

**MINUTES OF POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE HELD IN  
COUNCIL CHAMBER, PONTYPOOL COMMUNITY COUNCIL  
Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> November 2019**

**In attendance:**

Councillor: Mrs N. P. Parrish (In the Chair)

Councillors in attendance: J. Killick, Mrs G. E. James and Mrs R. Matthews

Also in attendance: Councillor Mrs E. Chilcott JP

Officers: Mrs R. V. Tucker, Ms J. Wright, Mrs L. McMail

---

209. **Apologies**

Apologies were received and accepted from Councillors Ms K. Arthur, Miss L. Clarkson, Mrs E. Hunt, R. Overton and B. Taylor JP.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the apologies be recorded.

JW

210. **Declarations of Interest**

Councillors Mrs G. E. James and Mrs N. P. Parrish declared an interest in any item relating to Torfaen County Borough Council.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the declarations of interest as outlined above be recorded.

JW

211. **Schedule of Receipts and Payments**

The Committee received the schedule of receipts and payments for September 2019. It was noted that the September Credit Card payments all related to the Youth Festival Conference.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the schedule of Receipts & Payments for September 2019 be approved and the information duly noted.

212. **Local Voluntary Funding**

The Committee received and considered requests for Local Voluntary Funding. Reference was made to a number of LVF forms that had not been signed. The Clerk confirmed that if an application is sent from a member's personal computer then the typed signature is accepted, however where additional members are contributing then their signature(s) would also be required on the form in accordance with the Council's financial regulations and for audit purposes.

Local Voluntary Funding was confirmed as follows subject to the Finance Officer ensuring all Local Voluntary funding forms are signed by the appropriate members.

Cllr B. Taylor JP

Pontypool Retired Men's Society - £150.00  
s.137 LGA 1972/Power of Well Being s2 LGA 2000

Cllr L. Clarkson

Friends of Garnteg - £250.00  
Friends of Ysgol Bryn Onnen - £250.00  
Friends of the British - £250.00  
s.137 LGA 1972

Garndiffaith Gleemen Male Choir - £150.00  
Garndiffaith Bowls Club - £250.00  
Garndiffaith 1<sup>st</sup> Scouts Group - £250.00  
Varteg Community Association - £250.00  
s.19 Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act  
1976

Ti a Fi - £300.00  
Local Government Act 1972, s.145.

Garndiffaith Community Association (Project) -  
£225.00  
Local Government Act 1972 s.145

Cllr Ms. K. Arthur

Garndiffaith Community Association (Project) -  
£225.00  
Local Government Act 1972 s.145

Cllr G. Davies

Garndiffaith Community Association (Project) -  
£225.00  
Local Government Act 1972 s.145

Cllr N. Byrne  
Garndiffaith Community Association (Project) -  
£225.00  
Local Government Act 1972 s.145

Cllr J. Killick  
Blaendare Allotment Association - £300.00  
s.137 LGA 1972/Power of Well Being s2 LGA 2000

**RECOMMENDED:** that the Local Voluntary Funding grants as listed above be approved subject to the LVF forms referred to being signed by members.

CC

213. **Financial Regulations**

The Committee was asked to approve redrafted Financial Regulations. Members confirmed they had read through them and they seemed appropriate. The Clerk informed the meeting that they are very thorough and they have been based on the new model produced by NALC and One Voice Wales. The Council's financial instructions will be added. The Clerk pointed out that in the regulation 2.2 it states that a member of the Council should be undertaking the bank reconciliation 3 times a year and therefore the Council will need to appoint an appropriate member to undertake this task.

**RECOMMENDED:**

(i) that the redrafted Financial Regulations be approved.

(ii) that a Councillor be nominated to undertake the bank reconciliation at least 3 times a year with appropriate experience.

214. **Unpresented Cheques**

The Committee received a report highlighting cheques that require re-issue or cancellation as per the Cancelled Cheques Policy dated the 6<sup>th</sup> July 2011. Reference was made to the cheque for Parkinsons UK Wales/Cymru. The Accountant stated that the LVF cheque in respect of Parkinsons UK Wales/Cymru had been presented to the bank last week even though it had been issued in January. The Accountant informed the meeting that she would be writing to the bank to inform them that they should not be cashing cheques which

are more than six months old. In respect of the remaining cheques:

*Torfaen Gypsies & Travellers:*

The ward member informed the meeting that there was an issue with them switching Treasurers and it was agreed that this cheque be reissued.

*Pontypool Veterans Association:*

The Cheque had been written out to the wrong organisation and should be made out to Comrades of the Great War not Pontypool Veterans Association (as they are two separate organisations). Agreed to reissue cheque. Ward member would liaise with the Finance Officer in respect of correct details.

*Woody Workers & The Neighbourhood Learning:*

The ward member explained that she had hand delivered both of the cheques to the Hub and asked for them to be passed on to the appropriate organisations. It was agreed that in future all members handing over cheques request a signature from the recipient of the cheque ensuring that the recipient is a member of the organisation that the LVF is being awarded to, just like a member(s) have to sign for a cheque(s) when they obtain it from the Finance Officer to avoid this issue reoccurring. It was agreed that the policy be amended to this effect.

Agreed that the cheques be reissued.

The Clerk added that there have also been a few occasions where members have collected cheques and have not passed them on to the organisation/association for whatever reason. So to avoid this happening in the future, if a member is aware that they are not going to be in a position to pass a cheque to the appropriate recipient then they should contact the Finance Officer to send the cheque on their behalf with a covering letter to the organisation to which the LVF has been awarded.

The Accountant stated that in future she would ensure that cheques were monitored far more carefully and a list will be presented to the Council quarterly.

It was agreed that the Clerk contact the remaining members in respect of the following unrepresented cheques:

- (i) St. John Cymru Wales
- (ii) New Inn Congregational Church
- (iii) Penygarn & Trevethin Junior
- (iv) Pleasant Court Senior Citizen

(v) Cyfannol Womens Aid

As long as they were able to give valid reasons why the cheques have not been presented then the cheques could be reissued.

**RECOMMENDED:**

(i) that the report and information relayed in respect of un-presented cheques be noted.

(ii) A member must sign and date to receive the cheque from the office and the individual collecting or receiving the cheque from the member must also sign and date.

215. **CCTV Cameras**

The Committee received a report on CCTV. The purpose of the report was to provide information to the Council to consider whether it should contribute towards the ongoing maintenance of the CCTV cameras in Pontypool Town Centre. The Clerk informed the meeting that she had met with Mr L. Puddy (Head of Torfaen's PSSU) who was under the impression that Pontypool Community Council were responsible for CCTV in the town. The Clerk had informed him this was not the case. It was agreed that the Clerk e-mails Mr L. Puddy with a copy to the Chief Executive stating that an alternative source of funding should be sought for the ongoing maintenance of the cameras as the Community Council are unable to make a financial donation at this present time.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the Clerk contacts Mr L. Puddy as outlined above.

RT

216. **Council Chamber Usage**

The Committee received the Council Chamber Bookings for July and August 2019.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the Committee note the bookings.

217. **Financial Budget Comparison**

The Clerk informed members that the Accountant had now produced a Financial Budget Comparison document which replaces the monitoring report. The Chair stated that she preferred this format and all members felt it was much clearer and easier to understand. The Accountant explained that this is was a financial report as of the 31<sup>st</sup> August

produced through the Edge software package; she explained it was still work in progress and was looking to improve it over the forthcoming months and this document would form the basis for the budget day. She added that the Edge package is much less time-consuming than Excel and the staff from Edge have been extremely supportive in assisting her to use the system.

The Committee was informed that due to Purdah the Budget Day would not be able to take place on Wednesday the 4<sup>th</sup> December as agreed by Council. It was therefore unanimously agreed that the budget day be rearranged for Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> January instead of the Policy & Finance meeting.

**RECOMMENDED:** (i) that the financial budget comparison document be received and the information outlined by the Accountant noted.

[Footnote: the Budget meetings can go ahead during Purdah but the budget meeting for members has still been rearranged for Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> January]

218. **Computers**

The Committee received a report to inform members of the new hardware and software that is required by the Council. The Council updates its hardware every 4 – 5 years and this is now overdue. In addition the Council's support is provided by SRS with whom the Council has a Service Level Agreement and hopefully this can continue after March 2020. The Clerk stated that a laptop and screen is required for every officer instead of desk tops. The prices are:

Laptops - £535.00

Additional Screen - £100.00 each

Licences from Microsoft - £150 per user per year (approximately)

The Council has been reserving money for new hardware and this hardware and software must be purchased. It was unanimously agreed that the Council purchases the hardware and software as indicated.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the Council purchases the hardware and software as indicated.



\_\_\_\_\_