



Bargoed Town Council

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Minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee Meeting 24th November 2021.

Present: Councillors R Carroll; J Halvey; P Collins; D Price; J Davies.

Also in Attendance: Mrs H Williams, Town Clerk

Meeting Chairman: Councillor Reg Carroll

1. Apologies for Absence

Schedule 12 of the Local Government Act 1972 requires a record to be kept of the members present and that this record form part of the minutes of the meeting. Members who cannot attend a meeting should tender apologies to the Clerk.

Councillor A Collis experienced technical difficulties; Councillor H Llewellyn was representing Bargoed Town Council at the CCBC Liaison Committee meeting.

2. Declaration of interests or dispensations on any item(s) on this Agenda, if appropriate.

Councillors and Officers are reminded of their personal responsibility to declare any personal and/or prejudicial interest(s) in respect of any item of business on this agenda in accordance with the Local Government Act 2000, and the Code of Conduct for both Councillors and Clerk.

No declarations made.

3. Press and public participation session.

No enquiries received by the Clerk.

4. To approve and sign Minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee meeting held on 27th October 2021.

Minutes approved as a true record. Moved by Councillor Collins and seconded by Councillor Davies. The meeting chairman signed the minutes in the presence of the committee.

5. To review and approve the October 2021 Bank Reconciliation and Payments Lists. Members RESOLVED to approve the bank reconciliation.

The chairman drew attention to the items on the payment list relating to the selection boxes for primary schools, making members aware of supply chain issues. Morrisons continues to work with the clerk to fulfil the town council order, but members should note there will be multiple payments on the list as the stocks are coming in low quantities. A total of 471 are still outstanding, at a cost of £315.35 as detailed on the payments to be made list.

Signed: _____ Date: _____ P&R committee minutes

The chairman moved on to speak about the payments made for the small selection boxes, drawing the committee attention to the instruction from the Events & Environment committee to initially purchase £400 of supplies. Again, supply chain difficulties have impacted this provisioning. 400 boxes have been secured to date at a cost of £356. A local supplier has advised they are holding stocks of a further 400 small selection boxes should council want them. The committee RESOLVED to purchase the additional stock without delay, authorising an additional £356 expenditure.

A member asked about the cost of the thermoplastic poppy as listed on the payments to be made list. The clerk confirmed the quotation was ex-vat.

Members RESOLVED to authorise the payments list, instructing the chairman to sign the document.

6. To conduct an annual salary review and approve the staff costs budget recommendations from the HR & Staffing committee meeting 8th November 2021.

The chairman drew members attention to the NJC salary scales explaining the 2021 pay award is still to be settled. Members considered the current spinal point for the clerk and confirmed LC2 to be the appropriate range. RESOLVED to approve the recommendations from the HR & Staffing Committee meeting 8th November 2021.

7. To receive an update from the clerk on the town hall and consider expenditure.

The clerk advised she is expecting an imminent date for the commencement of work on the ventilation in the town hall however this has not yet been confirmed. Member's attention was drawn to the terms of the lease and that they should expect potential cost implications. The committee instructed the clerk to follow up with Gwent Police as a matter of priority.

8. To review the Health and Safety policy.

Members considered and approved the amendments to the policy.

9. To conduct a review of available funds and consider authorisation of additional festive lighting expenditure as recommended by the Events and Environment committee.

RESOLVED reverse the virement of £10,000 contingency funds from the fireworks budget. Funds to be allocated for the purchase of additional festive lighting equipment including a waterproof power supply at St Peters Church in Aberbargoed. Should funds become available after the quarter three expenditure review is complete, Members will revisit the power supply issues at the three trees on Lowri Plaza.

10. To consider whether the town council standing orders and financial regulations require reviewing following changes made by the Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021.

RESOLVED to instruct the clerk to work with the Mayor and committee chairs to review standing orders and financial regulations. Draft recommendations to be taken to full council prior to the end of financial year.

11. To discuss the town council request for CCBC to move four concrete blocks in Bargoed and authorise expenditure to cover the fee payable to network contract services

The chairman advised the committee of feedback from CCBC and a proposal to cover 50% costs for the work to be undertaken. RESOLVED to approve £375 contingency funds. Officers to confirm blocks to be sited behind the angel.

12. To receive confirmation of increased insurance cover and approve expenditure for additional premium as notified by insurers.

The clerk provided members with confirmation of newly purchased assets being added to the insurance policy with the coin pay equipment and Christmas figurines increasing the sum insured by £7,720. The office furniture and IT equipment also added to the policy. RESOLVED to authorise the increased premium of £36.31.

13. To consider the draft 2022/23 budget requirements for the General Grants budget and for Premises and Office Services costs.

Members considered town council requirements for the 2022/23 budget. A member spoke about premise costs and the need for council to look at a long term solution for the council base. A member sought clarification on All Risks Contingencies in the draft budget. The clerk explained the rationale behind this budget line, advising the committee that some of the planned projects have unknown costs at the moment, therefore flexibility should be considered for the incoming council. Members discussed this element of the draft budget and considered appropriate sums. A further question was asked about the insurance budget line. The clerk explained guidance was sought from the broker who advised they have been seeing major increases across the sector and they are currently undergoing a full scheme tender to ensure best value is secured. The recommendation is that a minimum of 20% increase is factored into the budget for both the general policy and the cyber policy, while the terrorism and legal expenses are likely to be less than 10% increase.

Members spoke about the general grants budget considering the covid recovery and anticipating an increase in the number of applications to town council throughout next year as more organisations get up and running. The committee feel a larger grants budget is appropriate for 2022-23.

The chairman asked if any member had further comments or suggestions for the draft budget. RESOLVED to approve the draft budget for general grants and premises and office costs.

14. To receive:

Minutes of the One Voice Wales larger councils committee meeting 20th October 2021 - noted
RVFP Annual report - noted

Older persons commissioner newsletter - noted

Welsh Air Ambulance communication – the committee instructed the clerk to bring this request to the next meeting of full council.

ABHB notification about prescriptions - noted

ABHB Vaccination news issues 44 & 45 – noted

Welsh Government launch of Bereavement Services in Wales - noted

ABHB launch details for new weight management programme – noted

The chairman thanked members for their input to the meeting.

The meeting closed at 18.30pm