

Pontypool-Pont-y-pŵl

Community Council-Cyngor Cymuned

Striving to promote a positive cohesive community
Ymdrechu i hyrwyddo cymuned gadarnhaol a chydyfodol



01495 365 951

www.pontypoolcc.gov.uk
23 February/Chwefror 2023



Dear Sir/Madam,

You are summoned to attend a Multi-Location meeting of the **POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE** at **6.30 PM** on **WEDNESDAY 5 APRIL 2023**

The meeting will be held remotely, using Microsoft Teams and physically for those who wish to attend the Council Chamber. Councillors have been provided with a link to attend the meeting. If any member of the public wishes to attend the meeting remotely, please contact the Clerk of the Council (by e-mail or telephone) at least 24 hours before the meeting.

Members of the public have the right to ask questions at Council meetings and to speak in Welsh or English, provided that at least 3 working days' notice in writing of the question has been provided to the Clerk.

The agenda for the meeting is set out below and relevant papers are attached.

Gofynnir drwy hyn i chi fynychu **PWYLLGOR POLISI A CHYLLID yn Rhith Gyfarfod** am **6:30 yf, DYDD MERCHER 5 EBRILL 2023**

Cynhelir y cyfarfod o bell ar Microsoft Teams. Mae cynghorwyr wedi derbyn dolen i fynychu'r cyfarfod. Os yw unrhyw aelod o'r cyhoedd yn dymuno mynychu'r cyfarfod o bell, cysylltwch â Chlerc y Cyngor (trwy e-bost neu dros y ffôn) o leiaf 24 awr cyn y cyfarfod.

Mae gan aelodau o'r cyhoedd yr hawl i ofyn cwestiynau yng nghyfarfodydd y Cyngor, mae gan aelodau o'r cyhoedd hefyd yr hawl i siarad yn y Gymraeg neu'r Saesneg, cyn belled ag y rhoddir tri diwrnod o rybudd ysgrifenedig o'r cwestiwn i'r Clerc.

Mae agenda'r cyfarfod wedi'i nodi isod ac mae papurau perthnasol ynghlwm.

Yours faithfully/ Yr eiddoch yn gywir

Lisa McMail

CLERK TO THE COUNCIL/ CLERC I'R CYNGOR

AGENDA

FINANCIAL ITEMS

1. **Apologies for absence**
To receive apologies for absence.
2. **Declarations of Interest**
Members to declare any interests in any items on Agenda.
3. **Schedule of Receipts and Payments**
To approve schedule of receipts and payments for February 2023 (attached: page(s) 1- 4)
4. **Use of Credit Card**
To approve the credit card payments for January/February 2023 (attached: page(s) 5)
5. **Financial Budget Comparison with Reserves breakdown**
To receive and consider the financial monitoring report to the 28 February 2023 (attached: page(s) 6 – 9)
6. **Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales**
To receive the IRP's recent Annual Report (attached: page(s) 10 – 29)
7. **Internal Auditor**
To note that the Internal Auditor's three-year agreement has come to an end after completion of year end 31.03.23. Therefore to approve agreement to advertise for a new internal auditor for three years for year end 23/24, 24/25, 25/26.
8. **Renewal of One Voice Wales Membership**
To consider renewing the Council's annual membership of One Voice Wales at a cost of £6600 (attached: page(s) 30 – 33)
9. **CCTV**
To receive a reply from Mr Lyndon Puddy in relation to CCTV funding (attached: page(s) 34)
10. **Torfaen Community & Volunteer Awards 2023**
To receive a request from Torfaen Voluntary Alliance (attached: page(s) 35 – 36)

11. **Mic Morris Torfaen 10K – Medals**

To receive an e-mail from Christine Philpott, Business Support Officer at Torfaen County Borough Council. Attached page(s) 37 – 39)

12. **Financial Requests**

(i) To receive an e-mail from Matthew Cummins, Chairman of Torfaen Tigers RC in relation to their 20th Anniversary on the 4th May 2023 (attached: page(s) 40)

(ii) To receive a request from Tŷ Hafan (attached: page(s) 41)

(iii) Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod (attached: page(s) 42)

POLICY ITEMS

14. **Pontypool Community Council Investment Strategy**

To receive and review the Investment Strategy, three year review due (attached: page(s) 43 – 44)

15. **Fixed Asset Register Policy**

To receive and review the Fixed Asset Policy, three-year review due (attached: page(s) 45 – 46)

16. **Harassment and Bullying Policy**

To adopt One Voice Wales Harassment and Bullying Policy. (attached page(s) 47 – 65)

*Councillors: Lizzie Hunt (Chair) J. Killick (Vice-Chair), Jon Horlor, Jonathon Martin, Caroline Price, Bob Rogers, Jools Rogers, Vacancy.
Chairman (Councillor Matt Ford) and Leader (Councillor Mrs G. James) Ex-officio*

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POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE - 5 APRIL 2023
FEBRUARY SCHEDULE OF RECEIPTS and PAYMENTS

Income - February

01/02/2023	41	CCLA	Dividend Reinvested	2,493.62
13/02/2023	42	Torfaen County Borough Council	Stall - Party the Park 2022	5.00
				<u>2,498.62</u>

Expenditure - February

18/02/2023	523	DD	British Gas	Electricity Charges - Unit 8	25.22
20/02/2023	524	DD	123 Telecom	Telephone / Internet Charges	199.80
30/02/2023	525	DD	British Gas	Gas Charges - Office	575.56
15/02/2023	526	SO	Torfaen County Borough Council	Salaries - October	14,000.00
04/02/2023	527	DD	Cathedral Leasing	Hygiene Disposal Bins	41.59
27/02/2023	528	BP	Initial Washroom Hygiene	Mat Service	22.38
27/02/2023	529	BP	Mr W Beecham	Cancellation Fee - Esisteddfod 2023	200.00
17/02/2023	530	DD	Barclaycard	Various	821.40
13/02/2023	531	DD	Peninsula Business	Personnel Services	184.18
28/02/2023	532	DD	BT Payment Services	Mobile Phone - YP	20.53
09/02/2023	533	BP	Alpaca My Boots	YP - Youth Group Trek	300.00
09/02/2023	534	116608	Cash	YP - Petty Cash Reimbursement	197.26
09/02/2023	535	BP	SSE	Electricity Charges - Office	531.33
09/02/2023	536	BP	Torfaen County Borough Council	Salary Adjustment - December	31,160.15
09/02/2023	537	BP	Mrs L Mcmail	South Wales Removals - Noticebds	60.00
09/02/2023	538	BP	SLCC	The Clerk's Manual 2023	52.30
09/02/2023	539	BP	Acorn Recruitment Ltd	Salary - 29/01/23 (BS)	263.78
09/02/2023	540	BP	Panteg Cricket Club	LVF - EH/AG/NW/BR	500.00
09/02/2023	541	BP	Sebastopol Jnr AFC	LVF - EH/AG/NW/BR	400.00
09/02/2023	542	BP	Torfaen Qigong	LVF - EH/AG/NW/BR	100.00
09/02/2023	543	BP	New Panteg Jnr RFC	LVF - EH/AG/NW/BR	300.00
					<u>49,955.48</u>

POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE - 5 APRIL 2023
FEBRUARY SCHEDULE OF RECEIPTS and PAYMENTS

09/02/2023	544	BP	Griffithstown Jnr AFC	LVF - EH/AG/NW/BR	49,955.48
09/02/2023	545	BP	Pontypool Retired Men's Society	LVF - EH/AG/NW/BR	400.00
09/02/2023	546	BP	Nidus Children's Choir	LVF - EH/AG/NW/BR	100.00
09/02/2023	547	BP	Torfaen Male Voice Choir	LVF - EH/AG/NW/BR	150.00
09/02/2023	548	BP	Gollwopsies Playgroup	LVF - EH/AG/NW/BR	200.00
09/02/2023	549	BP	Pontypool Chrysanthemum	LVF - EH/AG/NW/BR	400.00
09/02/2023	550	BP	New Panteg RFC	LVF - EH/AG/NW/BR	100.00
09/02/2023	551	BP	Panteg Men's Park Bowls	LVF - EH/AG/NW/BR	300.00
09/02/2023	552	BP	Panteg AFC	LVF - EH/AG/NW/BR	250.00
09/02/2023	553	BP	Congregational Church Women's Guild	LVF - EH/AG/NW/BR	400.00
09/02/2023	554	BP	Griffithstown Ladies Club	LVF - EH/AG/NW/BR	100.00
09/02/2023	555	BP	Pontyfelin Bowls Club	LVF - EH/AG/NW/BR	150.00
09/02/2023	556	BP	Linden Singers	LVF - EH/AG/NW/BR	250.00
09/02/2023	557	BP	Griffithstown Allotment Association	LVF - EH/AG/NW/BR	100.00
09/02/2023	558	BP	Griffithstown Community Hall	LVF - EH/AG/NW/BR	350.00
09/02/2023	559	BP	Ennicroft Crafting Club	LVF - EH/AG/NW/BR	300.00
09/02/2023	560	116609	Mello 'D'	LVF - EH/AG/NW/BR	100.00
09/02/2023	561	BP	Griffithstown Primary School	LVF - EH/AG/NW/BR	100.00
09/02/2023	562	BP	Ysgol Panteg	LVF - EH/AG/NW/BR	200.00
09/02/2023	563	BP	1st Griffithstown Guides	LVF - EH/AG/NW/BR	200.00
09/02/2023	564	BP	1st Griffithstown Scouts	LVF - EH/AG/NW/BR	400.00
09/02/2023	565	BP	Panteg House Bowls Club	LVF - EH/AG/NW/BR	400.00
09/02/2023	566	BP	Fruit & Veg Share at St Oswalds	LVF - EH/AG/NW/BR	250.00
09/02/2023	567	BP	Renew GBC	LVF - EH/AG/NW/BR	100.00
09/02/2023	568	BP	Griffithstown Communal Gardens	LVF - EH/AG/NW/BR	100.00
09/02/2023	569	BP	Thrifty Fifties Quilters	LVF - EH/AG/NW/BR	150.00
09/02/2023	570	BP	Friends of Fishpond Park (Project)	LVF - EH/AG/NW/BR	100.00
09/02/2023	571	BP	Panteg House Sports & Social (Project)	LVF - EH/AG/NW/BR	1,000.00
09/02/2023	572	BP	St Alban's School	LVF - MF	1,000.00
09/02/2023	573	BP	All Creatures Great & Small	LVF - RM	300.00

58,905.48

POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE - 5 APRIL 2023
FEBRUARY SCHEDULE OF RECEIPTS and PAYMENTS

574	09/02/2023	BP	All Creatures Great & Small	LVF - GJ	58,905.48
575	09/02/2023	BP	All Creatures Great & Small	LVF - JJ	100.00
576	09/02/2023	BP	New Inn Pensioners	LVF - RO	500.00
577	09/02/2023	BP	New Inn AFC	LVF - RO	500.00
578	09/02/2023	BP	New Inn Jnr AFC	LVF - RO	200.00
579	09/02/2023	BP	Pontypool United RFC	LVF - MF	500.00
580	09/02/2023	BP	Pontypool United Jnr RFC	LVF - MF	300.00
581	09/02/2023	BP	Pontymoile OAP Club	LVF - CP	50.00
582	09/02/2023	BP	Tranch AFC	LVF - CP	300.00
583	09/02/2023	BP	Torfaen Museum Trust	LVF - CP	500.00
584	09/02/2023	BP	Pontypool AFC	LVF - CP	300.00
585	09/02/2023	BP	1st Pontypool Brownies	LVF - CP	350.00
586	09/02/2023	BP	Nifty Knitters	LVF - LC	50.00
587	09/02/2023	BP	Garnidiffaith Mini/Jnr RFC	LVF - LC	200.00
588	09/02/2023	BP	Fairfield AFC	LVF - LC	200.00
589	09/02/2023	BP	Varteg Community Association	LVF - LC	150.00
590	09/02/2023	BP	Noddfa Food Bank	LVF - LC	100.00
591	09/02/2023	BP	Garnsychan Partnership	LVF - LC	100.00
592	09/02/2023	BP	Stroke Association Support Group	LVF - NB	200.00
593	09/02/2023	BP	Pontypool Retired Men's (Project)	LVF - JH	400.00
594	09/02/2023	BP	4th Gwent Boys Brigade (Project)	LVF - JH	500.00
595	09/02/2023	BP	Cwmavon Community Hall	Grant Aid	500.00
596	09/02/2023	BP	Garnidiffaith Bowls Club	Grant Aid	500.00
597	09/02/2023	BP	Garnidiffaith Community Association	Grant Aid	500.00
598	09/02/2023	BP	Griffithstown Community Hall	Grant Aid	500.00
599	09/02/2023	BP	New Inn Community Hall	Grant Aid	500.00
600	09/02/2023	BP	Pontnewynydd Community Association	Grant Aid	500.00
601	09/02/2023	BP	Pontymoile Community Centre	Grant Aid	500.00
602	09/02/2023	BP	Pontymoile OAP Club	Grant Aid	500.00

68,505.48

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**POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE - 5 APRIL 2023
FEBRUARY SCHEDULE OF RECEIPTS and PAYMENTS**

14/02/2023	603	BP	Talywain OAP Club	Grant Aid	68,505.48
14/02/2023	604	BP	Victoria Village & District Welfare Hall	Grant Aid	500.00
14/02/2023	605	BP	Varteg Community Association	Grant Aid	500.00
28/02/2023	606	BP	Amazon	Various	343.66
28/02/2023	607	BP	Mrs H C Challenger	EE - Dongle CP (Oct - Feb)	157.25
28/02/2023	608	BP	Ricoh UK Ltd	Photocopier - Copy / Rental Charges	908.00
28/02/2023	609	BP	Restore Datashrd	Disposal - Confidential Papers	133.19
28/02/2023	610	BP	J S Cleaning Services	Window Cleaner	108.00
28/02/2023	611	BP	Twenty4 Fire & Security	Emergency Lighting Upgrade	2,418.78
28/02/2023	612	BP	Go Local Magazine	Publicity Items	715.06
28/02/2023	613	BP	Maben Vehicle Hire	Minibus Hire - YP	345.00
28/02/2023	614	BP	Door Maintenance Co Ltd	Repairs to Roller Door - Unit 8	180.00
28/02/2023	615	BP	Mrs A Ambrosen	Eye Test / Prescription Glasses	60.39
28/02/2023	616	BP	Torfaen County Borough Council	Election Expenses - Postage Costs	605.55
28/02/2023	617	BP	Torfaen County Borough Council	Salary Adjustment - February	8,040.91
28/02/2023	618	BP	J S Cleaning Services	Window Cleaner	108.00
28/02/2023	619	BP	Olivia Williams	Reimbursement - DBS	13.00
28/02/2023	620	BP	The Willows Usk Ltd	Hanging Baskets - 2022/23	4,620.00
28/02/2023	621	BP	Chloe Goddard	Reimbursement - DBS	13.00
28/02/2023	622	BP	Lauren Heckler	Expenses - YP	15.26
28/02/2023	623	BP	Orbits IT	Annual Renewal - Domain Name	72.00
28/02/2023	624	BP	Churches Fire Security Ltd	Alarm Monitoring & Maint - Office	23.51
28/02/2023	625	BP	Torfaen County Borough Council	Building Cleaning - February	655.67
28/02/2023	626	BP	Torfaen County Borough Council	Welsh Language Translation	20.83
28/02/2023	627	BP	Dwr Cymru Welsh Water	Water Charges - Office	54.43
					89,616.97

POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE - 5 APRIL 2023
BREAKDOWN - CREDITCARD PURCHASES (10 Jan - 3 Feb)

DATE	PAYEE	DETAILS	DEPARTMENT	Total
Office Expenses				
L McMail - Credit Card				
15/01/2023	Royal British Legion	Wreaths	Remembrance Sunday	5.49
23/01/2023	Tesco	Selection Packs	Christmas Cavalcade	738.00
24/01/2023	Tesco	Selection Packs	Christmas Cavalcade	39.30
24/01/2023	Wilko	Supplies	Christmas Cavalcade	10.60
25/01/2023	Amazon	Refreshments	Christmas Cavalcade	15.00
30/01/2023	Iceland	Supplies	Christmas Cavalcade	12.20
31/01/2023	Wilko	Supplies	Christmas Cavalcade	10.00
01/02/2023	Wilko	Supplies	Christmas Cavalcade	24.98
03/02/2023	Wilko	Supplies	Christmas Cavalcade	15.99
03/02/2023	Farmfoods	Refreshments	Christmas Cavalcade	45.00
				<u>916.56</u>
Office Expenses				
C Challenger - Credit Card				
10/01/2023	Cartridge Save	Ink Cartridges	Consumables	68.34
16/01/2023	Cynnal Cymru	Eco Training Refund AG	Members	-156.00
24/01/2023	Mcafee	Subscription Refund	IT	-7.50
				<u>-95.16</u>
			TOTAL	<u>821.40</u>

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Financial Budget Comparison

Comparison between 01/04/22 and 28/02/23 inclusive.

Excludes transactions with an invoice date prior to 01/04/22

		2022/2023	Reserve Movements	Actual Net	Balance
INCOME					
Council					
101	Precept	£715,987.00	£0.00	£715,987.00	£0.00
105	V.A.T.Refund	£0.00	£0.00	£25,785.12	£25,785.12
110	Chairman's Charity	£0.00	£0.00	£287.46	£287.46
115	Refreshments	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Total Council		£715,987.00	£0.00	£742,059.58	£26,072.58
Policy & Finance Committee					
301	Bank Interest (CCLA)	£200.00	£0.00	£13,646.93	£13,446.93
310	Barclaycard Rebate	£60.00	£0.00	£79.92	£19.92
Total Policy & Finance Committee		£260.00	£0.00	£13,726.85	£13,466.85
Events Committee					
501	Party in the Park	£0.00	£0.00	£1,211.00	£1,211.00
505	Christmas Trees	£0.00	£0.00	£1,887.02	£1,887.02
506	Christmas Cavalcade	£0.00	£0.00	£356.00	£356.00
520	Twinning Chairman's Visits	£0.00	£188.64	£188.64	£0.00
Total Events Committee		£0.00	£188.64	£3,642.66	£3,454.02
Youth Work Project					
701	Youth Project Misc Income	£0.00	£6,210.40	£9,169.55	£2,959.15
Total Youth Work Project		£0.00	£6,210.40	£9,169.55	£2,959.15
Total Income		£716,247.00	£6,399.04	£768,598.64	£45,952.60

EXPENDITURE

Establishment Committee					
2001	Salaries	£233,000.00	£0.00	£191,912.61	£41,087.39
2005	Professional Membership	£200.00	£0.00	£344.00	-£144.00
2008	HR Support Costs (Peninsular)	£0.00	£0.00	£616.00	-£616.00
2010	Conferences/Training	£2,000.00	£0.00	£1,111.00	£889.00
2015	Health and Safety & PPE	£1,500.00	£0.00	£281.55	£1,218.45
2020	Payroll Charges	£700.00	£0.00	£677.84	£22.16
Total Establishment Committee		£237,400.00	£0.00	£194,943.00	£42,457.00
Policy & Finance Committee					
3001	Rent, Rates & Water	£28,850.00	£0.00	£28,696.93	£153.07
3010	Fuel Charges	£7,500.00	£0.00	£5,521.19	£1,978.81
3015	Office Equipment & Consumables	£9,500.00	£0.00	£2,471.97	£7,028.03
3025	Cleaning	£9,050.00	£0.00	£8,198.15	£851.85
3030	Refuse/Disposal of waste	£500.00	£0.00	£513.69	-£13.69
3035	Office Contracts	£10,645.00	£0.00	£10,058.72	£586.28
3040	Maintenance Costs	£3,000.00	£0.00	£2,333.65	£666.35
3110	Insurance	£5,500.00	£0.00	£4,987.90	£512.10

3120	Association Subscriptions	£6,100.00	£0.00	£6,086.00	£14.00
3122	Stationery	£1,600.00	£0.00	£1,185.21	£414.79
3125	Audit Fee	£4,200.00	£0.00	£0.00	£4,200.00
3130	Postages	£2,200.00	£0.00	£9.89	£2,190.11
3160	Photocopying Costs	£1,500.00	£0.00	£1,248.32	£251.68
3165	Advertising	£1,000.00	£0.00	£1,022.91	-£22.91
3170	Publications & Licences	£750.00	£0.00	£498.00	£252.00
3175	Website Design	£1,000.00	£0.00	£320.00	£680.00
3180	Welsh Language Translation	£800.00	£0.00	£3.64	£796.36
3185	Bank Charges	£100.00	£0.00	£25.00	£75.00
3200	Local Voluntary Funding	£55,000.00	£0.00	£38,100.00	£16,900.00
3600	Election Expenses	£5,000.00	£5,834.09	£11,439.64	-£605.55
3605	Chairman's Allowance	£1,500.00	£0.00	£1,500.00	£0.00
3610	Members Remuneration IRPW	£6,000.00	£0.00	£4,500.00	£1,500.00
3615	Repairs, Chain of Office	£500.00	£0.00	£0.00	£500.00
3620	Vice-Chairman's Allowance	£500.00	£0.00	£500.00	£0.00
3625	Conference Fees & Expenses	£500.00	£0.00	£0.00	£500.00
3630	Attendance Allowance	£500.00	£0.00	£210.26	£289.74
3635	Members Training	£2,000.00	£0.00	£584.00	£1,416.00
3640	Publicity Items	£1,000.00	£0.00	£921.38	£78.62
3645	Photographs	£150.00	£0.00	£0.00	£150.00
3650	Refreshments	£1,200.00	£0.00	£192.80	£1,007.20
4095	Maintenance of CCTV	£2,500.00	£0.00	£2,040.00	£460.00
4105	Playschemes/FoodisFun	£29,000.00	£0.00	£29,000.00	£0.00
6001	Running Costs Grants	£18,000.00	£0.00	£18,000.00	£0.00
6005	Grounds Maintenance	£8,200.00	£0.00	£8,206.00	-£6.00
6010	Junior Sponsorship Grant (Section 19)	£6,000.00	£6,000.00	£6,000.00	£6,000.00
6015	Grant Aid for Community Halls/Facilities	£5,000.00	£0.00	£5,500.00	-£500.00
6020	Grants- Misc	£5,000.00	£0.00	£4,010.00	£990.00
6025	Presentation Evenings	£1,500.00	£0.00	£0.00	£1,500.00
6035	Community Hardship Fund	£15,000.00	£0.00	£15,000.00	£0.00
6036	Play Packs	£2,000.00	£0.00	£0.00	£2,000.00
Total Policy & Finance Committee		£259,845.00	£11,834.09	£218,885.25	£52,793.84

Planning & Environment Committee

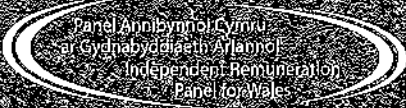
4001	Environmental Awards/Projects	£4,000.00	£0.00	£0.00	£4,000.00
4005	Litter Bins / Doggy Bins	£4,000.00	£0.00	£0.00	£4,000.00
4006	Community Notice Boards	£12,000.00	£0.00	£6,673.77	£5,326.23
4010	Spring Flowers	£2,500.00	£0.00	£0.00	£2,500.00
4015	Forest School	£2,000.00	£0.00	£1,250.00	£750.00
4020	Benches	£3,000.00	£0.00	£0.00	£3,000.00
4035	Environmental Quiz	£660.00	£0.00	£530.10	£129.90
4055	Woodland Rent & Amazing Tree	£150.00	£0.00	£135.00	£15.00
4090	Playground Equipment	£16,000.00	£0.00	£0.00	£16,000.00
4100	Pontypool Regeneration	£30,000.00	£3,850.00	£7,700.00	£26,150.00
4110	Public Toilets	£5,000.00	£0.00	£9,000.00	-£4,000.00

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Total Planning & Environment Committee		£79,310.00	£3,850.00	£25,288.87	£57,871.13
Events Committee					
3655	Annual Dinner	£2,500.00	£0.00	£0.00	£2,500.00
5001	Party in the Park	£15,000.00	£12,892.96	£29,204.54	£-1,311.58
5020	Christmas Lights	£60,000.00	£0.00	£27,921.47	£32,078.53
5025	Christmas Trees	£35,000.00	£0.00	£22,000.00	£13,000.00
5030	Christmas Cavalcade	£15,000.00	£0.00	£14,677.87	£322.13
5050	Eisteddfod	£9,000.00	£0.00	£3,515.70	£5,484.30
5051	Eisteddfodd March 2023	£0.00	£0.00	£513.75	£-513.75
5065	Additional Events	£5,000.00	£0.00	£3,278.60	£1,721.40
5075	Poetry Competition	£500.00	£0.00	£141.98	£358.02
5080	Photography Competition	£500.00	£0.00	£0.00	£500.00
5085	Testimonials	£200.00	£0.00	£0.00	£200.00
5090	Chairman's Concert	£200.00	£0.00	£0.00	£200.00
5105	Youth Festival - incl Overseas Airfares	£500.00	£3,019.33	£3,519.33	£0.00
5205	Twinning - Council's Visits	£500.00	£53.74	£553.74	£0.00
Total Events Committee		£143,900.00	£15,966.03	£105,326.98	£54,539.05
Youth Work Project					
7001	Youth Project	£58,750.00	£1,820.00	£65,770.53	£-5,200.53
Total Youth Work Project		£58,750.00	£1,820.00	£65,770.53	£-5,200.53
Total Income		£716,247.00	£6,399.04	£768,598.64	£45,952.60
Total Expenditure		£779,205.00	£31,888.27	£610,214.63	£200,878.64
Total Net Balance		-£62,958.00		£158,384.01	

Earmarked/Restricted Reserves

Heading	Committee Responsible	B/f Balance 01.07.22 as agreed	Used	M/s Number	Movements		Balance	Min No.
					In	Out		
Party in the Park 2022	Events	12,892.95	-12892.95		-		0	
Events	Events	1,237.46			1,237.46			1,237.46
Election Expenses	P & F	33,243.00	-5834.09		27,408.91			27,408.91
Repairs	P & F	5,000.00			5,000.00			5,000.00
Office Equipment	P & F	4,944.58			4,944.58			4,944.58
Twining Youth Festival	P & F	24,190.00	-2884.43		21,305.57			21,305.57
Sponsorship Grants c/f from 31.03.22 Min No 400	P & F	6,000.00	-6000.00		-			-
Grant Aid - Halls Min No 247	P & F	1,150.00			1,150.00			1,150.00
Play Equipment	Planning & Environment	38,164.00			38,164.00			38,164.00
Environmental Awards/Projects 2022	Planning & Environment	3,000.00			3,000.00			3,000.00 allocated Feb 23
Play Equipment - Maintenance 2022 - 2027	Planning & Environment	5,000.00			5,000.00			5,000.00
Youth Project	Youth	3,429.00			3,429.00			3,429.00
Youth Project Reserve	Youth	17,900.00			17,900.00			17,900.00
Youth Council - Bank account closure	Youth	4,390.40			4,390.40			4,390.40
MH Poetry Trail						12,000.00		12,000.00
Earmarked Reserves Sub Total		160,541.40	-27611.48		132,929.92	132,929.92		144,929.92
Pottypool Regeneration	P & F	160,461.01			160,461.01			160,461.01
Total Earmarked Reserves		316,612.01			293,390.93			301,540.93



Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales

Annual Report

February 2023

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Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg hefyd / This document is also available in Welsh

Hydym yn croeso i chi gyswrtu'r ddogfen hon yn Gymraeg / We welcome correspondence and telephone calls in Welsh

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Annual Report 2023 to 2024

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Section 1: Introduction

This is the Final Annual Report of the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales, setting the Decisions and Determinations on pay, expenses and benefits for elected members of principal councils, community and town councils, National Park Authorities and Fire and Rescue Authorities for implementation from April 2023.

This is my first Report as Chair of the Panel, having been appointed in June 2022. I would like to take this opportunity to thank John Bader, the outgoing Chair, for his service over many years and who led the Panel through two significant pieces of work last year – the Independent 10 Year Review of the Panel and restoring the link between elected members salaries and average earnings in Wales. I also thank Joe Stockley for his service and I am pleased to announce the appointment of Bev Smith in June this year. Saz Willey, Vice Chair, and Ruth Glazzard continued to lead the work of the Panel during this period of change and I thank them for the support they have given both Bev and I, as new members. Ruth Glazzard stood down from the Panel at the end of 2022, when she took up a new Public Appointment. The Public Bodies Unit is currently recruiting for a new Panel member.

This year the Panel has continued to focus on and take forward the recommendations from the Ten-Year Review. There are four key strands to this work – review the way we work, set out a three year strategy for the Panel, improve how we communicate and engage with stakeholders and build a robust evidence base to inform decisions.

We have embarked on the recommended Effectiveness Review of the way we work and have started developing our longer-term strategy with Panel Development Days in August and February. We have agreed that our mission is to deliver a fair and accountable reward framework for Wales, to support communities to have their voices heard within our local democratic bodies. We will use our expertise and professionalism to build trusting, sustainable partnerships to inform our work and deliver the changes Wales needs.

We aim to improve the way we communicate and engage both with our immediate stakeholders and the general public. As a first step we now publish a summary of our monthly meetings on our website, but recognise there is much more to do. We aim to improve the accessibility and ease of use of our website and develop it into a more useful resource tool for people. We intend it to be an easy-to-use store of information on our Determinations, and, building on our current Frequently Asked Questions page, develop our Guidance on how all decisions should be applied.

Whilst we are an independent body, we will continue to work collaboratively with key stakeholders engaged in promoting participation in local democracy. The Welsh Government published research exploring the barriers to standing for elected office and the changing role of the councillor and held a series of events across Wales to highlight and discuss the findings.

We took an active part in these events, hosting seminars on remuneration and the changing role of local councillors. We welcomed the opportunity to share knowledge, experience, and best practice across a range of subjects and particularly the focus

on developing a shared understanding of how we can take collective action to increase diversity in local democracy.

The Panel has decided that this year will be a year of consolidation. Major changes were put in place last year, and a significant uplift in salary levels was agreed. We wish to allow time for last year's Determinations to bed in and to allow the Panel to continue its development of a research and evidence base to inform future decisions and move to a longer term planning cycle. This report reflects that decision.

During the past few years, we have been considering the structure of our reports and how we can make them more accessible to all. We have concluded that much of the information published replicates previous years, often without significant change. For this report we decided to focus on the changes made as a result of the proposals. We have therefore decided that the majority of the content set out in previous reports will be removed from the report and placed on the Panel's website. We will make arrangements for those who are unable to access the website.

This change has significantly reduced the size of the report and made it more manageable to navigate. This approach is also in line with our efforts to respect the challenges facing us in protecting our planet.

We included an online survey in this year's Draft Annual Report for the first time and would like to thank everyone who took the time to complete this, or send in written responses to our consultation questions and comments on the Draft report.

Panel Membership

Frances Duffy, Chair
Saz Willey, Vice Chair
Bev Smith

Detailed information about the members can be found on the website: [Panel website](#)

Section 2: Role and responsibilities of the Panel

Role of the Panel

The Panel is responsible for setting the levels and arrangements for the remuneration of members of the following organisations.

- Principal councils – county and county borough councils
- Community and town councils
- National Park Authorities
- Fire and Rescue Authorities
- Corporate Joint Committees

The Panel is an independent body and is able to make decisions about:

- The salary structure within which members are remunerated
- The type and nature of allowances to be paid to members
- Whether payments are mandatory or allow a level of local flexibility
- Arrangements in respect of family absence
- Arrangements for monitoring compliance with the Panel's decisions

The Panel is an independent organisation and the organisations listed above are required, by law, to implement the decisions it makes. There is no requirement set by the Panel for principal councils to vote on the Determinations. The Panel also sets out Guidance on how its Determinations should be applied, and all councils must have due regard to this Guidance. The current guidance is set out in the 2022 to 2023 Annual Report, Annex 2 "The Regulations". This guidance is still applicable.

The Panel is also consultee for proposed changes to the pay of principal council Chief Executives.

Principles

The work of the Panel is underpinned by a set of principles which guides its approach, methodology and decision making. They are:

- **Upholding trust and confidence** – Citizens rightly expect that all those who choose to serve in local authorities uphold the public trust by embracing the values and ethics implicit in such public service.
- **Simplicity** – The Framework is clear and understandable.
- **Remuneration** – The Framework provides for payment to members of authorities who carry a responsibility for serving their communities. The level of payment should not act as a barrier to taking up or continuing in the post.
- **Diversity** – Democracy is strengthened when the membership of authorities adequately reflects the demographic and cultural make-up of the communities such authorities serve.

- **Accountability** - Taxpayers and citizens have the right to receive value for money from public funds committed to the remuneration of those who are elected, appointed or co-opted to serve in the public interest.
- **Fairness** - The Framework will be capable of being applied consistently to members of all authorities within the Panel's remit as a means of ensuring that levels of remuneration are fair, affordable and generally acceptable.
- **Quality** - The Panel recognises that the complex mix of governance, scrutiny and regulatory duties incumbent upon members requires them to engage with a process of continuous quality improvement.
- **Transparency** - Transparency of members' remuneration is in the public interest.

Section 3: Summary of Deliberations and Determinations

Methodology

Each year the Panel engages with members of the bodies for which it sets remuneration levels, officers within those organisations and clerks. The Panel also engages with relevant membership bodies including Welsh Local Government Association, One Voice Wales and the Society for Local Council Clerks. It does this through a range of meetings which, at the moment, remain mostly online. The Panel has continued with these discussions. They provide an opportunity for the Panel to explore views about existing arrangements, the impact decisions are having on individuals, how the arrangements are operating in practice and any issues or concerns individuals wish to raise. They have also provided an opportunity for discussion about emerging situations which the Panel has considered in its decision making.

The draft report was published widely and members of the public encouraged to and have provided valuable feedback and we welcome this. This year, the Panel had the opportunity to engage with a wider group of stakeholders at the three Welsh Government "Diversity in Democracy" events and workshops.

The Panel also considers feedback from the publishing of the Annual Report in the previous year. The changes made in last year's Report, in particular the uplift in the basic salary, seem to have been well received by stakeholders. The issues raised with the Panel have all been centred around the detail of the Determinations, asking for guidance on how they should be applied or asking for points of clarification where the text of the Report was unclear.

The Panel has therefore agreed to review the format and structure of the main Report and make better use of the Panel website to provide information and guidance.

The Panel has a duty to set payments that are fair and that encourage and enable democratic participation. It must also take account of affordability and acceptability.

In making its determinations the Panel considered a range of benchmarks, including past, current and projected indices and actual figures and the known and forecast extent and impact of multiple economic and social factors. These included post Brexit and COVID work environments and the cost of living, energy and climate crises.

Consultation on the draft Annual Report

The Panel produced and issued a draft report on 6 October 2022 for an eight-week consultation, which closed on 1 December 2022.

In addition, as part of the consultation process, stakeholders were invited to answer five questions using an online survey or by return email. A total of 89 responses were received online, whilst 44 were submitted by email to the IRP Mailbox. The

Panel would like to thank everyone who contributed to the consultation. A summary of the responses is included in section 4.

Overall, the responses supported the Panel's determinations and so no changes have been made in the final Determinations. In some areas the wording of the Determinations has been strengthened to clarify areas of uncertainty raised through the consultation, primarily a restatement of the ability for members, on an individual basis, to opt out of part or all of their remuneration.

In addition, the consultation responses, highlighted a few areas that the Panel will consider in their forward work programme for this year. The forward work programme will be published on the Panel's website at the end of March.

Following consideration of the views received in response to its consultation the Panel now makes its final determinations.

Panel's Determinations for 2023 to 2024

Basic salary for elected members of principal councils: Determination 1

The basic salary, paid to all elected members, is remuneration for the responsibility of community representation and participation in the scrutiny, regulatory and related functions of local governance. It is based on a full time equivalent of three days a week. The Panel regularly reviews this time commitment and no changes are proposed for 2023 to 2024.

Last year the Panel reset the basic salary to align with the 2020 Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) published by the Office of National Statistics. This reduced the imbalance that had arisen between the basic salary of members of principal councils and the average salaries of their constituents. The change took effect from the May 2022 local elections. The rationale for this significant step can be found in last year's Annual Report and a detailed explanatory paper setting out the historical context and analysis is available on the Panel's website.

Building on this decision the Panel has determined that for the financial year 1 April 2023 to 31 March 2024 it is right to retain a link between the basic salary of councillors and the average salaries of their constituents. **The basic salary will be aligned with three fifths of the all Wales 2021 ASHE, the latest figure available at drafting. This will be £17,600. This will represent a 4.76% increase in the basic salary.**

Salaries paid to Senior, Civic and Presiding members of principal councils: Determination 2

The limit on the number of senior salaries payable ("the cap") will remain in place. At the 2022 local elections boundary reviews changed the number of members for some councils. The Panel adjusted the senior salary cap for these councils in its 2022 to 2023 Annual Report. As there are no further changes for 2023 to 2024, the

maximum number of senior salaries payable within each council remains as set out in the 2022 to 2023 Report.

All senior salaries include the basic salary payment. The different levels of additional responsibility of and between each role is recognised in a banded framework. The framework was revised last year after a review of differentials and market comparators. No changes to banding are proposed this year. Early next year the Panel will gather evidence from principal councils to explore whether and how the workload of elected members has changed.

The ASHE 2021 increase applies to the role element of Band 1 and Band 2 salaries – leader, deputy leader and executive members.

To complete the last year's realignment of the framework, Band 3 and Band 4 salary holders will receive a small increase to the role element of their pay and the role element of Band 5 pay will remain frozen. The increase in basic salary will apply.

The salary of a leader of the largest (Group A) council will therefore be £66,000. All other payments have been decided in reference to this and are set out in Table 1.

Table 1 – Salaries payable to Basic, Senior, Civic and Presiding members of principal councils

Description	Remuneration		
Elected members of principal councils			
Basic salary (payable to all elected members)	£17,600		
Senior salaries (inclusive of basic salary)	Group A	Group B	Group C
Band 1:			
Leader	£66,000	£59,400	£56,100
Deputy Leader	£46,200	£41,580	£39,270
Band 2:			
Executive members	£39,600	£35,640	£33,660
Band 3:			
Committee Chairs (if remunerated): Civic Head Presiding Officer	£26,400		
Band 4:			
Leader of largest Opposition Group	£26,400		
Band 5:			
Leader of Other Political Groups Deputy Civic Head	£21,340		
Deputy Presiding Member – no role payment	£17,600		

Group A: Cardiff, Rhondda Cynon Taf, Swansea

Group B: Bridgend, Caerphilly, Carmarthenshire, Conwy, Flintshire, Gwynedd, Newport, Neath Port Talbot, Pembrokeshire, Powys, Vale of Glamorgan, Wrexham

Group C: Blaenau Gwent, Ceredigion, Denbighshire, Merthyr Tydfil, Monmouthshire, Torfaen, Isle of Anglesey

There are no further changes to the payments and benefits paid to elected members and therefore all other Determinations from 2022 to 2023 still stand and should be applied in 2023 to 2024, including those covering:

- Travel and subsistence;
- Care and personal assistance;
- Sickness absence;
- Corporate Joint Committees,
- Assistants to the Executive,
- Additional salaries and Job sharing arrangements and
- Co-opted members

Salaries for Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committees: Determination 3

The salary of a chair of a Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be £8,800.

The salary of vice-chair will be £4,400.

There are no other changes.

Contribution to costs and expenses of members of Community and Town Councils: Determination 4

Last year the Panel carried out a major review of the remuneration framework for community and town councils and undertook a comprehensive consultation exercise with the sector. The Framework was updated then and this year the Panel has decided to make limited but important changes.

The Panel recognise that all members of community and town councils necessarily spend time working from home on council business. This was the case before and during COVID and is continuing. As a result, members have extra domestic costs and also need office consumables.

The Panel considers members should not be out of pocket for carrying out their duties. However, an individual may decline to receive part, or all, of the payments if they so wish. This must be done in writing and is an individual matter. A community or town council member wishing to decline payments must themselves write to their proper officer to do so. Each community and town council must ensure that it does not create a climate which prevents persons accessing any monies to which they are entitled that may support them to participate in local democracy. Payments should be made efficiently and promptly.

Reimbursement for extra costs of working from home

All councils must pay their members £156 a year (equivalent to £3 a week) towards the extra household expenses (including heating, lighting, power and broadband) of working from home.

Reimbursement for consumables

Councils must either pay their members £52 a year for the cost of office consumables required to carry out their role, or alternatively councils must enable members to claim full reimbursement for the cost of their office consumables.

It is a matter for each council to make and record a policy decision in respect of when and how the payments are made and whether they are paid monthly, yearly or otherwise. The policy should also state whether and how to recover any payments made to a member who leaves or changes their role during the financial year.

Guidance on taxation

It is not within the remit or authority of the Panel to provide specific advice on matters of taxation. Advice can be provided by One Voice Wales and guidance is available on the HMRC website.

The £156 should fall under the statutory provisions of section 316A ITEPA: [Income Tax \(Earnings and Pensions\) Act 2003 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](#) and the current amount that can be paid without attracting a tax liability is £6 per week: [Expenses and benefits: homeworking: Homeworking expenses and benefits that are exempt from tax - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#).

The level of payments is set out in Table 2.

Table 2 – Payments to Community and Town Councils

Type of payment	Requirement
Group 1	Electorate over 14,000
Extra Costs Payment	Mandatory for all Members
Senior Role	Mandatory £500 for 1 member; optional for up to 7
Mayor or Chair	Optional - Up to a maximum of £1,500
Deputy Mayor or Deputy Chair	Optional - Up to a maximum of £500
Attendance Allowance	Optional
Financial Loss	Optional
Travel and Subsistence	Optional
Costs of Care or Personal Assistance	Mandatory
Group 2	Electorate 10,000 to 13,999
Extra Costs Payment	Mandatory for all members
Senior Role	Mandatory for 1 member; optional up to 5
Mayor or Chair	Optional - Up to a maximum of £1,500
Deputy Mayor or Deputy Chair	Optional - Up to a maximum of £500
Attendance Allowance	Optional
Financial Loss	Optional
Travel and Subsistence	Optional
Cost of Care or Personal Assistance	Mandatory
Group 3	Electorate 5,000 to 9,999
Extra Costs Payment	Mandatory for all members
Senior Role	Optional up to 3 members
Mayor or Chair	Optional - Up to a maximum of £1,500
Deputy Mayor or Deputy Chair	Optional - Up to a maximum of £500
Attendance Allowance	Optional
Financial Loss	Optional
Travel and Subsistence	Optional
Cost of Care or Personal Assistance	Mandatory
Group 4	Electorate 1,000 to 4,999
Extra Costs Payment	Mandatory for all members
Senior Role	Optional up to 3 members
Mayor or Chair	Optional - Up to a maximum of £1,500
Deputy Mayor or Deputy Chair	Optional - Up to a maximum of £500
Attendance Allowance	Optional
Financial Loss	Optional
Travel and Subsistence	Optional
Cost of Care or Personal Assistance	Mandatory

Type of payment	Requirement
Group 5	Electorate less than 1,000
Extra Costs Payment	Mandatory for all members
Senior Role	Optional up to 3 members
Mayor or Chair	Optional - Up to a maximum of £1,500
Deputy Mayor or Deputy Chair	Optional - Up to a maximum of £500
Attendance Allowance	Optional
Financial Loss	Optional
Travel and Subsistence	Optional
Cost of Care or Personal Assistance	Mandatory

Group number	Size of Electorate
Group 1	Electorate over 14,000
Group 2	10,000 to 13,999
Group 3	5,000 to 9,999
Group 4	1,000 to 4,999
Group 5	Under 1,000

There are no further changes to the payments and benefits paid to elected members and therefore all other Determinations from 2022 to 2023 still stand and should be applied in 2023 to 2024, including those covering:

- Payments for undertaking senior roles;
- Contributions towards costs of care and personal assistance;
- Reimbursement of travel and subsistence costs;
- Compensation for financial loss;
- Attendance allowance and
- Co-opted members

Payments to National Parks Authorities and Fire and Rescue Authorities: Determination 5

The three national parks in Wales - Brecon Beacons, Pembrokeshire Coast and Snowdonia were formed to protect spectacular landscapes and provide recreation opportunities for the public. The Environment Act 1995 led to the creation of a National Park Authority (NPA) for each park.

National Park authorities comprise members who are either elected members nominated by the principal councils within the national park area or are members appointed by the Welsh Government through the Public Appointments process. Welsh Government appointed and council nominated members are treated equally in relation to remuneration.

The three fire and rescue services (FRAs) in Wales: Mid and West Wales, North Wales and South Wales were formed as part of Local Government re-organisation in 1996. FRAs comprise elected members who are nominated by the Principal Councils within each fire and rescue service area.

Payments will increase as a result of the uplift proposed for elected members of principal councils. Therefore, there will also be an uplift of 4.76% in the basic salary element.

The remuneration for Chairs will remain linked to a Band 3 senior salary of principal councils. Therefore there will be a small increase to the role element of their pay. Deputy Chairs, Committee Chairs and other senior roles will remain linked to Band 5. Therefore their role element of pay will remain frozen. The increase in basic salary will apply. Full details of the levels of remuneration for members of National Park Authorities and Fire and Rescue Authorities, is set out in Table 3.

Table 3 – Payments to National Parks Authorities and Fire and Rescue Authorities

National Parks Authorities	
Basic salary for ordinary member	£4,964
Chair	£13,764
Deputy Chair (where appointed)	£8,704
Committee Chair or other senior post	£8,704
Fire and Rescue Authorities	
Basic salary for ordinary member	£2,482
Chair	£11,282
Deputy Chair (where appointed)	£6,222
Committee Chair or other senior post	£6,222

All other Determinations for 2022 to 2023 will still stand and should be applied in 2023 to 2024, including those covering;

- Contributions towards costs of care and personal assistance;
- Reimbursement of travel and subsistence costs;

- Compensation for financial loss;
- Co-opted members and
- Restrictions on receiving double remuneration where a member holds more than one post.

Section 4: Consultation: Summary of Responses

The Panel produced and issued a draft report on 6 October 2022 for an eight-week consultation, which closed on 1 December 2022.

The website link and pdf version of the draft report was sent to:

- One Voice Wales
- Welsh Local Government Association
- Society for Local Council Clerks
- Principal councils
- Fire and Rescue Authorities
- National Park Authorities and
- Community and Town Councils.

Determination 1: Basic Salary increase

Not all councils commented. Three highlighted whether it was correct that members be given an increase during the current cost of living crisis. However, these accepted that personal circumstances of members need to be considered and therefore it should be a personal matter for members to determine themselves whether or not they accept the pay rise or make the choice to opt-out. The Panel considered this feedback, and, whilst mindful of the overall impact on council budgets, agreed that the increase in basic salary was an important factor in encouraging and supporting a diverse group of people to stand for election.

Determination 2: Senior Salaries

There were two key issues raised by stakeholders; firstly whether the level of remuneration adequately recognises the increasing responsibilities of principal council members and secondly whether the current maximum number of senior salaries ought to be reviewed. The Panel noted these points and will consider whether this area should be a focus of the future workplan.

Determination 3: Salaries for Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committees

No representations were received in relation to the salaries for Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

Determination 4: Payments towards costs and expenses of members of Community and Town Councils

Over half of the responses highlighted a concern that the payments were mandatory and that their council did not wish to increase their precept to meet these costs. The fact that the Report did not restate that members can choose to decline their entitlement to payments was not helpful. However, other responses supported the payments.

Ten per cent of the responses received raised concerns about the costs of administration and fifteen responses raised questions about the correct treatment for tax purposes. One clerk also asked if the payments that members receive could be

published globally, similar to how the contribution to costs of care and personal assistance is publicised.

Other comments mentioned the need to encourage "green" travel and one queried the need for payments to be made for senior positions.

The Panel considered these responses and agreed to reiterate the policy on individual opt outs in the Final Report and to provide a link to helpful HMRC websites.

The Panel will continue to work with stakeholders to improve support and advice to Community and Town Councils.

Determination 5: Payments to National Parks Authorities and Fire and Rescue Authorities

No representations were made in relation to payments to members of National Parks Authorities and Fire and Rescue Authorities.

In addition, as part of the consultation process, stakeholders were invited to answer five questions via an online survey or by return email. A total of 89 responses were received online, whilst 48 were submitted by email to the IRP Mailbox.

Question 1

The Panel has continued to use the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) published by the Office for National Statistics as the benchmark for setting the basic salary of elected members of principal councils. There is a corresponding proportionate increase proposed for the members of National Park and Fire and Rescue Authorities. The Panel has continued to refer to the last published ASHE which was 2021. Do you agree that the basic salary element should be referenced to the ASHE 2021 data.

Responses

90% of those who answered this question agreed that the Panel should reference the basic salary element to the ASHE 2021 data. 3% did not agree whilst 7% had no opinion on this question

Question 2

The Panel has made changes to the payment of costs and expenses of members of community and town councils. Do you agree with the addition of the "consumables" element?

Responses

72% agreed to the addition of the 'consumables' element, whilst 25% did not agree to this additional payment.

The most common theme in the answers given to question two was whether this payment was now mandatory or if the payment was optional and that Councillors had the choice to forgo. The same question was asked of the £156 payment.

Question 3

The Panel will gather evidence from principal councils to explore whether and how the workload of elected members has changed to inform future Determinations. Are you content that the Panel should build this review into its future work plan and build the evidence base to support decisions?

Responses

97% of those who responded to this question agreed.

The majority of the answers highlighted the additional work that elected members now undertook in their role.

Community and town councils welcomed this as it would recognise the amount of work that the sector does.

Question 4

We have significantly reduced the size of the report this year to concentrate on key decisions made and intend to make more use of the website to provide easy to use guidance to users. This approach is also in line with our efforts to respect the challenges facing us in protecting our planet.

How would you like to access information and guidance from the Panel? (choose all that apply)

Responses

Summary report with links to detailed guidance	84
Easy to use guidance notes	71
Frequently asked questions	49
Website	54
Social media	16
Information events	25
Other	14

If other, please specify:

The proposed summary report, detailed guidance notes and frequently asked questions were welcomed. Other answers included seminars, online meetings and an information event.

Have you experienced any challenges accessing or understanding our guidance and information through our website? Please let us know how we can make it easier for you?

A simplified report and separate guidance document will help stakeholders find the information they require.

No stakeholders experienced any challenges accessing or understanding the guidance and information through the website

Question 5

The Panel intend to undertake a series of engagements with all relevant stakeholders over the next year as part of the development of its forward planning and building of its evidence and research strategy.

Have you any comments that would help the Panel shape this engagement?

For example, a preference for online polls, the holding of engagement events, virtual or face to face, which groups should be involved, how do we engage with prospective candidates etc.

Responses

The most popular answers given to this question were:

- online polls
- Virtual meetings
- Face to face meetings

There was a mixture of support for both online and in-person events. Some responses proposed that the Panel held regional engagement events so that several Councils could attend at the same time. Other comments received suggested these events would help to discuss any issues with the Panel in depth and for the Panel to receive a broader viewpoint and more comprehensive feedback on any proposals.

One Voice Wales offered support to the Panel in arranging any events in the Community and Town Council sector.

Summary of Determinations:

Determination 1:

The basic level of salary for elected members of principal councils will set at £17,600.

Determination 2:

The salary of a leader of the largest (Group A) council will be £66,000. All other payments have been decided in reference to this and are set out in Table 1.

Determination 3:

The salary of a chair of a Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee will be £8,800.

The salary of vice-chair will be £4,400.

Determination 4:

Members of Community and Town Councils will be paid £156 a year (equivalent to £3 a week) towards the extra household expenses (including heating, lighting, power and broadband) of working from home. And councils must either pay their members £52 a year for the cost of office consumables required to carry out their role, or alternatively councils must enable members to claim full reimbursement for the cost of their office consumables.

Determination 5:

The basic pay of members of National Park Authorities and Fire and Rescue Authorities has been increased by 4.76%. All payments are set out in Table 3.

Determination 6:

All other Determinations set out in the 2022 to 2023 Annual Report of the Panel remain valid and should be applied.

Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales
Room N.03
First Floor
Crown Buildings
Cathays Park
Cardiff
CF10 3NQ

Telephone: 0300 0253038
E-mail irmailbox@gov.wales

The Report and other information about the Panel and its work are available on our website at:

[Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales](#)



AGENDA ITEM 8

Dear Clerk

Please bring this letter to the attention of your Chair and Councillors.

Membership of One Voice Wales 2023-24

I am writing to invite your council to renew its membership to join One Voice Wales from April 2023. Once again, the past year has seen many positive developments to our services and for the community and town council sector in general, many of which are outlined in this letter, which we believe add significantly to the value for money offered by One Voice Wales membership.

We continue to represent the sector in a wide variety of ways – we regularly meet with the Minister for Finance and Local Government Rebecca Evans MS and we continue to represent the sector on the **Local Government Partnership Council**. During 2022-23 we have once again made strong representation on the role the sector can play in supporting sustainable local services and supporting the Local Government Reform agenda amongst others. We have maintained and further enhanced our working relationships with the Welsh Government, Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA) and the WCVA strengthening the voice of the sector within the public services family in Wales and improving working relations with the Third Sector.

One Voice Wales continues to make significant contributions to public policy developments through our representation on several Welsh Government advisory panels including the **Climate Change Panel, Ystadau Cymru Working Group, Ministerial Towns Action Advisory Group, Welsh Government Litter Advisory Panel, Ministerial Advisory Forum on Ageing, Welsh Government Diversity in Democracy Working Group, Older Persons Commissioner Age Friendly Steering Group, Welsh Government Advisory Board on Resourceful Communities as well as Understanding Welsh Places Advisory Board**. One Voice Wales is playing an ever-increasing role in the development of resources for the sector, for example, through our **Local Places for Nature Officer** in our team who has helped hundreds of councils to date on environmental projects and issues; and following funding off Public Health Wales via Save a Life Cymru we were able to establish the post of **Community CPR and Defibrillator Manager** in the team who helped hundreds of community and town councils in 2022-23 in developing this critically important agenda. We also played a significant role working with the Welsh Government and SLCC colleagues in the development of a **Finance and Governance Toolkit** for the sector which will help to drive up standards of working practice. We continue to work collaboratively with a range of other bodies including the **Local Government Democracy and Boundary Commission for Wales, Independent Remuneration Panel, Public Services Ombudsman and Wales Audit Office**. So, our ability to influence key stakeholder organisations continues to grow year on year.

There are exciting and challenging times ahead for Community and Town Councils in Wales and we will continue to develop our lobbying and representational roles especially in relation to the outcomes of the **Local Government and Elections (Wales) Act 2021**. During 2022-23

Llais Cyngorau Cymuned a Thref yng Nghymru - The Voice of Community and Town Councils in Wales

Eibost/Email: tgilmartin@onevoicewales.wales

Gwefan/Website: www.unllaiscymru.org.uk / www.onevoicewales.org.uk

we developed a **guidance document on the development of Training Plans, guidance on Bullying and Harassment** as well as supported the Welsh Government in delivering guidance and advice to councils on the requirements of the **Section 6 Environment Act duties**. We will continue to develop practice guides and share best practice case studies in 2023-24.

Our representational role means that **we have a direct interface not only with the Minister for Finance and Local Government but other Ministers** where our sector's remit extends. During 2022-23 we made several representations to the **Minister for Climate Change** on a range of matters - on the need for greater resources for the sector, the need for digital skills and capabilities to be developed, the role community and town councils can play in town regeneration and community planning, how the sector can support the decarbonization agenda, devolution of services and asset transfer agenda and support for the sector to better engage on the green infrastructure agenda. During 2022-23 we have extended our **representational role** - One Voice Wales' many Councillors across Wales are increasingly able to provide their views on a wide range of policy areas to support our lobbying activities and **influence government and stakeholder organisations** in their decision-making. This includes representation on health trust stakeholder forums and several **Public Services Boards**. These developments have improved and further developed our representational and lobbying roles and we will seek to further develop them in 2023-24.

Some of our other accomplishments over the past 12 months include:

- There has been a healthy increase in membership numbers during the year. Over 89% (88% previous year) of all councils in membership of One Voice Wales, or 653 (639 previous year) out of the 732 Councils in Wales and this is the highest level of membership since One Voice Wales was formed. Plans are already in place to drive increases in membership in 2023-24.
- Through our Local Places for Nature Officer post, we have enabled over £1m of funding to be accessed by Community and Town Councils across Wales with a further £500,000 of projects being worked up for 2023/24.
- Received confirmation from the Welsh Government of 3 years of additional funding at £150,000 per annum to develop resources to support community and town councils in helping their communities with the cost-of-living crisis.

As current members are aware, we provide the following services outlined below, and we are aware from feedback from our members that all aspects of the service are highly valued.

- **Provision of free legal advice** from a team of experienced Solicitors which can save members significant time and cost compared with using local solicitors for advice (These savings can in many cases exceed the membership that is payable)
- **Quality and timely advice and support service** on topics relevant to member councils.
- **Training** for members and staff, including policy seminars and new working opportunities.
- **General information via our website including a members' area.**
- **Monthly** editions of our new '**E- Newsletter**'
- **Representation** of the sector on the Local Government Partnership Council.
- Creating **new opportunities for collaboration** with national organisations across Wales.

The training and development agenda is another area where much progress has been made during 2022-23 with the continued successful delivery of webinar-based training. Under the auspices of the **National Training Advisory Group**, chaired by One Voice Wales, we have continued to refine and develop and extend our training provision to the community and town council sector. Once again, the breadth of our training programmes has been extended and will be available to members throughout the year. At the time of writing, we are about to distribute a **Training Needs Survey** to member councils and during 2023-24 intend to further enhance our offering to members. To date we have provided approximately 3,000 units of training to the sector – and it is very pleasing to see councils actively engaging in developing their skills and abilities as the sector's role grows in importance.

Furthermore, our **Consultancy Services** have been growing at a pace with many councils taking advantage of this service. We are increasingly able to provide 'One Stop Shop' solutions for our members and have supported our councils on **community planning exercises, accountancy services, technical VAT advice, HR and personnel matters including representation at Industrial Tribunals**, assisted in **policy development and health and safety** – and at **costs significantly below market rates**. We are also now able to offer consultancy support in relation to community planning and engagement. Please contact the Ammanford Office if you would like further details on how we can support you through these services.

Importantly our role as a representative body has been significantly improved with a significant growth in our membership during 2022-23 – **at year end we had 653 local councils in membership or 89% of all community and town councils.**

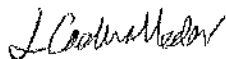
I hope that this summary of current and future developments has demonstrated that One Voice Wales continues to do all it can to represent the sector and provide a high-class information and support service for our members.

For your council to have a voice in the future of this vital sector of local government, and to benefit from the support provided by One Voice Wales, please return the attached Membership Form by email or to our office in Ammanford – the address is at the top of this letter.

If you have any further queries relating to membership, please contact the office on 01269 595400 / 07917 846510 or email: tgilmartin@onevoicewales.wales

I trust that your Council will give this invitation full consideration and I hope to be able to welcome you into membership shortly. I look forward to working with your council in 2023-24.

Yours sincerely,



Lyn Cadwallader
Chief Executive



ONE VOICE WALES
The Voice of Community & Town Councils

Invoice / Membership Form

Please enter all details in block letters and return original form for our records

I write to inform you that my Council has decided to join One Voice Wales for 2023/2024

Clerk to the Council Mr / Mrs / Ms / Miss (Delete as applicable)

Signed: Please print name:

Name & Address of Council - Enter any amendments clearly alongside

Lisa McMail, Clerk
Pontypool Community Council
35A Commercial Street
Pontypool
Torfaen
NP4 6JQ

Tel No's: 01495 365955 /

E-mail address: lmcmal@pontypoolcc.gov.uk

Website: www.pontypoolcc.gov.uk

Please inform us if any of the above details change

Please tick the preferred language for future correspondence:

Welsh English Bilingual

Membership Fee: **£6600**

Based on 16924 chargeable dwellings @ **£0.390p** per dwelling
(Based on Valuation List, not Electoral Register)

Please make cheque payable to One Voice Wales
Bank details - Account number: 16689360 Sort code: 30-94-85

Please return the form to the following address:
One Voice Wales, 24c College Street, Ammanford, Carmarthenshire, SA18 3AF

e-mail: tgilmartin@onevoicewales.wales Tel: 01269 595400 Fax: 01269 598510

Jane Wright

AGENDA ITEM 9

From: Puddy, Lyndon <Lyndon.Puddy@torfaen.gov.uk>
Sent: 08 March 2023 10:02
To: Jane Wright; Lisa McMail
Cc: Lear, Sharon; Lilly, David; Leech, David
Subject: RE: Quote QU000110 from Audio Visual Alarms Fire and Security Ltd for
Importance: High

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good morning and thank you for your response.

As previously notified to the Pontypool Community Council, we do not have the budget for CCTV in terms of ongoing replacement and maintenance of CCTV and will now make a decision on CCTV for Pontypool going forward. We have paid for this service and was expecting to recharge for the coverage up to and including September 2023. This will now be reviewed and may result in the maintenance and replacement being terminated from this date.

I will notify you of the Councils decision.

Best wishes

Lyndon

Lyndon Puddy

Head of Public Services Support Unit (PSSU)/Pennaeth Uned Cefnogi Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus (UCGC)

Public Service Support Unit (PSSU) / Uned Cefnogi Gwasanaethau Cyhoeddus (UCGC)

Torfaen County Borough Council / Cyngor Bwrdeistref Sirol Torfaen

Giantorfaen Road, Pontypool, NP4 6YB

Tel / Ffôn: 01495 742304

Email / Epost: Lyndon.puddy@torfaen.gov.uk



From: Jane Wright <JWright@pontypoolcc.gov.uk>
Sent: 08 March 2023 09:52
To: Lisa McMail <LMcMail@pontypoolcc.gov.uk>
Subject: FW: Quote QU000110 from Audio Visual Alarms Fire and Security Ltd for

Hi Lisa,
Information below as per previous e-mail.
Kind Regards
Jane

From: Richard Gwinnell <clerk@pontypoolcc.gov.uk>
Sent: 14 July 2022 11:58

Torfaen Community & Volunteer Awards

Sponsorship Packages 2023

It's that time of year again, when we are starting to think of recognising the amazing contribution that community groups, volunteers and businesses provide within Torfaen, and to enable the celebrations to happen, we have been fortunate in the last two years to secure the financial support of generous local businesses/organisations.

Whilst we cannot claim Royal endorsement, we would like to highlight the Royal recognition that followed each of the awards ceremony, and thanking our delegates for their role in highlighting the achievements in Torfaen. The success of the first awards in 2021 captured the attention of the Royal Family, which led to a visit to Blaenavon to meet the winner of our Young Volunteer of the Year. The awards in 2022, resulted in the Princess of Wales extending an invitation to her Christmas Concert at Westminster to the Young Volunteer of the Year.

This year's celebration will be held on **Friday, 20th October 2023** at the **Parkway Hotel, Cwmbran** and we would be delighted to have you join us in the celebration. We are offering multiple advertising opportunities and much more in a range of sponsorship packages to meet all contributions:

Gold £550

- ✓ Recognised sponsor against a specific award category of your choice (see categories below, only 12 available)
- ✓ Presentation of award to the finalist
- ✓ Invitation for 2 people including a 2-course meal
- ✓ Advertising of your company/organisation within event programme
- ✓ Promotional video of your company/organisation wishing nominations "Good Luck" on socials and on the evening
- ✓ Your company/organisation recognised as a sponsor, inclusion of your company logo on all promotion, tagged on socials and on the evening
- ✓ Discounted hotel room rate at the Parkway Hotel

Silver £350

- ✓ Recognised sponsor of the event
- ✓ invitation for 2 people including a 2-course meal
- ✓ Advertising of your company/organisation within event programme
- ✓ Promotional video of your company/organisation wishing nominations "Good Luck" on socials
- ✓ Your company recognised as a sponsor, inclusion of your company logo on all promotion and tagged on socials
- ✓ Discounted hotel room rate at the Parkway Hotel

Bronze £250

- ✓ Recognised sponsor of the event
- ✓ Invitation for 1 person with a 2-course meal, a second ticket can be purchased at a discounted rate
- ✓ Advertising of your company/organisation within event programme
- ✓ Your company recognised as a sponsor, inclusion of your company logo on all promotion and tagged on socials
- ✓ Discounted hotel room rate at the Parkway Hotel

If you are interested or would like to discuss further, please contact **Torfaen Voluntary Alliance**:

Email: volunteering@tvawales.org.uk Telephone: 01495 365610

Category	Award Description
Adult Volunteer/s	This award recognises an individual (26yrs+) who gives unconditional support to their organisation, dedicating great time and effort, often 'behind the scenes'. They may undertake one or several roles within an organisation.
Young Volunteer (Already assigned)	This award is to recognise a young person aged between 11 and 25 who has shown a real commitment to their volunteering.
Trustee Volunteer	This award recognises an exceptional and influential trustee who demonstrates outstanding dedication and commitment to an organisation.
Sports Volunteer/Group	This award recognises an individual or volunteer led clubs, teams in Torfaen whose contribution to sport has made a real difference by providing their time to support sport & recreational activities in Torfaen.
Health Volunteer (Already assigned)	This award recognises an individual that has actively contributed to improving the health and wellbeing of others or has supported the promotion and improvement of health and wellbeing in their community.
Environmental Volunteer (Already assigned)	This award recognises an individual or group who is committed to the promotion and protection of our environment, or the preservation of our rich cultural heritage.
The Heart of the Community (Community Group of the Year)	This award recognises teams of volunteers, groups, or community councils whose support has resulted in a positive impact on their local community.
Business of the Year	This award recognises a business that encourages, provides and/or supports its workers to volunteer in the community, provides skills and expertise to support or mentor local groups, or sponsored much needed work for local organisations.
Arts, Culture & Heritage Volunteer or Group	This award recognises those who contribute to the cultural life of Torfaen through encouraging and providing engagement with music, arts, creative writing, dance, history, and heritage.
Community Response 2023	A group, organisation or individual who has gone above and beyond in commitment and passion for their community. Responding by giving outstanding service and support during times of crisis this year.
Children & Youth Group Award	This award recognises volunteers and voluntary groups who support children and youth in Torfaen.
Community Leader Award	Great groups rely on inspirational people – those special individuals who have not just chosen to give their time to improve their community but who have been able to motivate and support others to do likewise.

** Categories are subject to availability

ADDRESS ITEM 11

Cindy Challenger

From: Philpott, Christine <Christine.Philpott@torfaen.gov.uk>
Sent: 23 March 2023 10:09
To: Cindy Challenger
Subject: Mic Morris Torfaen 10k - Medals
Attachments: Torfaen 10k 2023 V1 - medal design.pdf; Ribbon Artwork - Proof TLT.pdf

Importance: High

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Hi Cindy,

Lovely to chat. I've attached the medal (no 3) and the ribbon from last year which should give you an idea of what it would look like. As I said on the phone, the cost of the medals will be £1500 and I would need to get the artwork done by 6 April. If you need anything further from me let me know.

Thank you.

*Best Wishes
Chris*

Christine Philpott
 Work days Mon-Fri, 9.00 am – 12 noon / Dyddiau Gwaith Mon-Fri, 9.00 am – 12 noon
 BUSINESS SUPPORT OFFICER / SWYDDOG CYMORTH BUSNES
 Resources Directorate/Cyfarwyddiaeth Adnoddau
 TORFAEN COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL / CYNGOR BWRDEISTREF SIROL TORFAEN

Phone/Ffon: 01633 628936

Email/Ebost: christine.philpott@torfaen.gov.uk




Torfaen Sports Development is now on [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#)

25mm Heat Transfer Ribbon Artwork:


Torfaen Leisure Trust
Ymddiriedolaeth
Hornsbœn Torfaen

10.07.2022



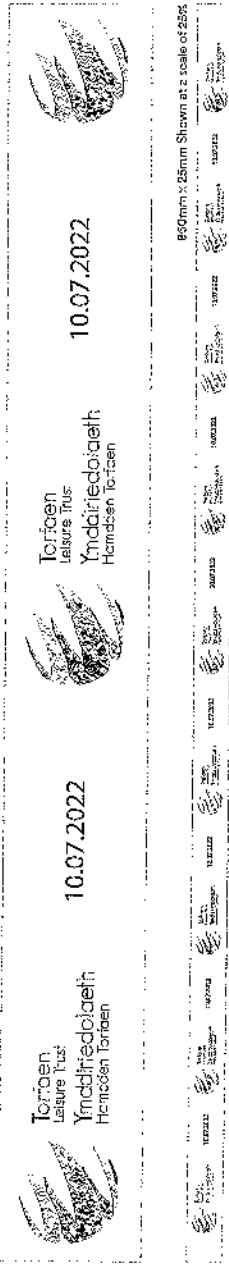
Torfaen Leisure Trust
Ymddiriedolaeth
Hornsbœn Torfaen

10.07.2022



Section of ribbon at 100%

950mm x 25mm Shown at a scale of 25%

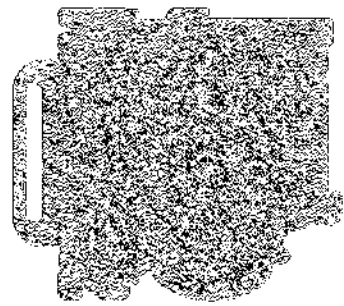
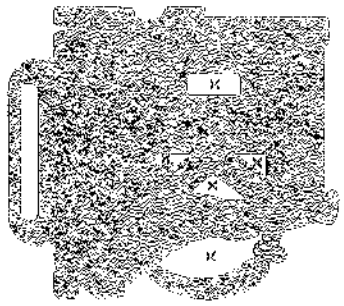
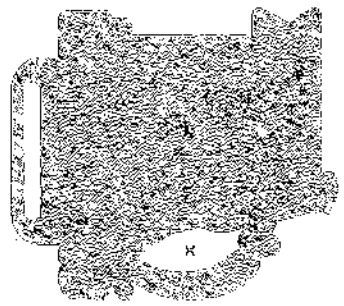



*Please note the final production artwork (which follows after the order is confirmed) may vary subject to production limitations



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Raised Metal
 Antique Silver Finish
 Recessed Metal
 Cut out



AGENDA ITEM 12 (i) April 1+2

Annette Ambrosen

From: Torfaen Tigers RL <TorfaenTigersRL@hotmail.co.uk>
Sent: 14 March 2023 14:28
To: Annette Ambrosen
Subject: Torfaen Tigers Rugby League

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good Afternoon Annette,

I hope this mail finds you well.

I believe you have recently been in contact with Thea Simons regarding the club and its upcoming anniversary year.

This year the club turns 20 years old which for a rugby league club in Wales is incredibly rare and hasn't come without its own challenges, I am however very pleased to say that as of today the club now has a flourishing junior section (6 teams), a men's team and a even our own wheelchair team which is the only one of its kind in the south wales.

As i am sure Thea mentioned, one of the biggest challenges for us is funding and this year is no different, we would love to be able to celebrate this year in style with new playing kits and off field wear for all the teams in the club as well as refreshing a large portion of equipment which is looking very tired but to do that requires significant funds.

If there is any way you could support us with this it would be greatly appreciated!

Any questions or if you would like more information regarding the club then please don't hesitate to reach out!

Kind Regards

20 years Anniversary — MAY 4th 2023.

Matthew Cummins

Chairman
Torfaen Tigers RL

Event - Summer.



Tel: 07944961777
Email: TorfaenTigersRL@hotmail.co.uk

From: Helen Morgan <helen.morgan@tyhafan.org>
Sent: Friday, February 24, 2023 3:35 PM
To: Pontypool <Pontypool@pontypoolcc.gov.uk>
Subject: hello

AGENDA ITEM 12 CID

CAUTION: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

To Pontypool Community Council,

I hope this email finds you all well?

I am contacting you as a representative of Tŷ Hafan, the leading children's hospice in Wales, and on behalf of all the families who rely on our services for support, care and respite.

I am sure you get many requests for financial support, but we would really appreciate you taking a moment just to consider making a small donation at the end of your financial year, through unspent funds to enable us to be there for as many families as we can.

I have attached some local statistics around how many families and services we support, through the generosity of our supporters across Wales and there is a link to our website below with information about how we support young people across south Wales, including the Torfaen area.

How we support young people - Tŷ Hafan

Tŷ Hafan, is a place of hope, strength, care, and support to children with life-shortening conditions and their families in Wales. We are there for them in their darkest hours, offering, emotional, practical, end-of-life and therapeutic support, clinical advice and so much more.

Although our Hospice in Sully is a well-known landmark, Tŷ Hafan also supports families in their local communities throughout Wales. We are a local charity with local solutions. You would be part of an exceptional army of support contributing directly to enabling us to sustain and grow our services, giving families respite, helping them make memories and have fun, and allowing parents and siblings a safe haven.

Now we are in our 24th year, and we need our supporters more than ever. We currently only receive 5% funding from the government, and rely heavily on our generous supporters to continue the vital work we do.

Thank you for your time and for considering supporting Tŷ Hafan to continue making a real difference to children with life-shortening conditions and their families in Wales - we could not do this without our supporters.

If any of the council would like to know more about our charity or visit us for a tour of the hospice and our lovely grounds by the sea, then please do not hesitate to email or telephone me on the number below?

With best wishes,

Helen



Helen Morgan; Senior Fundraising Executive
Tŷ Hafan | Hayes Road, Sully CF64 5XX
Tel: 07917 436 025



If you are not the intended recipient of this email (and any attachment), please inform the sender by return email and destroy all copies without passing to any third parties. Tŷ Hafan is a charitable company limited by guarantee, registered in England and Wales 3077406, registered charity number 1047912, VAT registration number 826930513. Registered office: Hayes Road, Sully, Vale of Glamorgan CF64 5XX: contact us. As an independent registered healthcare provider Tŷ Hafan is regulated by Healthcare Inspectorate Wales. You can contact HIW with any concerns about health care provision at any time by email hiw@gov.wales, or telephone: 0300 062 8163.

4/1

Llangollen 2023

Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod

Preparations are well underway for the 2023 Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod and I am writing to you as part of our annual fundraising appeal to Local Authorities, Town and Community Councils.

We are immensely appreciative of the support we have received in the past and I am writing to ask if you would consider supporting us again in 2023.

Llangollen Eisteddfod's rich heritage extends back to the unique innovation of the founders in 1947, who saw the festival as a means of using the arts to bring different peoples together in a spirit of peace and friendship. The Eisteddfod has always been a community led initiative and continues on this basis with the support of some 600 volunteers. Bringing significant community benefits, the event attracts around 4000 competitors each year and audiences of around 20,000 throughout the week. This brings an estimated £1.6 million in economic benefits to the area while the festival is taking place, and is an important part of the region's cultural and heritage offering, enhancing the tourism profile of NE Wales throughout the year.

2023 will see our first full-length Eisteddfod since the pandemic, with the return of the town Parade, a set of vibrant new designs inspired by the colourful costumes of our international performers and competitors, a reinvigorated Eisteddfod Maes with plenty of family entertainment, as well as three stages, workshops, celebrations of our Welsh heritage and daily showcases of cultures from around the world. We continue our strand of talks dedicated to understanding peace in the 21st century, and bring themes of internationalism and peace together in our concert, The White Flower: Into the Light. This event brings together massed professional and community performers from across Wales, Ukraine and Bosnia in a concert which reflects on conflict, loss and the power of music to restore faith in humanity.

As well as a number of collaborations with arts organisations and charities across NE Wales, we'll also be partnering once again with Llangollen Fringe Festival, and working with Llangollen Town Council to ensure that both events, and the town's wider festival offering are bringing increased benefits to local community members, businesses and visitors.

We hope that you can continue to support us both financially and ideologically in any way that you can, to help us with this event which showcases the best of Welsh culture both at home and across the globe.

I look forward to hearing from you.

Kind regards



Camilla King | Executive Producer

Llangollen International Pwlllen
Abbey Road
Llangollen
LL20 8SW
Tel: 01978 862000
Email: info@llangollen.net

Y Pafffen Rhyngwladol Brechfaol
Ffordd yr Abaty
Llangollen
LL20 8SW
Ffôn: 01978 862000
E-bost: info@llangollen.net

www.llangollen.net

Registered Charity No 504620. The Llangollen International Musical Eisteddfod is a Company Limited by Guarantee. Registered in England and Wales 1165311

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PONTYPOOL COMMUNITY COUNCIL
INVESTMENT STRATEGY 2020 – 2023 (3 YEAR PLAN) reviewed March
2023

INTRODUCTION

Pontypool Community Council acknowledges the importance of prudently investing all funds held on behalf of the community by the Council.

This strategy complies (as appropriate) with the revised requirements set out in Guidance on Local Government Investments issued by the Department of Communities and Local Government in April 2019. This strategy should be read in conjunction with the Council's Financial Regulations.

INVESTMENT OBJECTIVES

In accordance with Section 15(1) of the 2003 Act, the Council will have regard (a) to such guidance as the Secretary of State may issue, and (b) to such other guidance as the Secretary of State may by regulations specify. The Council's investment priorities are as follows in order of priority:

1. Security of Capital
2. Liquidity
3. Yield (The effect of any charges should be taken into account when considering investments)

The Council will aim to achieve the optimum return on its investments commensurate with proper levels of security and liquidity.

The Department for Communities and Local Government maintains that borrowing of monies purely to invest or to lend and make a return, is unlawful and this Council will not engage in such activity.

The Council's Finance Committee will monitor the risk of loss on investments and only recommend investing in institutions of high credit rating. Investments will be spread over different providers where appropriate to minimise risk.

- The Council holds its general funds in a current account with the Cooperative Bank and 2 investment accounts with:
 1. Public Sector Deposit Account - CCLA
 2. Gateway Credit Union, Pontypool

- In order to spread the risk of investment the Council invests the majority of it reserves with Public Sector Deposit Fund - CCLA Investment Management Limited (AAA Rated Deposit Fund) – unspecified term withdrawal within 1 day. CCLA is one of the UK's largest charity fund managers according to the latest Charity Finance Survey, managing investments for charities, religious organisations and the public sector. The balance must be continually reviewed by Responsible Finance Officer.

This Annual Investment Strategy is prepared in accordance with the statutory guidance on Local Government Investments issued by the National Assembly for Wales.

All cash, bank balances, financial assets, borrowings and credit arrangements are defined as a part of the Council's treasury management activities. This Annual Investment Strategy will concentrate on the Council's surplus resources (or other financial assets it holds) and the investments it undertakes of these resources.

The Council undertakes to ensure that for all its investments, priority will be given to security and liquidity rather than to yield. In drafting this Annual Investment Strategy the Council has made appropriate arrangements for:

- identification, management and control of risks in the investment/treasury management activities it undertakes,
- budgeting, accounting and audit arrangements,
- its cash and cash flow management requirements,
- segregation of responsibilities, organisational arrangements, adequate documentation and the identification of a responsible officer for investment/treasury management activities,
- corporate governance,
- procedures to ensure it is alert to the possibility it may become subject to an attempt to involve it in a transaction involving the laundering of money.

All investments undertaken by this Council will be made and repaid in Sterling.

June 2020 – reviewed June 2023

LPH

PONTYPOOL COMMUNITY COUNCIL

POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE

WEDNESDAY 5 APRIL 2023

FIXED ASSET REGISTER POLICY DOCUMENT

1.0 Purpose of Report

The Fixed Asset Register Policy Document is now due for review.

2.0 Fixed Asset Register

2.1 A Fixed Asset Register has four main purposes, it

1. forms a basis for completion of box 9 in the 'Annual Return'.
2. forms a basis for decisions on risk and insurance issues.
3. provides information on the age and potential lifespan of certain items.
4. provides assurance of the continued existence of Community Council's property.

3.0 Transparency and reasonableness

3.1 In order to ensure transparency and reasonableness, the following items are included in the Community Council's asset register, whether purchased, gifted or otherwise acquired, together with their holding location:

- land and buildings held freehold or on long term lease in the name of the Council
- community assets
- vehicles, plant and machinery
- assets considered to be portable, attractive or of community significance
- other assets estimated or known to have a minimum purchase or resale value of £100
- long term investments, shares and loans made by the Council

3.2 Community Councils must maintain an asset register to ensure fixed assets are appropriately safeguarded. Once recorded on the asset register, the value of assets must not change from year to year until disposal. Concepts of depreciation and impairment adjustments are not appropriate for local/community councils.

3.3 The Register is adopted by the Community Council at the end of each Municipal Year but is a working document over the following Municipal

Year, during which Council Officers will update and amend details as necessary.

4.0 RECOMMENDED

- 4.1 That the Committee approves the above policy until it is due to be reviewed in March 2026 and the information contained within the report be noted.

L. McMail,
Clerk,
Pontypool Community Council

This Report is jointly published by:

SLCC

For Local Council Professionals

Un Llais Cymru



One Voice Wales

Bullying and Harassment in Councils

47

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Introduction

One Voice Wales & the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC) are committed to improving the performance of community and town councils in Wales. One aspect of improvement is around behaviour by both elected members and council employees. While serious issues with behaviour are limited to a small number of cases each year, the impact of these cases is significant for those involved. Unacceptable behaviour can impact on the effectiveness of Councils undermining both loyalty and commitment and a souring of relationships which is in no one's interests. At its very worst it can result in ill-health and sickness absence which is clearly unproductive and very costly to those Councils which experience relationship issues of this nature.

This guidance has been developed by Paul Egan (One Voice Wales) and Naomi Bibi (SLCC) to support both councils and clerks when issues do arise.

Lyn Cadwallader, Chief Executive of One Voice Wales gives his full support to the production of this guide which he considers will help all Councils and employees to understand the nature of unacceptable behaviour and have a toolkit to help everyone ensure that Councils foster effective governance and employment practice. In his view, it is essential that Councils take all necessary actions to root out poor behaviour on the part of members and/or officers so that together a cohesive and focussed approach is adopted in achieving the best outcomes for local people.

As the professional body for local council clerks and chief officers, SLCC is similarly pleased to support the development of this guide. Rob Smith, Chief Executive of SLCC, gave his full support to the production of the guide and noted the value of its aims of improving behaviours, engendering positive relationships and helping councils and employees to deliver for their communities.

Effective Councillor and Officer Relationships

Councillors have different enthusiasms and interests, so celebrate this. Councillors have different skills and attitudes; for example, some work with ideas while others are very practical; some like accounts while others prefer reports. The community or town council needs a range of skilled people to work as a team.

Your chair has the roles of team leader and umpire at meetings. Some councils appoint a separate council leader, but this party-political role has no status in law. The clerk provides advice and administrative support and takes action to implement council decisions. The clerk may have to act as a project manager, personnel director, public relations officer or finance administrator. The clerk is not just a secretary and is not at the beck and call of the chair or other councillors; the clerk is answerable only to the council as a whole. The clerk is the **proper officer** of the council in law. Legally councils can agree to delegate decisions to clerks because they are professional officers whose independence allows them to act on behalf of the council. Clearly the clerk must be treated with respect. The best councils will have a clerk and councillors who work as a team to serve the community.

What is bullying and harassment?

Personal harassment takes many forms ranging from tasteless jokes and abusive remarks to pestering for sexual favours, threatening behaviour and actual physical abuse and includes bullying.

What are bullying and harassment? These terms are used interchangeably by most people, and many definitions include bullying as a form of harassment.

Harassment as defined in the Equality Act 2010 is: Unwanted conduct related to a relevant protected characteristic, which has the purpose or effect of violating an individual's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for that individual.

Bullying may be characterised as offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power through means that undermine, humiliate, denigrate or injure the recipient.

Bullying or harassment may be by an individual against an individual (perhaps by someone in a position of authority such as a manager or councillor) or involve groups of people. It may be obvious, or it may be insidious. Whatever form it takes, it is unwarranted and unwelcome to the individual.

Examples of bullying/harassing behaviour include: spreading malicious rumours, or insulting someone by word or behaviour (copying e-mails that are critical about someone to others who do not need to know, ridiculing or demeaning someone – picking on them or setting them up to fail), exclusion or victimisation, unfair treatment, overbearing supervision or other misuse of power or position, unwelcome sexual advances – touching, standing too close, the display of offensive materials, asking for sexual favours, making decisions on the basis of sexual advances being accepted or rejected, making threats or comments about job security without foundation, deliberately undermining a competent worker by overloading and constant criticism, preventing individuals progressing by intentionally blocking promotion or training opportunities.

Bullying and harassment are not necessarily face to face. They may also occur in written communications, email, phone, through social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter) and automatic supervision methods such as computer recording of downtime from work or the number of calls handled if these are not applied to all staff.

Bullying and harassment can make someone feel anxious and humiliated. Feelings of anger and frustration at being unable to cope may be triggered. Some people may try to retaliate in some way. Others may become frightened and de-motivated. Stress, loss of self-confidence and self-esteem caused by harassment or bullying can lead to job insecurity, illness, absence from work, and even resignation. Almost always job performance is affected and relations in the workplace suffer.

SLCC's Research

In 2017 Hoey Ainscough were commissioned by the SLCC to survey their members on issues relating to council governance, the Code of Conduct and standards arrangements under the Localism Act 2011.

Although the research focussed on England and its regime, Welsh members were included in the survey and the responses were consistent between the regions and countries.

The Localism Act (which does not apply in Wales) arrangements, which deregulated standards arrangements, are now over five years old and SLCC have been receiving increasing anecdotal evidence from their members that in some places standards are deteriorating and the lack of effective sanctions in the legislation for serious or persistent misconduct by councillors was having a negative effect on the governance of some parishes. SLCC therefore wanted to establish on a more systemic basis whether what they were hearing anecdotally was in fact true; if so, what was the scale of the issue and what were the effects. This evidence would be used, where appropriate, to help SLCC decide whether it felt it would wish to push for changes to the English/Welsh statutory framework and to identify what further support its members and the sector might need.

A survey in November 2017 was sent to all SLCC members with a series of questions designed to identify what clerks felt about certain key standards issues. In parallel a shorter questionnaire was sent to the English Monitoring Officers (MOs) of the principal authorities (In Wales, the Public Services Ombudsman investigates complaints) who have oversight of parishes under the legislation to see what impact, if any, parish governance issues were having on their role. We received 801 responses to the clerk questionnaire and 55 responses to the Monitoring Officer survey.

Summary of the findings

The findings from the survey were:

1. The number of complaints against councillors does not appear to have changed since before and after the introduction of the Localism Act, with roughly the same number reporting cases had increased as saying they had decreased

2. Most parish/community councils do not have issues with member behaviour, however a significant minority (some 15%) do have serious issues
3. In those councils with problems, it is generally caused by one or two councillors who are consistently disruptive although there is a smaller minority of councils where the whole council is seen to be acting inappropriately because of factional splits or significant governance failures
4. While the number of cases has remained roughly constant, there is a great deal of dissatisfaction with how those cases are now handled and particularly resolved, with the vast majority of respondents pointing to the lack of powers (unlike in Wales where there is a Public Services Ombudsman that receives complaints concerning alleged breaches of the code of conduct) to remove councillors from office as seriously damaging to the governance of councils where there are significant behavioural issues
5. Most clerks believe they are well supported by the principal authority's Monitoring Officer in helping them deal with issues but a sizeable minority are very dissatisfied with the support they receive (Not necessarily the case in Wales as Monitoring Officers have more of an advisory role to community councils)
6. Most clerks, however, are dissatisfied with the outcome of complaints and the way they have been handled with a minority saying they (and in some cases their councillors) no longer see the point in making a complaint
7. There is a significant feeling that the current legislative framework means certain individuals now believe they are 'untouchable' and are given free rein to cause disruption and that problems therefore go on longer without coming to a resolution (see section below on the Ledbury Town Council Judicial Review 2018)
8. Disruption generally seems to be either because of personal animosities between councillors or else because individuals or small groups of councillors are challenging the 'status quo' and see themselves as outsiders who wish to change the way that the council has traditionally been run
9. There is a small minority of councils where the behavioural issues are aimed directly against the clerk or other staff, but more generally the clerk tends to get caught in the crossfire, either as part of the general targeting of the way the council is run or because they are having to manage the behaviour or reconcile the factions. However, a minority of respondents said they had left a previous role as a clerk because of the way they were being treated and a handful of respondents were either currently engaged in an employment dispute with their council or actively considering it
10. Some councils and their councillors struggle to understand the rules around declarations of interest and a minority of councillors appear routinely to ignore the rules as they do not believe there will be any consequences

11. Councillors (particularly longstanding councillors) are resistant to receiving training, either because they see no benefit or feel they have received training in the past, or simply because they are volunteers who cannot commit the time. The availability and cost of training is also seen as a major barrier to getting councillors to go on training courses.

What is the difference between a grievance and a Code of Conduct complaint?

In simplest terms, a grievance is a complaint by an employee about the actions of his or her employer, their terms and conditions of employment, work they are being asked to undertake or the working environment. It may relate to the conduct or attitude of a colleague.

In the Community and Town Council sector, a grievance is a complaint about the Council as a corporate body and an employer. A grievance cannot be just about the behaviour of an individual councillor. It may be linked to the behaviour of a councillor but only to the extent that the Council as an employer has not prevented or managed the unacceptable behaviour. A grievance may be about a person's line manager if they are another member of staff.

A line manager cannot raise a grievance about a more junior member of staff – if there is an issue of this nature that should be dealt with through normal staff management processes. Nor can a councillor raise a grievance about a member of staff – this should also be managed through normal management processes.

A council has a duty to redress the grievance of an employee promptly and fairly.

A Code of Conduct complaint relates to behaviour by an individual who may have breached the formal Code regulating the behaviour of councillors or the separate Code for officers. Behaviours that are unacceptable are set out in the Codes of Conduct. A Code of Conduct complaint against a councillor is dealt with by the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales and cannot be dealt with by the Community or Town Council under the statutory framework. However, One Voice Wales has developed a 'Model Local Resolution Protocol' for dealing with low-level complaints about members which the PSOW supports (see later in this guidance).

The Code of Conduct for officers forms part of an employee's terms and conditions of appointment. A complaint that an officer has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct is a disciplinary matter for the relevant Community or Town Council. The Ombudsman has no power to investigate a breach of the employee Code of Conduct. That said, where the alleged conduct results in potential maladministration by the Council, that aspect may fall within the Ombudsman's powers to investigate a complaint by the person directly affected.

What should you do to resolve the complaints in the first instance?

In either case attempts to resolve matters informally should always be attempted before any formal process is contemplated. Ways of doing this can be as simple as an open and frank discussion or a more involved facilitated mediation. In these situations, nobody has anything to lose by trying to resolve a situation before it escalates.

Raising a formal complaint is not something that can or should be undertaken lightly. Even the most justified complaints damage relationships in the workplace in both the short and longer term.

Making Complaints to the Public Service Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW)

The Ombudsman considers that resources should not be used to investigate matters which are trivial, or which have little or no impact on the public. It is important that PSOW focusses its investigations on matters that are serious and have the potential to undermine the relationship between councillors and the public they serve, such as corruption, bullying and misuse of power in public office.

The Ombudsman uses a two-stage test when receiving complaints about breaches of the Code.

The two-stage test

The process requires the application of a two-stage test. Where she is satisfied that a complaint is supported by direct evidence that a breach has taken place, initially the public interest is considered in deciding whether a complaint against a councillor can and should be investigated. She considers the public interest again during an investigation to ensure that it should continue and, finally, again, when determining whether a matter should be referred to a Standards Committee (SC) or to the Adjudication Panel for Wales (APW) for consideration.

There is no widely accepted definition of public interest, but it has been described as "something which is of serious concern and benefit to the public". The public interest therefore relates to something which has an impact on the public and is not merely a matter the public finds to be of interest or a matter that impacts solely on an individual (although an individual may be more directly impacted by the matter than the wider public).

The published public interest factors the Ombudsman considers are set out below:

- the seriousness of the breach
- whether the member deliberately sought personal gain for themselves or another person at the public expense

- whether the circumstances of the breach are such that a member has misused a position of trust or authority and caused harm to another

- whether the breach was motivated by any form of discrimination against the victim's ethnic or national origin, gender, disability, age, religion or belief, sexual orientation or gender identity

It is clear therefore that councillors or Clerks making a complaint about harassment or bullying should ensure that there is sufficient evidence to support its consideration in terms of the impact on the individual concerned and how it may impact on the work of the Council and in turn the services delivered to the town or community. It goes without saying that witnesses who may be able to support a complaint should be identified in any complaint or statements in support of allegations should be provided to support the complaint.

Considerations

Then taking any of the above factors into account, relevant considerations can include the circumstances of the complaint; the extent to which the councillor was responsible for, or was to blame for, the alleged breach; whether the alleged conduct was premeditated and/or planned and whether the alleged conduct has caused harm or impacted on another person, group or body. Views expressed by the complainant, or any other person affected by the alleged conduct, relating to the impact and effect should also be considered. Other considerations may be:

- whether there is evidence of previous similar behaviour on the part of the member

- whether the Councillor has been the subject of any previous complaints or investigations, or been referred to the Standards Committee (SC) or the Adjudication Panel for Wales (APW) for a similar matter? Is the alleged conduct ongoing, repeated or is there evidence of escalating behaviour?

- whether the investigation or referral to an SC or the APW is required to maintain public confidence in elected members in Wales

- whether investigation or referral to an SC or the APW is a proportionate response. Consider whether it is likely that the breach would lead to a sanction being applied to the member and whether the use of resources in carrying out an investigation or hearing by an SC or the APW would be regarded as excessive, when weighed against any likely sanction.

Public interest will not be decided based on resource alone, but this is a relevant consideration when making an overall assessment. A balanced view should be taken and consideration of the outcomes of previous cases considered by SCs across Wales and the APW will be helpful in achieving this.

The list is not exhaustive and not all factors will be relevant to every case.

The role of the Council and Chairman

The legal position

Councils as employers are responsible for preventing bullying and harassing behaviour. It is in their interests to make it clear to everyone that such behaviour will not be tolerated — the costs to the business of the Council may include poor employee relations, low morale, inefficiency and potentially the loss of staff. An organisational statement to all councillors and staff about the standards of behaviour expected can make it easier for all individuals to be fully aware of their responsibilities to others.

Councils are encouraged to adopt a policy setting out its expectations and approach to dealing with identified cases of bullying and harassment by individual councillors towards other councillors and employees and relating to bullying and harassment by employees. One Voice Wales and the SLCC can provide model policies to assist Councils.

The Code of Conduct

The Public Service Ombudsman for Wales has published guidance to assist councillors understand their obligations under the Code. The guidance makes it very clear that bullying and harassment constitutes a breach of the Code. The guidance can be accessed from the following web-link:

<https://www.ombudsman.wales/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Code-of-Conduct-Guidance-Community-Councils.pdf>

One Voice Wales has also provided member councils with a model informal resolution process which can be used to deal with low level complaints from employees (other than the Clerk) against councillors and from councillors against councillors. The Ombudsman is very supportive of this process and encourages all councils to adopt it and use it whenever possible to resolve issues at an early stage before problems escalate. Wherever possible consideration should be given to using the informal resolution process which will enable the following matters to be considered in a more timely way and enable the individuals concerned to reach an appropriate form of agreement which is mutually acceptable. Those matters that are suitable for local resolution are:

- Minor complaints from Members about Members
- Minor complaints from Officers about Members
- Members alleged to have not shown respect and consideration for others – either verbally or in writing
- Repetitive low level and frivolous complaints

Please note that even when a council has adopted an informal resolution process these are only appropriate for these types of complaints and the Ombudsman may decide to investigate any cases which the Ombudsman considers raise more serious matters.

The role of the Chair of a Council

It is the Chair's responsibility to preserve order in the conduct of those present at meetings of the Council. It is also likely to be the case that the Chair will be the person whom the Clerk will approach for information about the Council and the community/town, to seek to informally discuss matters with and informally consult on decisions that are in the Clerk's remit to make or pass back to a formal meeting. In the context of the formal role at meetings, the Chair has a duty to ensure that the behaviour of members is appropriately monitored and if there are clear examples of bullying or harassment relating to councillors or the Clerk, the Chair should warn those concerned to desist from such behaviour. In extreme cases, the Chair or any other member can put a motion to the meeting to expel a councillor from the meeting.

The Council's Values and Beliefs

Although cases of bullying and harassment in Councils are probably limited to a minority of Councils it may be helpful for all Councils to consider adopting a values and beliefs statement that demonstrates to both councillors, employees and the public its position in relation to human interrelationships within the Council. Some examples are: -

Example 1

Trust and respect

We trust residents to make choices and decisions that are best for them. We will help when we are needed. The way we work together as staff, councillors, and partners reflects trust and respect for each other.

Pride

Our elected councillors and our staff are proud to work for us. They are committed to making our town a great place to live, and even a better place to do business.

Working as a team

The way we work together as councillors and staff makes sure we are the best we can be. We avoid duplication, tackle inefficiency and improve services and experience of residents and customers.

Being valued

We recognise our many responsibilities for keeping the area and our residents safe and prosperous. We recognise our councillors and staff for their contribution and for our success.

Example 2

Leadership - Councillors are elected to represent their communities and to lead on issues that will affect the lives of local people.

Integrity – operating with integrity, being ethical, trustworthy and reliable and treating others with respect.

Tenacity/ Persistence – work proactively to achieve the decision of the Council even if it takes a long time and a great deal of effort.

Communication – to give the public the opportunity to ask questions and engage with the Council, and to publicise the work of the Council.

Strong financial management – to ensure that the Council's resources are managed effectively and efficiently, at least cost, yet maintain quality.

Training – to support relevant training for Councillors and staff members.

Working as a corporate body – to respect decisions made democratically

These would serve to ensure that the Council is observing the ten principles that underpin the Code of Conduct which are:

A) Selflessness - Members must act solely in the public interest. They must never use their position as members to improperly confer advantage on themselves or to improperly confer advantage or disadvantage on others.

B) Honesty - Members must declare any private interests relevant to their public duties and take steps to resolve any conflict in a way that protects the public interest.

C) Integrity and Propriety - Members must not put themselves in a position where their integrity is called into question by any financial or other obligation to individuals or organisations that might seek to influence them in the performance of their duties. Members must on all occasions avoid the appearance of such behaviour.

D) Duty to Uphold the Law - Members must act to uphold the law and act on all occasions in accordance with the trust that the public has placed in them.

E) Stewardship - In discharging their duties and responsibilities members must ensure that their authority's resources are used both lawfully and prudently.

F) Objectivity in Decision-making - In carrying out their responsibilities including making appointments, awarding contracts, or recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, members must make decisions on merit. Whilst members must have regard to the professional advice of officers and may properly take account of the views of others, including their political groups, it is their responsibility to decide what view to take and, if appropriate, how to vote on any issue.

G) Equality and Respect - Members must carry out their duties and responsibilities with due regard to the need to promote equality of opportunity for all people, regardless

of their gender, race, disability, sexual orientation, age or religion, and show respect and consideration for others.

H) Openness- Members must be as open as possible about all their actions and those of their authority. They must seek to ensure that disclosure of information is restricted only in accordance with the law.

I) Accountability - Members are accountable to the electorate and the public generally for their actions and for the way they carry out their responsibilities as a member. They must be prepared to submit themselves to such scrutiny as is appropriate to their responsibilities.

J) Leadership - Members must promote and support these principles by leadership and example so as to promote public confidence in their role and in the authority. They must respect the impartiality and integrity of the Council's statutory officers and its other employees.

Ledbury Town Council Judicial Review 2018 and its relevance in Wales

Introduction

Although the Ledbury case was a judicial review in England the decision's underlying principles are relevant to Wales and are founded in the legislative framework and the Code of Conduct in Wales. Caselaw such as the Heesom and Calver cases also provide useful context for the application of the Code in Wales.

The Ledbury Case

The case arose after the Clerk & Deputy Clerk raised grievances about the conduct of two councillors. It was alleged that the councillors were bullying and harassing staff and preventing them from carrying out their duties. The grievances were investigated by the Council's advisor and the grievances upheld. The councillors appealed the outcome of the grievance.

Cllr Harvey believed that the matter was purely a Code of Conduct matter and self-referred to the Monitoring Officer. In May 2016, the Town Council put in place measures that restricted Cllr Harvey's access to the Clerk and Deputy Clerk, removed her from committees and outside bodies, prevented her from acting as a substitute for another councillor and informed other bodies of its decision.

On 11th May 2017 the Council resolved to maintain and extend the prohibitions. Shortly after that the Monitoring Officer confirmed that the investigation of Cllr Harvey's self-referral had concluded there was no breach of the Code.

What were the issues at Judicial Review?

Cllr Harvey challenged the 11th May 2017 decision on the grounds that the decision was ultra vires as it should have been dealt with as a Code of Conduct complaint by the Principal Authority and not an internal grievance.

She also claimed the decision was substantively unfair as it breached her Article 10 rights to freedom of expression or substantively unfair at common law.

She further claimed procedural unfairness through the absence of investigation, detail of complaints about her, failure to disclose the full evidence to the Council and its failure to allow Cllr Harvey to defend herself.

The Council's view was that it was acting to protect its staff and that it had the powers to do so.

The Decision

The Court agreed that the correct process for dealing with councillor behaviour is through the Principal Authority and the Code of Conduct under the Localism Act 2011. This follows the reasoning in previous cases and to a certain extent could have been expected as an outcome.

The Court while not having to consider the second and third issues found some of Cllr Harvey's argument persuasive. The discussion in the judgement providing useful guidance.

Implications of the Judicial Review

Where a complaint relates to the conduct of a councillor in Wales and falls into the provisions of the Council's Code of Conduct, the Council can and should attempt to resolve it informally. If this informal approach fails then it may be passed to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales (PSOW) as a local council has no powers to deal with the matter. Where the PSOW investigates a complaint and decides that the complaint should be referred to either a local standards committee or the Adjudication Panel for Wales, where breaches of the Code are found, they may decide to impose a sanction such as censure or suspension on the councillor.

Any complaint about a councillor's conduct should be regarded as a Code of Conduct complaint even if the complainant is an employee and it is raised in a grievance.

A complaint may fall outside the Code of Conduct in which case the Council must carry out or arrange for a proper investigation. There may also be overlapping issues that the Council as an employer should address in addition to any Code of Conduct being considered by the PSOW. The procedure followed must identify the issues in full, separating the issues as necessary. It must also ensure that the subject of the allegations is provided with details of the allegations and evidence so that they can provide a response.

Any subsequent measures taken as the employer must be proportionate and limited to the minimum required to stop the issue recurring. The measures should be kept under regular review and their effectiveness evaluated.

Further Commentary

In the wider context of regulating employment relations between a council and its staff the Ledbury decision does not obviate a council's duty of care towards its employees. Nor does it invalidate the principle of employers' vicarious liability established in the Bude Stratton case. This principle is clear that a council as a corporate body may be legally liable for the actions of individual members.

It is still possible for a Council to protect its employees if done correctly and that Councils have both preventative and reactive protective measures that they can apply. These are:

Preventative

Dignity at work policy

Member Officer protocol (perhaps with limitations on officer contact time)

Good induction of new members and ongoing training for existing members

Good policies to support effective governance

Reactive

Must be temporary (for example pending the decision of the PSOW)

Regularly reviewed

Relevant and proportionate

Not punitive

Still enables a councillor to carry out their role

Make a corporate Code of Conduct complaint – supported by/supporting the employee

Support for Councils and Clerks

There are several available sources of support including:

Mediation

In some cases, it may be appropriate to consider engaging an external mediator to assist in the handling of complaints relating to bullying and harassment. There are a range of sources of this form of service and One Voice Wales does engage a qualified consultant who can assist in such cases.

Training of Members

One Voice Wales offers six training courses that are relevant in this context and they are:

Code of Conduct

Council as an Employer

Equality and Diversity

Effective Staff Management

Mediation Skills

The Councillor

Support available for individuals

SLCC members can access a wide range of training and personal development opportunities which can support them. By developing their professional skills and knowledge they can equip themselves to better manage some of the demands of their role. Available opportunities include ILCA, CiLCA, the Community Governance degree, and continuing professional development courses.

SLCC members also have access to a free counselling service to provide individual support when they are experiencing distress in their personal and professional lives. Details of this can be obtained by logging into the SLCC website.

In addition to this SLCC members who are also members of the Association of Local Council Clerks are entitled to individual employment advice and support from the trade union. Details of this can be found at www.alccunion.co.uk. Clerks may also be members of other trade unions who can offer individual employment advice and support.

Making a complaint and evidencing it

One Voice Wales and SLCC are aware that bullying and harassment allegations have primarily originated from Clerks in several Councils in Wales and in all cases, it has related to the approach of individual councillors rather than the Council. We are also aware that Clerks who have submitted complaints to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales have often been dissatisfied with the result that the case has not been investigated. This has occasionally resulted in councillors often wrongly assuming that they have been exonerated. In those cases where Clerks have not been able to resolve such issues within the Council itself, the following checklist has been put together to assist them in formulating any complaint they may wish to submit to the Public Services Ombudsman for Wales.

Making a Complaint of Bullying and/or Harassment Checklist

Factual Evidence

- Can you document the dates, times and location?
- Do you have any witnesses who will support you?
- Are the witnesses prepared to write and sign a witness statement to accompany your complaint?
- Are the witnesses prepared to be interviewed if an investigation is undertaken by the PSOW or by the Council in the case of a grievance?

Read and Understand the Code of Conduct

- Identify which parts of the Code have been breached and how
- Explain how you consider the member has breached the Code

Collection of Written Evidence

- E-Mails
- Letters
- Memos
- Comments on social media
- Other

What support has been provided to you

- Staff
- Chairman/Mayor
- Other Councillors
- SLCC
- ALCC/ trade union

What is the impact on you personally

- Feeling undermined
- Illness (Describe)
- Absence from Work

Conclusion

The purpose of this guide is to help Councils and their employees develop a greater awareness and understanding of what constitutes unacceptable behaviour, the impact it can have on individuals and the Council as a whole and above all, what steps can be taken to address such issues when they occur.

Useful Links & Materials

OVW website - www.onevoicewales.org.uk

SLCC website - <https://www.slcc.co.uk>

PSOW website - <https://www.ombudsman.wales>

ALCC website - <https://www.alccunion.co.uk>

