

## **Minutes of the Full Council Meeting 29<sup>th</sup> January 2025.**

Present: Councillors H Llewellyn; C Andrews; R Carrol; P Collins; J Davies; M IngramJones; D IngramJones; J Bissex; C Bissex-Foster; J McCarthy; R Price; S HamerThomas; J Bissex.  
Also Present: PCSO Sadziek; Mr T Oliver (Deputy Town Clerk); Mrs H Williams (Town Clerk)  
Meeting Chairperson: Councillor H Llewellyn (Mayor)

### **1. To receive a report from Gwent Police.**

The Mayor reviewed the monthly report with Members noting a decrease in crime statistics for Bargoed and rise in other ward areas. He moved on to introduce PCSO Sadziek to the meeting and invited her to speak. PCSO Sadziek apologised to Members for a lack of locally based officers to attend the meeting, as she is based in Rhymney. Members were invited to ask questions which she would feed back to the respective teams. A Member asked if there were any updates on a local resident who has been reported missing, but nothing new is able to be reported at this time. The Mayor asked if any Members had other questions, but nothing was forthcoming at this time.

### **2. To receive Apologies for Absence**

All Members were present.

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

Cllr Bissex Foster, Cllr R Price and Cllr Andrews declared an interest in item 11.

### **4. Press and Public Participation Session.**

No enquiries received.

### **5. To receive, approve and sign Minutes of the Full Council Meeting 18<sup>th</sup> December 2024.**

RESOLVED to unanimously approve the draft unapproved minutes of the December 18<sup>th</sup> 2024 meeting.

### **6. To receive a report from the Mayor on his recent civic activities.**

The Mayor advised having attended the special meeting of the CCBC Community Council Liaison Committee to discuss the draft 2025-26 CCBC budget proposals which is about to go out to consultation.

Moving on he spoke about attending the OAP Panto which was tremendously received, and four Members received unexpected long service awards at the event, presented by Hefin David AM.

### **7. To receive draft unapproved minutes of the Policy & Resources Committee 19<sup>th</sup> December 2024.**

Noted.

### **9. To receive confirmation of the band D council tax base for 2025-26 as noted by Caerphilly County Borough Council cabinet meeting 11<sup>th</sup> December 2024.**

The Deputy Clerk advised members of the content of the notification of the number of band D dwellings in the town council area of 3744.55 properties, and the relevance in calculating the precept.

10. To receive a verbal report from the clerk, review and discuss the draft 2025-26 budget calculations and consider implications for the precept. Members are required to provide instruction to the clerk in accordance with the Local Government Finance Act 1992, s50.

The Deputy Clerk reviewed the budget notes with Members section by section and sought Members input into decisions not already ratified by council following committee recommendations. Members discussed wellbeing activities delivered from Bargoed library and spoke about some of the challenges in ensuring local residents benefit moving forward if the library is developed into a hub. Members voted unanimously to increase the budget for community wellbeing activities at the library to £1,500.

The Clerk verbally reminded Members of the Independent Remuneration Panel determinations and the draft figures full council instructed her to include in the draft budget. Members debated attendance allowance implementation and the mayor sought a vote by show of hands. Members RESOLVED to include attendance allowances in the 2025-26 budget [11 votes for; 2 abstentions]. The mayor moved on to seek a vote on the level of attendance allowance to be paid per full council meeting attendance. Members RESOLVED to include £30 per meeting per member attending a full council meeting [11 votes for; 2 abstentions] with effect from April 1<sup>st</sup> 2025.

Members RESOLVED to implement a £1,500 Mayors allowance; £500 Deputy Mayors allowance [unanimously]; and £1,500 for three senior salaries [11 votes for; 2 abstentions].

Members spoke about the increasing costs of by-elections and the need to spread the cost of local council elections over the five year term of office; therein RESOLVING to assign a £5,000 budget for by-elections 2025-26 and any underspend to be added to the Election Costs Reserves currently held. In considering the Caerphilly County Borough Council draft budget consultation and cuts to specific services, Members reviewed the grants and donations budgets which £10,000 expenditure is forecast for 2024-25 and RESOLVED that the small grants and the small donations programmes be continued at the same level with a Discretionary grants budget of £15,000 included to allow for additional community support. Several project costs RESOLVED to keep at same level as 2024-25, and an addendum to floral displays contract budgeted for remembrance and craftwork displays. The Summer Picnic event for children to have an increased budget with earmarked reserves supporting £3,000. The Remembrance budget increased to allow £500 for VE Day anniversary celebration in the community.

The Deputy Clerk confirmed that 3% has been included for non staff related office costs and staff costs input as per the instruction of the HR & Staffing Committee noting the inclusion of the 1.2% increase to employers national insurance and a predicted NJC annual increase of 3%.

Members reviewed the total of the draft budget expenditure for 2025-26; noted the use of £14,845 of Earmarked Reserves to support budgeted expenditure and £2,829 surplus being offset. Members also confirmed the establishment of Earmarked Reserves for Festive Lighting Renewals; IT Equipment Renewals; Election Costs and All Risks Contingencies in addition to the Running Costs Reserves, Members Care Costs Reserves and Growth Fund.

Following a lengthy debate and considerable consideration, Members RESOLVED to agree a 2025-2026 budget of £241,914 and make a precept demand to Caerphilly County Borough Council of £224,240 which equates to a band D precept of £59.41, an increase of 14p per week.

11. To review amendments to parking restrictions in:

- Park Crescent, Bargoed
- Usk Road, Bargoed
- Vere Street, Gilfach

Members reviewed the three maps of changes to parking restrictions. Members voted by show of hands noting unanimous support for the changes.

The Chairperson thanked Members for their attendance and closed the meeting at 7:15pm.