

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF PONTYPOOL COMMUNITY COUNCIL
HELD REMOTELY USING MICROSOFT TEAMS
ON WEDNESDAY 28 JULY 2021 AT 6.30 PM

In attendance:

Councillor: Giles Davies (in the Chair)

and Councillors: Elaine Chilcott JP, Lynda Clarkson, Gaynor James, Nicholas Jones, John Killick, Adrian Lang, Richard Overton, Norma Parrish and Ben Rapier

Officers: Ruth Tucker (Clerk), Richard Gwinnell (Acting Clerk) and Jane Wright (Assistant Clerk)

The meeting was recorded for minute taking purposes as agreed by Members.

108. **Questions from the Public**

No questions had been received from the public.

109. **Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Elizabeth Hunt, Keith James and Nick Simons.

110. **Declarations of Interest**

Councillors Lynda Clarkson, Giles Davies, Gaynor James, Nicholas Jones, John Killick, Richard Overton and Norma Parrish declared personal and non-prejudicial interests in any agenda items relating to Torfaen County Borough Council (TCBC) as they were members of TCBC, as well as being members of Pontypool Community Council.

JW

111. **Minutes of the Council meeting – 23 June 2021**

Members received the minutes of the Council meeting held on the 23 June 2021. These were agreed as a true record subject to the date under minute 71 stating 30 September 2020 instead of 2021.

In relation to minute 72 the Chair of Events stated that she likes it when everybody's contribution to an agenda item is noted in the minutes and stated that on this occasion, she had referred to the Annual Report being a joint effort by all the staff and as Chair of Events that was important to her. The Chair of Policy & Finance asked for it to be noted that she had also said a few words on that

issue as well.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 23 June 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair subject to the appropriate amendments as outlined being made.

JW

112. **Minutes of the Policy & Finance Committee – 7 July 2021**

Members received the minutes of the Policy & Finance Committee held on 7 July 2021. Councillor N. Jones referred to minute number 94 notice board at St. Mary's Street and enquired if a report would be coming back to Council on the condition of other notice boards through the Pontypool wards.

The Clerk confirmed that an item and report on notice boards is being placed on the September Planning & Environment agenda.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Policy & Finance Committee held on 7 July 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and the recommendations of the committee be adopted.

CC/CP

113. **Minutes of the Planning and Environment Committee – 14 July 2021**

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Planning & Environment Committee held on 14 July 2021 be confirmed as a correct record and the recommendations of the committee be adopted.

114 **Planning Applications**

Members received and considered Torfaen County Borough Council Planning Applications.

RESOLVED: that the observations (or absence of observations, as the case may be) outlined in the appendix attached to these minutes be submitted to Torfaen County Borough Council.

AA/CP

115. **Standing Orders**

Members received updated Standing Orders which had been presented to the Policy and Finance Committee in July and Council was asked to approve them. The Acting Clerk stated that where information had been highlighted in yellow or crossed out these showed members where he or the Governance Working group had made changes or deleted them from the original model. He also added after a query from Councillor N. Jones on page 59 numeral item (v) that the increase from £25,000 to £50,000 reflects existing practice in relation to the standard model across Wales which has 735 Community and Town Councils. Council moved that they be adopted.

RESOLVED: that the revised model standing orders be adopted by Council.

RG/RT

116. **Internal Audit 2020/21 – Action Plan**

The Council was asked to note the action plan formulated to address the issues raised by the Internal Auditor about the 2020/2021 accounts and to note that this is being dealt with by the Policy & Finance Committee going forward.

The Chair of Establishment stated that it was good to see it explained in such a clear way in that all those issues relating to the audit are being dealt with or in most cases have been dealt with.

RESOLVED: that the information in relation to the Internal Audit 2021/2021 – Action Plan be noted.

RG/RT

117. **A4042 – Pontypool to Llantarnam**

The Chair of Establishment proposed that the Council support addressing the transport problems and planning objectives as stated in the document with the Council adding to the response that they would like to be kept fully updated with any future planning and action which evolves from this consultation.

Councillor N. Jones proposed that a letter be sent as he felt that there were a couple of points that are not in the document which should be and referred to the noise abatement problems along the side of the carriageway itself, especially following the removal of trees in several

residential areas of New Inn causing very major noise problems which need to be addressed as part of the plan as a matter of great urgency.

He also stated that there are several major safety concerns in respect of traffic flows around the Rechem and McDonalds roundabouts, the Crematorium roundabout and the new hospital site which are unclear in the plans and need to be looked at and addressed at the earliest opportunity from a health and safety perspective.

It was unanimously agreed that a strongly worded letter be sent as outlined; in addition, it was further agreed that the Stakeholder feedback form on page 85 be filled in and sent along with the letter. The Chair of the Council stated that it was extremely important that the Council had a clear audit trail in relation to this item.

RESOLVED: that a letter as outlined above and the Stakeholder feedback form be sent to Atkins.

RT/JW

118. **Garndiffaith & Varteg and New Inn Upper vacancies**

The Clerk informed members that as there has been no request for an election for the Garndiffaith and Varteg vacancy the Council has a legal duty to co-opt, unless within six months of an election.

It was proposed and seconded by the Chair and Vice-Chair of Establishment respectively that as the Acting Clerk had considerable expertise in dealing with Council vacancies for members that the Council leave it in his hands to deal with in the most appropriate way. The Acting Clerk stated that if the vacancy was advertised on the Council's website until November (due to next Election taking place in May 2022) it had fulfilled its legal duty.

It was confirmed that the New Inn Vacancy had already been advertised on the Council's website and no-one had shown an interest. The Vice-Chair of Planning & Environment asked for it to be noted that the vacancies for Garndiffaith & Varteg and New Inn had run at different times, therefore Council has not long come out of the timescale in respect for the request for an election on the Garndiffaith & Varteg vacancy.

RESOLVED: that the Acting Clerk deal with this.

RG

119. **Payments from Pontypool Community Council (PCC)**

The Chair of Establishment informed the meeting that it was resolved at the recent Pontypool Regeneration Partnership Operational group that they would pay half towards the cost of the CCTV cameras in Pontypool if Pontypool Community Council would be willing to pay the other half. He therefore proposed that the Council pay the remaining half towards the CCTV for this year only with the proviso that a letter goes with the payment stating that this will be for this year only and it is expected that in 2022/2023 the Borough Council will resume its payment for CCTV.

It was agreed that, since the Regeneration Partnership had agreed to pay half, the Community Council would pay half the cost.

Councillor N. Jones said that as this was an item of revenue rather than strategic regeneration, he would have been agreeable for Pontypool Community Council to pay all of this request from Torfaen rather than splitting it with the regeneration Partnership.

In respect of the request from Torfaen for the Council to give a financial contribution towards the running and upkeep of the public toilets in Pontypool the Chair of Policy & Finance proposed that the Council ask Torfaen how much the exact cost will be in order that Council is able to make an informed decision. The Deputy Leader further added that when they are asked to provide this information it is made clear that the figure(s) they provide are only for Pontypool toilets as in their previous response they had also included the costs for Blaenavon and Cwmbran toilets which made it impossible to decipher the exact costs.

[Footnote: cost for CCTV is £4185.00 plus vat].

RESOLVED:

(i) that Pontypool Community Council pays half towards the cost of CCTV with a letter being sent to Torfaen as outlined above.

(ii) Torfaen be asked to provide a cost for the running and upkeep of the public toilets in Pontypool.

RT

RT/JW

120. **Reports/Minutes from other organisations**

Council received and noted the minutes of the One Voice Wales National Executive Committee held on Friday 4 June 2021. The Deputy Leader moved that Council note these and referred to the fact that the Council are moving forward on the 2021 Act as there is already a working group in place acting on this major piece of legislation.

The other major issue raised at that meeting which although of no concern to Pontypool Community Council was in relation to the real difficulty that many small councils in West and North Wales face where for instance there is one village where apparently only 2 people live for the whole year, so members spent a lot of time at the National Executive meeting raising their concerns that these villages are being run into the ground by second homes and considering whether there could be legislation to address it.

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the One Voice Wales National Executive Committee held on the 4 June and the information given by the Deputy Leader be noted.

Chair

Signed by the Chair

