

MINUTES OF PONTYPOOL COMMUNITY COUNCIL
VIRTUAL POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON
WEDNESDAY 2ND SEPTEMBER 2020

In attendance:

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

Councillors in attendance: J. Killick, Miss L. Clarkson, G. Davies, Mrs E. Hunt, R. Overton

Also in attendance: Councillor Mrs E Chilcott JP

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

390. **Apologies**

Apologies were received from Councillors Mrs K. Arthur, M. Ford, Mrs G. E. James, A. Lang, Mrs R. Matthews and B. Taylor JP

RECOMMENDED: that the apologies be noted.

391. **Declarations of Interest**

Councillor G. Davies

Any item on the agenda relating to Torfaen County Borough Council

Item 10 – Grant Aid – Chair of Garndiffaith Community Association.

Councillor Mrs E. Hunt

Item 11- Grounds Maintenance Grants – Parent of children who attend Fairfield United Junior and Griffithstown Junior football clubs.

Councillor J. Killick

Item 9 – Annual Funding – Trustee on TOGs

Councillor Mrs N. P. Parrish

Any item on the agenda relating to Torfaen County Borough Council.

Item 9 – Annual Funding – Trustee on TOGs

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

JW

392. **Schedule of Receipts and Payments**

The Committee received and considered the schedule of receipts and payments for June and July 2020. Reference was made to the £10.00 Cash credit receipt that had been paid into the Co-operative Bank in relation to Bank charges. The Accountant said she had phoned the bank and challenged the payment and they had said this payment had been paid in through a Natwest account in London. A member referred to the recent suspicious activity in relation to e-mails being sent by a fraudulent e-mail address and whether this could have a bearing on someone trying to hack into the Council finances. The Committee agreed that as the Accountant had now raised the matter with the Co-operative Bank then they would need to be vigilant of any further irregular activity, informing the Community Council if this was the case.

RECOMMENDED: that the schedule of receipts and payments for June and July 2020 be received and approved and the information relayed by the Accountant be noted.

LM/
CC

393. **Use of Council Credit Card**

The Council approved all credit card payments from the 22nd May to the 3rd July (attached as an appendix to the minutes)

RECOMMENDED: that the credit card payments as attached to the minutes be approved.

CC

394 **Financial Budget Comparison (Monitoring Report)**

The Council received the Financial Budget Comparison report to the end of June 2020. The Deputy Leader referred to expenditure number 3195 the CCLA Investment stating that it was very unhelpful to have this figure under both Net and Balance as it indicated that the Council had spent that much money rather than being moved from one account to another, thereby giving the impression of a major spend and making comparison difficult. It was agreed that in future the Financial Budget Comparison report be amended with the Accountant taking out that figure.

RECOMMENDED: that the Financial Budget Comparison to the end of June be received and that future financial comparison reports be amended as outlined above.

LM

395. **Council Accounts**

The meeting received a report from the Accountant on answers to the queries that members had raised at the Council meeting on the 12th August in relation to the Council Accounts.

RECOMMENDED: that the Committee notes the information provided by the Accountant contained within the report and welcomed the information.

396. **Policy on recording of virtual Council meetings**

[Councillor Mrs E. Hunt joined the meeting at this item]

The Committee received a report on the recording of virtual Council meetings and the process of voting at Council/Committee meetings. In relation to voting the Chair pointed out that if there is a small committee meeting over teams then it is easy enough to see by a show of hands those who are agreeing or disagreeing or abstaining as all members can be seen on screen. However if it is a larger meeting or Full Council it is extremely important that all members participating in the meeting are asked if they agree, disagree or wish to abstain in an item(s) that need to be voted on; in Torfaen CBC this is done alphabetically by another member of staff (not the minute taker) calling out the Councillors names in alphabetical order.

It was agreed that Pontypool Community Council adopt the format that Torfaen County Borough Council are using as outlined by the Chair and to this effect the Clerk would contact Democratic Services for their procedure as well as using the guidance provided by WGLA which was very similar to the One Voice Wales Guidance.

It was also agreed to approve the recommendations of the report and those made at the meeting.

RECOMMENDED:

(i) At the commencement of each Council/Committee meeting, the Chair asks for agreement by members for the minutes to be recorded.

(ii) the recording of the meeting be deleted once the minutes have been approved by the Chair of that meeting.

All staff

(iii) that the minute taker's responsibility is to just take the minutes of the Council/Committee meeting.

Minute Taker

(iv) the Clerk or another member of staff be responsible for taking/recording the vote from members when an item needs voting on.

All staff

(v) that the Community Council adopt the format that TCBC are currently using and to this effect the Clerk will contact Democratic services.

RT

397. **Local Voluntary Funding**

The Committee received and considered requests received for Local Voluntary Funding. Local Voluntary Funding was confirmed as follows:

Cllr Mrs E. Chilcott JP

Ebenezer United Reformed Church - £200.00

s. 137 LGA 1972/Power of Well Being s2 LGA 2000

Garndiffaith Gleemen Male Choir – £200.00

Pontnewynydd Community Centre - £200.00

Cwmffrwdoer Sports Club - £400.00

Pontypool Park Mens Bowling Club - £100.00

Local Government Act (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. S.19

Pontnewynydd Friends for Life - £100.00

Ebenezer Ladies Group - £100.00

Merchants Hill Baptist Church - £150.00

Pontnewynydd History Society - £100.00

Huntingdon's Disease Association (South Wales Branch) - £100.00

Usk New Start Cat Rescue - £100.00

All Creatures Great and Small - £150.00

s. 137 LGA 1972/Power of Well Being s2 LGA 2000

Cllr G Davies

Victoria Village and District Welfare Hall - £260.00

Local Government Act (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976. S.19

Councillor Davies asked the Finance & Events Officer to send all his LVF cheques direct to his home address in order that he could distribute appropriately.

Cllr Mrs J. E. Jones

Trevethin Vicars & Church - £500.00

s.215 Local Government Act 1972

Cllr Mrs R. Matthews

Royal British Legion Band of Wales - £250.00

s. 137 LGA 1972/Power of Well Being s2 LGA 2000

Councillor Davies asked the Finance & Events Manager if she could send all LVF cheques that he awards direct to this home address.

RECOMMENDED: that the Committee approve the applications for Local Voluntary Funding as outlined above.

CC/CP

398. **Annual Funding**

The Committee considered application for Annual funding for the following organisations:

(i) TOGs Centre

(ii) Pontypool Pacers Heart Support Group

(iii) Hope GB

s. 137 LGA 1972/Power of Well Being s2 LGA 2000

[The Chair and Vice-Chair of Policy & Finance took part in no discussion relating to the application for financial assistance to TOGs Centre].

It was unanimously agreed that £3000.00 be awarded to each organisation as outlined above and that if any further applications came in for Annual Funding that these be placed as an item on the next Policy and Finance Agenda.

RECOMMENDED: that £3000.00 Annual Funding be awarded to the organisations as stated.

CC/CP

399. **Grant Aid**

The Committee received applications for Grant Aid from 12 organisations. It was unanimously agreed that £350.00 be

awarded to each organisation with a report being brought back to the next Policy & Finance Committee regarding giving additional financial assistance to these Halls/Organisations in relation to the detrimental effect that COVID 19 has had on these halls through no fault of their own by doubling the present allocated budget for Grant Aid out of Council reserves.

RECOMMENDED: (i) that the Committee approved Grant Aid awards of £350.00 to each of the following organisations:

- (i) Cwmavon Village Hall
- (ii) Garndiffaith Community Association
- (iii) Griffithstown Community Hall
- (iv) Panteg Employees Club
- (v) Pontnewynydd Community Association
- (vi) Pontymoile O.A.P Club
- (vii) Pontymoile Community Centre
- (viii) Talywain O.A.P Club
- (ix) Trevethin & Penygarn Community Centre
- (x) Varteg Community Association
- (xi) Victoria Village & District Welfare Hall
- (xii) Wainfelin & Pentranch Community Association

*Local Government Act (Miscellaneous Provisions)
Act 1976. S.19*

(ii) that the organisations approved to receive Grant Aid awards be notified subject to Full Council approval.

CC/
RC/
CP

400. **Applications for Grounds Maintenance Grants**

The Chair informed the meeting that in respect of money allocated for Grounds Maintenance Grant it is £350.00 if a club has one pitch, £700 for two pitches and £1050 if there are three pitches. It was unanimously agreed that financial assistance be awarded for Grounds Maintenance Grants to the Clubs listed below as outlined by the Chair, subject to New Inn AFC providing their accounts before the money is awarded.

The member from Garndiffaith & Varteg pointed out that that there seemed to be a number of Clubs in her ward that had not applied this year who had applied last year. The Finance & Events Manager informed the meeting that all Clubs had been contacted by Mrs A.A and the ones that had applied were listed. The Clerk said she would check with Mrs AA to see if

all the contact details were correct in relation to the clubs that were invited to apply as obviously with lockdown some details may have changed. Any late applications could be placed as an item on the next Policy & Finance meeting for consideration.

- i. Cwmffrwdoer Sports Club
- ii. Fairfield United Juniors
- ii. Fairfield United Senior
- iii. Griffithstown Junior Football Club
- iv. New Inn AFC * (*have not provided their accounts)
- v. New Panteg RFC
- vi. Panteg Park Bowls Club
- vii. Penygarn & Trevethin
- viii. Pontypool Park Girling Bowls Club
- ix. Pontypool Town AFC
- x. Race Association Football Club
- xi. Sebastopol AFC Juniors
- xii. West Monmouth RFC

*Local Government Act (Miscellaneous Provisions)
Act 1976. S.19*

* New Inn AFC have not provided their accounts

RECOMMENDED: (i) that the above clubs be awarded a financial sum of £350.00 for one pitch, £700.00 for two or £1050 for three.

CC/AA

(ii) that the clubs not on the list be contacted and sent a grant form

[Councillor Mrs Chilcott left the meeting after this item]

401. **Applications for financial assistance**

The Committee received and considered the following requests for financial assistance:

- (i) Congress Theatre
- (ii) Noah's Ark

In respect of the application from Noah's Ark it was unanimously agreed that £200.00 be awarded. In relation to the application from Congress Theatre it was agreed by a majority vote of 4:2 that they be awarded a grant of £500.00

*Local Government Act (Miscellaneous Provisions)
Act 1976. S.19)*

RECOMMENDED: that grants of £500.00 and £200.00 be awarded respectively to the Congress Theatre and Noah's Ark.

CC/CP

402. **Gateway Credit Union Account**

The Committee received a comprehensive report from the Clerk on the Gateway Credit Union Account.

Although the committee noted that there will not be a dividend in the current year the Deputy Leader proposed that the £15,000 remain in the Gateway Credit Union Account as Torfaen Credit Union is an essential community resource to a lot of residents in the Pontypool and surrounding areas who rely on them for loans. This amount could help a lot of people who are currently applying to Credit Union for financial assistance in relation to personal financial difficulty they are finding themselves in due to the detrimental financial impact of COVID 19 and felt that as a Community Council it was extremely important that it showed its support. It was requested that this full explanation be included in the minutes for auditing purposes as the Council would be agreeing to maintain a sum in its investments which it understands will not gain interest. This was unanimously agreed by members.

RECOMMENDED: that the Council retain its money in the Gateway Credit Union account.

LM

403. **Investment Strategy**

The Committee received the updated Investment Strategy for 2020 – 2023 (3 Year Plan). It was unanimously agreed to approve the updated Investment Strategy.

RECOMMENDED: that the Council's updated Investment Strategy be approved

LM

Chair of Policy & Finance