

**MINUTES OF PONTYPOOL COMMUNITY COUNCIL  
VIRTUAL POLICY & FINANCE COMMITTEE HELD ON  
WEDNESDAY 7<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2021**

**In attendance:**

Councillor: Mrs N. Parrish (In the Chair)

Councillors in attendance: Mrs E. Hunt, Mrs G. E. James, J. Killick,  
R. Overton

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

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204. **Apologies**

The Clerk informed the meeting that she had received an e-mail from Councillor Byrne in relation to his apologies (work related).

**RECOMMENDED:** that apologies be received and accepted.

205. **Declarations of Interest**

Councillors Mrs G. E. James, Mrs N. P. Parrish and R. Overton declared an interest on any item on the agenda relating to Torfaen County Borough Council.

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

JW

206. **Schedule of Receipts and Payments**

The Committee received and considered the schedule of receipts and payments for February 2021.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the schedule of receipts and payments for February 2021 be approved.

CC

207. **Use of Council Credit Card**

The Committee was asked to approve the Council credit card payments made in February as follows:

Christmas Decorations for Office - £19.99

Headset for Staff	- £26.99
Tree LVF (Mrs G. James)	- £57.94
Sign-Maker Plaque – LVF (Mrs G. James)	- £148.98
Headsets x 5 for staff	- £134.95

**RECOMMENDED:** that the use of the Council credit card for February be approved as outlined above.

CC

208. **Financial Budget Comparison**

The Council received and considered the Financial Budget Comparison report to the end of January 2021. Councillor Mrs Hunt queried the last column on the financial comparison in relation to the balance. The Accountant explained that this is the difference between what has been budgeted for and what has been spent to date and confirmed that the Council has an additional £17,000 in unused funds.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the Financial Budget Comparison to the end of January 2021 be received and the information outlined noted.

LM

209. **One Voice Wales**

The Council received a letter from One Voice Wales regarding the Council renewing its membership at a cost of £5832.00. It was unanimously agreed for the Council to renew its membership as they had proved invaluable over the last year in providing advice and guidance to the Council.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the Council renew its membership with One Voice Wales at a cost of £5832.00.

CC

210. **Local Voluntary Funding**

The Committee received and approved the following Local Voluntary Funding requests: [The Finance & Events Manager confirmed that she had vetted them and they will now come out of the LVF funding for 2021/2022].

**Cllr. Mrs G. James**

Renovation of Pontypool Band Stand - £1,000 (Project)

**Cllr G. Davies**

Renovation of Pontypool Band Stand - £1,000 (Project)

**Cllr N. Byrne**

Renovation of Pontypool Band Stand - £1,000 (Project)

In relation to the up-to-date information from One Voice Wales in relation to funding of churches the Chair stated that it is quite clear that the Council is unable to award grants to churches. It was therefore unanimously agreed that Pontypool Community Council abides by NALC's advice on this.

**RECOMMENDED:**

(i) that the Local Voluntary Funding as outlined above be approved.

(ii) that the Council abides by NALC's advice in relation to the funding of Churches.

RT/  
CC/  
LM

211. **Welsh Hearts**

The Council received a letter from Welsh Hearts regarding a grant towards a defibrillator. The Finance & Events Officer clarified that there are presently 3 defibrillators in Pontypool Town Centre at the following locations:

- (i) Inside Civic Centre
- (ii) Outside Pontypool Police Station
- (iii) Inside Pontypool market

The Finance & Events Officer explained that both pads and batteries on a defibrillator have an expiry date and will need replacing even if the defibrillator hasn't been used therefore there would be implications and consequences of not keeping a defibrillator up to date. There would also be implications in relation to ongoing costs of a defibrillator if the Council were to take up the offer of a grant. It was therefore agreed that the Finance & Events Officer investigate costs for maintaining a defibrillator including electricity charges, shelf life of pads and batteries in order that this could be brought back to a future Policy & Finance meeting for the Council to

make an informed decision once the relevant information is sought.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the Finance & Events Manager source costings as outlined above in relation to whether the Council wished to accept a grant from Welsh Hearts in relation to a defibrillator.

CC

212. **Low Interest Rates Article**

The Clerk received an e-mail from One Voice Wales asking her to circulate information in relation to them receiving a few questions from Town and Community Councils regarding the reduction in returns from their Funds and from the banking sector more generally. The Deputy Leader stated that he was unaware of anywhere at present where you can get more than a 1% interest rate. It was agreed that the Accountant reports to the next Policy & Finance meeting on interest rates that are available and whether it would be beneficial to the Council to move its funds from CCLA.

**RECOMMENDED:** that the Accountant reports on interest rates to the next Policy & Finance meeting as outlined above.

LM

213. **Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales**

The Council received the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Annual Report 2021/2022 in relation to payments to members of Community and Town Councils. The Leader referred to the annual payment of £500.00 that is normally given to the Chair and Vice-Chair of Council and the Leader and Deputy Leader and stated that the Council can give up to 5 members and suggested giving another £500.00 to an additional member e.g., Chair of Establishment. It was agreed that this be deferred to the Annual meeting for consideration. It was further agreed that determinations 42 to 49 be approved with the exception of 44 as that determination only applied to Community and Town Councils in groups B or C. [Pontypool Community Council is in Category A].

**RECOMMENDED:**

(i) that determinations 42 to 49 with the exception of 44 in relation to payments to

members of community and town Councils be approved as outlined in the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales Annual Report 2021/2022.

(ii) that the £500.00 awarded up to 5 members be deferred and considered at the Council Annual meeting.

LM  
RT  
CC

JW

214. **Christmas Lights/Trees**

In relation to the item on the Christmas Lights/Trees the Clerk informed the meeting that due to insufficient information at present and in liaison with the Chair of Policy & Finance and Chair of Events it was agreed that a presentation from Festive Lighting will be given at the April Events Committee, after which an item would go on June's Policy & Finance agenda in order that the Committee can consider and produce a policy on Christmas lights/trees and make a decision regarding the purchase of Christmas lights/trees this year subsequently to be approved by Council.

**RECOMMENDED:**

(i) to note that a presentation will be given at the April Events Committee meeting (21<sup>st</sup>) by Festive Lighting in agreement with the Chair and Vice-Chair of Policy & Finance.

(ii) that an item would be brought back to the June Policy & Finance Committee as outlined above.

RT/  
CC

JW

Chair