would reconsider the nature of the interest matters at County Borough Council level taking into account all relevant evidence and representations.

- Minute CL20/135 (Planning Consultations) (Councillors Ashley and Jones are members of the Planning Committee of Torfaen County Borough Council.)

Members expressed their appreciation to Councillor Villars for observations he had submitted in relation to the proposed demolition of existing buildings and construction of a new Lidl food store and replacement Stagecoach office and servicing depot at St David's Road (Application 21/P/0012/FUL)

Members also referred to the recent decision of Torfaen County Borough Council in relation to the demolition of existing building and redevelopment to form apartments at Victoria Street/Ventnor Road (Application 20/P/0720/FUL). Members emphasised the importance of the impact of the development on the surrounding buildings, including the Council House. Members considered that it was important to preserve the character of the immediate locality. Members emphasised the importance of protecting the character of local buildings and landmarks.

It was **Resolved** that:

- (1) Members forward any observations on current applications to the Clerk.
- (2) the Clerk is instructed to report to Members with information about Listed Buildings in Cwmbran.

#### **CL20/136 2021 Events**

Members considered potential arrangements in relation to forthcoming events in the light of continuing restrictions and constraints associated with Covid-19.

It was **Resolved** that;

- (1) the Schools Eco Quiz (6 February 2021) is cancelled for the current year to be replaced by suitable on-line activity for schoolchildren.
- (2) the Community Celebration Dinner (5 March 2021) is cancelled for the current year.
- (3) The Primary Schools Coral Festival (w/c 22 March 2021) is cancelled for the current year and further consideration is given to the potential for Primary Schools to participate in the Senior Schools Festival if that takes place.
- (4) the Big Event (12 June 2021) is postponed, to be held on 18 September 2021 if conditions and restrictions permit.
- (5) In the event that the Big Event takes place in September, the charges reported to Members are approved.

#### **CL20/137 NHS, Social Care & Frontline Workers Day 5 July 2021**

Members noted that Local councils, communities and others throughout Wales were encouraged to play a leading role in the above day of celebration. Members discussed aspects of the proposals and sought clarification about the organisers, supporters etc. Members considered that the Council's

existing Community Awards could help reward and recognise NHS, Social Care and Frontline Workers.

It was **Resolved** that consideration is deferred to allow the Clerk to provide further information to Members.

**CL20/138 Zero Racism Wales Campaign**

Members considered a detailed report on the above, which supported a zero-tolerance policy to racism in Wales. The Leader of the Council emphasised the need to respect peoples of all races.

It was **Resolved** that the Council supports the campaign.

**CL20/139 Date of Next Meeting**

Members considered the date of the next Council meeting. Members also noted that the Senedd Elections were due to take place on 6 May 2021. The "Pre-Election Period," often referred to in the past as "purdah," would commence on 26 March 2021. During this time specific restrictions on communications activity would be in place.

It was **Resolved** that the next meeting is held on 10 February 2021. (Agenda to be published 3 February 2021,)

Signed ..... (*Chairman, Cwmbran Community Council*)