

**MINUTES OF A MULTI-LOCATION MEETING OF THE FINANCE,
GOVERNANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE OF PONTYPOOL COMMUNITY
COUNCIL HELD
ON WEDNESDAY 5 JULY 2023**

In attendance:

Councillor Lizzie Hunt# (in the Chair)

and Councillors: Gaynor James#, Matt Ford*, John Killick*, Jonathon Martin*, Allan Peploe#

Also in attendance: Councillor Anne Gunter#

Officers: Lisa McMail (Clerk)#, Cindy Challenger (Finance Manager)# and Jane Wright (Assistant Clerk)* Ceri Jones (Community Development Officer)#

* Attending remotely via Microsoft Teams

Attending physically in the Council Chamber

Min. no.	Subject and Decision	Action
97.	<p><u>FINANCE</u></p> <p><u>Apologies for Absence</u></p> <p>Councillors Nick Byrne and Jon James.</p>	
98.	<p><u>Declarations of Interest</u></p> <p>Councillor Gaynor James 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> <p>Councillor Matt Ford declared an interest in item 6 Local Voluntary Funding in relation to his LVF Project Funding application for St. Alban's School; he is a member of staff at the school. (He had also declared it on the LVF application form)</p> <p>Councillor Lizzie Hunt declared an interest in item 7 Running Cost Grants in relation to Hope GB and item 8(ii) of the Agenda – Financial Request from West Monmouth School; son is a pupil at the school.</p>	

	<p>Councillor Allan Peploe declared an interest in item 7 Running Cost Grants in relation to Hope GB</p> <p>Councillor John Killick declared an interest in item 6 running costs in relation to Citizens Advice and TOGS.</p> <p><u>RECOMMENDED:</u> that the declarations of interest be recorded.</p>	JW
99.	<p><u>Schedule of Receipts and payments</u></p> <p>The Committee was asked to approve the Schedule of receipts and payments for May 2023.</p> <p><u>RECOMMENDED:</u> that the receipts and payments for May 2023, as shown in the report, be approved noting the information.</p>	
100.	<p><u>Use of Credit Card</u></p> <p>The committee was requested to approve the credit card payments for April/May 2023.</p> <p><u>RECOMMENDED:</u> that the payments made on the Council's credit card for April/May 2023, as shown in the report, be approved.</p>	
101.	<p><u>Financial Budget Comparison Reports with Reserves</u></p> <p>The committee was asked to approve the financial budget comparison reports along with the earmarked/restricted reserves for March and April 2023. In relation to the miscellaneous income for the Youth Project, the Clerk stated that this was from Spectrum Fibre (Broadband provider). The Chair stated that as it was early in the year everything within the report looked good.</p> <p><u>RECOMMENDED*:</u> that the financial monitoring report to the end of March and April 2023 be approved and the information contained in it be noted.</p>	CC
102.	<p><u>Local Voluntary Funding.</u></p> <p>The Committee were requested to approve the Local Voluntary Funding applications (attached as appendix A to the minutes).</p> <p>The Chair stated that all applications had been checked and</p>	

	<p>vetted by staff.</p> <p><u>RECOMMENDED:</u> that the LVF applications as outlined in the appendix be approved.</p>	CC
103.	<p><u>Running Cost Grants</u></p> <p>The Chair informed the meeting that the Council had received 8 applications from different organisations this year for Running Cost Grants; informing members that last year the Council had divided the budget equally, however this year there was a difference in the situations and the size of the organisations, of which members had received the financial details and particulars of each organisation on pink papers. [There is £25,000 in the budget for 2023/2024). The Chair proposed the following amounts:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (i) St. David’s Hospice Care (new applicant) - £1000 (from their financial details they were in a healthy position) (ii) Torfaen Citizen’s Advice - £3000 (more local to the area and not as well off) (iii) TOGs – £3000 (same as last year) (iv) Llantarnam Grange Arts Centre (new applicant) - £3000 (the Council had not given to this organisation before but they are doing a lot of excellent work locally) (v) Age Connects (Widdershins) – £3000 (same as last year) (vi) Hope GB - £3000 (the Council gave £3000 last year, and they have put it to incredibly good use) (vii) Pontypool Pacers Heart Support Club - £1000 (there is not much difference between their outgoings and income so if the Council gave £1000 this would ensure that all their outgoings are covered for a year. (viii) Torfaen Museum - £8000 (due to them having £100,000 less funding than last year, which means they are unable to open to the public as they are presently unable to heat and light it) <p>The Chair asked members if they were all in accord with the amounts proposed. All unanimously agreed.</p> <p><u>RECOMMENDED*:</u> that the payments as outlined above be given to each organisation subject to Council approval.</p>	CC

104.	<p><u>Financial Requests</u></p> <p>The Committee received requests for financial assistance from the following:</p> <p>(i) TCBC Social Care – Housing – Family Support Request The Chair stated that this request is quite unusual as the Council do not normally receive requests like this, they are asking the Council for grant funding of between £300 - £500 to purchase additional items including pens, pencils, calculators etc which families are unable to provide for their children. All unanimously agreed that £500.00 be awarded out of the Council’s general grant fund for this valuable cause.</p> <p>(ii) West Monmouth School – Defib Funding Request The Clerk informed the meeting that she had spoken to June Thomas (JT) who runs Jack’s Appeal ABUHB who are funding defibs in the area, they do not fund the defib and the cabinet. As JT was in hospital when the Clerk spoke to her, she had asked if a proposal could be put forward by the Committee and sent to her. It was agreed that the Council fund the defib cabinet at a cost of £575.00 so that hopefully Jack’s Appeal would be able to source funding for the defib. The Clerk informed the Committee that if Jack’s Appeal was unable to obtain funding for the defib she would bring it back to F, G and P Committee.</p> <p><u>RECOMMENDED*</u>: that the Council fund the defib cabinet at a cost of £575.00 noting the information relayed by the Clerk.</p>	CC
105.	<p><u>Budget Day</u></p> <p>The Committee was asked to consider a date for the council to discuss budget priorities. The Chair stated that the Vision Days that had taken place last year had proven very successful so recommended having a priorities day on a Saturday in September to discuss the Council’s financial plan for the next 3 – 5 years. It was unanimously agreed that a date be set for Saturday 30th September between 10.00 am and 2.00 pm in the Council Chamber. All members to be notified of date subject to Council approval.</p> <p><u>RECOMMENDED</u>: that the date to discuss budget priorities be set for Saturday the 30th September 10.00 am to 2.00 pm.</p>	CC

106.	<p><u>Appointment of Internal Auditor</u></p> <p>The committee agreed that an advert be placed on the Council’s website for the appointment of an Internal Auditor to the Council for the following three financial years 2023/24, 2024/2025 and 2025/2026. The Clerk informed the meeting that three people had also been suggested to her so if in agreement she would go to those individual/companies to see if they would be interested in applying. The Clerk informed the meeting that next year Audit Wales would be undertaking a full audit of the Council which would involve a lot of work for the staff.</p> <p><u>RECOMMENDED:</u> that an advert be placed on the Council’s website for the appointment of an Internal Auditor as outlined above, and the information from the Clerk in relation to the Council having a full Audit next year be noted.</p>	LM
107.	<p><u>Estimate received for repainting of three internal rooms</u></p> <p>The Clerk informed the meeting that three estimates had been requested from local companies for the repainting of three internal office rooms on the first floor, giving an update on each one. The Clerk was recommending Dean Groves as the best value quote for the Council (submitted in writing); he had undertaken work for the Council previously, was always reliable and his work was of a very high standard. This was unanimously agreed. The Clerk stated that permission needed to be obtained from the landlord (TCBC) before the work could commence.</p> <p><u>RECOMMENDED:</u> that Mr Dean Groves be awarded the contract to repaint the three internal office rooms on the first floor at a cost of £1800.00 as soon as permission received from landlord (TCBC).</p>	CC
108.	<p>GOVERNANCE</p> <p><u>FINANCE & GOVERNANCE TOOLKIT</u></p> <p>The Chair stated that as part of the Finance & Governance Toolkit Theme B was Leadership and People. The Chair read out the statements to see if the Council had them in place or if there were any comments/actions needed in relation to each statement (attached as appendix B to the minutes).</p>	

	RECOMMENDED* : that the comments/actions as outlined on the document be progressed and actioned.	LM/ JW
109.	<p>POLICIES</p> <p><u>Members Remuneration Policy</u></p> <p>The Committee was asked to clarify the following points on the policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) If a resigning member should repay the allowance (proportionate to the term) if leaving position after it has been paid in October in any year (b) Should the newly elected member receive a proportionate amount of the allocated allowance after being elected into the new position for the remaining year after October in any year (if so budget allocation to be reviewed). <p>After discussion it was unanimously agreed that the Council would not ask a leaving member to pay any allowance back and that a new member would receive the full allowance; this to be stated in the Members Remuneration Policy.</p> <p>RECOMMENDED*: that the Members Remuneration Policy be approved.</p>	LM/ CC

Signed by the Chair

- * This is a recommendation to the Council. The Council will make the final decision at a future meeting.

FINANCE, GOVERNANCE & POLICY**5th JULY 2023****LOCAL VOLUNTARY FUNDING**

<u>Councillor</u>	<u>Requested Amount</u>	<u>Organisation</u>	<u>Reason</u>	<u>Power/Act to Ward Grant</u>
Councillor J. Horlor	£500 (PROJECT)	Cold Barn Farm	To build bird boxes with the young and elderly bringing everyone together but also to load them on the day making sure people can get a proper meal.	Power of Well Being s.2 Local Government Act 2000
Councillor J. Horlor	£500	DYT Dance	To purchase equipment to be used in class	Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, s.19
Councillor J. Horlor	£500 (PROJECT)	Pleasant Court Senior Citizens Association	Replenishment of garden fixtures and fittings to supply residents with fresh vegetables	Power of Well Being s.2 Local Government Act 2000
Councillor A. Gunter Councillor E. Hunt Councillor N. Warren	£399	1 st Griffithstown Guides	To buy litter picking equipment and other resources	Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, s.19
Councillor M. Ford	£500	St. Albans School	To expand on the sensory garden to create benches for pupils and staff to sit and relax	Power of Well Being s.2 Local Government Act 2000

FINANCE AND GOVERNANCE TOOLKIT

THEME B – LEADERSHIP AND PEOPLE

Statement	In place (Yes/No)	Comments and actions
B.1 The Council has adopted a Code of conduct	Yes	Every year the Council should readopt it – to be placed as an item on September F, G. & P
B2. All Councillors have signed a formal declaration of acceptance of office.	Yes	
B.3 All councillors have been provided with a copy of the council’s adopted code of conduct	Yes	To be distributed to all members in the summer to read before being readopted at September F, G. & P.
B.4 All councillors have a council e-mail address or a separate e-mail address for council business	Yes	Up to individual member(s) to ensure they have a separate e-mail address for council business.
B.5 All councillors have received training on their role and training needs are regularly reviewed		<p>The Chair stated the Council has a training plan which needs updating. Clerk will print out members training to date and present to September’s P, G & F.</p> <p>New members to be made aware of training available to them.</p> <p>Clerk will split members training and staff training, as in previous training plans both were together; staff have completed a</p>

		lot more training than in previous years.
B.6 All payments to councillors are made in line with the levels set out by the Independent Remuneration Panel for Wales	Yes	
B.7 A statement of payments to councillors is published by 30 September each year detailing payments made to elected members in the previous municipal year.	Yes	
The Council carries out its Employment Duties		
B.8 All employees have a written employment contract setting out the terms of their employment	Yes	The Chair stated that this is the first year that the Council had been able to tick that off properly
B.9 All employees have an up-to-date job description	Yes	
B.10 Any changes to terms and conditions, including salary increments, are recorded and approved by the council	Yes	These go through the Establishment Committee.
B.11 All staff have been given a copy of the employee code of conduct	Employee handbook provided by Peninsular covers some of this.	Although there is an element of the code of conduct within the staff handbook, there is a code of conduct for staff; Clerk would ensure that this is distributed to all staff.
B.12 The Council has core employment policies in place for example:		

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adoption and Paternity Policy • Alcohol, Drugs and Substance Misuse* • Annual Leave Policy* • Appraisal Scheme* • Bullying and Harassment* • Capability Policy* • Code of Conduct for employees* • Dignity at work Policy* • Discipline and Grievance policy and procedure* • Equality and Diversity Policy • Health and Safety at Work Policy* • Maternity Leave Policy • Member/Officer Relations Protocol • Recruitment Procedure* • Shared Parental Leave Policy • Attendance Management Policy • Stress Management Policy • Time off in Lieu Policy* • Training Policy • Whistleblowing Policy 	<p>Where there is an * there is a policy in place.</p> <p>Other staff policies need to be presented to Establishment and approved by Council that are out of date or are not covered in the staff handbook provided by Peninsular.</p>	<p>Policy Review meeting to be arranged with the Clerk, Assistant Clerk, Chair and Vice-Chair of Finance, Governance and Policy in August.</p>
<p>B.13 The council is registered as an employer with HMRC</p>	<p>Yes</p>	
<p>B.14 All overtime payments are paid through the normal payroll process and subject to PAYE</p>	<p>Yes</p>	

B.15 Any additional allowances paid to staff are subject to tax where appropriate	Yes	
B.16 The council complies with pensions legislation	Yes	
The council gives it staff the resources and support to carry out their role.		
B.17 All staff have received appropriate training for their role	Yes	The Clerk carries out 1:1's with all staff to establish if there is any training they wish to attend.
B.18 All staff have council email addresses and access to Council IT systems	Yes	