



Bargoed Town Council

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Minutes of the Policy and Resources Committee Meeting 28th September 2022

Present: Councillors R Carroll; P Collins; J Davies; D IngramJones; C Andrews; T Williams.

Also in Attendance: Mrs H Williams, Town Clerk

Meeting Chairman: Councillor Reg Carroll

1. To welcome representatives from the Caerphilly Regeneration Team and receive a short presentation on Caerphilly Employment Support.

The deputy mayor welcomed Shaun Lane from CCBC Employment Support Team to the meeting and invited him to tell Members about the work of the team. Shaun explained that the team is part of the Communities for Work Plus programme and they provide support to residents from Bargoed and the North of the valley. The team is there to assist with work preparations, CV writing, interview preparations, job applications etc. Individuals are assigned a mentor who will work with them to apply for work, access training, build confidence and generally support residents throughout their journey into work. Shaun asking for Members support in spreading the word, encouraging residents to drop in to the information sessions at Bargoed library (Mondays 10am to 1pm). The support is flexible and it is entirely voluntary participation. Training courses are free and have been delivered on a wide range of areas from health and safety, manual handling and first aid through to driving and chain saw handling. There is no definitive list of training courses available it comes down to what an individual has expressed an interest in. Residents can self enrol to access support via the website communityregen@caerphilly.gov.uk or telephone to make an appointment 01443 864227, or simply call in to the drop in sessions in the library for further information. Members requested A4 notices for the community noticeboards, and a supply of leaflets for their distribution within the community.

Members asked about statistics from the community engagement activities – not yet available as the roadshows are still going on.

2. Apologies for Absence

Councillor H Llewellyn (school); Councillor D Price (health)

3. To receive Declaration of Interests or dispensations on any item(s) on this Agenda, if appropriate.

None

4. Press and Public Participation Session.

No enquiries received by the clerk.

5. To review and approve the draft unapproved minutes of the Policy & Resources committee meeting 20th July 2022.

Cllr Andrews abstained due to absence from the meeting.

The minutes were proposed by Cllr Davies and seconded by Cllr Collins. Those present approved the minutes as a true record.

Councillor Williams joined the meeting at this point.

Signed: _____ Date: _____ P&R committee minutes

6. To receive feedback from the chair on the meeting of 1st August 2022 with the Police and Crime Commissioner in respect of the Town Hall together with information from the Clerk on accessibility.

The deputy mayor reported, as requested by Members, having met informally with the Police and Crime Commissioner along with the mayor and Councillor Collins to discuss the service charges at the town hall and the impending end of lease.

Members explained the conversation was extremely positive with the police and crime commissioner advising of being eager to maintain the relationship with town council. Members were invited to make suggestions for consideration by the commissioner and his team, and to provide details of town council budget availability. The head of finance will respond with lease proposals and a response to the requests about service charges in due course.

The clerk advised of having liaised with the finance manager but no further detail has been provided to date.

Members discussed the current situation at the town hall; accessibility concerns were expressed by Cllr Andrews and echoed by several Members particularly as this is impacting on Members' physical attendance at meetings. The committee spoke about options, and about the need to consider alternative accommodation, possibly working in collaboration with Caerphilly County Borough Council. Members instructed the clerk to reach out to the community regeneration team for further information.

7. To review and approve the Bank Reconciliation and approve the Payments List.

The committee closely reviewed the bank rec and payments list. The clerk advised of two grant payments of £250 also having been made because of the full council meeting the week before. Members requested information about bank service charges. The clerk explained that the bank charged additional fees for processing cheque transactions and cash transactions. Members RESOLVED to approve both the bank reconciliation and the payments list. The deputy mayor signed both documents in the presence of the meeting.

8. To review the Bargoed Town Council Statement of Internal Control document.

RESOLVED to approve the updates to the document. The deputy mayor signed the updated document.

9. To consider amendments to the Annual Donations statement of intent.

Members considered the document RESOLVING to withdraw the statement of intent. The clerk was instructed to communicate with the two OAP groups currently known to be operating and provide each with a grant application form for submission to the January 2023 round.

10. To receive and consider requests for financial support from:

The committee spoke about financial reports received from organisations not based in the local community and their need to develop a mechanism to ensure fair consideration based on the services being delivered to local people. Members instructed the clerk to prepare a policy and procedure detailing that all organisations requesting financial assistance from Bargoed Town Council will be provided with a grant application form and a matter of standard practise. The request will be noted by staff and advice given to the respective organisations that evidence must be provided with the completed application form to demonstrate service delivery to residents of the four town council ward areas. Only organisations who can provide such evidence will be considered by the committee.

10.1 Tenovus cancer care RESOLVED to reject the request at this time.

10.2 Eisteddfod y Cymoedd RESOLVED £250 Grant

10.3 Cerebral Palsy Cymru RESOLVED to reject the request at this time.

11. To receive items from the Clerk and provide instruction as follows:

11.1 Confirmation of the funding award from Cwtsh Community Connections Fund Grant scheme.

The funding application was successful with £4520 having been secured from the grant scheme for the volunteer community gardening project.

Members expressed positivity about the benefits this project will bring to the local community, the connections with stakeholder organisations and engaging local people in taking pride in their community. RESOLVED – assistant clerk to liaise with the biodiversity working group to move forward with this project.

11.2 Geocache feedback from the IWN about the geocache in Bargoed Urban Park.

The clerk advised that there have been over 100 hits on the geocache over the past weekend, with the activity being very well received. There are longer term issues to consider such as monitoring the content of the caches and ensuring they are well maintained. The clerk has placed the order for additional supplies of the town council treasure 'coins' but a long-term solution will need to be found for maintenance. Members spoke about contacting the scouts and the ramblers as well as the comprehensive school and RESOLVED to take the issue to full council for discussion with the youth representatives. RESOLVED to instruct the assistant clerk to seek authorisation from CCBC rangers for the GPS points and get the second geocache up and running without delay.

11.3 Litter picking.

The clerk advised the meeting that two areas in Bargoed Urban Park have become litter problem areas and it is impacting on the geocache activity in the park. The assistant clerk has been liaising with Keep Wales Tidy who have tentatively pencilled in a 14th October date for a litter pick activity in the park. Further details will be provided to members as soon as the confirmation has been received.

11.4 Member training.

The clerk circulated a list of October training for Members consideration.

11.5 Card services.

The clerk provided information to the meeting from the business manager at Lloyds bank who confirmed the debit card currently used by town council is secure for online purchases with reputable businesses. The business manager advised that any credit or charge cards issued to town council would incur regular monthly fees as well as an annual fee, and a full credit check would be carried out prior to cards being issued to the organisation. A credit agreement would need to be signed also. Members spoke about the type of transactions that the card may be used for, such as the purchase of wreaths for remembrance tide and RESOLVED not to proceed with additional card services at this time.

12.To review the draft forward work plan.

Members started to review and edit the forward work plan resolving to change their objectives to read:

1. To become a more robust, resilient Town Council delivering a wide range of services and activities for the benefit of residents.
2. To improve and enhance opportunities for residents' wellbeing.

The committee acknowledged the need to edit the remainder of the document without delay however meeting time was rapidly disappearing. The committee RESOLVED to have a special meeting specifically for the purpose of confirming the forward work plan. Members to continue to review the document in the meantime with the intention of identifying unnecessary/complete content.

The deputy mayor thanked all committee members for their positive contribution to the business on the agenda and he closed the meeting at 17.24pm.