

**MINUTES OF A MULTI-LOCATION MEETING OF
PONTYPOOL COMMUNITY COUNCIL
HELD REMOTELY USING MICROSOFT TEAMS ON
WEDNESDAY 16 MARCH 2022 AT 6.30PM**

Councillor: Matt Ford* (in the Chair)

and Councillors: Elaine Chilcott JP*, Lizzie Hunt*, Gaynor James*, Keith James*, Nicholas Jones*, John Killick#, Jonathon Martin*, Rose Matthews#, Richard Overton*, Norma Parrish* Ben Rapier* and Nick Simons#

Officers: Cindy Challenger# (Finance & Events Manager), Lisa McMail* (Accountant) and Jane Wright# (Assistant Clerk)

Also in attendance: Anne Evans*, Torfaen Voluntary Alliance

* *Attending remotely via Microsoft Teams*

Attending physically in the Council Chamber

Min No	Subject and Decision	Action
423.	<p><u>Questions from the Public</u></p> <p>No questions had been received from the public.</p>	
424.	<p><u>Apologies for absence</u></p> <p>The Finance & Events Manager read out letters sent in by Councillors Barry Taylor, Jackie Taylor and Janet Jones explaining the reasons why they had been unable to attend Council meetings for the last six months. Council unanimously agreed to give special dispensation for their absence for the reasons outlined in the letters.</p> <p>Further apologies received from Councillors Nick Byrne, Lyn Clarkson and Giles Davies.</p>	
425.	<p><u>Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>Councillors Gaynor James, Keith 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.</p>	JW

426.

Torfaen Voluntary Alliance (TVA) Grants Proposal

The Chair welcomed Anne Evans from Torfaen Voluntary Alliance. AE explained that the prompt for the invitation was to discuss the Grants Proposal scheme. She explained that fortunately the Grants Proposal scheme has been put on hold until the new financial year. The reason for this was that TVA received late funding for small grant schemes from the Welsh Government as part of the Covid recovery package and winter pressure fund so, rather than it clash with other community grants, they have left it on hold until the new financial year where they will be revisiting it at that time. She therefore took the opportunity to provide the Council with an update of where TVA are at present.

Staff

TVA are a small staff team of eight who are skilled and who all are both proactive and reactive to emerging needs. TVA are always welcome to partnership working and if anyone has anything they want to put forward to them or ask them about then they can do this by either contacting her directly at

anne@tvawales.org.uk

or

info@tvawales.org.uk.

Key Areas

There are four key areas that TVA work in general and these are Volunteering, Good Governance, Sustainability Funding and Engagement and Influencing, although these are the main key areas they will diversify and work in any areas where people ask for their support.

Community Groups

TVA are doing extremely well at present. It presently has 420 community group members which they actively engage with and in the context of the size of the borough 420 community groups is a large amount and a large reach, they are continually in contact and talking with them.

Torfaen Connects Platform

They have recently developed a Torfaen Connects Platform in partnership with Torfaen County Borough Council. This is a platform which puts community in touch with community by helping encourage participation and

engagement in the community to reduce social isolation and loneliness through community connectors. Councillor JM stated that he was really excited about this platform however he was aware that not everyone is active on social media so how would these people be reached.

New Open Doors Project

This project is funded by Aneurin Bevan University Health Board and is hosted by TVA at their request. This project starts immediately with the new postholder taking up their position on Monday. This post will contribute to tackle loneliness and isolation by supporting organisations that enable people to access activities and services that support their social, health and wellbeing needs.

Funding

In terms of funding TVA's core funding comes from Welsh Government, they get very little funding via anywhere else and TCBC is included in that, at this present time TVA do not know if they will get any funding this financial year from TCBC but they are waiting to see.

Councillor JK informed the meeting that Torfaen Association of Local Council's (TCALC) put in a funding bid through TVA approximately two years ago to support community venues. Unfortunately, that bid was unsuccessful. He added that he didn't think it was successful at the time not because it was not a good bid but with Covid and other such things taken over the time, he felt that it was the timing rather than the bid that was unsuccessful. However bearing in mind the information that AE had relayed to Council, it would be well worth the community council working with TVA to put in another bid of that sort. He also recommended inviting TVA to participate in Pontypool Regeneration because of their additional fund-raising potential.

The Chair thanked Anne and stated that on behalf of himself and the Council they all recognised the invaluable work of TVA throughout the Borough and personally thanked her for all the hard work she and her team undertakes. He added that he knows of several charities that have not only benefitted financially from TVA but the professionalism the team provides when helping charities set up.

RESOLVED:

(i) that Ms Anne Evans from TVA be thanked for attending the meeting.

(ii) the Council look forward to partnership working with TVA in the future.

427. **Council Meeting – 23 February 2022 – Minutes**

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Council meeting held on 23 February 2022 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

428. **Policy and Finance Committee – 2 March 2022 - Minutes**

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Policy and Finance Committee held on 2 March 2022 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair; and that the recommendations of the committee be adopted.

429. **Planning and Environment Committee – 8 March 2022 - Minutes**

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Planning and Environment Committee held on 8 March 2022 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair; and that the recommendations of the committee be adopted.

430. **Events Committee – 8 March 2022**

RESOLVED: that the minutes of the Events Committee held on 8 March 2022 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair; and that the recommendations of the committee be adopted.

431. **One Voice Wales**

RESOLVED: that the Council renews its membership with One Voice Wales at a cost of £6086.

432. **Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales**

RESOLVED: that the Council note the IRP Report for the year ahead.

433. **Local Voluntary Funding (LVF) applications**

The committee considered the LVF applications (noting that all LVF applications had been checked by the F&E Manager):

RESOLVED: that the LVF applications outlined in the appendix attached to these minutes be approved.

434. **Risk Assessment**

The Council was asked to review the risk register for 2022. All members were happy with the updated information.

RESOLVED: that the Risk Assessment for 2022 be approved.

435. **Planning Applications**

Members received and considered details of planning applications submitted to TCBC, on which the Community Council was being consulted.

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.

436. **Pontypool Youth Council Bank Account**

The Accountant informed the meeting that the Pontypool Youth Council Bank account is not recorded as part of the Council's bank account therefore she was recommending to Council that the account be closed with the remaining balance (approximately £4,000 as she understands) on the account being transferred to the Pontypool Community Council current account and set aside in an earmarked reserve while further investigation is made as there had been no transactional history for a very long time. The Chair outlined the background in relation to the Youth Council account informing members that when he first came on the Council it was set up for the Youth Council to have a separate account to go on twinning visits/events. Although the money came from the PCC account it was felt having their own account would be easier to monitor exact expenditure. This was reiterated by the Chair of Events.

Cllr BR had reservations regarding closing the Youth Council Account as he felt that the Youth should be able to have access to the money. Cllr JK reassured him that by closing the Youth Council account the youth would be able to access the money much easier. The Leader stated that if the Accountant was recommending closing the account then the Council should approve this action. The

Accountant confirmed the cheque signatories for this account were Councillors Elaine Chilcott JP and Janet Jones who would need to sign for the account to be closed.

RESOLVED: that the Youth Council account be closed.

Signed by Chair